



June 2009 Vol. 5, No. 6

SRDC ITEMS OF INTEREST

2009 Resource Development Grants for e-Commerce Released

The Southern Rural Development Center, in partnership with CSREES and the Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) announces *Building Quality e-Commerce Educational Resources to Support Extension Programming* a grant opportunity for up to \$25,000 to develop and provide new educational products, or to significantly expand/improve existing resources of the National e-Commerce Extension Initiative. All Land-Grant University Faculty/Educators (1862, 1890 or 1994) located anywhere in the U.S. are eligible for consideration. Proposals must be postmarked no later than July 20, 2009 or received by e-mail to the SRDC by 5 p.m. Central Daylight Time on July 20. For the complete RFP and list of targeted educational topics please visit the 2009 Resource Development Grants Page at www.srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/grants09.

SRDC Welcomes Student Summer Intern

Joining the SRDC from Austin College in Sherman Texas, rising senior Katy Williams will spend the summer completing research for several SRDC projects including the National e-Commerce Extension Initiative and the Cashing in on Business curriculum. After working last summer as a student intern at her local Texas AgriLife Extension office in Hopkins County, Williams sought a position at the SRDC to gain a better understanding of the process behind rural community development. Following graduation, Williams, a sociology major, plans to pursue a master's degree in either rural sociology or community development.

SERA-19 2009 Conference Postponed

Due to the current economic crisis that has hit many of the nation's universities and Extension Services, the SERA-IEG 19 Rural Health Conference has been postponed to a future date. The date and location of the next conference will be provided as soon as they are available.

Regional Rural Development Centers Launching New "Foundations of Practice in Community Development" Training in September

Want to know more about the principles of doing good community development work? If so, take a close look at the new "Foundations of Practice in Community Development" that the SRDC and its sister regional centers are kicking off in September. The distance education program will provide Extension educators with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to work more successfully in communities. The initial training program – designated as Level I CD

Training – will consist of a series of seven, one and one-half hour sessions featuring topics such as demographics, understanding the local leadership structure, the community's economy, and approaches to community development. A nationally recognized team of faculty drawn from universities across the U.S. will be serving as instructors. All sessions will be held from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Central Standard Time. Hurry and register!! The first session is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, September 29. For more information and to register, visit <http://srdc.msstate.edu/fop/>.

Double Early Bird Savings Ends June 30th for Joint Meeting of SR-PLN, AEA & ASRED

Receive discounts on both conference and hotel registration fees when you register by June 30th for the 2009 SR-PLN, AEA & ASRED Joint Meeting scheduled on August 24-28, 2009 in Orlando, Florida. This year's theme, "Meeting the Challenges of a Changing World - Staying Relevant, Maintaining Funding and Adapting to Shifting Needs and Priorities" will address the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (The New Farm Bill), what it means for PLN, how it will be paid for, and changes to be expected in years to come. Keynote speakers include Dr. Deborah Sheely (Interim Deputy Administrator for CSREES), Dr. Ron Brown (Executive Director for the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors), and Dr. L. Washington Lyons (Executive Director for the Association of Extension Administrators). To register and view a tentative agenda, visit <http://srpln.msstate.edu/>

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

SAFER Releases Bioenergy State Fact Sheets

The Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy Resources (SAFER) Alliance has compiled *Bioenergy State Fact Sheets* for fourteen Southern states. Featuring state-specific data that was presented in the *Southern Bioenergy Roadmap*, these fact sheets provide data on current energy use, biomass resources, bioenergy commercial plants, research activity, fueling stations, and more. All fact sheets can be accessed at http://www.saferalliance.net/projects/statefacts.html?mc_cid=ddfb2d42f&mc_eid=5d0771113e.

Rural Americans Long to be Linked

In Plains, Texas, the local phone company, Windstream, offers high-speed DSL service in part of Plains (population: around 1,450). But those who live outside the city limits, including farmers such as Jeff Roper, don't have a lot of choice. Roper currently uses ERF Wireless, which provides service in more remote areas. He says the service, which costs \$40 a month for a 1.5-megabit connection, is pretty good, though it sometimes goes down for days at a time. To help run his 2,400-acre farm, he spent \$65,000 on equipment for a satellite-based GPS service for his tractors, useful for navigation in the field. Broadband, handy for a variety of diagnostic and operational purposes such as irrigation and real-time weather monitoring, isn't available — so Roper and other farmers in this West Texas community do without. Rural folks aren't prone to complain, Roper says. They work hard, love their communities and wouldn't think of living anywhere else. But that doesn't mean they don't want, and need, to be connected to the

outside world. Read more about broadband in rural America at http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2009-06-07-rural-broadband-digital_N.htm.

Scenic Landscapes Enhance Rural Growth

Natural amenities play an important role in attracting and retaining people in rural America (see “Farm Programs, Natural Amenities, and Rural Development” in the February 2005 issue of *Amber Waves*). But what exactly are people seeking and why? Understanding why people value the rural countryside is important for gauging the costs and benefits of Federal policies that affect rural land use, including farm commodity, rural, and environmental policies. Learn more about the preferred landscapes that attract rural migration at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Amberwaves/June09/Findings/ScenicLandscapes.htm>.

