

Summer 2003

VISIONS



*Energizing
Entrepreneurship
in Rural America*

**E² Loaded
with Energy**

See Pages
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A publication of the
**Heartland Center for
Leadership Development**

3 Recruiting a Youth Advisory Group

Help the Heartland Center recruit a diverse advisory group of youth and young adults by sending in your nomination.

6 Heartland to Provide Training for Tribal Planners

Planners from seven states will gather at Fort Yates on the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota to focus on economic development and entrepreneurship.

7 Same Place, New Face:

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VISIONS
from the
Heartland

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**Heartland Center for
Leadership Development**

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

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New folks at Heartland

We're pleased to introduce two additions to the

Heartland Center staff. Aditya Peri is an intern with the Heartland Center this summer and is specializing in gaining experience in community development projects. Aditya, a native of India, has completed an undergraduate degree in architecture and all the course work for a Master's degree in Community and Regional Planning at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In addition to his computer knowledge and interest in planning projects, Aditya is also known for his cooking skills.



Aditya Peri

Working on data base management and helping the office stay organized, Laura Vonk is a student in International Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She's helped at the Center at various times during the past two years. Laura began her undergraduate days with sophomore status since she'd completed more than 20 credits while still in high school.



Laura Vonk

Striving for Cultural Competency

Ethnic and cultural diversity is increasing dramatically in many medium-size cities and rural areas across the Midwest. This summer the Heartland Center is assisting Region V Systems, a coalition of behavioral health care providers in southeast Nebraska, with a planning process to develop a resource system for cultural competency.

In Lincoln, Nebraska alone, more than 40 different languages are spoken in the public schools. Newcomers to the area include Iraqis, Kurds, Afghans, Vietnamese, Bosnians, Cambodians, Africans from 19 nations, and more. In addition to the stress of culture shock, many of the immigrants are survivors of war and torture.

Behavioral health care providers cite the language barrier as the number one challenge we must overcome in providing culturally competent services. However, there are many other aspects and deficiencies in our system that must be addressed. There are far too few translators, and even fewer have been trained in behavioral health. In several cultures, people do not take issues such as mental health "outside the family." There is very little cultural and linguistic diversity among providers. For

some clients, lack of gender diversity is also problematic.

In addition to the stress of culture shock, many of the immigrants are survivors of war and torture.

Planning for the resource system began in June. Short and long-term goals include securing dedicated and sustainable funding for providing culturally and linguistically appropriate services, increasing the number of minority persons served, and increasing the availability of educational opportunities for providers and clients. A model for a delivery system is under development. For more information on the progress of this project, contact Reggi Carlson at rcarlson@heartlandcenter.info.

Watershed Basin Planning

For the next two years, the Heartland Center will be part of a large watershed basin planning project in Lancaster County, Nebraska. Center staff will be part of a team that will develop a comprehensive watershed basin study that addresses both water quality and quantity while managing future development. Heartland Center staff will facilitate stakeholder involvement throughout the project to build consensus for the final recommendations.

The team will be led by Camp Dresser & McKee (CDM), a full service engineering and consulting firm with offices throughout the Midwest. CDM will establish a local office for the project and several other engineering and research firms will collaborate. The area under study is a unique watershed, now adjacent to city of Lincoln, and the site of acreages, older family farms and recreation areas. Development in the basin has been controversial for a long time, and the involvement of property owners will be vital to the success of the plan.

Watershed and floodplain management and planning have been topics for Heartland Center facilitators for several years now. In addition to designing and facilitating several citizen task force planning efforts, the Center's staff has also conducted a wide variety of opinion polls, surveys, focus groups and community meetings on natural resource management topics.



Mema-Shua Regina Grant

How About A Youth Advisory Group?

After observing how much youth involvement improves community development projects, Heartland Center staff and board have begun exploring the potential for a youth advisory group for the Center itself. "We're always telling community folks that they should include young adults and high schoolers in the core group of movers and shakers. We want to consider doing that for planning our own future projects," Co-Director Milan Wall observed.

An advisory group made up of teens and young adults will offer a new perspective on topics such as building social capital, reversing out-migration and nurturing entrepreneurship. Plans include seeking grant support to gather a group together for a retreat that would also offer the participants a chance to network and learn some new skills. The concept of two-way sharing is extremely important to informing new Heartland Center programs and building the capacity of the advisory group members.

