



BLOG

## Building Resiliency in Disadvantaged Communities

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We recently observed the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. I feel that USDA's Risk Management Agency helps to advance the dream of Dr. King in our support of the [1890 National Scholars Program](#), and the [Risk Management Education Program](#), among other initiatives.

I attended the Rural Coalition's winter forum in Washington, D.C. This organization is a partner in our new pilot program, [Building Resiliency](#), which trains new crop insurance agents and adjusters from disadvantaged communities.

The Rural Coalition represents stakeholder groups across the country. Attending their event allowed our agency to present our pilot program to a diverse audience. Participants ranged from a young fifth generation row crop farmer to a poultry grower who has been raising chickens for 70 years. Most attendees represented underserved populations.

Over 30 people signed up to spend four hours learning about crop insurance from the Risk Management Agency. They also attended a presentation about becoming a crop insurance agent or adjuster.

"I am excited about the Building Resiliency program, particularly as it targets people of color," said Liz O'Gilvie, an African American farmer from Massachusetts.

"I think becoming trained as adjusters and agents positions us to be educators in the communities we serve," she explains. "We'll be able to ensure farmers participate in many of the USDA programs that they probably aren't aware of."

It was evident to me that many farmers in the audience did not have crop insurance. That is why our outreach and education efforts are so critical to the success of our agency's mission.

The event was an important opportunity to connect with diverse producers and leaders from organizations that serve all our nation's producers.

USDA and the Risk Management Agency are being directly responsive to the needs that we hear from the countryside.

If you are interested in participating or finding out more information about the Building Resiliency pilot program, please email Lorette Picciano at [lpicciano@ruralco.org](mailto:lpicciano@ruralco.org), or Tomie Peterson at [tomie@indianag.org](mailto:tomie@indianag.org).

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