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## **New Board of Directors Appointed**

The [Center for Rural Entrepreneurship](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org) is pleased to announce three new members for its 9-member board of directors. Grace Fricks, Angela Lust and Steve Radley have been elected as new board members, replacing Mary Hunt, Tom Lyons, Nancy Straw and Sherece West-Scantlebury who stepped down at the end of the year.

Deborah Markley, Managing Director of the Center, said of the transition, "With the addition of these three board members, we have brought new social and business entrepreneurship experience and energy into the governance of the Center. They represent organizations that are innovators in their respective fields and will bring that focus on innovation to the Center. We look forward to working more deeply with our new and continuing board members over the next year."

The new members include:

**Grace Fricks** is President and CEO of ACE (Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs), a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) providing financing for low-income and underserved populations. ACE has also developed loan products for green businesses in Georgia, as well as a lending and education program targeted to women entrepreneurs. Ms. Fricks founded ACE in 1997 and has grown the organization to state and national prominence since that time. She holds numerous board positions and was named one of the 100 Most Influential Georgians by *Georgia Trend Magazine*. A business owner for more than 15 years, she received an MBA from the University of Memphis.

**Angela Lust** is Senior Vice President of the Amarillo Area Foundation, a nonprofit community foundation committed to improving the quality of life for the 400,000 residents of the Texas Panhandle region. Ms. Lust is responsible for coordination and administration of the Foundation's program strategies and grantmaking activities. She brings extensive experience in organizational leadership and community-based philanthropy. Under Ms. Lust's leadership, the Foundation launched a community wealth building initiative in the Panhandle region. She received her MBA from West Texas A&M University and holds certification as a Chartered Financial Consultant.

**Steve Radley** is President and CEO of NetWork Kansas, providing a statewide portal to connect entrepreneurs to the right resource at the right time. NetWork Kansas is devoted to growing entrepreneurs and their communities throughout the state. Mr. Radley brings extensive private sector experience to his current position, having participated in or launched several business startups in the state. His experience centers on business development and taking products and businesses from startup to maturity. Mr. Radley received an MBA from the W. Frank Barton School of Business at Wichita State University.

The new members join the rest of the board comprised of:

**Michelle Decker (Chair)**, CEO, Rural Action

**Jane Henderson (Treasurer)**, President and CEO, Virginia Community Capital

**David Leckey**, Executive Director, Orton Family Foundation

**Ines Polonius**, CEO, Communities Unlimited

**Tim Putnam**, Director, North Iowa Area Community College's Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center

**Shawn Winkler-Rios (Secretary)**, CEO, Soloprenur

The **Center for Rural Entrepreneurship** helps communities throughout the U.S. and Canada build a prosperous future by supporting business, social and civic entrepreneurs. We work in partnership with communities to provide research-based, asset-focused, comprehensive and customized economic development strategies emphasizing entrepreneurship. The Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

For more information about the Center, call (402) 323-7336 or visit <http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org>. For interviews, please email Deb Markley at [deb@e2mail.org](mailto:deb@e2mail.org).