

# Talent Development Leading to Economic Growth in Rural Communities



**USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum 2006**  
**Rural America: Can Rural America Meet the Demand for Skilled Workers?**  
**Crystal Gateway Marriott**  
**Arlington, Virginia**

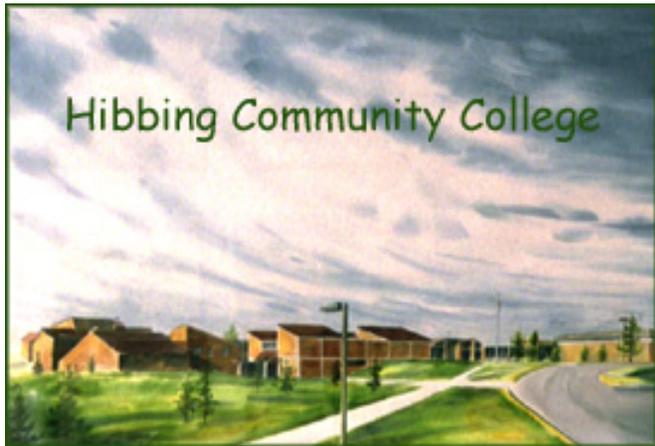
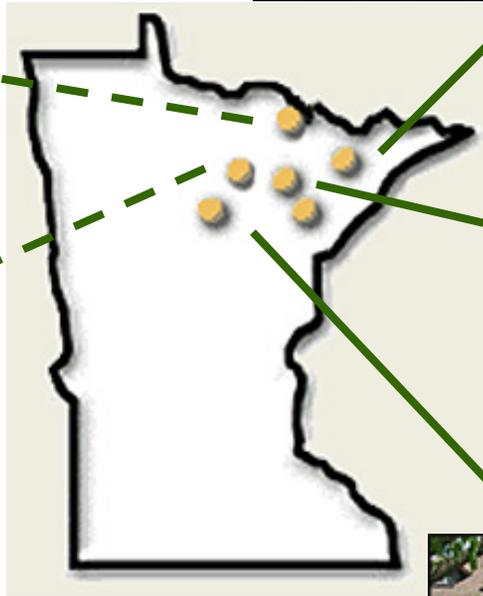
**Joe Sertich, Ed.D., Chair of the Rural Community College Alliance and  
President of  
Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District**

# Trustees Create Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District Effective October 1, 1999



**Minnesota**  
STATE COLLEGES  
& UNIVERSITIES





3



**RURAL COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE ALLIANCE**  
**creating opportunities in place**

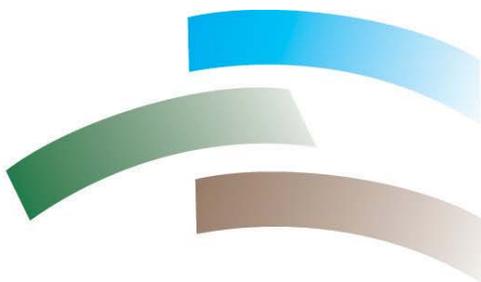
**Chair: Joe Sertich**

**Vice Chair: Cheryl Sparks**

**Secretary: Terry Suarez**

**Treasurer: Bruce Ayers**

**Executive Director: Bill Scaggs**



# The National Institute for Rural Community Colleges

# The National Institute Will

- Develop regional and national leader formation programs.
- Conduct and sponsor policy research and analysis.
- Identify and encourage exemplary practices rural community colleges.



# The National Institute Will

- Guide and support the development of regional “lighthouse” programs.
- Continue network building by seeking additional international, national and regional partners.
- Provide technical and developmental assistance to rural colleges and to college-community partnerships.



