



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT RECOGNIZES EMPLOYEES FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE

Washington, October 22, 2008 – Agriculture Under Secretary for Rural Development Thomas C. Dorr today recognized 38 Rural Development employees who have been honored by Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer for their exemplary service and achievements.

“I congratulate these outstanding employees for their impressive commitment and dedication to USDA Rural Development’s public service mission,” Dorr said. “These Honor Awards are the most prestigious given by USDA, and I am proud to work with such remarkable individuals.”

Schafer recognized the employees at the 61st annual USDA Honor Awards Ceremony. The honorees provided outstanding service to the public in areas including rural community and economic development, educational outreach, and renewable energy. All Honor Awards recipients are listed on: [USDA 61st Annual Awards](#) . The Honor Awards were presented to the following Rural Development employees:

Secretary’s Award For Supporting Increased Economic Opportunities And Improved Quality Of Life In Rural America

- Randall Frescoln, group leader; Barabara Boelman, Teresa Bomhoff, Joshua Borchert, Norman Brus, Shannon Chase, Erika Damschen, Melinda Gottman, Marjorie Huegel, , Jeffery Kuntz, Chris Mercer, Leonard Merrick, Thomas Miller, D. Michelle Moore, Nancy Nielsen, Jennifer Nihart, Connie Noll, Dorinda Oostenink, Debra Reed, Catherine Sand, Sheila Svoboda, Robin Templeton, Karen Triplett, and Ellen Walker. These members of the Business Programs staff, Des Moines, Iowa, received group award for

Committed to the future of rural communities.

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outstanding achievement in program delivery demonstrated by more than a 200% growth in businesses assisted and a 450% increase in total dollars awarded since 2004.

- Roger Davis and Eddie Miller, Raleigh, N.C., received individual awards for dedication and outstanding leadership resulting in improved quality of life and economic opportunities for North Carolina rural citizens and communities.

Secretary's Award for Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy and Transportation Management

Washington Internatioal Renewable Energy Conference Planning Committee, Washington, D.C.

- Allan Johnson, group leader; Dick Kasting, George Douvelis, Anna Ferus, Christian Foster, Constance Jackson, Jim Brownlee, Carolyn O'Conner, Kim Taylor, Heather Vaughn, Tom Witham, Harry Baumes and Jim Fisher received a group award for exceptional leadership and commitment in fostering increased private-sector investment in renewable energy, resulting in positive outcomes in climate change, agriculture profitability and increased rural economic development.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for rural residents. Rural Development has invested more than \$110 billion since 2001 for equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. More than 2 million jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA Rural Development's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.