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**New ASU Program to Study, Promote Community Development**

Angelo State University's Department of Psychology, Sociology and Social Work has launched a new program, "Community Development Initiatives" (CDI), with the goal of aiding community development through projects aimed at building local wealth and income.

The objective of CDI is to initiate 10 innovative projects in San Angelo over the next 10 years that, in collaboration with community leaders and organizations, will develop new ways to raise the local median household income and reduce poverty in the area.

Work on CDI began in fall 2007 and consists of formulating an assessment of San Angelo's community development needs. In the process, CDI members are utilizing methods developed at Vassar College's Institute for Innovation in Social Policy and the Saguaro Seminar at Harvard University to assess both the social health and social capital of the local community.

ASU sociology faculty member Dr. Kenneth Stewart and Government faculty member Dr. Casey Jones head CDI up. A \$42,130 ASU Faculty Innovation Grant is funding the San Angelo community assessment.

Also, work has already begun on what CDI members hope will become the first of their community development initiatives. The ASU Biology Department has applied for a National Science Foundation grant to engage in a five-year project called the "Angelo Science Partnership for Undergraduate Recruitment, Retention and Success" (SPURRS). The program would recruit talented, low-income, and underachieving students from San Angelo and area high schools into a specially designed science "boot camp" to lead them toward success and graduation from one of ASU's science degree programs.

CDI is currently working with SPURRS to design and implement a Hidden Talent Assessment System (HTAS) to assist in the recruiting of students for the program. Future CDI projects could deal with a wide range of community needs in such areas as affordable housing, financial services for low and moderate-income residents, small business development, and healthcare.

For more information, call Dr. Stewart at 942-2068, Ext. 256.