# The National Institute Developmental Team

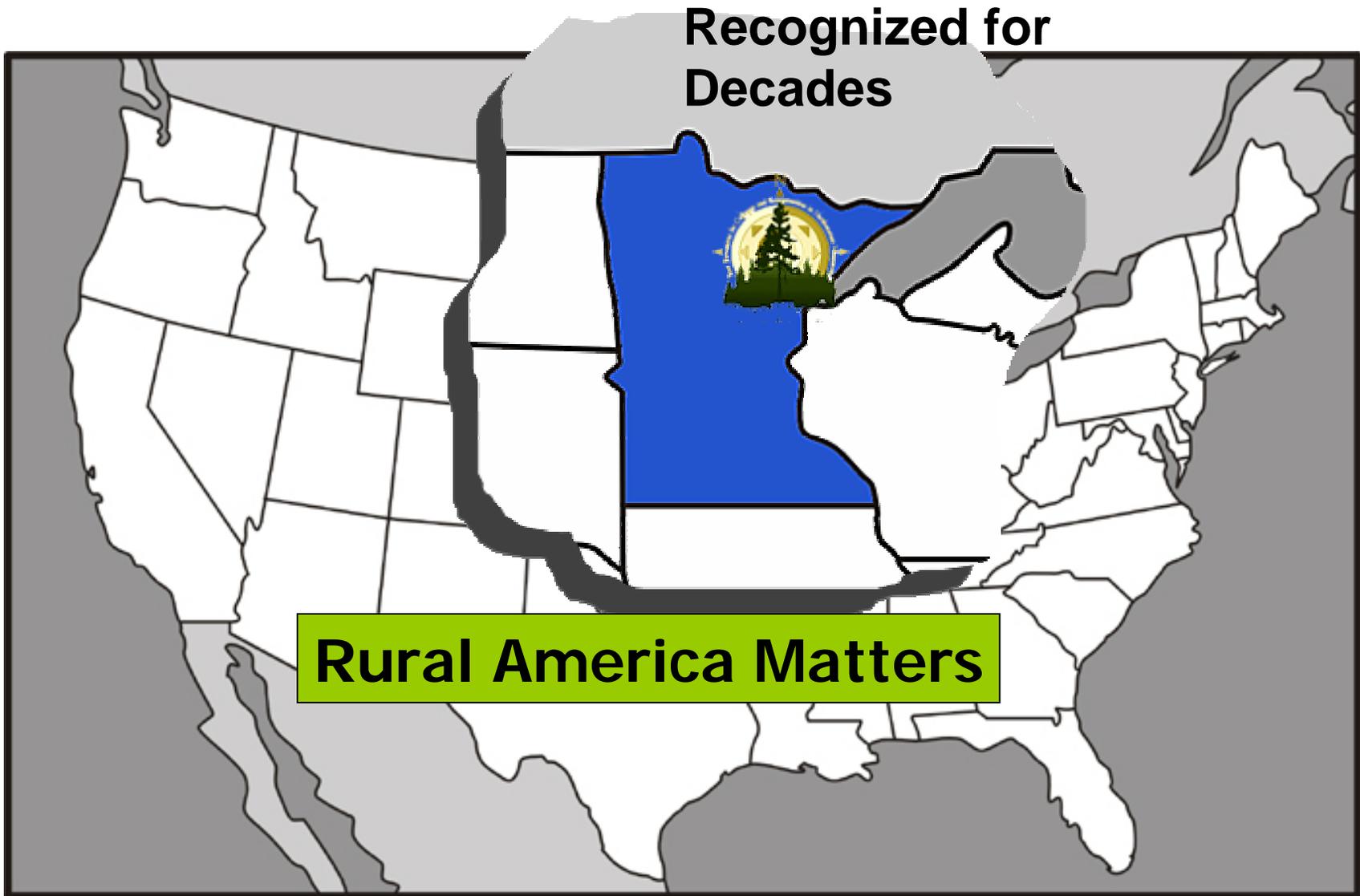


- Joe Sertich, Convener
- Policy Research Panel Co-Chairs:  
Malvin Williams and Chuck  
Fluharty
- Practitioner Panel Co-Chairs:  
Bruce Ayers and Cheryl Sparks

