

USU Launches New Center to Drive Rural Economic Growth

01/29/2026

```
$(document).ready(function(){ $(''.pdf-wrapper').hide();
$(''.pageTitle').addClass('text-bold'); });
```



Jacob Webb, senior business consultant for the USU Extension Center for Rural Economic Development & Emerging Technologies (CREDET), provides e-commerce technical assistance and support to rural Utah agricultural producers.

Utah State University recently established a new center to support economic growth and technological innovation in rural communities statewide.

The USU Center for Rural Economic Development & Emerging Technologies is designed to serve as the hub for USU's statewide efforts to strengthen workforce development, diversify rural economies, and drive technological innovation across Utah's rural communities.

USU Extension Professor Paul Hill has been named associate vice president for economic development and will lead the new center as its executive director.

The center will address the unique challenges facing rural Utah, including limited economic opportunities, unemployment, insufficient broadband access, and gaps in workforce development. It will also unite USU's signature initiatives, including the Rural Online Initiative and the E-Commerce Accelerator, into a single strategic platform to maximize impact for rural communities statewide.

"USU's land-grant mission is to empower individuals, families, and communities, no matter where they live," said Ken White, senior vice president for the USU Statewide Enterprise. "The creation of this new center under Paul Hill's leadership is a major step forward for our state and university. Paul has demonstrated a remarkable ability to

build innovative programs that meet real needs. With his vision, we are poised to deliver workforce training, digital access, and entrepreneurial support to communities that need it most."

The center's mission is to empower rural communities through research-driven education, workforce innovation, and entrepreneurial support for sustainable economic growth and broad access to emerging technologies. It will focus on increasing digital literacy and broadband adoption, supporting rural entrepreneurs, aligning workforce training with high-demand industries, and expanding opportunities for rural residents.

"I'm honored by the opportunity to lead the Center for Rural Economic Development & Emerging Technologies," said Hill. "Our amazing team is dedicated and already working to create pathways for rural Utahns to succeed in the digital economy now and in the future."

The creation of the center follows the USU Board of Trustees' approval and builds on USU's commitment to excellence, access, and opportunity throughout Utah.

Visit the website for the [Center for Rural Economic Development & Emerging Technologies](#) to learn more about its programs.

Contact

Paul Hill
Paul.Hill@usu.edu

More Extension Updates

- [Extension News](#)
- [Gardening](#)
- [Recipes](#)
- [Personal Finance](#)
- [Relationships](#)
- [Our Impact](#)

[Tips Sign Up](#) [Take a Course](#) [Donate to Extension](#)