

REAP Business Update

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REAP Hispanic Business Center Entering Phase Four *Providing Business Development Services for Hispanics in Rural Nebraska Communities*

BY JEFF REYNOLDS, REAP PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP), a program of the Center for Rural Affairs, is preparing to implement the fourth phase of work for the REAP Hispanic Business Center (HBC). The objective of phase four is to further establish a rural statewide Hispanic business development program to provide key business development services to

rural Nebraska Hispanic entrepreneurs. REAP anticipates this project will impact 200 Hispanic entrepreneurs during the project year.

REAP completed the hiring process and now has a Hispanic Business Specialist in western Nebraska. *Nancy Flock* from North Platte has been hired and began her new duties on January 29, 2008. Read more about Nancy on the back page of this issue.

As of September 3, 2007, *Adriana Dungan* was promoted to REAP Hispanic Business Center Director and will also continue to serve her northeast region. The new Hispanic Business Specialist position will cover the Hispanic population outside of northeast

Nebraska and will also cover a small region in southwest Nebraska. The REAP HBC phase four work will officially begin on July 1, 2008.

The phase four work of the REAP HBC will help create new economic opportunity, higher incomes, asset growth, and improved skills for rural Hispanic entrepreneurs. Efforts will focus on eight communities and two counties with concentrated Hispanic populations.

These communities/counties include: Crete, Dakota City, Dawson County, Madison, Nickerson, Schuyler, South Sioux City, Wakefield, West Point, and Scottsbluff County. Services will be made available to Hispanic entrepreneurs

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MarketPlace Entrepreneur's Conference Once Again a Big Success

Attendees from 126 different towns and seven states converged in Columbus, Nebraska for the second annual MarketPlace event

Over 550 people gathered in Columbus, Nebraska, on February 27, 2008, for the second annual *Marketplace: Opening Doors to Success* presented by the Center for Rural Affairs and many sponsors. It's the only entrepreneurial conference of its kind in Nebraska and surrounding states.

Entrepreneurs, business owners, service providers, students, teachers, farmers, ranchers, and many others of all ages took part. Participants came from over seven states including California, Nevada, Colorado, Kansas, North Dakota, Iowa, and Nebraska. Over 72 counties and 126 towns were represented at this year's conference.

Whether interested in starting or improving a business, a farming operation, agri-tourism, or community development, MarketPlace had something for everyone.

There were over 28 training opportunities in 7 tracks including: business development, technology, financing, community, marketing, agriculture, and Hispanic business development (with sessions available in Spanish).

Over 50 exhibit booths were filled with successful small businesses, service providers, and other conference sponsors. Attendees had the opportunity to meet with experts in many fields



The exhibit hall fills up during a break. The conference featured 3 long breaks to make networking easier.

– attorneys, CPA's, web designers, etc. The excited buzz from the exhibit hall indicated that lots of networking was taking place, one of the main goals of the MarketPlace.

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CALENDAR



REAP Activities

2/25/2009, **MarketPlace:**

Opening Doors to Success, Sandhills Convention Center, North Platte, NE. Educational sessions, exhibit booths, networking opportunities, local foods. Contact Monica Braun for more information, 402.643.2673.

Statewide Activities:

5/31, **From Recipe to Reality seminar presented in Spanish**, Food Processing Center at UNL, Lincoln, NE. Contact Jill Gifford, 402.472.2819.

The Food Processing Center is offering this one-day seminar for individuals interested in exploring the idea of starting a food manufacturing business. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. **Registration deadline is May 16.** Contact Jill Gifford at 402.472.2819 or jjgifford1@unl.edu for information.

REAP Hispanic Business Center makes a difference ...

(Continued from page 1)

across all of rural Nebraska – wherever they may reside.

Jose Lopez received assistance through the REAP Hispanic Business Center last year. Jose came to Nebraska in search of better work opportunities. In 2003 he opened a small business in North Bend, Nebraska. Spotting a new opportunity to buy a building and relocate his business, he contacted REAP Hispanic Business Center Director Adriana Dungan to receive help working on his business plan and packaging the loan. You can read more about his success on page three of this issue and in the awards insert. Help from the REAP Hispanic Business Center was the difference maker in growth for this small business!

REAP is excited about the approaching implementation of phase four of the REAP Hispanic Business Center. The addition of a Hispanic Business Specialist in the southwest area of Nebraska and promotion of Adriana Dungan to REAP Hispanic Business Center Director will play a major role in moving this critical work to the next level. REAP will continue to research, develop, and build strategic partners to provide comprehensive New American services in all of rural Nebraska.