The MidSouth  
*Partnership*  
for Rural Community Colleges

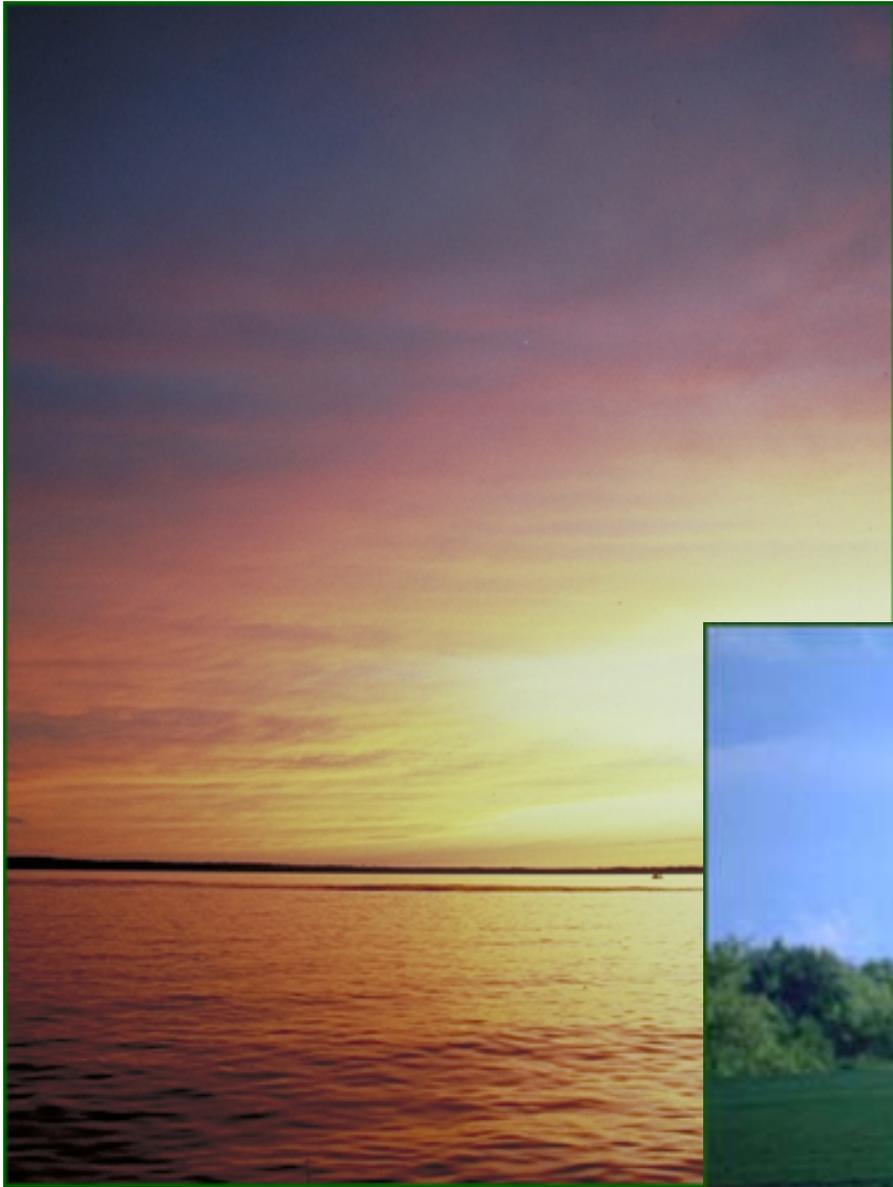


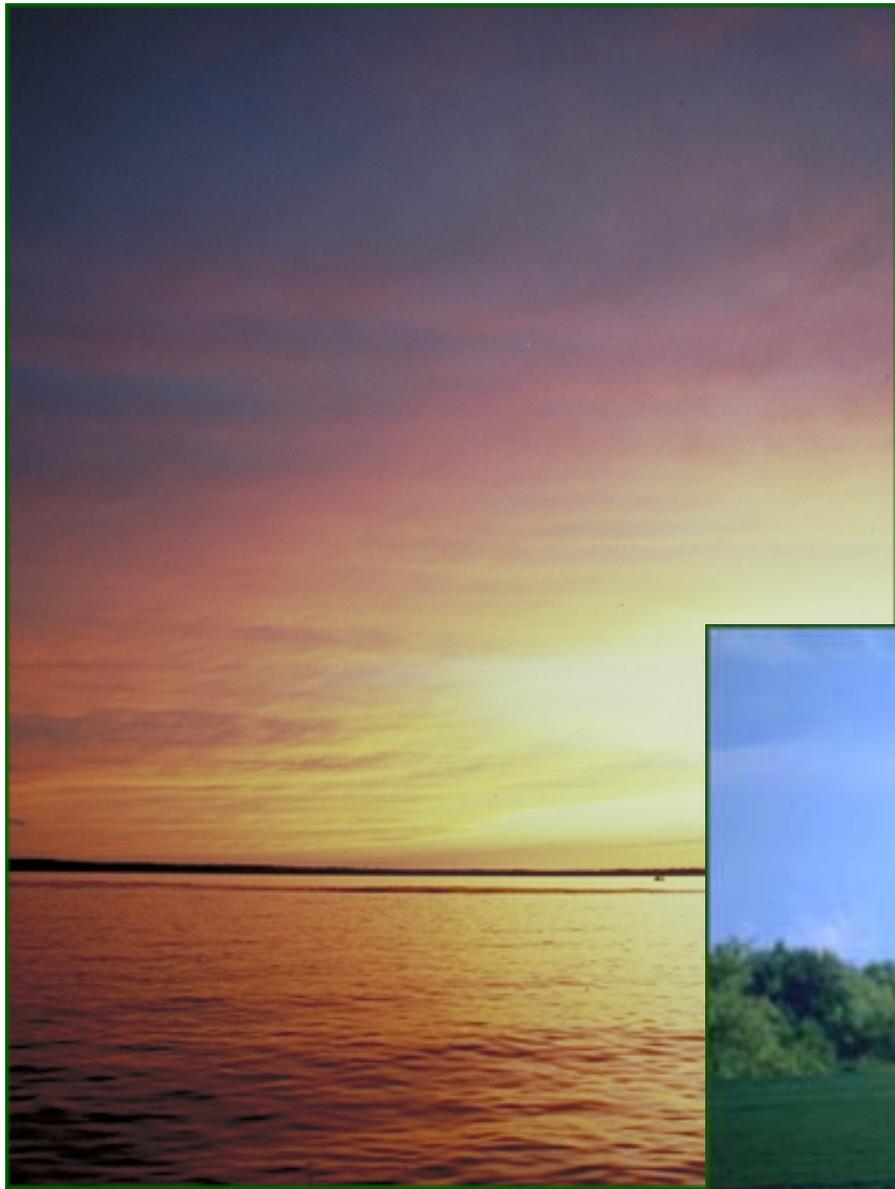
**RURAL COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE ALLIANCE**  
creating opportunities in place

