

NATIONAL RURAL FUNDERS COLLABORATIVE
*A Learning Partnership to Expand Resources for
Rural Communities and Families Facing Persistent Poverty*

**Twenty Finalists Announced for Round One Funding
November 19, 2001**

The inaugural phase of the selection process for the National Rural Funders Collaborative's first round of funding is now complete. NRFC received 284 letters of intent in response to its initial request for qualifications. Of those, twenty (20) were selected to advance to the next round of the process and submit full proposals for final funding consideration. In this initial round, NRFC will distribute \$1,000,000 in grants to benefit rural communities and families facing persistent poverty.

The overwhelming response to the Collaborative's request for letters of intent came from diverse rural areas across the country: from arctic regions of Alaska to the coastal areas of Florida and the Carolinas, from remote corners of rural Maine to the colonias along the U.S./Mexican border, from the reservations of Montana and the Dakotas to the pueblos of New Mexico, from the bayous of Louisiana and the banks of the Mississippi in the Mid South Delta to the rainforests of Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest, and from agricultural areas as different as the Central Valley of California to the Heartland of the Midwest to the Black Belt of the Deep South. Geographic distributions of the responses were as follows:

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| • Appalachia | 6% |
| • Mid South Delta | 11% |
| • Midwest/Plains | 22% |
| • Northeast | 15% |
| • Southeast | 14% |
| • Southwest | 13% |
| • West/Northwest | 15% |
| • Other (Overseas, National) | 4% |

The responses also represented a broad range of issues related to the vitality of rural areas and quality of life for the families and children who live there, including among them housing, economic development, healthcare, education, workforce development, access to credit, leadership development, and telecommunications. Each letter of intent was drafted by partnerships, coalitions or collaborations of funders and practitioners who are actively working together to address rural poverty within a particular geographic region.