

FALL 2005/WINTER 2006

# VISIONS



A publication of the  
Heartland Center for Leadership Development



## Blueprint COMMUNITIES

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from the  
Heartland

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The Heartland Center is  
an independent nonprofit  
organization developing  
local leadership that responds to  
the challenges of the future.

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# Jackson Hole Institute Draws Energetic Group

The Heartland Center's annual Jackson Hole Institute, Helping Small Towns Succeed, drew a lively group of community development professionals and practitioners from 10 states and the District of Columbia.

This year's institute focused on six skill-building themes: Appreciative Inquiry, Co-Facilitation, Measurement, Social Capital, Youth Engagement and Diversity. Trainers included Co-Director Milan Wall and Associates Reshell Ray and Kurt Mantonya.

Next year, the Heartland Center will celebrate the 15th anniversary of this annual institute. Dates in 2006 are October 10 through 13. Once again, the institute will be held in Jackson Hole, Wyoming at the Snow King Resort.



Co-Director Milan Wall, second from right, joins participants and co-trainers Reshell Ray and Kurt Mantonya.



Jackson Hole participants enjoy outdoor and indoor venues.

# Tribal Case Studies Span 5 States

The Heartland Center for Leadership Development has teamed up with United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) to develop a training program in sustainable economic development. This program will be made available to tribal planners and economic development specialists within the Denver region of the Economic Development Administration. This region encompasses the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska.

The fieldwork phase is nearing completion with staff traveling to each community to interview persons engaged in tribal economic development and planning, as well as local business owners and entrepreneurs. The fieldwork sites that make up the case study portion include the Winnebago tribe of Nebraska, Rosebud of South Dakota, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians in North Dakota, Flathead of Montana, and Wind River Cheyenne of Wyoming. For each of the sites visited, a case study is written to identify best practices. Conversations about what is working on each individual reservation with regard to economic development and entrepreneurship provide the focus for these visits.

Once the case studies are written, a curriculum and training materials will be developed and presented to tribes served by UTTC in the Denver region. This training program will include materials that describe sustainable economic development successes among tribes in the region. These case studies will track tribal enterprise development projects and reservation-based entrepreneurship support programs. Heartland Center staff will lead the training programs with our UTTC partners.

Program Associate Kurt Mantonya and incoming Heartland Center Board member Valerie Shangreaux have been conducting the fieldwork, with assistance from Co-Director Milan Wall. Kurt recently joined the Center's staff. Valerie is a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe who has been with the Center for the past several years as an associate. Valerie had this to say about her experience. "Working in the field has been such a wonderful experience! The people I met were so warm and welcoming. They made me feel right at home. Every time I go into Indian country and talk to people about what they are doing to build stronger and more vibrant communities, I am filled with hope. I have a deep respect for those who have committed their lives and careers to making things better for themselves and for our future generations." Kurt's experience has been very similar. "What we're doing ultimately helps the tribal groups we are working with to strengthen their economic development strategies. We're facilitating information sharing with other tribes to show what is working on the ground."



# Blueprint PA COMMUNITIES

## *in Pennsylvania*

Beginning in 2004, the Heartland Center staff has worked with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh on a community revitalization training project. The project, which targets communities in Pennsylvania, is intended to serve as a catalyst for creating sustainable neighborhoods and communities in Delaware and West Virginia in addition to Pennsylvania. Designed to encourage teams to approach revitalization holistically, the initiative takes into account physical, economic and social needs.



Waynesburg displays its banner.



Governor Rendell, third from right (front row), kicks off Blueprint Communities at the State Capitol in Harrisburg.

The Blueprint Communities program was developed with very specific objectives. These include: fostering strong local leadership, increasing collaboration and enhancing development capacity in older neighborhoods and communities.

