

USDA to Address Opioid Crisis, Promote STEM Education

Written by USDA, Jessica Mancel

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U.S. Department of Agriculture is giving funding priority for grant applications to address opioid misuse and increase Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education in rural communities.

STEVENS POINT, WI – Wisconsin Rural Development State Director Frank Frassetto announced Friday that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is giving funding priority in a key grant program for applications to address opioid misuse and increase Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education in rural communities.

“USDA recognizes the need to combat opioid misuse and support STEM skills in rural communities,” Frassetto said. “By targeting our investments, USDA can be a stronger partner in helping equip rural communities with the resources they need to enhance their prosperity.”

USDA may award 10 special consideration points for opioid-related [Distance Learning and Telemedicine \(DLT\)](#)

projects or for those that provide STEM education as their primary purpose. The application deadline for these projects is May 15, 2019.

All DLT applications can be submitted electronically at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or in hard copy to: USDA Rural Development Telecommunications Programs, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 2844, Mail Stop 1597, Washington, DC 20250-1597.

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President Donald J. Trump has mobilized his entire Administration to address opioid misuse by directing the declaration of a nationwide Public Health Emergency. To help local leaders respond to this epidemic, USDA has worked to build infrastructure for prevention, treatment and recovery, facilitate partnerships, and drive innovation in rural communities.

Last year, USDA worked with the Office of National Drug Control Policy to establish a White House Rural Opioid Federal Interagency Working Group that is improving coordination of federal resources in rural America. In December, USDA launched the Community Opioid Misuse Toolbox. This initiative includes the [Community Resource Guide](#) (PDF, 1.7 MB), a comprehensive directory of federal resources that can help rural communities address the opioid crisis, and the

[Community Assessment Tool](#)

, an interactive database to help community leaders assess how and why the opioid epidemic is impacting their regions. For more information, visit

www.usda.gov/topics/opioids

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USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit <http://www.rd.usda.gov/wi>