



NEWS RELEASE

1303 SW First American Place, Suite 100, Topeka, KS 66604-4040

Voice (785) 271-2700, FAX (785) 271-2708, WEB www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 15, 2006

Contact- Harold Alford (785) 271-2701

Lender/Realtor Training Provided By USDA Rural Development

Two USDA - Fort Leavenworth Regional Initiative Training Meetings Held

Atchison, KS - USDA Rural Development held a second 'Lender/Realtor Training' meeting in Atchison today, as a part of the Agency's USDA - Fort Leavenworth Regional Initiative. The Agency held a similar meeting at Fort Leavenworth yesterday. Approximately sixty attendees participated in the two training sessions, which included a briefing of USDA Rural Development programs and a presentation by Fort Leavenworth officials on military culture.

"USDA Rural Development is pleased with the support by many local lenders and realtors in the Fort Leavenworth and Atchison area who are interested in utilizing the Agency's single-family homeownership loan program. USDA's *Guaranteed Rural Housing Loan Program* allows prospective homebuyers, including Soldiers, the opportunity to purchase a home in one of the many Agency-eligible communities in the region. By expanding partnerships with local Kansas lenders and realtors, USDA can help improve homeownership opportunities and support potential economic development for the Fort Leavenworth area," commented State Director Banks.

Harold Stones, representing U.S. Senator Pat Roberts, praised USDA Rural Development for creating the Agency's 'Fort Leavenworth Regional Initiative' to support Soldiers and the region's local communities. "Real economic development for communities is where people live and providing affordable housing is a key component in making that happen," remarked Stones.

The USDA - Fort Leavenworth Regional Initiative, announced in July 2006, is based upon the Agency's successful USDA - Fort Riley Regional Initiative which began in 2005. During 2006 to date, over \$10 million in USDA single-family homeownership loans have already been obligated or committed to Soldiers and civilian personnel in the Fort Riley region. Numerous communities in that region have also been assisted since the beginning of the Initiative to support various community and economic development projects associated with the Post's expansion.

Atchison City Manager Kelly DeMeritt, commented following today's meeting, "The City of Atchison looks forward to working with USDA Rural Development to help Atchison improve available affordable housing for its residents. We look forward to further meetings with USDA to help achieve this important goal."

For more information about the USDA - Fort Leavenworth Regional Initiative, along with general Agency program information, individuals may call the USDA Oskaloosa office at 785-863-2587.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. For additional information regarding all USDA Rural Development programs, individuals may contact the Agency's state office at 785-271-2700 or visit the Agency's website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks