



CENTER *for* RURAL AFFAIRS

March 2013

Small Donor Fund Raiser and Action Network Builder

Center for Rural Affairs

leading national advocacy and development nonprofit organization

Would you devote your life to building a better future for rural America? Here is an opportunity for you to work in support of economic opportunity, social justice, environmental stewardship and community from a small town in rural Nebraska.

Position Goals

- Increase the number of active supporters of the Center for Rural Affairs who read and are influenced by our newsletter and website, forward our posts and respond to action alerts on critical rural legislation from 18,000 to 40,000 nationally by December 2018 – with a priority on rural people.
- Increase individual annual financial support from 1,500 people giving \$150,000 in 2012 to 3,200 people giving \$320,000 by December 2018.

This position is essential to all we believe in and are working to achieve. We must build the power of citizens to overcome the inertia and vested interests of Washington. Tens of thousands of Americans acting together can win reforms to support vibrant small towns, small business, rural health care, renewable energy, small farms and sustainable farming.

Keys to Success:

- *Establish a collaborative team* that develops strategy, learns, allocates responsibility and holds each other accountable -- with high performance standards and a culture of humility in which members recognize the need to draw on each other's insights and subject their own work to team scrutiny.
- *Multi-faced approach* – We must try many approaches, measure effectiveness and pursue what works; including engaging current supporters in recruiting new supporters and employing social media, direct mail, phone banks, online outreach, speaking engagements and other approaches.
- *Engaging the people of the Center for Rural Affairs* - Success will depend on engaging our staff, board, supporters, interns and volunteers in this campaign.
- *Develop, implement and refine an action plan* – This multi-faceted and multi-year campaign will require detailed planning and relentless follow-through.

Major Objectives

Implement an Aggressive Annual Fund Drive using paper and online appeals that inspire people to act, reinforced by phone calls. Analyze results and apply findings.

Within 90 Days, Design and Implement a System to Convert New Contacts to Engaged Supporter and Donors – including a systematic outreach ladder to welcome new contacts, keep them informed, prompt them to act and request donations.

Within 120 days, design and work with staff to implement a strengthened system to draw new contacts to the Center for Rural Affairs, including:

- Recruit high impact speaking engagements for Center for Rural Affairs staff,
- Build lists of influential rural leaders in targeted states;
- Ask current supporters to refer friends and neighbors as potential supporters;
- Test mailings and emails to purchased lists for new donor solicitation; and
- Engage our online supporters in recruiting new supporters by forwarding issue petitions, action alerts, videos, etc.

Convene a team that within 180 days, develops and implements a plan to elevate the effectiveness of Center for Rural Affairs social media in drawing and engaging supporters, including metrics to measure impact and guide efforts to increase impact.

Supervise staff responsible for the Center for Rural Affairs website, database and Newsletter and assist them in engaging the entire staff in developing fresh and appealing content. Design metrics to measure the impact of our website in drawing and engaging supporters and guide us in elevating its impact.

Participate in leadership of the Center for Rural Affairs – Serve on the organizational leadership team; prepare quarterly Board reports and provide staff leadership to the Constituency Development and Communications Committee of the Board.

Resources at Your Disposal if You Assume This Position

- **The People and Leadership of the Center for Rural Affairs** - In this position, you would draw on the time and skills of the leadership, staff, board and volunteers of the Center for Rural Affairs.
- **Money in the Bank and Finances** - We have \$130,000 in the bank earmarked for this effort and we regularly commit additional funds in two ways: 1) Fundraising and communication costs associated with this effort are allocated costs shared by Center for Rural Affairs Programs. 2) A portion of the increase in annual donations resulting from this campaign will be dedicated to it.
- **Training**– No later than 150 days after assuming the position and annually thereafter, you would identify and schedule training that enhances your knowledge and skills for this position, paid by the Center for Rural Affairs.
- **Upgraded Data Base Software and Website** – We just launched an updated website and are in the process of purchasing, developing and implementing constituent management software that integrates data from online and offline constituents, personal contacts, donations and responses to action alerts.

Location: The position will be based in Lyons, a rural community of 850 in Northeast Nebraska. Alternative locations may be considered for extraordinary applicants.

Application Procedures – Send your resume to Tricia Darnell, Center for Rural Affairs, POB 136, Lyons, NE 68038 or trishd@cfra.org with a one page cover letter responding to the following questions:

- * Why are you interested in this position and how does it fit in your long-term plans?
- * What are your key strengths?
- * What is your greatest accomplishment?

Deadline: Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. The position will be filled upon finding the right candidate.

The Center for Rural Affairs is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment regardless of their race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status or veteran status.

