

## Elko County Economic Diversification Authority USDA Faith-Based and Community Initiatives



Through many USDA Rural Development Faith-Based and Community Initiatives outreach campaigns in Nevada, more and more communities are finding out about the benefits available to them through the governments Rural Development Programs. Rural Development assisted Wells, Nevada, by providing Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) funding to Elko County Economic Diversification Authority. The mission of the Authority is to develop and coordinate the continual economic growth and diversification of Elko County and all of its communities. The RBEG grant funding helped to complete a 25-mile radius study of Wells, Nevada ROAN (A diagnostic Analysis of Retail Potential) Report on Retail opportunities in the area.

Rural Development also provided RBEG funding for the WREP program (Wells Retail Enhancement Program) for fifteen weeks to 14 individuals. This program consisted of providing technical training to current small business owners and entrepreneurial types that included courses such as business planning, marketing, and product research. Additionally, six weeks of individual business coaching was providing with a yearlong mentoring service.

The Authority was able to undertake a retail and service study of Wells to attract new residents and encourage the growth and availability of retail and services business in the area. The ROAN Report identified various retail businesses that could be established to increase the growth and employment in Wells, Nevada such as; Miscellaneous Entertainment, Drugs & Sundries, and Grocery stores.

The Wells Retail Enhancement Program provided individual business coaching to 7 of the 14 individuals that attended the 15 week program. Individual business coaching

sessions were performed weekly with 1 hour increments. These business coaching's assisted several with establishing a long term goal of achievement, developing their business plan, record keeping process, marketing plans, and cash flow management tools. These activities educated the existing and new business owners in Wells, while increasing the growth and availability of retail and services business in the area. The Nevada Rural Development Staff has been working to expand the Rural Business Enterprise Grant program with faith and community based organizations in the greater Elko area.