Through Boom and Bust: Minorities, Immigrants and Homeownership

The boom-and-bust cycle in the U.S. housing market over the past decade and a half has generated greater gains and larger losses for minority groups than it has for whites, according to an analysis of housing, economic and demographic data by the Pew Hispanic Center, a project of the Pew Research Center. From 1995 through the middle of this decade, homeownership rates rose more rapidly among all minorities than among whites. But since the start of the housing bust in 2005, rates have fallen more steeply for two of the nation's largest minority groups -- blacks and native-born Latinos -- than for the rest of the population. Covering the nation's 3,141 counties, this report analyzes three major interrelated aspects of the U.S. housing market: trends in homeownership from 1995 through the middle of 2008 among different racial, ethnic and nativity groups; higher-priced lending to Hispanics and blacks in 2006 and 2007; and differences in foreclosure rates. Learn more about these trends at http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1220/home-ownership-trends-blacks-hispanics?src=prc-latest&proj=global&mc_cid=626a90b0ff&mc_eid=5d0771113e.

Why Do Some Rural Schools Succeed? Three Alabamians Look and Find Some Answers.

A perfect storm-fueled by the outmigration of young adults and rising poverty and strengthened by a declining economy and loss of jobs—swirls across rural Alabama. In its wake lie communities struggling not only to maintain a certain standard of living, but just to exist. And the most notable victims are the smallest among the community, the children. *Lessons Learned from County Schools* is an honest attempt to shed light on one of Alabama's most pressing needs—how do they better prepare the 30 percent of the state's children who go to public school in rural communities for a future where a quality education will be the rule and not the exception? This publication explains what was learned about 10 outstanding rural schools and 10 communities. These schools offer glimpses of what is possible when expectations, teamwork, collaboration and pride become a way of life. Read more about the community aspect that has helped these schools succeed at <http://www.agi.state.al.us/uploads/r7/5w/r75wkW1B6Dsr2V/VuI5hx2w/LessonsLearnedRuralSchools2009.pdf>.

Nonmetro Areas Showing the Effects of the Economic Downturn

With the onset of the current recession in December 2007, the nonmetro unemployment rate

jumped from 5.5 percent in the first quarter of 2008 to 8.5 percent a year later. This is the largest year-to-year point increase in the nonmetro unemployment rate since the beginning of the ERS data series in 1973. The metro unemployment rate increased from 5.2 percent to 8.9 percent in the same period. See more about nonmetro unemployment rates at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Amberwaves/June09/Findings/NonmetroAreas.htm>.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

SRDC's Grant Connections: Rural Development Funding Opportunities

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The latest issue will be released June 30 at

http://srdc.msstate.edu/funding/grant_connections.html

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

Analyzing Poverty and Socioeconomic Trends Using the American Community Survey

June 22-26, 2009

Ann Arbor, Michigan

<http://www.npc.umich.edu/opportunities/papers/analyzingpoverty>

Summer Leadership Institute: Leadership for Transforming Organizations in a Time of Unprecedented Challenges and Uncertainties

June 25-26, 2009

Tuskegee University

http://srdc.msstate.edu/files/btwpamphlet_april8.doc

Microenterprise! The Engine for Economic Growth

June 30, 2009

Lexington, Kentucky

<http://peakky.org>

Transition to a Bioeconomy: The Role of Extension in Energy

June 30-July 1, 2009

Little Rock, Arkansas

<http://www.farmfoundation.org/webcontent/Transition-to-a-Bioeconomy-The-Role-of-Extension-in-Energy-1704.aspx?z=85&a=1704>

American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) and American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI)

2009 Joint Annual Meeting

July 26-28, 2009

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

<http://www.aaea.org/2009am/>

Rural Sociology Society 2009 Annual Meeting

July 30-August 2, 2009

Madison, Wisconsin

<http://www.ruralsociology.org/annual-meeting/>

Southern Region Program Leadership Network

Joint Meeting of PLN, AEA & ASRED

August 24-28, 2009

Orlando, Florida

<http://srpln.msstate.edu/conferences/proceedings.htm>

Foundations of Practice in Community Development

Understanding Communities and their Dynamics—A Distance Education Program

September 29-November 11, 2009

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/projects/corecomp/component1-fall2009.htm>

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Research Agricultural Economist, Economic Research Service/USDA

View announcement:

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AboutERS/Employment/OpportunitiesPage.htm>

Director, Missouri Research Corporation, Southeast Missouri State University

View announcement:

<http://www4.semo.edu/humanresources/JOBS/Director-MRC.htm>

Forestry Program Associate, Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED)

View announcement:

<http://www.maced.org/forestry-ad.htm>

Program Director, Everyday Democracy, Hartford, Connecticut

View announcement:

<http://nonprofitprofessionals.com/searches/ed-pd.htm>

Project Manager, Industrial Outreach Service, Mississippi State University

View announcement:

[http://srdc.msstate.edu/newsletters/documents/project
manager %20%20job announcement.pdf](http://srdc.msstate.edu/newsletters/documents/project_manager%20%20job_announcement.pdf)

**Senior Project Associate (Associate Director), Northeast Regional Center for Rural
Development**

View Job Number 29929:

<http://www.psu.jobs/Search/Opportunities.html>

Vice President, Finance & Operations, Everyday Democracy, Hartford, Connecticut

View announcement:

<http://nonprofitprofessionals.com/searches/ed-vpfo.htm>