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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Twelve Communities Selected for North Carolina Local Government Service Corps

CHAPEL HILL, NC – Twelve North Carolina towns have been selected for the North Carolina Local Government Service Corps. The two-year initiative, a partnership between the School of Government at UNC-Chapel Hill and Appalachian State University, is designed to assist some of the most economically distressed communities in the state. The project is funded by a grant from the Golden LEAF Foundation. The NC Rural Economic Development Center and the NC League of Municipalities have been active in supporting the Service Corps and shaping its development.

The pilot phase of the Service Corps project will deploy four graduates from three of the state's Master of Public Administration (MPA) programs to work as Golden LEAF Management Advisors with the selected communities. The management advisors, who will earn their MPA degrees this spring, have received advanced training in economic development, local government management, and proposal writing and grant administration. They will provide hands-on economic development and capacity-building assistance to the selected communities for two years, beginning in August 2009. In addition, public officials in the host communities will receive scholarships to attend regional Essentials of Economic Development workshops offered by the School of Government in partnership with Appalachian State University and other universities as regionally appropriate.

The communities, selected in geographic clusters in order to facilitate one management advisor being able to work with several communities in an area, include Drexel, Hildebran, and Rutherford College; Dobson, Boonville, and Cooleemee; Star, Candor, and Ellerbe; and Bolton, Northwest, and Navassa. Each cluster of communities has agreed to share the services of a management advisor, and has defined specific projects or priorities to be addressed during the two-year period.

The Golden LEAF Management Advisors are John Gowan from UNC-Chapel Hill, Elton Daniels from UNC-Wilmington; and Amanda Reid and Tyler Beardsley from Appalachian State University. Will Lambe, associate director of the Community and Economic Development program at the School of Government, is project director for the Service Corps initiative.

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