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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Appalachian Community Capital Awarded \$150,000 USDA Grant for Technical Assistance
*Grant to promote small business growth in rural communities***

Christianburg, VA. Appalachian Community Capital (ACC) is pleased to announce receipt of a \$150,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) program. ACC will disburse these monies to build the capacity of seven eligible small business lenders to support small business development and entrepreneurship, job and wealth creation, and economic growth in the low-income rural communities they serve throughout Appalachia.

ACC President & CEO Donna Gambrell shared her excitement about the grant, stating, *"This grant is a game changer for our training and technical assistance program, and more importantly, it will strengthen our members' capacity to support successful small businesses and entrepreneurs which will lead to job creation, which is a huge unmet need in Appalachia."*

ACC's training and technical assistance program will build the capacity of recipient small business lenders to access new sources of capital, strengthen and expand their loan programs, and increase their financial, technical, and organizational abilities to better meet the needs of their borrowers and communities. The program will provide these Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) with 1) a peer learning program for CEOs; 2) a staff development program for middle management and senior staff; and 3) a resource bank linking them with additional opportunities.

"This program will make it easy for recipients to learn from each other and from national industry leaders, understand and adopt cutting-edge practices, and access new sources of capital," noted Gambrell. Ultimately, the program will help recipients become more robust organizations that effectively support evolving small business needs and sustainable economic development in their communities.

ACC is a member-based organization and community development finance intermediary. Its 20 high-performing CDFI members are mission-driven lenders committed to meeting the credit needs of rural Appalachia. RCDI provides grants to nonprofits serving low-income rural communities and federally recognized tribes to support housing, community facilities and community and economic development projects in rural areas.

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