

Dakota Rising expands to six South Dakota sites in 2010

Dakota Rising, the statewide entrepreneur development program of South Dakota Rural Enterprise, awarded seven entrepreneur fellowships, chose two new sites during 2010 and recertified four other South Dakota locations for a third year.

Kristi Wagner, program developer for South Dakota Rural Enterprise and statewide coordinator for Dakota Rising, says the Dakota Rising program offers incredible possibilities for communities of all sizes.

“We have seen new levels of local involvement and community excitement during the first phases of Dakota Rising,” says Wagner, a Black Hills resident who has an extensive background in community development consultation. “With this expansion into two new sites, South Dakota Rural Enterprise anticipates even more focus on statewide entrepreneur development, specifically by nurturing a pool of entrepreneurs and small business talent, networking resources and building community support.”

DAKOTA RISING CHOOSES SEVEN FELLOWS IN 2010

Entrepreneurs have the opportunity to become Dakota Rising Fellows because people in their communities recognize the importance of supporting the businesses in their communities being run by enterprising business owners with a vision for growth. Dakota Rising chose the following people for Entrepreneur Fellows in 2010:

- **Brad Heitmann** of Trail Tamer ATV, Inc., from the *Glacial Lakes Dakota Rising*
- **Peg Austin** of Vanilla Bean Bakery, *Spearfish Dakota Rising*
- **Bryan Lessly**, Western Sky Media, *Spearfish Dakota Rising*
- **Les Voorhis**, Royal Tine Images, *Spearfish Dakota Rising*
- **Gerald and Stephanie Davidson**, D&D Plumbing and Heating, *Four Bands Community Fund*
- **Nichole White Eyes**, The Gift Garden and Photos to Go, *Four Bands Community Fund*, covering Dewey and Ziebach counties in addition to the Cheyenne River and Standing Rock Reservations
- **Mark Hollenbeck**, Sunrise Ranch, *57735 On The Rise*



Twelve of the 13 fellows selected since the program began are still in business at the end of 2010. Though some individual businesses experienced growth and some contracted to adjust to economic realities, the two classes of Fellows in aggregate increased total assets by over \$4 million, gross revenues by over \$12 million and went from a net loss to over a \$3 million net profit. Since becoming a Dakota Rising Fellow, the 2009 and 2010 Fellows have added 24 permanent jobs. To give an idea of the range of job fluctuation among the Fellows, one Fellow has added 16 employees and another lost 10.

Dakota Rising Fellows have been successful in creating more living wage jobs in our state. According to the Northwest Area Foundation, a living wage in rural South Dakota is \$13.93 an hour. Dakota Rising Fellows as a whole have added 24 living wage jobs.

DAKOTA RISING CHOOSES TWO NEW SITES AND RECERTIFIES FOUR



Dakota Rising cultivates entrepreneurs dedicated to growing themselves and their businesses by connecting them to a system of support, resulting in economic growth. As an effective Entrepreneur Development System, the program works to:

- Nurture a pool of entrepreneur and small business talent through business visitation, community outreach and youth activities.
- Network resources through Resource Fairs, mentoring connections and bringing together resource partners, business leaders and entrepreneurs statewide.
- Build community support, through heightened public awareness of the value local entrepreneurs and business people add to the community by sharing entrepreneur fellows’ and community success stories, collaborating with other community organizations and seeking resource and financial assistance for the Dakota Rising Entrepreneur Development System.

Aberdeen Dakota Rising, serving Brown County and *Faulkton Area Economic Development Initiative*, a group organized to promote and lead the Dakota Rising program in the Faulk County area, were chosen as new sites for the community economic development project.

South Dakota Rural Enterprise recertified *Glacial Lakes Dakota Rising*, *57735 On the Rise*, *Spearfish Dakota Rising*, and the *Four Bands Community Fund* as Dakota Rising sites for the third year.

2009 AND 2010 FELLOWS AGGREGATE OUTCOMES

	Baseline (FYE prior to being selected as a Fellow)	FYE 2010
Total Assets	\$ 7,770,589.78	\$ 11,941,108.55
Gross Revenue	\$ 3,710,513.68	\$ 15,980,408.14
Net Profit/Loss	\$ (715,422.69)	\$ 2,699,494.24
Fulltime Permanent Positions	104	129
Fulltime employees earning over \$13.93	41	65

