

## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Contact:**

**Angeline F. Johnson, CEO**

**Community Connections Consulting Services**

**[angeline@cccsconsulting.com](mailto:angeline@cccsconsulting.com)**

**316-444-6767**

**WICHITA, KANSAS** - Community Connections Consulting Services (C3S Consulting) is honored to announce that our CEO, Angeline F. Johnson, has been selected to serve as an inaugural Fellow for the International Economic Development Council's (IEDC) Economic Recovery Corps (ERC) initiative beginning in February 2024. This \$30 million dollar initiative is a cooperative agreement with the IEDC and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). As shared on the IEDC webpage, "The Economic Recovery Corps (ERC) is a new, collaborative initiative designed to accelerate recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in distressed communities and regions throughout the U.S. by connecting organizations with the talent and capacity needed to advance new ways of doing economic development that promote economic resilience and transformative change." (<https://economicrecoverycorps.org>) Angeline will be partnered with the Greater Wichita Partnership located in Wichita, Kansas to provide support in identifying how to best utilize available resources to address critical components that contribute to the economic well-being and vitality of this community through the lens of affordable housing, childcare, and regional transit.

Learn more about the project here: <https://economicrecoverycorps.org/fellow-information/angeline-f-johnson>

When asked why she felt that the partnership with ERC was an important one, Angeline shared the following:

*"As the nation is recovering from the damaging impacts of the COVID pandemic, it is imperative that organizations rally together in a collaborative spirit to bring economic health and vitality back to our communities. Through the efforts of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), and each of their national and local host partners, Fellows are positioned and equipped to bring a focused approach in efforts happening that will make a positive difference in communities across the U.S. and its territories. I am proud to be a member of the very first cohort of professionals selected to initiate and advance this work forward for a stronger America!"*

With more than 1,400 applicants, Angeline and the 64 other selected Fellows that make up the inaugural cohort, will be in place in 44 states, 9 efforts in tribal communities, and U.S. territories for the next 30 months.

**Learn more about this effort, please see IEDC's official press release here:**

**<https://www.iedconline.org/news/2024/02/05/press-releases/international-economic-development-council-iedc-announces-the-economic-recovery-corps-inaugural-cohort-of-65-fellows-host-communities/>**

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## **About Community Connections Consulting Services (<https://ccsconsulting.com>)**

Community Connections Consulting Services, LLC (also known as C3S) is a boutique consulting firm that provides one-on-one support to governmental, non-governmental organizations, nonprofit, and for-profit entities whose mission align with making a marked difference in urban communities throughout the United States as well as internationally. The mission of C3S is to provide high-level professional expertise and implementation guidance to support the earnest efforts of governmental, non-governmental, nonprofit, and for-profit entities working to improve the quality of life for individuals, children, and families. Angeline F. Johnson is the firm's founder and CEO.

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## **ECONOMIC RECOVERY CORPS LEADS, HOST AGENCY AND PARTNERS**

### **ERC LEADS**

**U.S. Economic Development Administration (<https://www.eda.gov>):** The mission of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting competitiveness and preparing the nation's regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy. An agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA invests in communities and supports regional collaboration in order to create jobs for U.S. workers, promote American innovation, and accelerate long-term sustainable economic growth.

**IEDC (<https://www.iedconline.org>):** The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,300 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities by creating, retaining, and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members engage in the full range of economic development practices. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in various settings, including local, state, provincial, and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities, and a variety of other institutions. When we succeed, our members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions. Learn more at [iedconline.org](http://iedconline.org).

### **HOST AGENCY**

Greater Wichita Partnership (<https://greaterwichitapartnership.org>): The Greater Wichita Partnership is the economic development organization for the Greater Wichita region. Our work is focused on three priority areas — Jobs, Talent and Quality of Place — to fast-forward growth. Each priority is driven by highly detailed, research-driven plans. Working collaboratively with partners to apply holistic strategies and creative tactics in each of these priority areas, together we are creating a more vibrant and successful community now and a solid future for the next generation.

### **ERC PARTNERS**

**National League of Cities Institute (NLCI) (<https://www.nlc.org>):** The National League of Cities (NLC) is an organization comprised of city, town and village leaders that are focused on improving the quality of life for their current and future constituents. With nearly 100 years of dedication to the strength and advancement of local governments, NLC has gained the trust and support of more than 2,700 cities across the nation. Our mission is to

relentlessly advocate for, and protect the interests of, cities, towns and villages by influencing federal policy, strengthening local leadership and driving innovative solutions.

**International City/County Management Association (ICMA) (<https://icma.org>):** ICMA's vision is to be the leading association of local government professionals dedicated to creating and supporting thriving communities throughout the world. We do this by working with our more than 11,000 members to identify and speed the adoption of leading local government practices in order to improve the lives of residents. ICMA offers membership, professional development programs, research, publications, data and information, technical assistance, and training to thousands of city, town, and county chief administrative officers, their staffs, and other organizations throughout the world.

**National Association of Counties Research Foundation (NACo RF) (<https://www.naco.org>):** NACo strengthens America's counties, serving nearly 40,000 county elected officials and 3.6 million county employees. Our Mission: Strengthen America's counties; Our Vision: Healthy, safe and vibrant counties across America. NACo is owned by America's county governments, with oversight and governance by an executive committee and board of directors.

**National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation (NADO RF) (<https://www.nado.org>):** The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) is a 501c4 membership association that represents the interests of regional community and economic development practitioners. Established in 1967, NADO advocates for federal policies and programs that promote equitable community development, economic competitiveness, rural development, economic mobility, and quality of place. NADO represents a national network of more than 500 Regional Development Organizations (RDOs) across the country.

**Center on Rural Innovation (CORI) (<https://ruralinnovation.us>):** The Center on Rural Innovation (CORI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization partnering with rural leaders across the country to build tech economies that support scalable entrepreneurship and lead to more tech jobs in rural America. Established in 2017, CORI is at the heart of a dynamic social enterprise focused on closing the rural opportunity gap. To maximize all possible resources to address this critical problem, the organization partners with a taxable nonprofit, **Rural Innovation Strategies, Inc.** (RISI), and a seed fund, **CORI Innovation Fund** (CIF), focused on early-stage technology companies located in rural areas.

**RAIN Catalysts (<https://www.raincatalysts.org>):** RAIN (Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network) Catalysts is a 501(c)(3) global non-profit organization that is run by experienced entrepreneurs and local entrepreneurial ecosystem-builders. RAIN exists to reduce barriers to entrepreneurship and innovation for underrepresented populations and communities. Since 2014, RAIN Catalysts has been invited to serve 52 communities in Oregon and Washington, plus 4 cities in Pakistan, to help them build inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems and innovation economies. RAIN's community-informed approach is investigative, not prescriptive – which means we join-in to existing community activities/conversations, engage local stakeholders, listen, map ecosystem assets, identify and leverage strengths, identify gaps, and spin-up programming that meets the needs of that community's entrepreneurs. RAIN's Mission is to partner with communities to catalyze inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems, connect entrepreneurs to resources—including overlooked entrepreneurs—and contribute to the creation of prosperous economies. RAIN's Vision is that communities everywhere support, value, and celebrate all entrepreneurs; regional leaders recognize entrepreneurs are a primary creator of net new jobs; communities of any size have thriving economies, and a culture of possibilities is embraced.