

The Aspen Institute's Economic Opportunities Program Publishes Comprehensive Online Directory of US Microenterprise Programs

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WASHINGTON, D.C., Sep. 08 /CSRwire/ - The Aspen Institute's Fund for Innovation, Effectiveness, Learning and Dissemination (FIELD), a project of the Economic Opportunities Program, announces the publication of its on-line searchable directory of almost 700 US microenterprise programs. The **directory** is the only one of its kind providing information on all microenterprise programs directly serving entrepreneurs in the US. Streamlined graphic profiles provide key facts on products, services and scale of organizations that reported to the US microenterprise census conducted in 2009 by the FIELD Program.

An accompanying brief provides key statistics on the size, scope and evolution of the US microenterprise industry based on survey responses, along with estimates for the entire industry. Clear text and simple graphics help answer the most frequently-asked questions about the US microenterprise industry. View the report at: <http://fieldus.org/Publications/HighlightsFY2008.pdf>.

The programs included in FIELD's directory are part of a vibrant sector providing assistance to entrepreneurs in the US; particularly entrepreneurs from traditionally disadvantaged racial or ethnic groups, low-income households, or facing other barriers to business assistance or capital access. FIELD's microenterprise census documents:

- 696 organizations providing direct business services to entrepreneurs in 2008
- Over 270,000 entrepreneurs are estimated to have received assistance from microenterprise programs in FY2008
- For a smaller group of programs reporting data in both FY2002 and FY2008, the annual number of individuals assisted rose by 19 percent and their outstanding microloan portfolios rose by 45 percent

This new searchable directory is the first phase of a rich, interactive and user-friendly Web site currently being developed by FIELD. The site will provide access to extensive data on the US microenterprise field, enable users to compare data to peers and national averages, and be widely available to potential funders, investors and the media.

About FIELD:

FIELD's mission is to identify, develop and disseminate best practices in the microenterprise field, and to educate funders, policy makers and others about microenterprise as an anti-poverty strategy. FIELD is a project of the Economic Opportunities Program (EOP), which is a policy program housed at the Aspen Institute in Washington, DC. EOP focuses on advancing strategies that connect the poor and underemployed to the mainstream economy. For more information about FIELD and its work, please visit www.fieldus.org

The Aspen Institute mission is twofold: to foster values-based leadership, encouraging individuals to reflect on the ideals and ideas that define a good society, and to provide a neutral and balanced venue for discussing and acting on critical issues. The Aspen Institute does this primarily in four ways: seminars, young-leader fellowships around the globe, policy programs, and public conferences and events. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also has an international network of partners.

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For more from this organization:

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