For questions about the work of the REAP Hispanic Business Center, please contact REAP HBC Director Adriana Dungan at 402.494.1013 or adungan@msn.com or REAP Program Director Jeff Reynolds at 402.656.3091 or jeffr@alltel.net.

MarketPlace 2009 ...

(Continued from page 1)

Rural America is facing many challenges. The purpose of MarketPlace is to address these challenges by creating connections and sharing information that people across rural America can use to create a better future for their communities, their families, and themselves.

The **3rd Annual MarketPlace Conference** will be held on **February 25, 2009, at the Sandhills Convention Center in North Platte, Nebraska.**

Those with an interest should keep their calendars open for that day and register early as spots filled up fast this year. Watch this newsletter for more details.

“The Top 10 Things I’ve Learned as a Professional Marketer,” the morning keynote presentation by *Kipp Kreuzberg* is posted on the MarketPlace website at www.cfra.org/marketplace/home. The proceedings also include many of the handouts.

Contact: Monica Braun with questions, mbraun@windstream.net or 402.643.2673.

Get your FREE 2008 IRS Tax Calendar for Small Businesses and the Self-Employed

The 2008 IRS Tax Calendar for Small Businesses and the Self-Employed (Pub 1518 and Pub 1518SP, Catalog 12350Z) is a ready resource to help small business owners meet their tax obligations. The 36 page, 12-month wall calendar, available in English (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1518.pdf>) and Spanish (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p1518sp.pdf>), is chocked full with useful information on general business taxes, electronic filing and paying options, retirement plans, business publications and forms, common tax filing dates, and much more.

Each page highlights different tax issues and tips that may be relevant to small business owners, with room on each month to add notes, state tax dates, or business appointments. As an added feature, you can now import the tax calendar into Microsoft Outlook and iCal.

For an online version of the tax calendar, visit www.irs.gov, keyword: tax calendar or go to: <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=176080,00.html>. Copies of the tax calendar can also be ordered online at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=101169,00.html> or by calling the National Distribution Center at 800.829.3676.

To learn about other IRS products and services, subscribe to e-News for Small Businesses. To view a representative sample and to start your FREE subscription to e-News, just go to IRS.gov at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/content/0,,id=154826,00.html>, type in your e-mail address and submit.

Source: John Berger, SB/SE CLD External/Product Development Branch, 31 Hopkins Plaza, Room 940, Fallon Federal Building, Baltimore, MD 21201, Tel: 410-962-9025, Fax: 410-962-2572, e-Mail: John.R.Berger@irs.gov.



THREE CHEERS: Hip, Hip, Hooray! A salute to REAP businesses

Lopez Auto Sales Business Expands with Help from the REAP

Jose Lopez came to Nebraska from California 11 years ago looking for better working opportunities. In 2003 he opened Lopez Auto Sales, a used car dealership located on Highway 30 in North Bend, Nebraska. His target market was Hispanic people living in Schuyler and the surrounding areas, but over the years he created a solid clientele base drawing people from as far away as Omaha and Grand Island, Nebraska; Sioux City and Denison, Iowa; Harper, Kansas; and St. Joseph, Missouri.

When he saw the opportunity to buy a building and relocate his business to the Schuyler area, Jose contacted REAP Hispanic Business Center Director *Adriana Dungan* to receive help working on his business plan and packaging the loan. After several months of work, Jose was able to purchase the building, but not only that, he also decided to purchase the business located in the building, a liquor store. With a great plan in mind and using business skills acquired over 20 years working in a family-run small business in his native Guatemala, Jose went into his new business venture.

Contact: Adriana Dungan, REAP Hispanic Business Center Director, adungan@msn.com or 402.494.1013 for more information on the HBC.

With an investment of over \$200,000 he's kept the liquor store up and running and has shown increased sales every month. The breakdown was just done to remodel the purchased building. Jose plans to open a new Auto Business in Schuyler, Nebraska, right behind the liquor store.

Jose resides in Schuyler with his wife and three children. He recently received the Center for Rural Affairs' Entrepreneur Award (see insert). REAP is one of five rural 5 programs offered by the Center for Rural Affairs.



Jose Lopez is pictured in his office in North Bend, Nebraska.

