

# **NEWS RELEASE** From the Center for Rural Affairs FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, February 14, 2011

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## **National Entrepreneurship Week Begins**

*Center for Rural Affairs to host MarketPlace rural entrepreneurship conference during heart of national celebration*

**Lyons, NE** - National Entrepreneurship Week begins this Saturday, February, 19 and lasts until February, 26. Entrepreneurship Week provides an opportunity to focus on the innovative ways in which entrepreneurship education can bring together the core academic, technical, and problem solving skills essential for future entrepreneurs and successful workers in future workplaces.

For the fifth year in a row, the Center for Rural Affairs will host MarketPlace, an entrepreneurial conference, during this national week-long celebration of the importance of rural entrepreneurs.

This year MarketPlace will take place in Kearney, NE at the Ramada Convention Center on Tuesday, February 22, and Wednesday, February 23, 2011. "Entrepreneurship is vital to Nebraska's growth and prosperity," said Chuck Hassebrook of the Center for Rural Affairs. "Most of the new jobs created throughout the United States in the past decade have come from the creative efforts of entrepreneurs and small businesses." MarketPlace is an event focused on the role of entrepreneurship in revitalizing rural communities. The conference features strong, hands-on learning opportunities for potential and existing business owners including on and off farm/ranch, store front or home based, community leaders; and youth interested in entrepreneurship. Professional development will be enhanced through a series of teaching tracks -

55 training opportunities including topics on financing, marketing, innovation, community development, agriculture, business development, and technology, policy and youth entrepreneurs. Experts in many fields - attorneys, web designers, etc. - will be available throughout the day to answer participant questions. MarketPlace will feature 52 booths in the Resource Zone filled with successful small business men and women, service providers, and other conference sponsors. Attendees will be able to meet with these folks throughout the day to ask questions, gather information, and make connections. A pre-conference workshop offering 17 in-depth sessions is available on Tuesday afternoon from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. Participants can go to one or both days.

"MarketPlace is the place to be if you are an entrepreneur interested in starting or expanding a small business or growing your idea," commented Joy Marshall of the Center for Rural Affairs. "The connections and resources this event offers are invaluable. And we want to take this opportunity to thank the sponsors we have on board - without them, we would not be able to put on this great event."

According to Marshall, sponsors of MarketPlace come from a variety of sectors, but their impact on the economic growth of rural Nebraska is something they all have in common. Sponsors include: State Farm, University of Nebraska at Kearney, and many more. For a full list of all of those who are promoting National Entrepreneurship Week by supporting MarketPlace, visit: <http://www.cfra.org/marketplace/sponsors-ne2011>

"The University of Nebraska at Kearney College of Business and Technology (UNK CBT) and its Center for Rural Research and Development (CRRD) are pleased to offer our continued support for Nebraska MarketPlace," said Shawn Kaskie at UNK. "The partnership between the University and MarketPlace will continue to prove to be a very valuable one as our students are introduced into the workforce. The University's CRRD is our campus' Entrepreneurship Center and Nebraska MarketPlace is a great environment to get our students connected with small business service providers and other small business owners; thus building the very important relationships that will be necessary for their success after their time at UNK CBT."

According to Kaskie, the trainings offered at MarketPlace are integral to

successful and sustainable small business development; networking with other small business owners as well as resource providers will provide a foundation for growth and longevity. "In the current economy, an event such as this is particularly needed. More people are starting small businesses but they need to have the right tools that MarketPlace provides in order to ensure their ventures are successful and to help to build our rural economy. It is a program that will always fill a need in Nebraska."

Early bird registration has been extended until February 17, 2011. This is a great opportunity for students, young and old and those looking to expand their horizons as well as community development. Visit: <http://www.cfra.org/marketplace/home> to register or for more information. Or contact Joy Marshall, [joym@cfra.org](mailto:joym@cfra.org), (402) 614- 5558.

"We look forward to an outstanding event and appreciate the participation of all of our MarketPlace sponsors," added Marshall.

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*Established in 1973, the Center for Rural Affairs is a private, non-profit organization working to strengthen small businesses, family farms and ranches, and rural communities through action oriented programs addressing social, economic, and environmental issues.*

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