More than 6,000 surveys left K-State in early March for a visit to rural grocery stores and customers in Kansas.

“There are actually two types of surveys that we sent, one for store owners, and one for grocery store customers,” said Chandra Ruthstrom, administrative assistant for the Center for Engagement and Community Development at K-State.

The grocery store owner survey is intended to gather information statewide to better understand industry challenges and strategies for success of rural Kansas grocery stores. The survey was sent to stores serving communities with a population of 2,000 or less. The information from these surveys will be shared with interested store owners at a rural grocer summit at the Kansas Sampler Foundation in Inman, Kan., on June 1, 2008.

The grocery store customer surveys are taking place in the service area of five cooperating grocery stores. These surveys went to every box holder within an area surrounding each of the cooperating stores; and the surveys will collect information that will help the stores better understand the product and service needs of the customers in their area.

The surveys were created by staff in Agricultural Economics at K-State, with the support and feedback from staff from the Kansas Sampler Foundation, the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, the participating rural grocery store owners and CECD staff.

“While the immediate feedback of this project will help the participating stores, I am also pleased that these same survey tools will be available for use by K-State Research and Extension staff to assist other stores too,” CECD Director David Procter said.

The surveys are currently available online at www.ruralgrocery.org. This Web site was created by K-State to be both an informational networking site as well as a resource location for rural store owners. This initiative is possible due to generous support from the USDA Rural Development Office.
CECD sponsors engagement incentive grants, helps Kansans

by Stephanie Faulk

CECD sponsors engagement incentive grants. These grants inspire K-State faculty to take on civic-minded projects that not only benefit professors and students, but also Kansas communities. Incentive grants can serve as a stimulus that moves a great idea to action. In fall 2007, five proposals received funding. A summary of each project is listed below.

Rural engagement and action leadership (REAL) project

Coordinators of this project will train Kansas citizens to solve important issues in their local communities. Up to 10 participants will be chosen for the study; then they will be given $500 to address a key problem in their community. Participants will receive the help of K-State faculty in their endeavors.

The REAL project is coordinated by K-State’s Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development in partnership with the Kansas Leadership Forum and K-State faculty.

Principle Investigator: Ron Wilson

Engaging the engagers: What excites the university extension agent?

This research project will examine how extension agents work and interact with their peers and target publics. The team argues that extension agents who are engaged in their own work will in turn engage their publics more effectively. Investigators hope to identify ways to increase extension agent satisfaction, productivity and long-term retention.

Principle Investigators: Satoris Youngcourt and Clive Fullagar

Using public deliberation in assessing social service assets and needs

This study will assess social services needs in both Manhattan and Ogden, Kan. A research team will host five public forums to determine how to improve civic engagement and leadership. The team also hopes to explore classroom service-learning projects and help engage citizens in public dialogue on important community issues.

The project is coordinated by K-State’s Department of Leadership Studies and the Volunteer Center of Manhattan.

Principle Investigators: Lynda Bachelor and Mary Tolar

Romeo & Juliet: A theatrical response to youth and young adult violence

It is often said that the fictional world can inspire real-world action. Coordinators of this project will test this very premise in their production of Romeo and Juliet. A team of investigators will look at the relationship between theater production and increased awareness about the issues of youth violence and suicide prevention.

The project is spearheaded by faculty in the K-State Theater Department and the Project for Non-Violence. The team will work with faculty and students in Topeka and Manhattan high schools. After the grant activities are completed, a DVD and revised curriculum guide will be made available to Kansas educators.

Principle Investigator: R. Michael Gros

Health literacy for HIV/AIDS prevention among minority women: a community approach

Minority women in the United States often have a lower level of health literacy than other segments of the population. This investigation will work to remedy the problem by developing strategies to promote health literacy in Kansas African American and Latina women. Students in a K-State journalism class will practice community-service learning and develop the messages and materials for the campaign.

This project is coordinated by the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications, the Huck Boyd Center for Community Media, the Regional AIDS Project, and the K-State Geary County Research and Extension Office in Junction City, Kan.

Principle Investigators: Nancy Muturi and Soontae An

Applications for the spring 2008 round of Engagement Incentive Grants are due April 1, 2008. For more information, please contact the Center for Engagement and Community Development at (785) 532-6868 or by visiting www.k-state.edu/cecd.
CECD engages with UPAEP, K-State students
by David Procter

CECD is part of an exciting and expanding partnership with UPAEP (Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla) – a private university of nearly 8,000 students in Puebla, Mexico. As part of its effort to increase both engagement efforts and internationalize the campus, K-State is working on a variety of projects with UPAEP. CECD is a central part of this emerging partnership.

UPAEP’s rector, Dr. Jose Alfredo Miranda Lopez is a key member of the K-State Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy’s advisory board. In October 2007, David Procter, along with Provost M. Duane Nellis, Dr. Ken Holland (former assoc. provost of International Programs), and Terrie McCants (director of K-State’s Conflict Resolution Program) traveled to Puebla to meet representatives from UPAEP. From that meeting, CECD has initiated a technology transfer project, a faculty exchange program, and explored hosting international forums on issues that are important to both countries.

In addition, Civic Leadership is sending four K-State students to Puebla, Mexico, as an international service team. The team consists of Tamara Andra, senior in secondary education, Jennifer Barnes, junior in public relations, Leah Killebrew, senior in journalism and Spanish, and Allison Voris, senior in electronic journalism. The students will be working with the community service office at the University of Puebla to define projects for the summer.

This is the second international service team in Puebla. In 2007, three students worked for a diabetes research project, a childcare center for working mothers, as well as facilitated computer classes for children and adults. One member even had the opportunity to write for a local periodical.

"The new technology in Greensburg is transformative — it will help people change their own lives."

-- Bert Biles, associate director of the National Institute for Land Management and Training

Next month’s newsletter to feature Greensburg reconstruction efforts
by Stephanie Faulk

Greensburg, Kan., has moved from a site of utter destruction to one of profound hope. A community is gathering around fresh and innovative ideas that aim to serve as a model for other rural communities in Kansas and worldwide.

CECD and K-State are partnering with various Greensburg stakeholders to make these visionary plans a reality. Community improvement is a lengthy process in any environment; and Greensburg hopes to make extensive changes in the coming months.

Our feature next month will include interviews with various community leaders such as Bert Biles. Biles is the associate director of the National Institute for Land Management and Training; he is also spearheading the Greensburg Community Media Project. We will also speak with Larry Bowne, a K-State architecture professor, and other individuals involved with the project.

CECD and K-State are helping to make Greensburg’s dreams a reality. Find out how next month.

This model, designed by the architecture firm McCluggage, Van Sickle and Perry, will be the site of the Greensburg Community Media Center. The building will also house the Kiowa County Library, a historical museum and K-State Extension Services.
**CECD Mission & Vision**

**Mission**

To promote engagement across the breadth of Kansas State University - in teaching, research, and outreach - and to connect the vast resources of KSU to the significant issues of public need facing Kansas and communities worldwide.

*Engagement occurs when collaborative partners — both on and off-campus stakeholders — work together to address a public need in a way that is both reciprocal and mutually beneficial. Through engagement, K-State endeavors to fulfill its historic land grant mission.*

— David E. Procter, CECD director

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**Promoting Civic Engagement**

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**Center for Engagement & Community Development**

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