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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
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Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

University of Minnesota Offers Assistance to Small Towns:

Summary:

(December 16, 2004)-The Center for Small Towns at the University of Minnesota, Morris, is requesting applications for its "Connecting Students and Communities" (CSC) program. This program will provide financial support to hire a University of Minnesota, Morris undergraduate student to work with a community organization to help answer research questions, assist with project administration, or provide other support and at the same time learn ways to complete project goals. Previously funded student projects have addressed issues of senior housing, storefront design, health care research, program evaluation, document design and newsletter creation, economic analysis, Internet and web training, analyzing water and wastewater data, downtown revitalization, analysis of census data, and more.

Local units of government, K-12 schools, or community-based organizations located in 12 west central Minnesota counties -- Big Stone, Chippewa, Douglas, Grant, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Pope, Renville, Stevens, Swift, Traverse, and Yellow Medicine -- are encouraged to apply. The deadline for this application is January 10, 2005. Priority areas for projects include:

- Renewable energy
- Local and healthy foods
- Healthy landscapes and water
- Improving the lives of children
- Improving the quality of and access to the arts in communities
- Economic development
- Other project areas will be considered

Staff at the Center for Small Towns can assist your organization in the development of your application. If the proposal is funded, staff will also help in the coordination of activities related to the student's involvement and help provide technical assistance related to these projects. The timeline for student involvement will cover the spring semester at UMM, for 10 hours a week, from January 18 (or the time of student hiring) through May 6.

To obtain a CSC application on-line visit the Center for Small Towns web site

1. Go to <http://www.centerforsmalltowns.org> Connecting Students and Communities program and download the application.

2. Print out a hard copy of the application and send, deliver, or e-mail to:

The Center for Small Towns
University of Minnesota, Morris
Attn: Jessica Beyer
600 E 4th Street
Morris, MN 56267

3. If you have questions, need assistance, or want a paper copy of the application contact Jessica Beyer at (320)

589-6451 or jbeyer@mrs.umn.edu

This program is offered as a collaborative effort by the Center for Small Towns based at UMM, the U of M West Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership, and the Community Assistantship Program (from CURA at the U of M Twin Cities campus). More details about the project can be found at the CST web site or in the CST office.

The Center for Small Towns is a community outreach program housed at the University of Minnesota, Morris and serves as a point-of-entry to the resources of the University of Minnesota. Small towns, local units of government, K-12 schools, non-profit organizations, and other University units are able to utilize CST's resources as they work on rural issues or make contributions to rural society. CST's mission is to focus the University's attention and marshal its resources toward assisting Minnesota's small towns with locally identified issues by creating applied learning opportunities for faculty and students.

The West Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership <http://www.regionalpartnerships.umn.edu> is one of five University of Minnesota Regional Partnerships, legislatively funded initiative led by citizen leaders. The partnership is committed to leverage U of M resources to sustain west central Minnesota's natural resource base economy and empower citizen participation and leadership. Since its inception in 1999, the partnership has funded/partnered on more than 20 applied research and education projects.

The Community Assistantship Program is offered by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs on the Twin Cities campus of the University of Minnesota. CAP supports student research assistants to carry out community-initiated and community-guided projects that will impact their community. The students provide information or answers to questions that a group may need to better accomplish their goals or plans. The Community Assistantship Program's goals are to: 1) enhance the capacity of community organizations by providing access to research and technical resources available at the University of Minnesota and 2) provide faculty and students with increased opportunities to complete useful community based applied research projects. For more information go to CURA's web site at www.cura.umn.edu.

[Contributed by Jessica Beyer '02, community program assistant at the Center for Small Towns]

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.