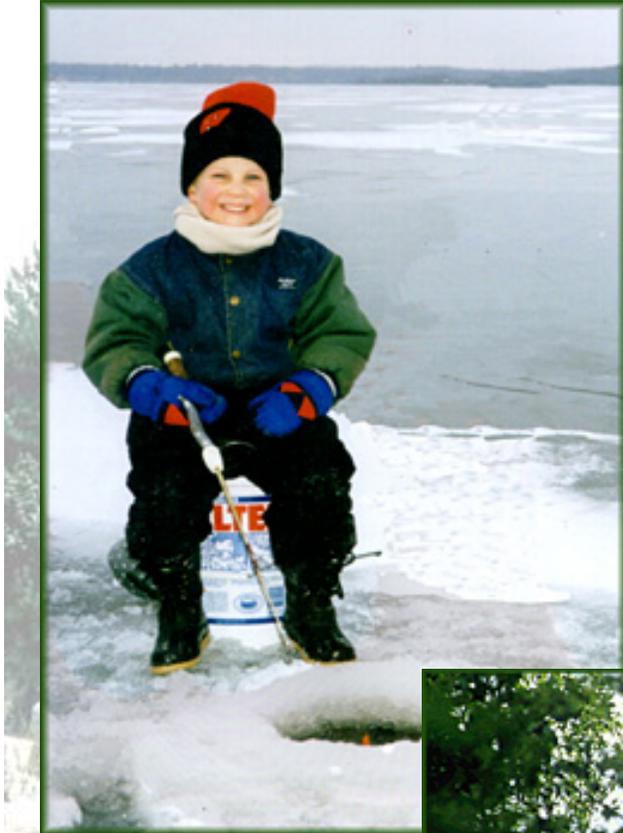


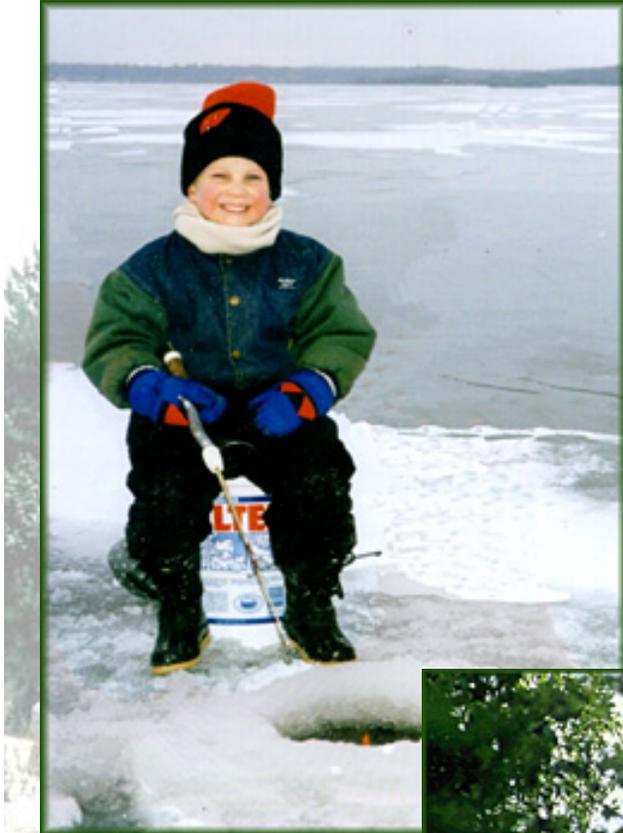
**Recognized for  
Decades**

**Rural America Matters**



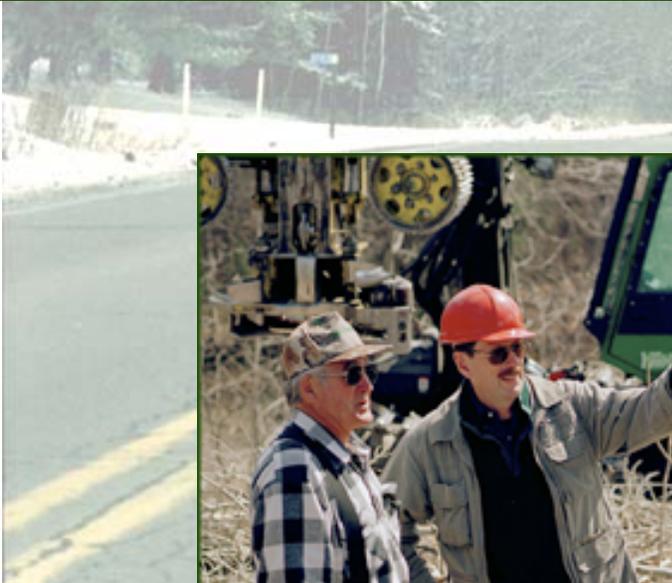




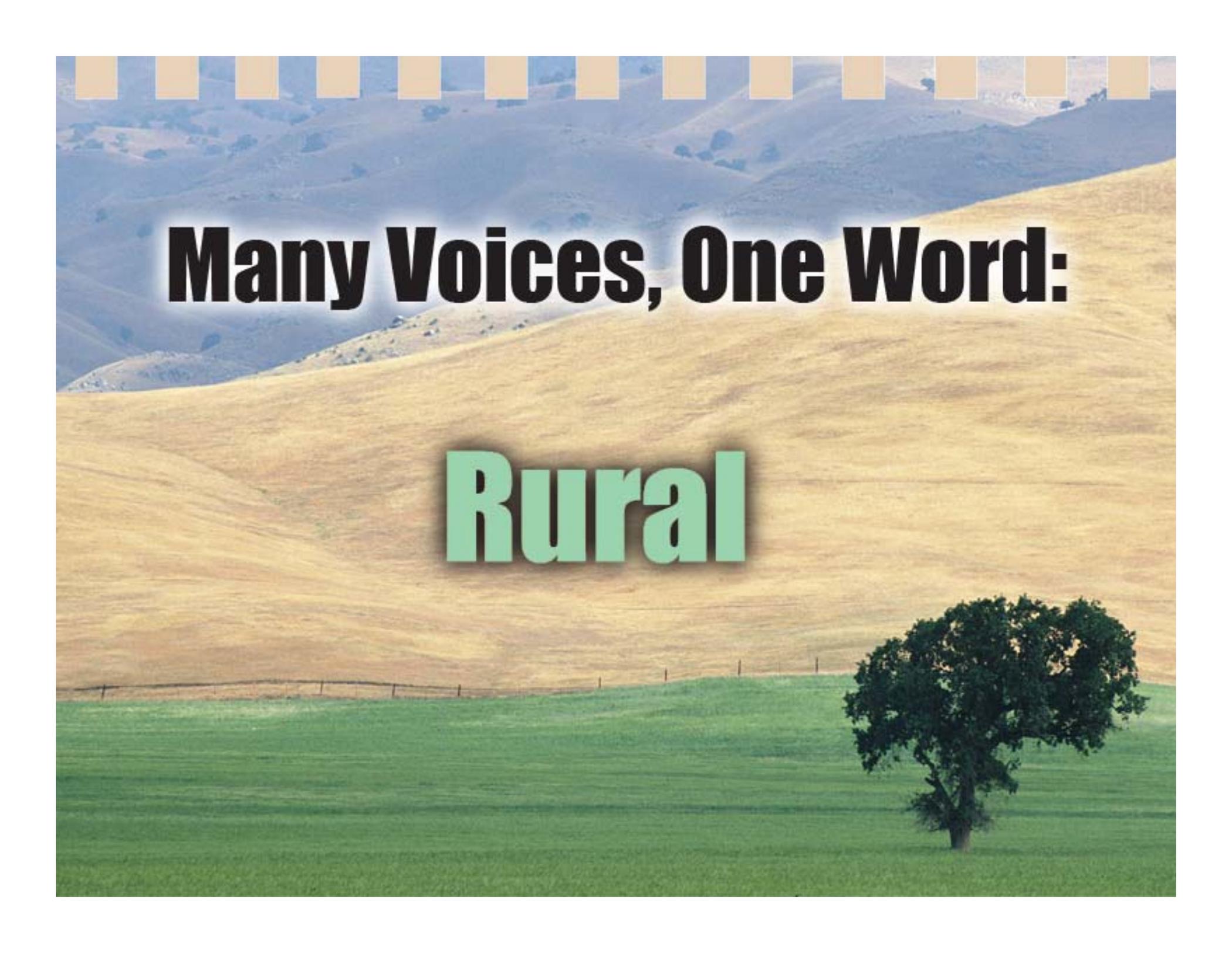










A rural landscape featuring rolling hills. The foreground is a vibrant green field with a single, large, dark green tree on the right side. A wooden fence runs across the middle ground. The background consists of rolling hills in shades of yellow and brown, with some sparse trees. The top of the image has a decorative border of vertical bars in shades of blue and tan.