Benefits

- Annual training at Center for Rural Affairs expense. (Each member of the Center for Rural Affairs staff identifies training opportunities in consultation with his/her supervisor.)
- 13 – 19 days vacation per year (depending on years of service) plus sick leave
- 10 holidays
- Annual cost of living adjustments
- Extraordinary health insurance benefits, including fully paid family medical and dental insurance plus Medical Savings Account contributions.
- Employer paid life and long-term disability insurance
- Employer retirement plan contributions after two years

About the Center for Rural Affairs

Mission Statement: Establish strong rural communities, economic justice, environmental stewardship, and genuine opportunity for all while engaging people in decisions that affect their lives and communities.

Vision: We aim to become the leading force engaging people and ideas in securing a better future for rural America.

Background and Programs: The Center for Rural Affairs was formed in 1973 by rural Nebraskans concerned about family farms and rural communities. It has evolved into one of the nation's leading rural organizations known for its pioneering work to rebuild rural America and its national work to reform federal policy. Our work includes:

- Advocate for public policies that support rural community development, reduce rural poverty, reward environmental stewardship, strengthen family size farms and small businesses, advance renewable energy development and expand access to affordable health care;
- Conduct and publish analysis of trends in rural America and public policy;
- Provide loans, technical assistance and training to small entrepreneurs through our Rural Enterprise Assistance Program (REAP), the nation's leading statewide rural microenterprise development program serving 600 rural entrepreneurs each year.
- Support rural community development by linking retiring and beginning farmers, improving access to wholesome food, assisting communities in local development initiatives and sponsoring Marketplace, the annual conference for rural entrepreneurs in Nebraska and surrounding states.

The Center for Rural Affairs is among the nation's most influential rural organizations. It has a track record of winning state and federal legislation; gaining coverage by the nation's leading media outlets and developing pioneering efforts in rural development.

Values: The work of the Center for Rural Affairs is guided by its values, specifically:

- **Responsibility** –to contribute to the betterment of our community and society;
- **Conscience** that balances self-interest with an obligation to community and the common good;
- **Progress** that strengthens rural communities, small businesses and family farms and ranches;
- **Genuine opportunity for all** to earn a living, raise a family and prosper in a rural place;

- **Stewardship of the natural environment** on which current and future generations rely;
- **Widespread ownership and control** of small businesses, farms and ranches by those who work them;
- **Fairness** that allows all who contribute to the nation's prosperity to share in it: and
- **Citizen involvement and action** to shape the future.

Those of us who serve on the Center for Rural Affairs staff are provided the extraordinary opportunity to devote our professional lives to working for the things we believe in – in common purpose with people of like mind.

The Principles That Guide How We Work Together - In addition to the values that guide what we work for, we have established principles to guide how we work together. We use these principles as our guide, annually evaluate how well we live up to them and set goals for improvement.

We care about each other. We take the time to show personal interest in each other. We are committed to the success of our coworkers. When they fall down in their work, we help them up. When they succeed, we celebrate their success.

We place service to others over self. We work at the Center to respond to a calling and to make a difference. We often work longer hours and make less than we could elsewhere. But that is offset by the satisfaction of working for the things in which we believe. We work hard and go the extra mile. We focus on what we give rather than what we receive.

The Center is committed to its staff. We provide competitive salaries for the nonprofit sector and excellent benefits. We are attentive to the goals of our staff and help them meet them. We help people to grow by investing in their training. We are flexible in how people do their work. We provide staff the tools they need to do their work well.

We are as committed to internal equity as we are to equity in rural America. We have a relatively flat salary structure and eschew perks and special privileges for our top staff.

We are committed to shared decision-making. Staff have much control over their own work, coupled with accountability, and input on major organizational decisions. We encourage expression of and active listening to different opinions by all staff. We seek consensus, though when unattainable we make decisions and move on as a team.

We are committed to intellectual rigor. We do quality analysis and we do our homework. In taking stands, we are guided by an honest search for what will advance the Center's values, rather than by ideology or political winds.

We are courageous. We do pick our fights to maximize our impact. And we do strive to articulate our message in ways that are not misunderstood and that do not unnecessarily alienate people. But when we engage an issue, we do not falter in standing for what we believe. We are willing to take the heat for it.

We are part of rural America and it is part of us. We do not set ourselves apart to issue pronouncements about what rural people should do or be. Rather, we work with them, engage them, challenge them, develop them, respect them, respond to them and serve them. We strive to speak about issues and do our work in ways they can embrace.

We are practical idealists. We work in service to our values and ideals, yet we are practical in searching for approaches that work in advancing those values and ideals.

We are hopeful, positive and forward-looking. We criticize that which is wrong and learn from the past, but we focus on solutions and the good that can be achieved in the future.

Because we strive to change the course of history, we set high standards for ourselves. We strive to make the Center the nation's premier rural organization and we are committed to continuous improvement - making it and ourselves better and more effective in advancing the values we share.