

Around the South

June 2008 Vol. 4, No. 6

SRDC Items of Interest

- **Youth Entrepreneurship Symposium a Major Success**
Under the leadership of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development (NERCRD), the SRDC helped co-sponsor an important conference in State College, Pennsylvania on June 4-6, 2008. The workshop attracted more than 40 Extension educators and others from various parts of the U.S. The symposium offered participants a unique opportunity to hear about a variety of innovative youth entrepreneurship development programs and activities underway both within and outside the land-grant university system. Aside from exploring ways to build multi-state youth entrepreneurship development training through the Regional Rural Development Centers, participants endorsed plans to establish a Youth Entrepreneurship Subcommittee, one that will work hand-in-hand with the eXtension “Entrepreneurs and Their Communities” Community of Practice. Photos from the symposium can be viewed [here](#).
- **SRDC Announces Business Retention and Expansion Training**
The SRDC will hold Business Retention and Expansion Training on July 20-22, 2008, in Galveston, Texas. This training will introduce participants to the elements of a successful BR&E program and provide an assessment and planning framework that can be used to evaluate an established BR&E program or design a program tailored to the specific needs and capacity of the local community. For more information and to register, go to <http://srdc.msstate.edu/economic/bre.htm>.
- **Registration Open for 2008 SERA-19 Conference**
Registration is continuing for the 2008 SERA-19 Conference, “Research Trends: Determining the Future of Health Programming.” The conference will be held August 4-6, 2008, in Houston, Texas. This year’s theme reflects a focus on the cutting-edge research that influences all aspects of health programming in rural areas. To learn more about SERA-19 and to register for the conference, visit <http://srdc.msstate.edu/sera19/index.html>.

Other Items of Interest

- **Rural U.S. Suffers Impact of Gas Prices**
As the national average for gasoline passes \$4 a gallon, motorists, especially in rural areas, are feeling the strain of the pump. While the national average shows Americans

are spending about 4 percent of their take-home income on gasoline, in rural areas that average goes as high as 16 percent. With so much income going toward gasoline, people are changing their diets, taking buyouts from employers, and working shorter work weeks. To read more about the effects of gasoline prices in the U.S., go to <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/09/business/09gas.html?pagewanted=1&ei=5087&em&en=c16ffd5dd28b7453&ex=1213156800>.

- **Food Stamps and Obesity: What We Know and What It Means**

Critics have questioned whether the Food Stamp Program has contributed to higher rates of obesity among some low-income populations due to boosting food consumption or fostering cycles of boom-and-bust consumption. However, research shows that Food Stamp Participation does not increase the likelihood for being overweight or obese for both men and children. For women, multiple studies show a potential link; however, the effect appears to be small. To read more, see the article at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/June08/Features/FoodStampsObesity.htm>.

- **Airlines Cutting Services in Rural Areas**

As fuel costs increase, airlines are cutting flights and eliminating services to small towns leaving would-be passengers to drive hours to larger airports or eliminate travel plans altogether. Over the past year, 30 small town airports have lost airline service while over 400 airports have seen an overall reduction in the number of flights. Despite the federal government's \$100 million program to subsidize air travel to rural and remote locations, the subsidies have not risen enough to cover current costs. To read more about effects of rising airline fuel costs on rural America, visit <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/21/business/21air.html>.

- **Defining the "Rural" in Rural America**

While "rural" is a common term, it lacks a common meaning. According to whether the definition is based on administrative, land-use, or economic concepts, rural can range from 17 to 49 percent of the United States. These various definitions reflect the multidimensional qualities of rural America and each definition tends to serve the goals of research projects and economic development programs that use them. To see find out more about the definitions of rural, read the article at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/June08/Features/RuralAmerica.htm>.

- **1.23 Million Students Will Fail to Graduate in 2008**

Almost 30 percent of the class of 2008 will fail to graduate with their peers. While state-level councils are increasing in popularity to better align educational institutions by bringing together key representatives from all levels of education, state government, business, and the community, these groups often lack the support and clear agendas necessary for success. Graduation data is available for every U.S. school district and

state. More information can be found at

http://www.edweek.org/media/ew/dc/2008/DC08_Press_FULL_FINAL.pdf.

Funding Opportunities

- **SRDC's Grant Connections: Rural Development Funding Opportunities**

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<http://srdc.msstate.edu/funding/jun08.html> --Available June 30!

The SRDC staff compiles Grant Connections primarily for the faculty of land-grant colleges and universities in the South to provide funding information in support of activities in agricultural economics, education, human sciences, rural sociology, youth development and other related disciplines.

Conferences and Trainings

- **Delta Regional Authority Annual Conference**

"Reimagining the Delta"

June 23-25, 2008

New Orleans, Louisiana

<http://www.dra.gov/>

- **Business Retention and Expansion Training**

July 20-22, 2008

Galveston, Texas

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/economic/bre.htm>

- **The Society for the Study of Social Problems 58th Annual Meeting**

"Crossing Borders: Activist Scholarship, Globalization, and Social Justice"

July 31-August 2, 2008

Boston, Massachusetts

<http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/23>

- **SERA-19 Conference**

"Research Trends: Determining the Future of Health Programming"

August 4-6, 2008

Houston, Texas

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/sera19/index.html>

- **Regional Quality Growth Conference**

“Building Sustainable Communities for the 21st Century”

August 12-14, 2008

Charleston, South Carolina

<http://www.southeastwaterforum.org/roundtables/default.asp>

- **Galaxy III Conference**

"Celebrating the Extension System: Strengths, Diversity and Unique Qualities"

September 15-19, 2008

Indianapolis, Indiana

<https://sharepoint.agriculture.purdue.edu/ces/galaxy/default.aspx>

- **Caring for the Caregivers Conference**

“Preparing the Caregiver to Give: Issues, Challenges, Solutions”

October 1-3, 2008

Chattanooga, TN

http://www.clemson.edu/fyd/Assets/Adobe_Acrobat_files/caregiver_flyer.pdf

Job Opportunities

- **Vice Chancellor for Ag and Life Sciences/Dean, College of Ag and Life Sciences**

Texas A&M University

View announcement:

<http://agrilife.tamu.edu/agrilifevcsearch/docs/VCDeanAgriLifePositionAnnouncement.pdf>

Submit Announcements

- Job announcements and other items of interest may be sent to [Alicia Barnes](#) for possible inclusion in future issues.

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