

University Center Project Update

Hennessey Hall - Dodge City, KS

June 2019



Progress continues with the University Center. Discussions with wKREDA (The Western Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance), the Kansas Health Foundation (KHF) and NetWork Kansas have continued to be effective with regards to building coalitions across SW Kansas to further recognize the needs for an increase of available healthcare professionals and other workforce training skills needed in the region. In late May, the Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation organized and held a Lunch and Learn for Fort Hays State's Bachelor of Social Work Cohort. The event drew more than 30 potential students for the 2019 class to be held at Dodge City Community College. The Development Corporation has taken the lead in helping to assist higher education entities recruit students to meet workforce needs through the creation of the Rural Education Workforce Alliance (REWA). The Development Corporation and REWA will be hosting a Lunch & Learn for Newman University on their Accelerated Pathways to Teaching program on Tuesday, June 18th.

The City of Dodge City has also applied for two grants with intentions of remodeling a classroom in Hennessey Hall and outfitting this classroom with the necessary technology to make it a successful hub/end-user site. The USDA Rural Business Development Enterprise Grant will help fund the remodeling of a classroom in Hennessey Hall in Dodge City. The new classroom will be able to comfortably seat 50 students. The second grant is the USDA Rural Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant which will help the funding for the necessary technology

for a site in Hennessey Hall in Dodge City that will serve as a hub/end-user site. There were many communities and businesses alike that wrote letters of support endorsing the efforts of the City of Dodge City to create a University Center/training facility in Dodge City.

Once the construction of the classroom and equipment is complete, the Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation, REWA and the Kansas Small Business Development Center will begin delivering their workforce training seminars at the location and across the region to our frontier community partners. The space will be managed by REWA to coordinate programs from the Universities as well as diversified certifications and trainings.



The frontier communities that submitted plans to be incorporated into the initial USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine grant are Jetmore, Elkhart, Tribune, Scott City and St. John. These communities will all have sites that have a classroom with capability to connect to courses that are broadcasted from the Dodge City Hub site in Hennessey Hall. As of early June, the City of Dodge City is waiting to hear back on the status of these grants that will assist funding of the University Center project.

This project is being made possible through funding in part by the USDA Rural Business Development Grant, the Arthur and Cornelia Scroggins Foundation Fund at the Community Foundation of Southwest Kansas and the Kansas Health Foundation.



For more information about the University Center Project contact the Dodge City/Ford County Development Corporation at 620-227-9501