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03/01/1991 - EIU supports rural partners

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news

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EASTERN SUPPORTS "RURAL PARTNERS"

CHARLESTON, IL--Allen Messenger, Director of Eastern Illinois University's Business Development Center, and Waldo Born, Assistant Professor in Eastern's Department of Accountancy, Data Processing and Finance, have volunteered to be part of the Rural Partners community action team.

They join more than 30 professionals from academic, business and economic organizations who have come together to form the Rural Partners program.

Sponsored by the University of Illinois Department of Agricultural Economics, Rural Partners will be involved in overseeing the development of a series of community action "modules."

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According to Messenger, a member of the project advisory committee, "The community action modules are programs designed to help communities engage in specific activities to improve economic conditions in their area."

"Economic development in Illinois, like various other states, needs to be an organized and structured process in order to use human resources at a community level to the best advantage," Messenger said. "The goal of the community action teams is to incorporate the action modules that will benefit them most directly in their economic development process," Messenger added.

Since needs vary from county to county, the modules will address a range of topics. Messenger is the co-author of two modules "Initiating New Businesses" and "Marketing New Businesses." Born will also co-author a module entitled "Developing A Labor Force Profile for Your County."

After the modules have been developed, more than 60 rural community development coordinators will be trained in the program. "The modules provide the specific tools to do the work, but the motivation has to come from the community itself," Messenger said.

The communities are selected on the basis of local involvement and commitment along with the capability to utilize and sustain the activities.

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RURAL PARTNERS

More than 12 organizations in Illinois have contributed direct and in-kind grants, including Eastern, to help fund the program. Messenger said, "Community and economic support are crucial to the success of the community action modules."