



February 15, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**School of Government Receives \$1.625 Million
from Local Government Federal Credit Union for New Initiatives**

Chapel Hill, NC – The School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has received a commitment of \$1.625 million from Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) for two new initiatives to help North Carolina local governments.

The Community Development Finance initiative will receive \$1 million to create new opportunities for economically distressed communities in North Carolina by increasing their access to and use of innovative development finance instruments.

“Many communities work hard to determine strategic priorities for development, but then have difficulty determining how to finance new projects,” said Mike Smith, dean of the School of Government. “This new initiative will help them tackle that challenge.”

In the initiative, the School of Government will help local governments and development nonprofits increase their capacity to leverage private investment through public development finance mechanisms, such as tax credit programs, self-financing bonds, special assessment districts, loan programs, and others. The initiative also will allow the School to test innovations in the field of development finance in partnership with social entrepreneurs in distressed areas of North Carolina.

The remaining funds will support creation of the LGFCU Fellows Program. This program will provide mid-level public executives, many of whom have risen through the ranks of local government service departments without executive training, with the skills to develop and manage programs and people, as well as to build systems and cultures for creative, effective service delivery.

“This new program is particularly important now, when the pool of local government management talent is shrinking,” Smith said. “Hiring freezes, layoffs, and flattening of organizational structures have contributed to a smaller pool of middle managers and have narrowed the natural pipelines for leadership succession.”

LGFCU Fellows will participate in a new executive development course and will further develop their leadership capacity through follow-up activities. In addition to supporting start-up needs, LGFCU funding will subsidize the course fees for the first three groups of fellows, allowing the program to start at a time when government training and development budgets are being cut significantly.

LGFCU President Maurice Smith said, “We are excited to partner with the School of Government on these two very important needs. Focusing on community development finance and the people who faithfully serve in our local governments is an investment in North Carolina. When local governments succeed, our citizens flourish. Every resident of our state deserves a fighting chance at a successful life. This is just a small down payment toward helping dreams come true.”

Mike Smith added, “I am grateful to LGFCU, and especially to Maurice Smith and the members of the LGFCU Board, for their strong vision and trust in the School. These funds will allow us to provide important and innovative assistance to local governments at a time when they face enormous challenges.”

Local Government Federal Credit Union is a not-for-profit, member-owned financial cooperative established to serve the financial needs of North Carolina local government employees, elected officials, volunteers and their families.

The commitment from Local Government Federal Credit Union supports the Innovate@Carolina Campaign, a \$125 million drive to help make Carolina a world leader in launching university-born ideas for the good of society. To learn more, visit innovate.unc.edu.

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