**Many Voices, One Word:**

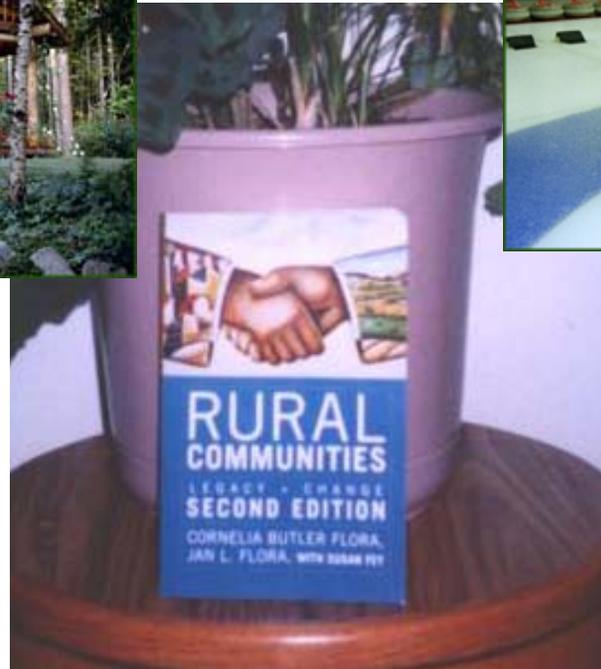
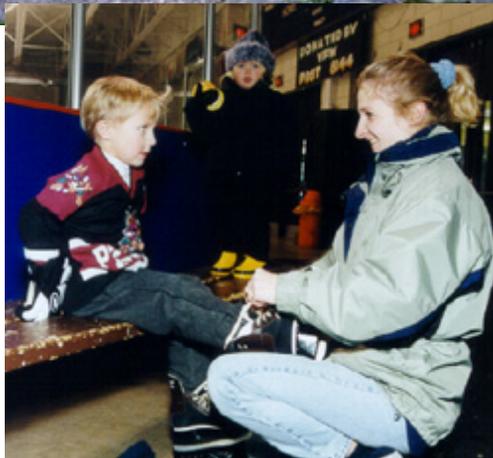
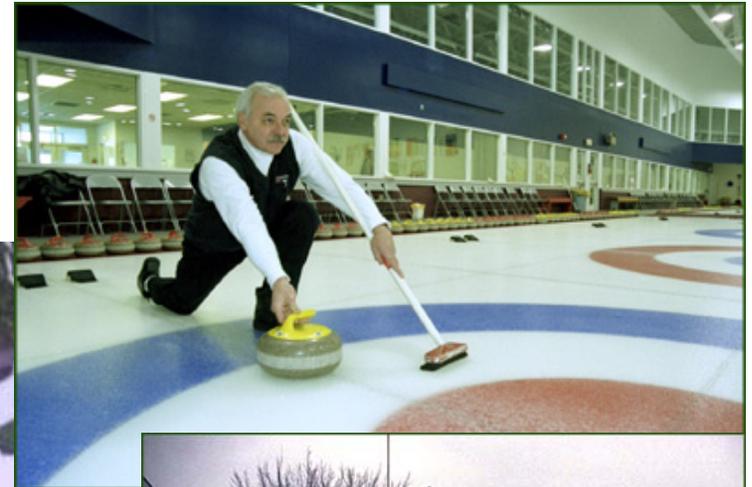
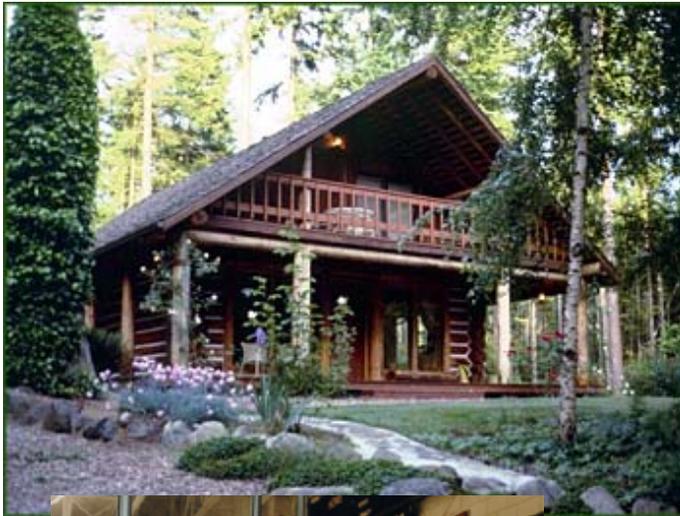
**Rural**



# Can rural folks get what they need in a reasonable period of time?



# A sense of place involves people, culture, environment



**Bonding and Bridging**

# Rural Community Colleges

are engaged  
in building  
human capital.

Talent Vs.  
Workforce?



# Rural Community Colleges

develop talent and  
are demonstrated  
nurturers  
of social capital  
and healthy  
communities.



# **Rural Community Colleges: Anticipate the market indicators**



**Now is the time for leaders to play forceful roles in community development that leads to economic growth for the rural regions they serve.**



# Rural Colleges must recognize their unfunded Mission...

---

Which is To  
Provide  
Quality  
Higher  
Education to  
the  
Communities

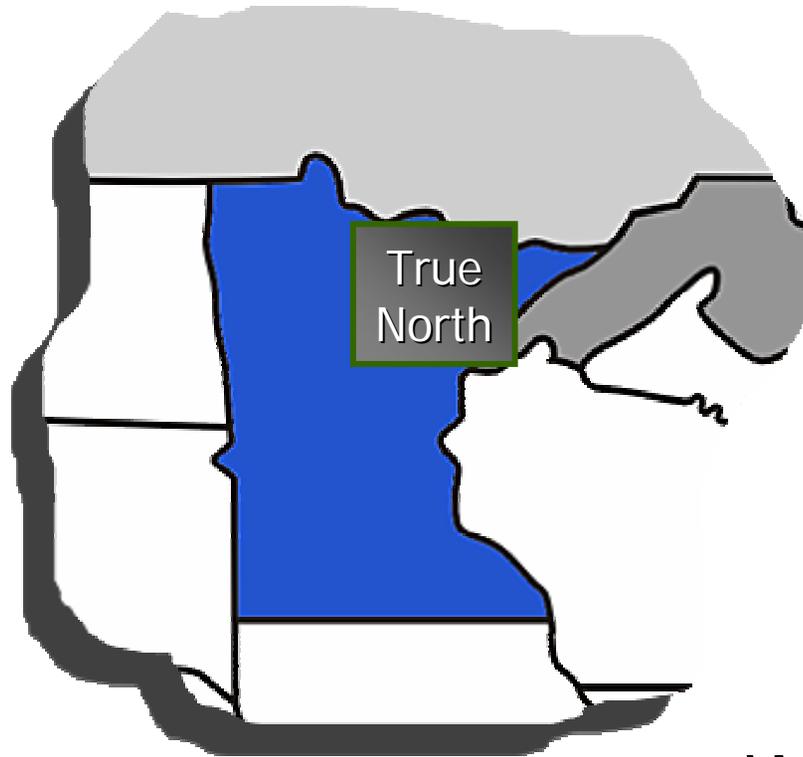


27



**LTV mine closed  
in 2000**

**1400 workers lost  
their jobs**



## True North:

A Regional,

Economic,

Community,

Education, and

Workforce Strategy

Regional branded term for public, private and higher education institutions<sup>29</sup>



## Northeast Minnesota

- Rural
- 60 Yr Regional Advocate
- Strong Work Ethic...
- ...Despite Winds of Change
- Reflects on Core Values & Tradition





# Consequence of Challenges

- Turn problems into progress



- Allow our deep traditions to emerge
- Get smart about how our economy is making itself up as we go along

*and*

- Get in behind it quickly to support it

**Motivation = motive for action**



***As communities  
go – so go their  
colleges ... and  
vice versa***





# Rural Community Colleges

are grounded  
in the communities  
of rural America...

and hold the trust  
of those they serve.



