



News Release

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Economic Development District Training Program Announces 10 Participants Selected Pilot Program Serves Five State EDA Southwest Region

Washington, DC – The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation is pleased to announce selections for its first-ever one-year Economic Development District Training Program, funded by the Austin Regional Office of the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

“Economic Development Districts provide crucial support to communities, helping to spearhead local economic development plans and projects,” said Jorge Ayala, Acting Regional Director for EDA’s Austin office. “EDA is proud to support NADO’s training program and congratulates the selected participants. We look forward to working with you in the future.”

The NADO Research Foundation received nearly three times the number of applications it had spots available this first year, indicating strong demand among EDDs in the Austin Region for professional and leadership development. Participants will attend in-person workshops held at various EDA project sites around the Austin Region, which includes Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The program will include topics such as best practices in comprehensive economic development strategies (CEDS), project cultivation and management, and stakeholder engagement. The goal of the program is to help EDD planners and project coordinators grow into future executive directors of EDDs.

“The NADO Research Foundation would like to thank EDA for its generous support of this new training program,” said Joe McKinney, Executive Director of NADO. “These ten participants are among the best EDD planners in the EDA Austin region, and will be well-positioned after going through this program to continue their careers as future leaders of regional development organizations.”

The ten participants in the program are:

- Amanda Adaire, Central Arkansas Planning and Development District (Lonoke, AR)
- Virginia Belew, Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission (Midland, TX)
- Monique Boulet, Acadiana Planning Commission (Lafayette, LA)
- Raul Gonzalez, Rio Grande Council of Governments (El Paso, TX)
- Tiffany Goolsby, South Central Council of Governments (Mesilla, NM)
- Kyle Ingham, Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (Amarillo, TX)
- Jeremy Ragland, Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District (Harrison, AR)
- Michael Ryburn, South Western Oklahoma Development Authority (Burns Flat, OK)
- Evan Williams, Northwest New Mexico Council of Governments (Gallup, NM)
- Vickie Williamson, Ark-Tex Council of Governments (Texarkana, TX)

The first training will occur in Tulsa, OK, in late 2015.

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Founded in 1967, the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) provides advocacy, education, networking, and research for the national network of 540 regional development organizations. NADO members provide professional, programmatic and technical assistance to over 2,300 counties and 15,000 municipalities. The NADO Research Foundation is NADO's 501(c) (3) nonprofit affiliate. The Research Foundation provides professional development training, research and peer networking services. The Research Foundation examines new and innovative practices in regional development, strives to improve the organizational and professional capacity of regional development organizations and their partners, and bridges the communications gaps between policy makers, practitioners and the public. This project is made possible with support from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Austin Regional Office, under award # 08-88-04985.

