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Rural LISC Recognized with Two National Excellence Awards

IEDC honors economic development orgs with awards for excellence in the field

Washington, DC –Rural LISC today announced it has been recognized with a silver award in the Multimedia/Video Promotion category and a bronze award in the Print Brochure category at the 2022 Excellence in Economic Development Awards from The International Economic Development Council (IEDC), the largest nonprofit professional association for professional economic developers in the world.

The awards honor organizations for exemplary economic development marketing campaigns, projects, and programs. 25 award categories honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, & rural communities.

“In 2021 when our annual Rural LISC Seminar was moved to all virtual due to the pandemic, the event’s signature site visit to local partner programs would be lost,” said Caitlin Cain, LISC Vice President and Rural LISC Director. “These bus tours had been synonymous with our annual Seminars to demonstrate our innovative approach to economic development with local partners. In this instance, we were able to capture inspirational stories in Clarksdale, Mississippi, where the community continues to work to overcome a declining population, poor health care, empty buildings, and struggling schools, to a community coming together to offer entrepreneurial growth, new training opportunities, creative placemaking, and hope.”

Rural LISC’s bronze award recognizes the *Affordable Housing Developers’ Broadband Handbook*, a comprehensive guide for affordable housing stakeholders developed with telecommunications experts, CTC Technology & Energy, to demystify the process of planning for, paying for, and advocating for better connectivity in their residential communities.

“Addressing connectivity gaps tops the list of nearly every rural community’s economic development agenda,” said Christa Vinson, Senior Program Officer at Rural LISC. “Building the ‘last mile’ of broadband infrastructure to reach every home is key to long-term American competitiveness: it is part of the foundation of economic growth and essential to addressing education, health, and economic inequality.”

An abridged version of the guide can be found at lisc.org/rural or a full copy can be requested by email.

For nearly three decades, Rural LISC, the national program of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) with focus on rural places, continues to support community-based partners who address complex issues in workforce and small business, creative capital, disaster solutions and housing where there are factors affecting residents' quality of life. Rural LISC's work expanded during the pandemic to include broadband internet access and programming as an essential and intersecting component of its mission to improve the lives of low-income people.

"This year's awards selection process was especially competitive. We are honored to recognize the more than 100 communities whose marketing submissions, projects, and partnerships have improved regional quality of life," added IEDC Awards Advisory Committee Chair Christina Winn.

Awards are judged by a diverse panel of economic and community developers from around the world. IEDC received over 500 submissions from the United States and four additional countries around the world.

Watch IEDC's awards ceremonies at iedconline.org/OKC.

About Rural LISC

Launched in 1995, Rural LISC is the rural component of LISC, the largest community development support organization in the country. Through a partnership base of over 145 organizations spread across 49 states, Rural LISC provides a wide range of services, including financial support, training, technical assistance, and capital resources to help rural community partners and developers invest in rural communities. To date, Rural LISC has leveraged nearly \$3.3 billion from public and private sources to produce 35,000 affordable homes and apartments. Rural LISC investments have also produced over 4 million square feet of commercial and community space, including 20 early childhood care centers. Rural LISC technical assistance has touched more than 700 businesses, resulting in over 12,000 jobs supported and/or retained. Rural LISC is committed to ensuring equity and investment in rural America. Learn more at www.lisc.org/rural.

About the International Economic Development Council

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,800 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities by creating, retaining, and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members engage in the full range of economic development practices. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in various settings, including local, state, provincial, and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities, and a variety of other institutions. When we succeed, our members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions. Learn more at iedconline.org.