

## STAKEHOLDER ANNOUNCEMENT

### USDA Announces Awards to Help Socially-Disadvantaged Groups in Rural Areas

WASHINGTON, Nov. 7, 2019 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development Donald “DJ” LaVoy today announced funding for organizations to provide technical assistance and training to socially-disadvantaged cooperatives in rural areas. Through the Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grants Program (SDGG), [USDA is awarding a total of \\$3 million to 21 organizations in 15 states and the District of Columbia.](#)

The awards announced today include the following:

- In Arizona, the Dine Community Development Corporation will use a \$65,000 grant to prepare a feasibility study and business plan and provide strategic planning for an artists’ cooperative on the Navajo Nation Indian Reservation. The cooperative will include about 30 artists and emerging entrepreneurs. It will employ at least 15 individuals.
- In South Carolina, United Farmers USA will use a \$68,273 grant to provide training and technical assistance to socially-disadvantaged African American farm cooperative members in Clarendon, Lee and Williamsburg counties. These counties have a Median Household Income of \$26,800. Farmers will be provided access to education, training and mentoring in areas such as farm management, record keeping, and specialty crop marketing. As many as 54 jobs will be saved and 60 small agricultural businesses will be assisted.

USDA defines a socially-disadvantaged group as one whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of their identity without regard to their individual qualities. Under the SDGG program, eligible grant recipients include cooperatives, groups of cooperatives and cooperative development centers that serve socially-disadvantaged groups. Examples of technical assistance include leadership training, and support to develop feasibility studies, business plans and strategic plans. Recipients can be based in any area, but the businesses or organizations they serve must be in an eligible rural area.

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