# Talent Development requires a comprehensive approach of matching Learner/Workers to prospective employers

---



# Connectivity – A Rural Advantage/Challenge

- Multi-point multi-channel distribution systems
- Broadband satellite
- Third generation wireless



Abraham (2003)

# Ely TechNorth Prep Center Network Site



**An Example:**  
**Back-office contract service providers**  
**VS**  
**off-shore outsourcing**



**Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota**  
**Virginia, Minnesota Site**

# Visionary Leaders with clear economic development strategies





## Arrowhead Growth Alliance Economic Leadership Conference October, 2002

**Lead town meetings on regional thinking and be willing to tell the story and carry the vision.**





# Building Trust



- Investment



- Relating to others in new ways



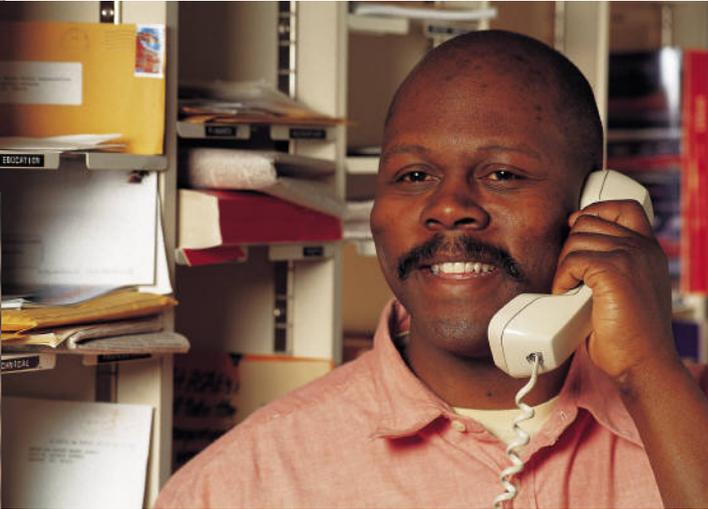
- Win – Win Strategies

42

**Private**



**Government**



**Higher Education**

**A low threshold inclusive collaborative  
not interested in replacing or taking  
over for other people or organizations.**

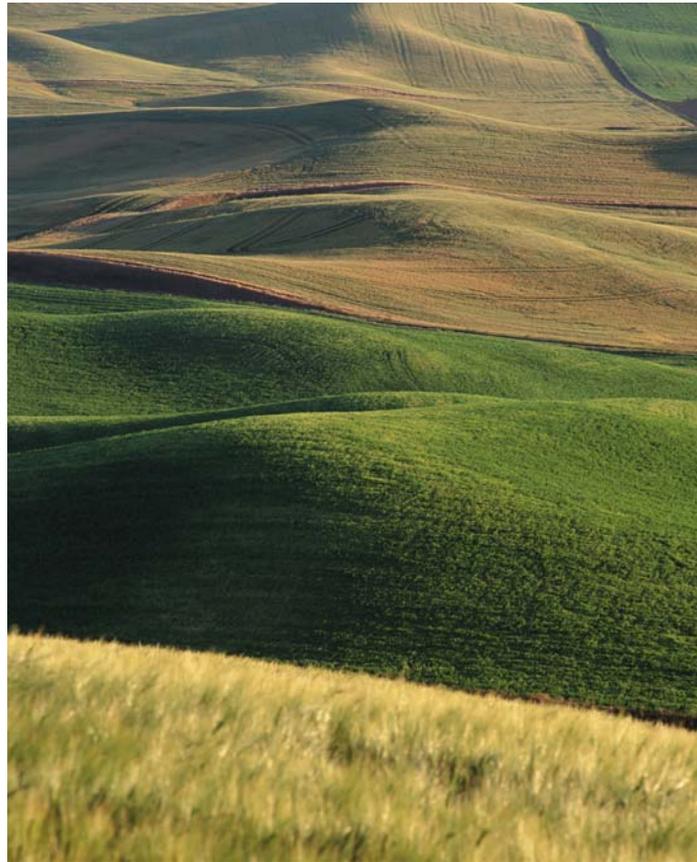




**Manning, et al (2004) says collaboration led by college leaders with their communities and better focused missions will result in survival for rural regions.**

