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Institute for Emerging Issues receives grant from Duke Endowment for \$886K

RALEIGH—The Institute for Emerging Issues (IEI) is pleased to announce it has received a \$886,000 grant from the Duke Endowment for IEI’s Rural Faith Communities in Action project.

The grant continues the work of IEI’s Thriving Rural Communities initiative, which connects faith leaders to one another and resources throughout the year through peer networks. This award also ensures the continuation of IEI’s Rural Faith Communities as Anchor Institutions Conference and participation of rural faith leaders in annual Emerging Issues forums on critical issues facing our state.

The Duke Endowment and the United Methodist Church have deep roots in North Carolina’s rural communities and understand the importance that churches can play in ensuring the vitality of these communities, particularly as some other anchor institutions struggle. The Thriving Rural Communities Initiative focuses on leadership development – both in preparing clergy for service in rural churches and in strengthening the churches for community leadership roles.

“Rural faith leaders know their communities – the people in their congregations are leaders, residents, children, teachers, business owners, and workers”, said Kylie Foley, Rural Faith Communities Fellow. “The Duke Endowment award will allow IEI to continue to provide training, peer networks, and access to experts to enable them to discuss how major issues impact their communities.”

"We're so excited to be able to work with this energetic, insightful, passionate group of people to help them navigate their communities in times of change," said Leslie Boney, director of IEI. "They are stepping forward, rolling up their sleeves and positioning themselves as anchors of compassion and hope. Our job is to listen, learn and connect."

"I believe churches can be catalysts for human, community, and economic development in the regions that they serve. They have tremendous gifts and assets for this work and in this endeavor, including a theological language that allows them to hold complex ideas in tension," said Robb Webb, director of Rural Church for the Duke Endowment. "And they are often on the front line of some of the most challenging issues that this state is addressing — immigration, race, addiction, economic mobility or the lack of it, and more recently, storm recovery. IEI has a long track record of addressing these issues in a nonpartisan way."

Other Duke Endowment partners include the Resourceful Communities Faith and Food initiative, The Rural Center’s Faith in Rural Communities initiative and NC State’s Faithful Families Thriving Communities initiative.

Jack F.A.V. Cecil, *National Advisory Board Chair* | Leslie Boney, *Director*

About the Institute for Emerging Issues

The Institute for Emerging Issues (IEI) at North Carolina State University is a nonpartisan public policy organization focused on the state's vibrancy and economic competitiveness. Since 1986, the Emerging Issues Forum has attracted leaders in business, education and public policy to discuss issues with profound implications for North Carolina's future prosperity. For more than three decades, the Forum has helped catalyze the policy reforms, public investments and other proactive responses required to build an enduring capacity for progress in North Carolina.

About The Duke Endowment

Based in Charlotte and established in 1924 by industrialist and philanthropist James B. Duke, The Duke Endowment is a private foundation that strengthens communities in North Carolina and South Carolina by nurturing children, promoting health, educating minds and enriching spirits. Since its founding, it has distributed more than \$3.7 billion in grants. The Endowment shares a name with Duke University and Duke Energy, but all are separate organizations.

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