The FHLBank created a strong partnership of funders including Rural LISC, Sovereign Bank and PNC Bank, NA to help with the program. Even more impressive has been the strong endorsement of Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell, who led a special kick off event in Harrisburg in August when teams were selected. Each team was presented with a banner proclaiming their participation in the Blueprint Communities and these banners were in evidence throughout the state in the days that followed.

## Curriculum and Participant Selection

A statewide advisory committee assisted in the identification of topics for the curriculum, according to Heartland Center Co-Director Vicki Luther. "We chose to stress a team approach to the leadership training, too, so that participants would have support back home after a workshop." Ultimately, the curriculum emphasized vision, planning and strategy development with a strong focus on techniques for increasing community involvement.



Participants dive into the first workshop.

## 2005 Blueprint Communities & Neighborhood Groups

- Aliquippa
- Berwick—LaSalle Street group
- Brownsville—Downtown and North side groups
- Canonsburg
- Carnegie
- Connellsville
- Etna
- Hamburg
- Irwin
- Kennet Square-East Linden group
- Lebanon-Northwest group
- McKeesport
- New Kensington
- Philadelphia—Norris Square
- Philadelphia—Tioga
- Pittsburgh-Hazelwood
- Pittsburgh-Larimer
- Reading-Callowhill group
- Tamaqua
- Uniontown—East End group
- Waynesburg
- Wilkinsburg

The staff at the FHLBank managed a rigorous application and selection process that resulted in the selection of 22 communities from across the state. These communities presented a team composed of five individuals including a banker, a developer, representatives of school age and other residents as well as service providers and non-profits. Heartland Center Associate Leon Sharpe, while serving as one of the trainers, noted, "These teams represent the best of interested, active community folks. It's really inspiring to see how determined they are to make a difference."

## Training Programs in the Fall of 2005

The first sessions of the multi-day training events were held in September at sites in western and eastern Pennsylvania. Using a retreat setting allowed the participants to focus on the experience away from the duties and distractions of everyday events. The Heartland Center training team included Milan Wall, Vicki Luther and Leon Sharpe.

An October interim session featured a one-day program on housing needs and programs and was especially significant in the attempt to introduce teams to resource people from state agencies, non-profits and for-profit development companies. The final sessions were held

**"These teams represent the best of interested, active community folks. It's really inspiring to see how determined they are to make a difference."**

*Leon Sharpe  
Heartland Center Associate*

**The Blueprint Communities program was developed with very specific objectives. These include: fostering strong local leadership, increasing collaboration and enhancing development capacity in older neighborhoods and communities.**

in December, again at western and eastern sites in Pennsylvania.

An external evaluation team was also part of the program design and considered by the training staff to be a valuable asset. As Co-Director Milan Wall says, "Thorough evaluation of impact is a great luxury. We'll take advantage of the feed back and follow-up information on how these community teams use our training to improve future efforts."

## Next Steps

Following the December training, teams will continue to work on developing a vision statement and a practical strategic plan for their community or neighborhood. Technical assistance is also available to the teams through a new network of service providers developed by the Graduate School of Public Administration at the University of Pittsburgh.

