USU Extension Receives Grant for Innovation Center in Garfield County

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Utah State University Extension, Garfield County and Panguitch City recently received a grant from the Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development to create a rural co-working and innovation center.

The innovation center is designed to act as an incubator for small businesses and startups. It will also provide co-working space and equipment for individuals in rural Utah to participate in the remote workforce.

“Creating this innovation center in Garfield County will certainly boost the local economy,” said Callie Ward, USU Extension family and consumer sciences assistant professor. “This will allow people who moved away from their rural communities because of work to return to their hometowns. And the affordable office space will be a huge draw for entrepreneurs.”

The new rural co-working and innovation center will be located in the Panguitch City administration office building, with the funds from the grant used to renovate and update the space. One major upgrade will be transforming the kitchen area into a working commercial kitchen. This will provide a place for entrepreneurs to create food products to promote local food tourism or online food sales.

The grant funds will also be used to purchase printers and copiers as well as 3D printers, which will have shared use with the Panguitch City Library (also in the same building).

“I’m focused on Utah’s rural economic growth, and as a result, sponsored the RCIC bill this past legislative session,” said Rep. Carl Albrecht in a prepared statement.

“We hope these grant programs will make a difference in job creation in rural Utah.”

The renovations will begin soon, and the innovation center is projected to open sometime next year.

To learn more about USU Extension programs, visit https://extension.usu.edu/.

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