

***News Release – For Immediate Release***

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**The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship (CRE) e2 rural entrepreneurship transition**

Lincoln, Nebraska, October 23, 2018 --The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship (CRE) announced today an exciting transition of its rural entrepreneurship (e2) framework, assets, and intellectual property to the nationally recognized Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship dba **NetWork Kansas** effective January 1, 2019. Acquisition of the Center's entrepreneurship expertise and resources from Virginia Community Capital and LOCUS Impact Investing completes a transition of the Center's work beginning in 2017. The Center's community development philanthropy and Transfer of Wealth™ work will continue as part of the mission and portfolio of LOCUS Impact Investing.

The impetus for the move came through an emerging opportunity to strengthen entrepreneurial environments in rural geographies. Through years of working together in communities throughout Kansas and national efforts with partners including the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, SourceLink, Edward Lowe Foundation, and the Kauffman Foundation, the opportunity to create more robust models and training was evident. "We expect significant opportunities to create new learning opportunities of support for rural entrepreneurial ecosystem builders and scalable models for implementation," explained CRE Founder Don Macke, "With the successful NetWork Kansas Entrepreneurship Communities model and thirty (30) years of e2 experience, the time is right to accelerate learning and design systems that allow assets to coalesce around rural places." Macke will join NetWork Kansas as Vice President of **e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems**.

This transition also marks the beginning of collaborative work between NetWork Kansas and LOCUS Impact Investing in Kansas, with support from the Kansas Health Foundation. The new initiative that creates the Kansas Community Philanthropy Innovator Network and the Kansas Community Investment Fund is designed with the ambitious goal of building healthier and more vibrant Kansas communities through integrated community and economic development efforts

that include community foundation and economic development organizational support and investment. This work represents another example of the potential benefits of focused efforts created through integrated entrepreneurship and place-based philanthropy.

**NetWork Kansas** is a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Kansas that connects aspiring entrepreneurs, emerging and established businesses, to a deep network of business building resource organizations across the state. Partners include economic development organizations, small business development centers, Kansas Department of Commerce field offices, regional certified development companies, technology innovation centers, organizations specializing in minority and women owned businesses and more. For more information, visit [www.networkkansas.com](http://www.networkkansas.com).

**e2 Entrepreneurial Ecosystems** is a new national platform hosted by NetWork Kansas that will offer institutes, a robust resource center, community consulting/mentoring and more. Watch for news to come about this exciting transition and new partnership work or visit [www.energizingentrepreneurs.org](http://www.energizingentrepreneurs.org).

[LOCUS Impact Investing](#) is a national social enterprise launched by [Virginia Community Capital](#) (VCC) in 2017 with a mission to empower place-focused institutions to invest their capital locally to build prosperous, vibrant communities. Prior to the launch, VCC, an \$323 million Community Development Financial Institution and regulated Community Development Bank, acquired the nationally recognized Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, a leader in economic development philanthropy with its field-tested expertise and resources to help regional associations of grant makers, philanthropic serving organizations and place-focused foundations identify and implement strategies to create more resilient communities and regions. LOCUS offers a continuum of services starting with building capacity for community economic development all the way through to executing, servicing and monitoring local impact investments as well as aggregating capital for local and regional impact funds. LOCUS offers its investment advisory services through a registered investment advisor, LOCUS Capital.

Center for Rural  
Entrepreneurship

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energizing entrepreneurial communities

