



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Community Building

Groundbreaking for St. Helena Library Opens a New Chapter



Outline Of Need:

The Library will improve the quality of life by providing workforce development and educational resources in a rural area. St. Helena Island is considered primarily minority community characterized by high unemployment and extremely low per capita income.

How Rural Development Helped:

Rural Development provided \$6 million loan and \$2.5 million grant assistance to Beaufort County.

The Results:

The St. Helena Branch Library project will provide educational, informational and economic opportunities for the St. Helena Community and will address literacy and learning needs of a severely under-served and under-employed population. The project will initiate programs to develop literacy and lifelong learning. It will increase professional, personal, academic, and workforce suc-

cess. It will also support the preservation and dissemination of the Sea Island Culture.

The library will provide access to state of the art technology and self improvement resources. The library will be located adjacent to the historic Penn Center campus where, in 1862, an African-American school and cultural facility was established to educate freed slaves.

The St. Helena Branch Library will partner with the historic Penn Center which will increase visitors to this historic site and create awareness of their historic mission and accomplishments.

This project will help the community grow in the short term by saving or creating 75 construction jobs and 25 to 30 library staff jobs. In the long term, the library will provide St. Helena with free success-building resources for all ages. It will function as a center for education, learning, connecting the community to its past, as well as to the internet, ideas and job training. It will help bring economic activity and opportunities to this small community

Fast Facts

Program: Community Facilities

Investment:

\$2,5 million Grant & \$6 million Loan

Partners: Beaufort County, State of SC

Unemployment rate on St. Helena Is. 16.4%

Congressional District: District 2—Congressman Wilson

Educational fact:

31% below basic skill level in English,

41% below basic skills in Math,

69% below basic skills in science,

59% below basic skills in social studies

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