

## USDA Supports Native American Efforts to Strengthen Small Businesses and Create Jobs

Written by USDA, Kevin Tuttle  
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WASHINGTON – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced Monday that USDA is providing support to Native American communities in 18 states to help strengthen tribal business and create jobs. The funding is from USDA's [Rural Business Enterprise Grant](#) (RBEG) program, which promotes the development of small and emerging businesses in rural areas.

“USDA continues to create ladders of opportunity in Native American communities by investing in the tools needed to create good-paying jobs and raise the quality of life for residents,” Vilsack said. “These strategic investments will help deliver more products and services to local customers, boost residents’ earnings and improve the economic vitality of these tribal communities.”

Rural Business Enterprise Grants also may be used to help fund distance learning networks and employment-related adult education programs. Eligible applicants include local governments, non-profit corporations and federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Since the start of the Obama Administration, the RBEG program has helped create or save more than 73,000 rural jobs, expanded or helped establish more than 41,000 rural businesses and community projects and provided more than \$170 million in economic development assistance.

Below is the complete listing of the 18 recipients receiving more than \$2.7 million in USDA funding. The assistance is contingent upon the recipients meeting the terms of the grant agreement.

### **Alaska**

Alaska Village Electric Cooperative – \$200,000 grant. To provide technical assistance through commercial energy audits.

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### **Arizona**

Steamboat Chapter – \$80,000 grant. To provide business training and financial literacy workshops and establish an artisan association for more than 100 Native American artists in the Navajo Nation.

### **California**

North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians – \$216,000 grant. To purchase automotive training equipment for 60 future mechanics.

### **Connecticut**

Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut – \$97,609 grant. To provide entry-level job training for tribe members.

### **Idaho**

Nez Perce Tribe – \$22,554 grant. To provide federal contracting certification training and business assistance for small businesses.

### **Louisiana**

United Houma Nation, Inc. – \$89,520 grant. To provide technical assistance and training to 10-12 entrepreneurs seeking to start small businesses in six Louisiana parishes.

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### **Maine**

Passamaquoddy Tribe – \$99,500 grant. To establish a revolving loan fund for a small business that will produce maple syrup.

### **Michigan**

Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan – \$200,000 grant. To build a farmers market pavilion.

### **Minnesota**

White Earth Tribal Council – \$200,000 grant. To help expand and renovate a tribal business in Waubun.

### **Montana**

Fort Belknap Indian Community – \$317,000 grant. To help build a trading post and establish a cooperative that will market and sell fruits and vegetables that are not readily available to local residents, and to serve as an incubator for other small and emerging businesses.

### **Nebraska**

Center for Rural Affairs – \$99,000 grant. To provide training and business assistance to two small businesses in Santee and Macy that will specialize in growing vegetables for high-value markets.

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### **Nevada**

Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribe – \$99,950 grant. To create a revolving loan fund to assist small and emerging businesses.

### **New Mexico**

Capacity Builders Inc. – \$50,000 grant. To provide mentoring and marketing assistance to small and emerging Navajo artist-owned firms and approximately 50 artists.

### **North Dakota**

Coalition of Indian Housing Authorities of North Dakota – \$177,614 grant. To establish a revolving loan fund to provide technical assistance for small and emerging businesses that benefit Native Americans living on or near reservations in the state.

### **Oklahoma**

Thlopthlocco Tribal Town – \$497,530 grant. To build a learning center in Southeast Tulsa County.

### **Oregon**

The Klamath Tribes – \$98,394 grant. To provide technical assistance for planning and developing a member-owned small business micro-enterprise program.

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### South Dakota

Cloud Horse Art Institute – \$99,000 grant. To provide technical assistance and training on producing professional media products.

### Wisconsin

Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. – \$99,999 grant. To provide job skills training and financial literacy education to tribal members.

President Obama's plan for rural America has brought about historic investment and resulted in stronger rural communities. Under the President's leadership, these investments in housing, community facilities, businesses and infrastructure have empowered rural America to continue leading the way – strengthening America's economy, small towns and rural communities. USDA's investments in rural communities support the rural way of life that stands as the backbone of our American values. President Obama and Agriculture Secretary Vilsack are committed to a smarter use of Federal resources to foster sustainable economic prosperity and ensure the government is a strong partner for businesses, entrepreneurs and working families in rural communities.

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