



Laulima Center Grant Aimed at Cooperatives, Small Businesses

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By Dave Smith

A Big Island non-profit center will be the recipient of a federal grant designed to help cooperatives and small businesses serve rural citizens and their communities.

Laulima Center, a component of The Kohala Center, will receive \$200,000 under the US Department of Agriculture's Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program.

The grant is one of 34 being given in the US to help establish, expand or operate rural businesses.



The Laulima Center has received a grant to assist Big Island agricultural cooperatives. Pictured from left to right are Nicole Milne, The Laulima Center; Lori Beach, Hamakua Agricultural Cooperative; and Denise Oda, US Department of Agriculture. Photo courtesy of The Kohala Center.

The USDA said these competitively-awarded grants may be used to conduct feasibility studies, create and implement business plans, and help businesses develop new markets for their products and services.

“Our rural communities have incredible potential to create new jobs and expand opportunity for rural Americans,” Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in a statement.

“The grants announced today will strengthen rural business development by partnering with rural co-ops and non-profits, expanding technical assistance for main street businesses.”

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