



### Osage County Economic Development Helps Entrepreneurs Develop New Businesses

Small town business success is difficult at the best. However, conscientiously aware of that gloomy proven statistic, Osage County Economic Development is going above and beyond to assist entrepreneurs in developing rural enterprises that will continue to thrive.

"It has been very positive. I'm pleased to have worked closely with three Osage County women who have developed and are operating somewhat unique businesses with potential for long term survival and growth," said Stephanie Watson, enthusiastic director of the office headquartered in Lyndon.

The Osage County family ventures include Flowers on the Trail, owned by Kerri Davis (center) at Lyndon; Dulce's Photos, owned by Dulcelina Delekta (right) at Burlingame; and The Calico Oven, owned by Rose Hearn (left) at Lyndon.

"Kerri had a dream to own and operate a floral shop and contacted my office for assistance while she was completing an online floral design course and doing arrangements for friends and family," Watson recalled.

"My office offers free confidential business consultation in partnership with the Emporia State University Kansas Small Business Development Center. Osage County Economic Development has also created a revolving loan fund to assist new and existing businesses with low interest gap financing. Flowers on the Trail is a recipient of the Osage County E-Community revolving loan," Watson related.



An advertiser on The BIG 94.5 Country, "Osage County Economic Development, Network Kansas and Emporia State University KSBDC have made a commitment to cultivating an entrepreneurial environment by identifying and developing resources to help new entrepreneurs start or grow businesses," Watson pointed out.

The Network Kansas E-Community Partnership has grown from six communities in 2007, to 39 last year. "More than \$7.5 million have been raised, generating an estimated \$41.9 million of investment in rural businesses across Kansas," Watson calculated.

Dulcelina Delekta began working with Osage County Economic Development last year to increase networking opportunities. "After her husband's job transfer, Dulcelina moved with her family from Texas to Burlingame and purchased a country home on five acres at 426 East Santa Fe. It has a park-like setting which allows Dulcelina to capture beautiful photos for her developing Dulce's Photos business," Watson said.

With five children, one grandchild and three more on the way, Rose Hearn serves as second deputy in the Osage County Register of Deeds Office. "Rose is a very busy woman, yet she and her husband are very devoted to their children and grandchildren. But, she still operates The Calico Oven making all kinds of cakes out of their home at 1066 East 245<sup>th</sup>, during evenings and weekends in her spare time," Watson said.

"These three new young Osage County businesses will be part of The Bridal Crawl on Sunday, June 22, in Topeka," Watson announced. Additional information is available by contacting Watson at [swatsonoscoed@gmail.com](mailto:swatsonoscoed@gmail.com).

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*"Folks need to have the confidence that they CAN make a difference before they will TRY to make a difference."*