



Courtesy photo for the News-Courier

The Knox-Haskell Texas Rural Leadership Program (TRLP) graduates and speakers are shown (l-r) in front row are Ronnie McDonald, Lynn White, Joy Lynn Pool, Mitzi Welch, Scott Bearden, Carl Milburn, Parris Pittman, Laura Bowers, Lorrie Coop and Teresa Martinez. In the bottom row are Tatiana Nchotu, Tammy Cunningham, Erin Dunnam, Jimi Coplen, Sheena Crosson, Mary Drury.

Leadership graduates plan community projects

Special to the News-Courier

The Knox-Haskell Texas Rural Leadership Program (TRLP) has completed its 2015 pilot program to encourage individuals to become better educated about resources and community leadership roles in rural communities.

A total of 14 completed the eight-month program to study leadership curriculum as well as hear from local civic and business leaders regarding resources.

During the graduation ceremony in Knox City earlier this month, program participants and guests heard from Ronnie McDonald, Executive Director of TRLP as well as Dr. Lynn White, President of TRLP who traveled from College Station to acknowledge the series, its accomplishments and future project plans that program graduates plan to implement in their communities.

The Haskell County class community project plans included a Haskell city park clean-up and beautification effort as well as spearheading a long term vision and fundraising plan for city park improvements.

Graduates of the Haskell county class who will implement the plan include Scott Bearden, DaLinda Black, Laura Bowers, Sheena Crosson, Erin Dunnam, Mary Drury, Tammy Cunningham, Teresa Martinez, Carl Milburn and Parris Pittman.

The Knox County class community project

plans included pursuing state grants and funding for additional sidewalks and decorative lighting around the Knox County courthouse area as well as helping with other projects around the City of Benjamin.

Graduates of the Knox County class who will implement the plan include Lorrie Coop, Jimi Coplen, Tatiana Nchotu, Joy Lynn Pool and Mitzi Welch.

Initial organizers for the TRLP included the City of Haskell, Development Corporation of Haskell, Haskell County Extension Service, Knox County Visioning Group, Knox County Extension Service as well as Texas Rural Leadership Program leaders based out of College Station.

Businesses who sponsored an employee to attend included Davis Kinard of Haskell CISD, Richardson's True Value, Haskell Feeds, Knox County Appraisal District and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

At this time, the series is expected to be repeated for the 2015 – 2016 calendar year. The eight part series will most likely again include the following topics and themes: Introduction to Community Development, Together Leadership in a Nutshell, Communication Skills, Organizing and Group Dynamics, Leading as well as Planning and Project Management.

Applications for the next leadership course will start in August. For more information, call 940 459-4121 or 940 864-3424.