

# Southwest Oklahoma Partners Receive EDA Grant to Help Communities

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University's Center for Economic Development has received a \$97,850 grant to leverage applied research and technical assistance to help communities overcome economic development challenges and capitalize on opportunities.

The grant came from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration.

Dr. Marvin Hankins, head of the SWOSU center, said the grant funds the second year of a three-year University Center program at the SWOSU CEBC. Hankins said the scope of work focuses on provision of technical assistance and applied research to help increase productivity, spur innovation and entrepreneurship, and increase long-term regional competitiveness and economic diversification in southwest Oklahoma.

The CEBC has been working in a collaborative effort with its regional partners—Western Oklahoma State College, Cameron University, University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, Redlands Community College, South Western Oklahoma Development Authority and Association South Central Oklahoma Governments—in promoting economic, business and workforce development.

Hankins said technical assistance will assist governmental entities, non-profit organizations, economic development organizations, businesses, communities, and other entities with:

- strategic planning and feasibility studies
- the development and implementation of entrepreneurial training and technology commercialization programs
- the development and implementation of workforce development and business counseling programs
- planning and implementing information technology and economic development education training courses
- and other programs useful in satisfying the economic and business development needs of southwest Oklahoma

Applied research is also one of the components being funded by the EDA grant. This will include economic and fiscal impact of new or expanded industry, market feasibility of new or expanded industry or facilities, financial feasibility of projects, community retail analysis, industry cluster analysis and demographic trend analysis.

EDA's mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. EDA implements this mission by making strategic investments in the nation's communities that encourage private sector collaboration and creation of higher-skill, higher wage jobs. EDA investments are results driven, embracing the principles of technological innovation, entrepreneurship and regional development.