As a first step, we have recruited program associate Mema-Shua Regina Grant, a past recipient of the The Hitachi Foundation Yoshiyama youth leadership award. According to Mema-Shua, "There are so many young tribal members that are very active and engaged in all types of betterment projects. I also plan to investigate contacts from other winners of the Yoshiyama Award from the past years." Mema-Shua will be developing a pool of potential members and researching examples of similar advisory groups for the Heartland Center board to review.

The long-term goal is to improve Heartland Center programs and staff skills while offering the same high quality, practical tools for community leaders. It's clear that now and in the future, those leaders come in all ages.

Help us recruit a youth advisory council!

Do you know of a young person (16-25 years of age) who could offer a youthful perspective on community building? We're not really searching for examples of services or programs for young people, but rather those exceptional young people themselves. And, we're not looking for just the scholarship winners and sports champions, either. If you know:

- entrepreneurs
- activists
- community volunteers

**Please contact Mema-Shua Grant at:
mgranthcd@aol.com**

She'll be glad for any ideas and may have some questions for you, too.

E² loaded with energy



Don Macke, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, at the podium with our first E² graduating class.

Our first academy for **E² (Energizing Entrepreneurship in Rural America)** drew 53 practitioners from 15 states to Nebraska City in April 2003. The four-day workshop, presented with our partners at the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, was designed with a train-the-trainers approach so that participants would have tools to take home and share with others working in rural economic development.

Patricia Kehoe, with the Bureau of Health Care Access in Iowa, is a graduate of our first E² class. With her permission, we are reprinting an excerpt of her report to the Iowa Department of Public Health, which describes her team's experience. Thanks to Patricia for sharing her story, and to the rest of the Iowa team for your commitment to this learning experience. We look forward to working with you and our other graduates soon!

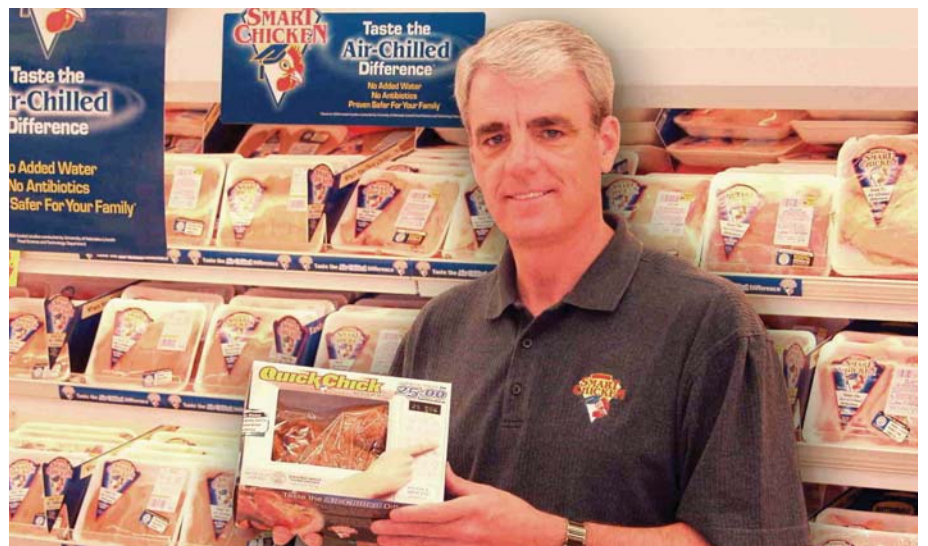


Patricia Kehoe shares strategies with Odee Ingersall of Nebraska and another colleague. Some participants took their teamwork outside to enjoy the weather and the scenery.



“Entrepreneurship is the transformation of an idea into an opportunity.”

Mark Haskins, founder and CEO of MBA Poultry, Tecumseh, Nebraska, told his story of bringing an improved product, “Smart Chicken,” to a broad urban market.



Create opportunities for all ages to get involved.

