

For immediate release

July 2009

### **UW-Extension's Hembd receives national distinguished service award**

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Madison, Wis.--A faculty member from the University of Wisconsin-Extension Community Center for Economic Development and the UW-Superior was recently honored with the 2009 National Distinguished Service Award—the highest honor conferred by the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP)--at the group's national convention in San Diego.

Jerry Hembd, who currently serves as Director of the Northern Center for Community Economic Development, was recognized by NACDEP for achievements over the course of his career.

NACDEP is dedicated to improving the visibility, coordination, professional status and resource base of Extension community and economic development programs and professionals.

Hembd's career in community development work began in the early 1980s, when he focused on conducting research, analysis and educational programs related to the role of tourism and natural resources in the northwestern Wisconsin regional economy. He and UW-Extension colleagues were also actively involved in the statewide Community Economic Analysis program.

More recently, his research and educational programming have focused on the creative economy of Wisconsin and community sustainability. Hembd helped organize, and currently co-chairs the UW-Extension Sustainability Team, which during the past year offered a statewide in-service on sustainable communities. He was also involved in the development of the Sustainable Communities Capacity Center website (<http://www3.uwsuper.edu/sustainability/index.htm>), and organized a nine-session series of web-based seminars, or webinars, on community sustainability.

“Jerry Hembd has successfully combined his expertise in economics with emerging principles and practices for sustainable communities. His work is well-known nationally, as well as in Wisconsin, and it reflects his ability to engage people with diverse perspectives around a common theme of sustaining communities into the future,” says Tom Blewett, interim director of UW-Extension's Community, Natural Resource and Economic Development program.

The theme of this year's NACDEP conference was "Creating Sustainable Communities in a Changing America." The annual event provides an opportunity for Extension professionals from all subject matter areas and all parts of the country to network and learn about the latest in community development with the goal of continuing to build programs that serve the needs of local communities.

For more information on NACDEP, go to <http://www.nacdep.net/>

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