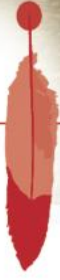




**FOUR
BANDS**
COMMUNITY
FUND, INC.



FOUR BANDS

Tcahya Woecun

For immediate release: April 30, 2010

For more information, contact: Beth Davis, 605-978-2804 or info@sdrei.org
Cora Mae Haskell, 605-964-3687 or coramae@fourbands.org

Local entrepreneurs chosen as 2010 Dakota Rising Fellows

South Dakota Rural Enterprise, along with Four Bands Community Fund, are pleased to announce local entrepreneurs who have been named 2010 Dakota Rising Fellows. **Gerald and Stephanie Davidson**, D&D Plumbing and Heating, and **Nichole White Eyes**, The Gift Garden and Photos to Go—all of Eagle Butte—are among seven outstanding South Dakota business owners chosen to be Entrepreneur Fellows at the Dakota Rising State Entrepreneur Conference held in Sioux Falls.

The business owners were selected from applications submitted by entrepreneurs in four Dakota Rising areas; the Glacial Lakes Dakota Rising region, 57735 On The Rise, Spearfish and the Four Bands regions. The Four Bands region is comprised of Dewey and Ziebach counties and the Standing Rock Reservation. The Dakota Rising Entrepreneur Fellowship program is administered by South Dakota Rural Enterprise.

Gerald and Stephanie Davidson own and operate D&D Plumbing & Heating. Gerald started the business in April of 2000, due to being unemployed at the time. The Davidson's are now celebrating their tenth year of business ownership. Even though they feel they are in an endurance race, they are very proud of this accomplishment. Gerald and Stephanie have lived in Eagle Butte all their lives and have been married for 27 years. They have two sons, Kassidy and KP, both of whom work for the business, one full time and one part time.

Since early childhood, **Nichole White Eyes** has had an interest in photography. The youngest memories of her childhood revolve around having a camera and taking pictures of people, animals and nature. Born and raised in Eagle Butte, she graduated from high school and continued her education earning two AA degrees. In 2006, Nichole purchased The Gift Garden, a flower shop and gift store. During the summer of 2007, she built an addition to the existing store that now houses a photo studio.

“The Dakota Rising Fellowships present an exciting opportunity for businesses to grow with financial assistance as well as technical guidance from mentors,” says Cora Mae Haskell of Four Bands Community Fund. “Four Bands congratulates Gerald, Stephanie and Nicole for being selected 2010 Dakota Rising Fellows. They worked very hard to prepare their applications, and we are proud of their accomplishments.”

Additional entrepreneurs chosen as Fellows include **Brad Heitmann**, Trail Tamer ATV, Inc.—from the Glacial Lakes Dakota Rising region which is comprised of Day, Marshall and Roberts counties with the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Lake Traverse Reservation. Spearfish Dakota Rising Fellows include **Peg Austin**, Vanilla Bean Bakery; **Bryan Lessly**, Western Sky Media, and **Les Voorhis**, Royal Tine Images. **Mark Hollenbeck**, Sunrise Ranch, was selected as a 2010 Dakota Rising Fellow from 57735 On The Rise, covering Fall River County.

Each of the seven Fellows will be given the opportunity to work with mentors to focus on personal development and the growth of their businesses. The seven new Fellows were also awarded \$10,000. The Fellows will become members of a Fellowship community of rural South Dakota entrepreneurs which includes entrepreneurial mentors and the eight 2009 Dakota Rising Fellows. All Dakota Rising Fellows will benefit from a peer advisory board and ongoing focused technical assistance.

“Our experience with Dakota Rising has shown us that these local entrepreneurs have the ability to help create a culture of confidence in their communities and our state,” said Beth Davis, president of South Dakota Rural Enterprise. “These seven Fellows share a determination to succeed, a work ethic that defines our Midwestern region and a commitment to their futures that holds promise for the future of South Dakota. We applaud them for their achievement.”

Dakota Rising is administered by SD Rural Enterprise in partnership with SDSU Cooperative Extension, SD Governor’s Office of Economic Development, SD Small Business Development Centers, East River Electric Power Cooperative and the REED Fund, and the Enterprise Institute. Dakota Rising was developed through the generous support of the Northwest Area Foundation and Citi Foundation, and is sponsored by Avera Health, Christiansen Land and Cattle, Ltd., CorTrust Bank, Dacotah Bank, First Dakota National Bank, First Interstate BancSystem, Home Federal Bank, South Dakota Community Foundation and individual members of the SD Rural Enterprise board of directors.

For more information, contact SD Rural Enterprise at 605-978-2804 or e-mail info@sdrei.org. Dakota Rising information is also available on the Rural Enterprise website, www.sdrei.org.

###