AEO Conference

Anaheim, California, will be the setting for the 2008 Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) Conference on May 20-23, 2008. The majority of REAP staff will be attending this training event.

The AEO Conference, which is now known as the "National Summit on Entrepreneurship" is the best opportunity for us to learn about the newest innovations in microenterprise programming; expand our skills related to existing program offerings; and network with an international attendance of other practitioners, programs, and funders.

The REAP program is widely respected. Many U.S. programs were created in part by examining REAP. This respect is totally in relation to the dynamic entrepreneurs who participate with the REAP program.

It is this participation that makes REAP a great program and the motivation that drives us all. We will do our best to continue providing an innovative program to meet the needs of our clients.

REAP WBC Co-Sponsors Women in Agriculture

Where would you find nearly 300 Nebraska farm and ranch women on a cold day in February? At the Women in Ag Conference, of course! The REAP Women's Business Center was proud to again support the 23rd Nebraska Women in Agriculture Conference held at the Kearney Holiday Inn in Kearney on February 21-22, 2008. The conference is presented by the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Nebraska-Extension and the Department of Agricultural Economics and supported by many other sponsors.

The conference purpose is to provide opportunities for all Nebraska women to develop management skills in every facet of agriculture by providing leadership, learning support, and networking avenues to empower women. This aligns with the goals of the Women's Business Center.

This year's theme was "The Heart of the Farm" and warm hearts roamed throughout the two-day Conference. Approximately 40 learning sessions were offered, ranging from accounting and bookkeeping to stress management to "moving and grooving with GPS." One of the Keynote Speakers was *T. Marni Vos*, Lincoln, who educates people in all walks of life to meet their challenges with a light heart and the echo of laughter. She ended the Conference for us by lessening our stress with a time of laughter!

REAP Business Specialist *Dena Beck* and REAP WBC Director *Monica Braun* staffed an Exhibit Booth during the conference and networked with other exhibitors and attendees. Monica presented "What's In YOUR Business Plan?" as one of the many sessions offered.

The two-day conference reinforces the value of networking and sharing with others. Check out the website at <http://wia.unl.edu>. Contact Monica Braun, REAP WBC Director, mbraun@windstream.net or 402.643.2673 for more information.

QUESTIONS?

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All opinions, conclusions, or recommendations
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the Hispanic Business Center are programs of
the **Center for Rural Affairs**. The Center for
Rural Affairs is a private, nonprofit organization.

Hormel Foundation Business Plan Contest

The Hormel Family Foundation annual business plan competition will take place on June 6, 2008, at the Hormel Business & Technology Center on the McCook Community College campus. The Hormel Business Plan Competition is intended to encourage existing businesses in McCook, as well as to attract new businesses to the area. Start-ups and existing local business owners are equally welcome to submit their business ideas.

On June 6, a judge's panel comprised of business and community leaders will once again identify the most promising business plan tailored to the McCook region. The winning entrepreneur or team will receive a \$25,000 cash investment, and consulting and advertising services valued at \$10,000.

In exchange for the \$25,000 investment, the Hormel Family Foundation will take a minority stake in the business and will work closely with the winner to maximize the chances of success.

The Hormel Family Foundation is a nonprofit committed to education and business development in McCook, Nebraska. Founded in 1999 by the late *Ben F. Hormel*, it provided the funding for the Ben F. Hormel Technology Center for Business and Industry on the McCook Community College campus.

The foundation will accept submissions online or via mail this spring and encourages all those interested in entering the competition to visit www.hormelfamilyfoundation.com, or to contact *Susan Harris-Broomfield*, Pro-

Welcome New REAP Hispanic Business Specialist

The Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP), a program of the Center for Rural Affairs, is pleased to announce the hiring of *Nancy Flock* as our new Southwest/ Central 2 and Hispanic REAP Business Specialist. Nancy holds an AS in Business Administration from Mid Plains Community College.

Nancy most recently worked as Loan Operations/Cash Management/Cash Services Representative at First National Bank at North Platte, Nebraska. Nancy was also involved with her family owned Mexican Crafts business.

We are excited to have Nancy join us and are also very excited about the future of our Hispanic work in rural Nebraska. Nancy lives in North Platte and will operate from a home based office. **Contact Nancy at 308.534.3508 or npflock@msn.com.**

Welcome Nancy to REAP and the Center for Rural Affairs family!

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REAP: Strengthening rural communities through small, self-employed business development.