



NEWS RELEASE

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDES \$1,259,000 TO WILLOW HEALTH CARE, INC.

Janie Dunning, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development presented a mock check in the amount of \$1,259,000 on Tuesday, November 24 to Willow Health Care, Inc. The mock check represents two loans that will be used to construct a medical office building on the Willow Springs campus which will house Westwood Rural Health clinic, Westwood Home Health Agency and the corporate administrative staff; purchase backup generators for the skilled nursing facilities; and allow for remodeling of the dietary and therapy services departments at Willow Care.

“Thousands of families in Missouri depend on rural health clinics and home health care services like those provided by Willow Health Care,” said U.S. Senator Kit Bond. “I am pleased that these funds will provide improvements and an expansion of services to serve better the people living in Willow Springs and surrounding communities.”

“As the recent debate over health care in our country has proven, there is no substitute for quality, affordable care close to home. In rural areas of the country, there are so many committed health care professionals. Expansion of our existing facilities is only going to attract more qualified health care workers to our region where they can serve the public. I am very pleased that USDA Rural Development shares our priority of continuing to expand care in our region. The people of Willow Springs and the surrounding areas will greatly benefit from this funding,” said U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson.



From left: Willow Care board member Leon Walker; U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill's district director, David Rauch; Willow Care Administrator Shirley Alter; USDA Rural Development Area Specialist Mark Dethrow; Willow Care board member Elquin Auala; USDA Rural Development Missouri State Director Janie Dunning and Area Specialist Danny Campbell; Willow Care Board Chairman Charles Millner and Treasurer Dennis Von Allmen; U.S. Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson's district director, Heather Peugh; Willow Health Care Executive Director Jack Whitaker; U.S. Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond's field representative, Hollie Elliott; Willow Care Vice President of Finance Sherry Miller; USDA Rural Development Area Director Mark Hultgren; Willow Care board member Jim Johnson; Human Resources Director Mary Gregory and Vice President of Operations Rita Huff.. Photo courtesy of Kimberly Langston, West Plains Daily Quill.

Jack Whitaker, Willow Health Care, Inc. Executive Director expressed his thanks, “It has been a great partnership with USDA Rural Development and the Community Facilities loan program that has forged this terrific organization. For over thirty years this partnership has created a diversity of health care services in three Howell County communities in which we operate skilled and assisted living facilities, and six surrounding counties benefiting from our Home Health services. Today we continue our transformation with a new medical building to house Westwood Rural Health Clinic, Westwood Home Health and In-Home Care Agency and our administrative staff; the expansion of our Willow Care Therapy and Rehabilitation Services, remodeling of our dietary services at Willow Care, and to assure everyone our buildings will never go dark again, the addition of complete electrical generation systems on all of our campuses in Willow Springs, Mountain View and West Plains. We have such great appreciation and respect for USDA Rural Development; without whom we would not have been able to serve others as we do.”

Dunning said, “This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development’s mission and President Obama’s initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities. Special thanks are extended to our federal elected officials including U.S. Senators Kit Bond and Claire McCaskill plus U.S. Representative Jo Ann Emerson for making available federal monies for funding this kind of project providing essential services for rural Missouri.”

Anyone seeking more information about this or any other USDA Rural Development program may visit the homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo/> or by contacting Mark Dethrow, Area Specialist, at 6726 S. Hwy 63, Suite B, Houston, MO 65483-2701 or by calling (417) 967-2028 extension 3 or by email to mark.dethrow@mo.usda.gov.

Committed to the future of rural communities

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