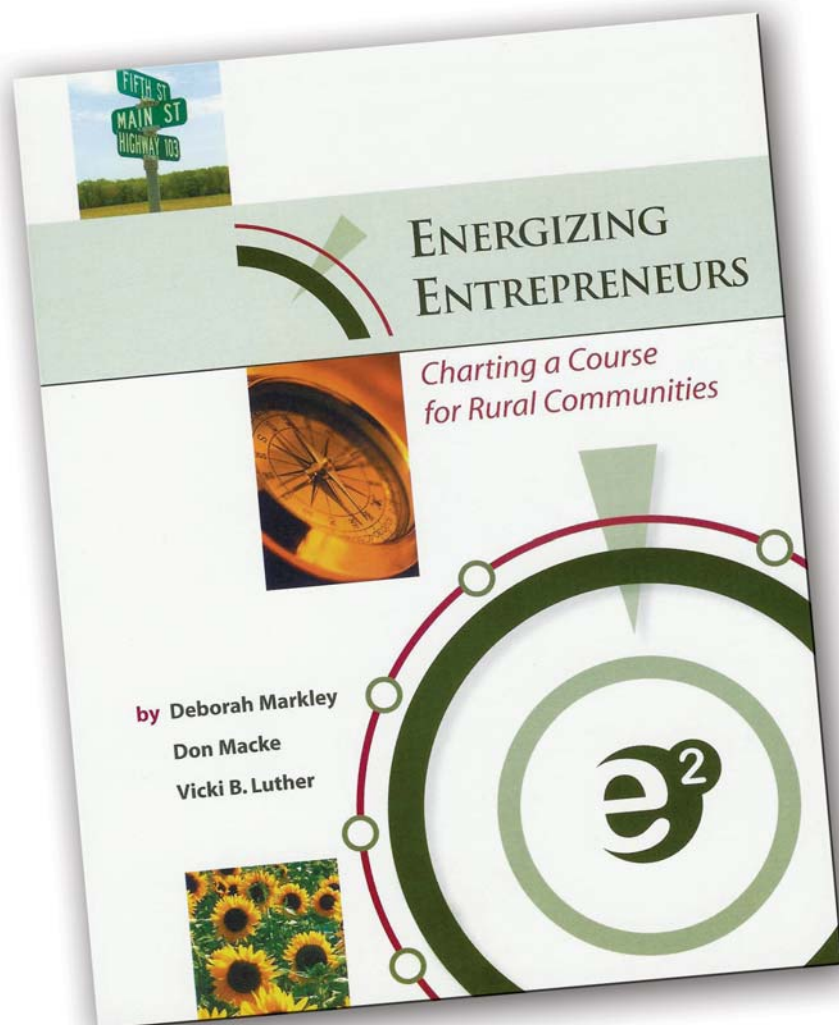
As FHLBank Vice President John Bendel says, "These communities will have a competitive edge when competing for development resources and we'll do everything we can to help them accomplish their plans. Ultimately, the test is up to the teams, of course. We've provided great training, connections to resources and a structure for a plan. Now they have to fill in the local content and get the job done."



Co-Director Vicki Luther leads a workshop presentation.



Participants join in a get-acquainted activity.



# e<sup>2</sup> Energizing Entrepreneurs Book Helps Rural Entrepreneurs to Chart New Course

The Heartland Center and the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship have published a new book titled *Energizing Entrepreneurs: Charting a Course for Rural Communities*. This publication puts a guide map in the hands of rural community development professionals and volunteer community leaders who want to transform their communities into hotbeds of entrepreneurship. The insights shared in the book are drawn from the experiences of rural communities that are in the process of reassessing their economic development approaches and planning strategically for their future.

The information in this book combines stories from rural communities across America together with insightful tips and advice from experts with years of experience in the field. It is a "must have" for anyone working to create supportive environments for entrepreneurs, new sources of wealth and sustaining economic betterment. Here is a sample of the book's chapter titles:

Here are samples of what experts on entrepreneurship are saying about *Energizing Entrepreneurs*:

**"E<sup>2</sup> is a folksy and hands-on way for rural leaders to develop a clear strategic plan for community-based entrepreneurship. The curriculum highlights many simple and inexpensive approaches that have worked in other rural settings to build support for entrepreneurs."**

—Leslie Scott, Director, Institute for Rural Entrepreneurship,  
North Carolina Economic Development Center

**"Energizing Entrepreneurs is a key to promoting a positive future for rural citizens. I have sent my staff to the E<sup>2</sup> training and I believe that it helped ignite additional enthusiasm for the potential of rural people and places."**

—John Allen, Director, Western Rural Development Center

**Charles Fluharty of the Rural Policy Research Institute notes in the preface that, "I see a new rural entrepreneurial culture and climate flourishing...where three principles apply: entrepreneur focused...strongly based in communities...and regionally oriented to reach scale and expand capacity. These same principles apply to the knowledge, stories and tools shared in the pages that follow."**