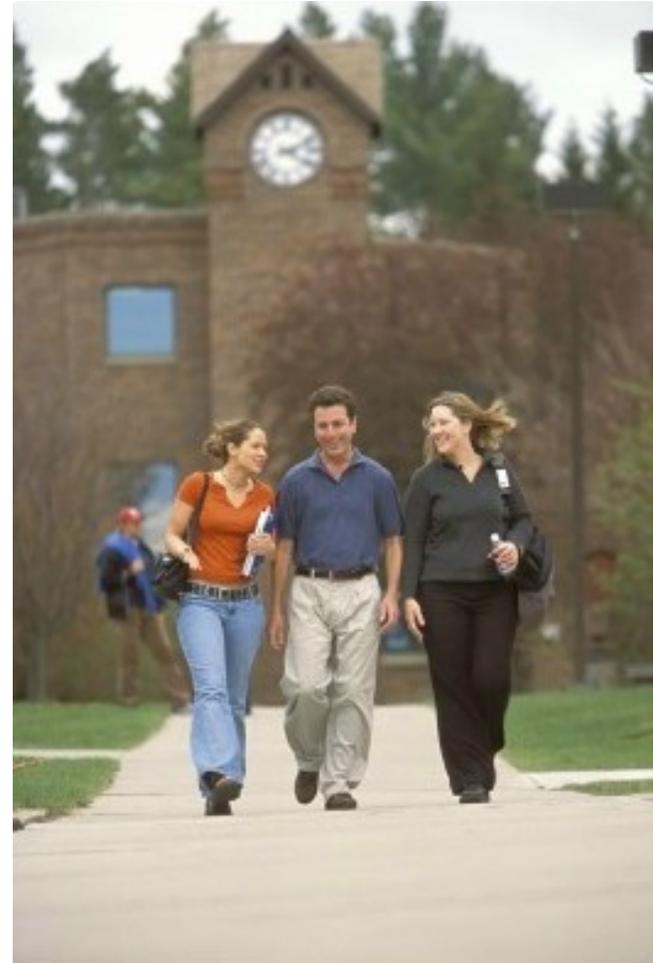
# Rural Community Colleges

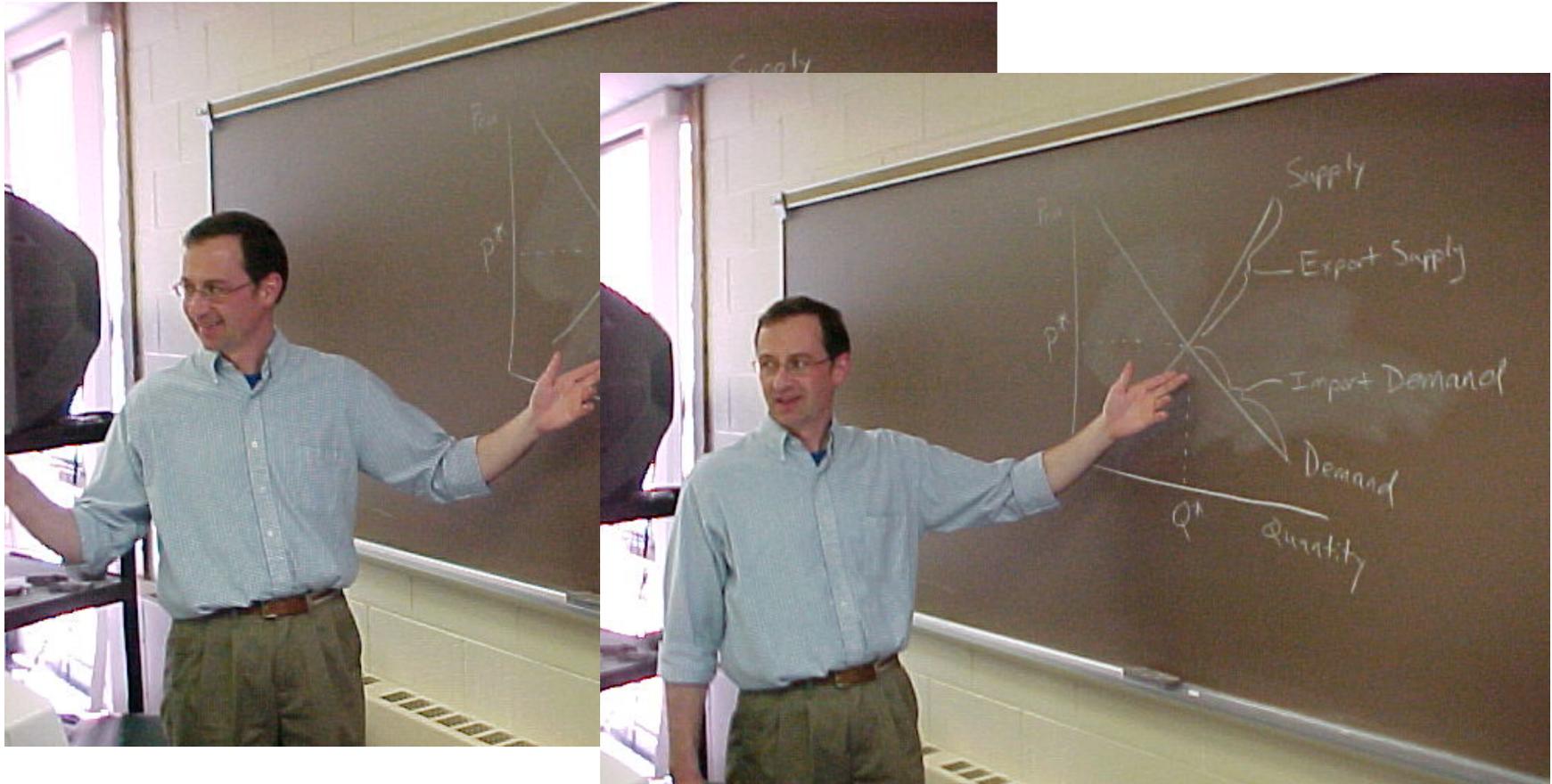
are used  
as effective  
local intermediaries  
across all sectors.



# Rural Community Colleges Need

- Public policy support for their work in community building and human capital building.
- Increased institutional capacity to assist in building sustainable rural communities.
- Professional development programming within a rural context.
- Practitioner-guided research focused on rural communities and colleges.





## **Entrepreneurship by owning and operating a business through its college**

**Aaron Kelson, Mesabi Range Community and Technical College**

# Lessons Learned: A Work in Process

But where  
are we  
now?