Three Iowa towns were invited (to the Energizing Entrepreneurship academy) as pilot communities, and local leaders with backgrounds in health care, economic development, extension service and marketing responded. According to workshop leaders, “entrepreneurship is the transformation of an idea into an opportunity.” They hypothesize that weaker economic performance in rural areas is due in large part to lack of entrepreneurial activity. Rural America has been reluctant to foster the level of opportunity, know-how, talent and capital necessary to develop and expand business in small communities.

Develop a community vision that focuses on local talent.

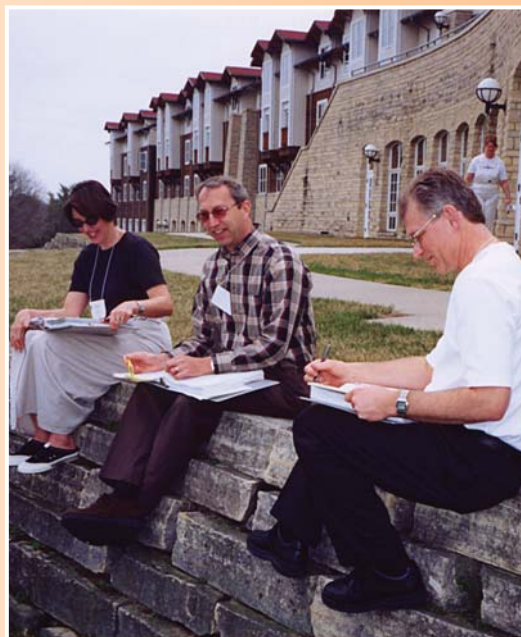
But the rural landscape is changing. Workshop facilitators presented successful rural case studies from Appalachian Ohio, Nebraska, Texas, Maine and Missouri. Local entrepreneurs shared their success stories and ongoing challenges: A young physician started a paper shredding business to meet medical privacy standards. The entrepreneur behind Smart Chicken technology described his roller coaster ride to success. Two partners in a temporary staffing service outlined their workforce development techniques. An economic development professional from Kearney, Nebraska, shared the town’s strategies for success.

Research conducted by the Heartland Center and the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship indicates that the key to rural revitalization rests with energizing rural entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. They determined that “many rural Americans have rudimentary entrepreneurial experiences and skills. But few rural Americans have experience with and knowledge associated with entrepreneurial growth companies.”

Workshop leaders encouraged rural communities to work with potential entrepreneurs one by one. “By understanding the entrepreneurial talent present in your community, it is possible to be

more strategic in shaping an economic development program,” they advised participants. Develop a community vision that focuses on local talent. Provide motivation and capacity to budding entrepreneurs. Create opportunities for all ages to get involved.

As the workshop drew to a close, Iowa participants mapped a development plan. Representatives from Creston, with a focus on youth entrepreneurship, joined the team. Pilot communities will bring workshop leaders to their own towns for local presentation of entrepreneurship strategies. Teamwork between economic development and health care professionals at local and state levels offers an opportunity to expand rural economies and energize local talent. Stay tuned for early returns from Bloomfield, Creston, Shenandoah and Edgewood.



The E2 academy was held at the Lied Conference Center at Arbor Day Farm.