- **Charting Your Own Course**
- **Economic Development Today**
- **Working in Rural America**
- **Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurship**
- **Making the Case – Why Entrepreneurship?**
- **Readiness for Economic Development and Entrepreneurship**
- **Assessment**
- **Strategies for Energizing Entrepreneurs**
- **Building Capacity for Entrepreneurship Development**
- **Keeping Score**
- **Influencing Policy to Support Entrepreneurship**
- **Sustaining Your Community, Your Efforts and Yourself**

People who will find *Energizing Entrepreneurs* most useful include directors of local community development agencies, entrepreneurship practitioners, extension educators, village managers, or any community leader who embraces change and reaches across regions to connect with people and agencies to strengthen hometown entrepreneurial assets.

The book was written by Deb Markley and Don Macke of the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and Vicki Luther of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development.

The book has 187 pages and is in a softbound edition. It may be purchased through the Heartland Center at [www.heartlandcenter.info](http://www.heartlandcenter.info) or 800-927-1115. The cost is \$23, shipping included. A companion website to the book can be found at: [www.energizingentrepreneurs.org](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org).

## Resources for Small Town Success Publications of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development

### Publication Order Form

Postage and handling are included in the price of the publication for orders within the U.S. and Canada. Cost of publication to be paid in U.S. dollars. (Prices subject to change without notice.)

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<input type="checkbox"/> Your Field Guide to Community Building . . . . .	\$18.50 _____
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## Meet Kurt Mantonya

Program Associate Kurt Mantonya has worked with anthropology and Native American affairs for the last 15 years in the central plains and southwest. He brings to the Heartland Center experience in Native American and Latino cultural issues, project coordination, collaborative community based planning and the rapid growth of rural communities. He's been active in numerous projects involved with cultural anthropology of the Great Plains, health care issues in the Native American and Latino communities and policy analysis.

Kurt's professional interests include the Society for Applied Anthropology, the International Association for Public Participation, and many other anthropological associations and societies.

He received a Masters Degree in Anthropology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2002 and a B.S. in Sociology from Kansas State University in 1994. Before coming to the Heartland Center he served as program director of the AmeriCorps program for the City of Lincoln Parks and Recreation. Kurt is married and his wife Becky is an ELL team leader and educator in the Lincoln Public Schools system. They have two children, Cody and Maggy.

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## Ask The Heartland Center

**Question:** I've constantly got new folks that want to join our project. We're spending so much time at each meeting just in reviewing stuff that we're getting frustrated and stalled on progress. How do I include newcomers but still get the group goals accomplished?



**Vicki Luther**  
*Co-Director*

Don't underestimate the value of a history! It can be written, sort of an abbreviated version of meeting minutes, or even a graphic display of a project time line. Use several sheets of newsprint, taped on a wall lengthwise and get your team to create their own time line. Use this as a display for future meetings to give newcomers a sense of what's happened in the past and what's still to come.



**Kurt Mantonya**  
*Program Associate*

I like to see a group use a simple web site that includes information from previous meetings by date and lots of pictures, too. Try getting your local high school to help with the web site. It's a great project for kids and pretty easy to put together. The high schoolers make good photographers, too, and can come to each meeting and then update the web site.



**Valerie Shangreaux**  
*Board Member*

Sometimes the best way to include newcomers is to have an organized, assigned "welcoming" committee that takes the responsibility for educating as well as greeting. If you have 2 or 3 volunteers that will take on this task, they can be available for a briefing session prior to every work session, just in case someone new arrives and needs to catch up.



**Adam Wall**  
*Marketing Specialist*

How about a scrap book? Just keep it at the meetings and then publicize a coffee or refreshment time before your work session really starts. This way newcomers are invited to come early and take a look at the scrap book. This, of course, assumes that you'll take advantage of the chance to get news articles, photos and letters to the editor printed in the local paper.