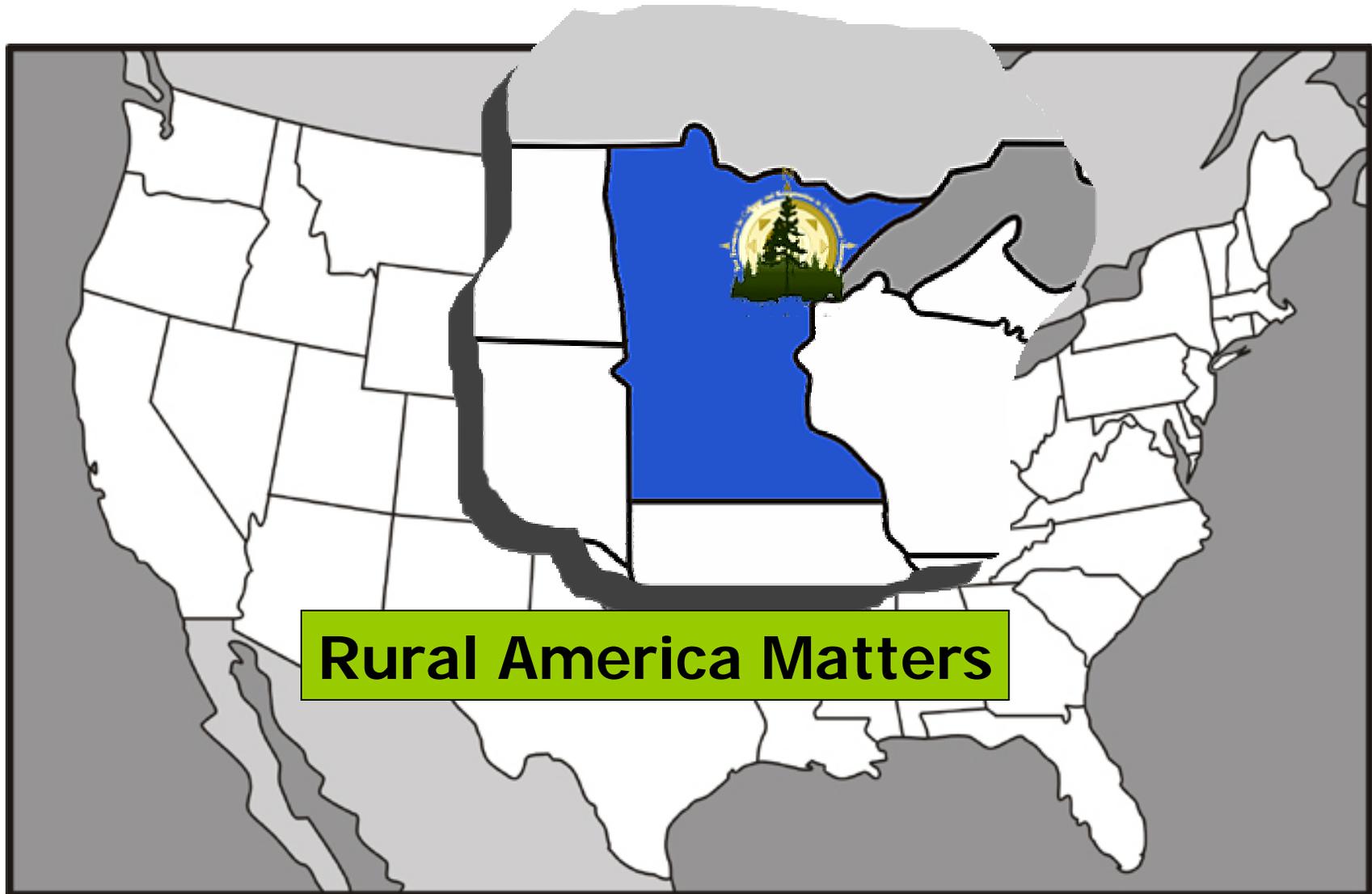
# Checklist of 5 Lessons Learned

- ✓ 1. Rural America is at a “tipping point” regarding economic decline.
- ✓ 2. Entrepreneurship built rural America, and now we need to create new “engines of innovation.”
- ✓ 3. New technologies can bridge the rural divide.
- ✓ 4. Business, education, and government working together is not a new idea, and partnerships are hard work.
- ✓ 5. Rural community colleges around the nation have emerged as powerful economic catalysts for the communities they serve.



# The Road Ahead





**Rural America is at a *tipping point***

**“There is a congealing set of forces to combat the sense of hopelessness rural people are experiencing.”**

**Dr. Chuck Fluharty**



**Dr. Bill Scaggs**

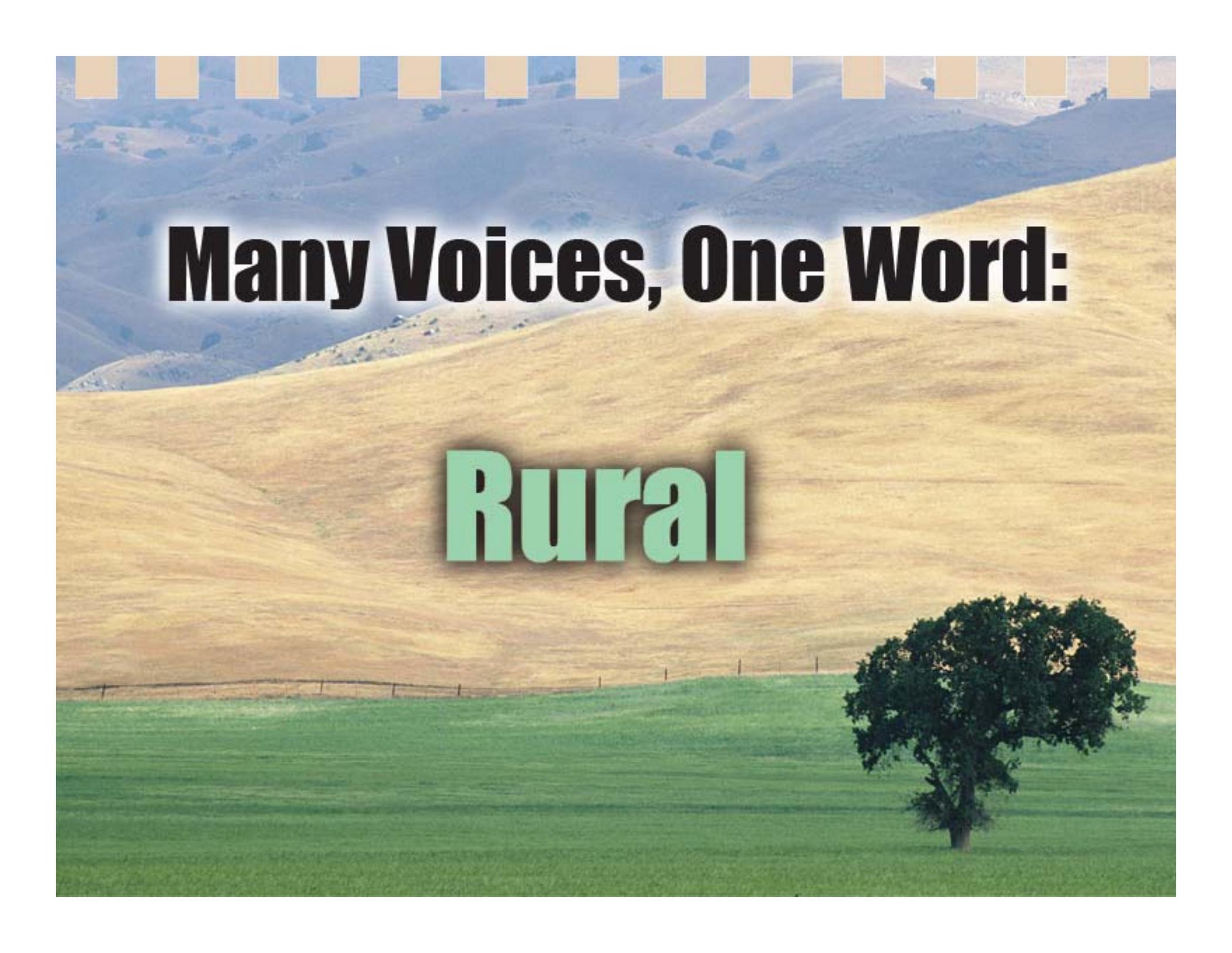
# Fast Forward

Rural community colleges with increased capacity to build, serve and sustain better places to live, learn, work and grow.



Evidence of increasing college-community collaborations, improving education and health care, sustainable economic development and civic participation.

Focus on Talent Development.

A rural landscape featuring rolling hills. The foreground is a vibrant green field with a single, large, dark green tree on the right side. A wooden fence runs across the middle ground. The background consists of rolling hills in shades of yellow and orange, with some blue-tinted hills in the distance. The top of the image has a decorative border of vertical bars in shades of blue and orange.

**Many Voices, One Word:**

**Rural**

# QUESTIONS?



[www.technorthprepcenter.org](http://www.technorthprepcenter.org)

[www.ruralcommunitycollege.org](http://www.ruralcommunitycollege.org)

[www.rupri.org](http://www.rupri.org)