Story shared by Patricia Kehoe
of the Bureau of Health Care Access in Iowa



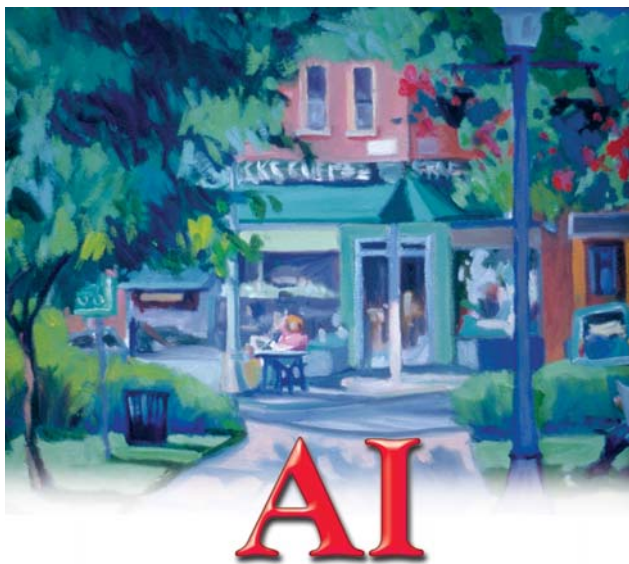
Snow King Resort, Jackson Hole, Wyoming

Time to register for Helping Small Towns Succeed institute

Helping Small Towns Succeed is an annual training program offered by the Heartland Center since 1992 in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The program is designed as a basic, all-around course in community development and is ideal for someone new to community work, or for experienced practitioners as a refresher. This year’s dates are October 23 to 27, 2003, and the Snow King Resort will again serve as the facility. For more information, go to the Heartland Center’s web site at www.heartland-center.info or call 1-800-927-1115 for a printed registration brochure.



Photo courtesy of the National Park Service



Appreciative Inquiry: A New Tool for Communities

The Heartland Center has been using Appreciative Inquiry (AI), a social science approach developed by David Cooperrider and others, in several recent projects. The basic concept is similar to asset mapping or the analysis of social capital in that appreciative inquiry is based on best practices or the study of success. In the strict use of AI, the four steps include discovery, dreaming, design and delivery.

“When were we at our best and what was going on then?”

In the Center’s adaptation of AI, the community group works together to “discover” past high points in the community by answering the questions, “When were we at our best and what was going on then?” In this phase, not only is success discovered—all the people and circumstances that made the success possible are rediscovered. Next, the group works on a visioning process by asking “What do we ‘dream’ our community might be?” The third step is “designing” the supports that would be necessary to ensure success. The last is an action plan to “deliver” the changes needed to create and keep that new dream in place. A web search on “appreciative inquiry” will offer many sources for this interesting process. A good place to start is www.appreciative-inquiry.org.

What do we “dream” our community might be?

Heartland to provide training for tribal planners



In July the Heartland Center will travel to the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota to work with up to 75 participants, many of them tribal Economic Development Administration (EDA) planners. Tribes and tribal entities in the state of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Nebraska will be invited to participate. Tribal EDA planners are charged with submitting a comprehensive economic development strategy plan to the EDA yearly. The plan must involve an outreach component to community members, an analysis of regional or reservation economic conditions, a vision for the future, an action plan, and a strategy for evaluation. The training will utilize Appreciative Inquiry techniques to focus on assets and successes upon which tribal planners can build effective strategies for change.

In addition, participants will have the opportunity to explore successful practices related to the Five Strategies for Active Economic Development (Heartland Center, 1992) including: stopping economic leakage, retaining and expanding local businesses, supporting local entrepreneurs, capturing outside dollars, and developing new businesses.

The project, initiated by Barbara Schmitt, Economic Development Director for the United Tribes Technical College University Center in Bismarck, North Dakota, represents phase one of a three-phase project that includes training in strategic planning, assessment and impact analysis at various reservations.

A Great Chance for Follow-On Training

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines is sponsoring the second round of community team trainings now scheduled for 2003. One workshop has already been conducted in Pella, Iowa, and was attended by the teams returning from the series offered in 2002. Each team consists of a banker and at least two community leaders. Eleven communities were represented at the Iowa training program. Similar two-day events are scheduled for South Dakota, Minnesota, Missouri and North Dakota.

This year’s program has several new dimensions. Teams are asked for updates on community projects and have a chance to share ideas in a problem-solving session. Heartland Center staff also presents a session on community foundations that runs concurrently with a discussion of resources and technical assistance. A wide range of federal and state agencies are participating in the resource session. Day two includes a Heartland Center session on conflict management and, as a final topic, there is a facilitated discussion on rural policy issues.

Another change from the program’s first year is the welcome addition of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development as a partner. All five states served by the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines are also served by NCRCD, and that organization generously covered the cost of all the training materials designed by Heartland Center staff.



For more information on the program, go to the web site of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines at www.fhlbdm.com

**Resources for Small Town Survival
Publications of the Heartland Center for Leadership Development**

Publication Order Form	Please Note # of copies	Amt.
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**Web Site Update:
Same Place,
New Face**

If you go to www.heartlandcenter.info you'll notice a new look and a lot more helpful information. We've overhauled our web site to be more interactive as well. We now have a secure site where you can purchase publications online. (Of course you may still use the order form printed to the left, or make requests over the phone and by email).

Become more familiar with our staff and associates, and find out which of our workshops and projects can benefit your community the most. We also are including a regular "help" section to answer some of the most frequent questions we get when we're working directly with practitioners and community leaders.

You will still be able to access current and back issues of our Visions newsletter, and connect directly to other community development resources on the Internet through our "Liaisons" links. And you can even make an online contribution to support our work through our scholarship program.

We hope you'll visit Heartland's new home page soon to learn more about how we can help you in your community building efforts.

Calendar

July

- **United Tribal Technical College**
Standing Rock Reservation, North Dakota
Milan Wall and Mary Emery lead a three-day workshop for tribal planners in economic development
- **Affordable Housing Needs Analysis**
Lincoln, Nebraska
Vicki Luther and Scott Biehle facilitate community planning sessions
- **Leadership for Community Action**
Sheldon, Iowa
Mary Emery and Scott Biehle present a workshop sponsored by the Northwest Iowa Health Center
- **The Hitachi Foundation**
Washington, DC
Vicki Luther and Milan Wall participate in a Learning Partners meeting
- **Ford Community Leadership Program**
Portland, Oregon
Vicki Luther conducts a train-the-trainers workshop for the Ford Family Foundation

- **Excelsior College**
Albany, New York
Milan Wall facilitates an executive leadership retreat
- **Community Development Society**
Cornell, New York
Mary Emery participates in panel discussions on technology, rural community technology and community clusters

August

- **Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines**
Minnesota
Vicki Luther and Milan Wall present a two-day community leadership workshop
- **Watershed Basin Planning**
Lincoln, Nebraska
Vicki Luther facilitates citizen advisory groups

September

- **Federal Home Loan Bank Partners**
North Dakota and Missouri
Vicki Luther and Milan Wall present two-day community leadership workshops
- **Great Neighborhoods!**
Lincoln, Nebraska
Vicki Luther launches the second year of this training series for neighborhood leadership

October

- **Community Leadership Workshops**
Alexandria, Louisiana
Gordon Goodwin and Mary Emery present Clues to Rural Community Survival sponsored by the Rapides Foundation
- **Great Neighborhoods!**
Lincoln, Nebraska
Milan Wall continues our series for neighborhood leadership training
- **The Hitachi Foundation**
Washington, DC
Vicki Luther and Milan Wall participate in a Learning Partners meeting
- **Rural Community College Association**
San Antonio, Texas
Mary Emery will facilitate sessions on Energizing Entrepreneurship in Rural America
- **Helping Small Towns Succeed**
Jackson Hole, Wyoming
The Heartland Center's 13th annual leadership institute

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VISIONS from the Heartland

Ask The Heartland Center

Question:

I just hate goofy get-acquainted activities, and the groups I work with tend to be very formal. Why do I have to do this kind of thing anyway? And if I have to, what works without making me look silly?

Milan Wall

Co-Director

It's a stage in all group development and, believe me, the group will figure out a way to get acquainted whether you want to or not! Spending time at the beginning to get to know one another can help avoid conflicts later on. Brush up on your group development theory and make the most of the first stage of forming a group.



Vicki Luther

Co-Director

You should at least hear every voice during the beginning stages of a meeting or any group work session. One technique is to ask each person to share his or her name and then answer a pertinent question, such as, I've lived or worked here for so many years, or what I like best about our town is this. That way you do hear every voice and learn something new about each person.



Mary Emery

Program Associate

It's usually best to design an activity that will lead into your first topic. For example, if you're leading a training session on conflict management, ask each person to share their name and a word that describes their first reaction when they encounter conflict. If you talk about the responses, it's a perfect lead-in to your training session.



Scott Biehle

Research Associate

The get-acquainted activities should help you find out about the participants and their expectations. For example, you might direct group members to find a partner and share at least one thing that they'd like to accomplish at the meeting. After a few moments, you can ask for examples and then review the agenda as the very first piece of business.



Reshell Ray

Program Associate

You don't have to be silly or play games to get to know one another. It's an important part of setting an atmosphere that's civil, friendly and relaxed. Try asking every community builder you know about the best "warm-up" that they ever saw! It's a great way to collect some ideas you can adapt to fit your own style.

