



## **SRDC ITEMS OF INTEREST**

### **SRDC releases results from disaster preparation for disadvantaged populations evaluation**

Not everyone has the resources to prepare for, cope with, and recover from disasters. Factors such as medical challenges, limited financial resources, language barriers, limited access to transportation, and numerous socioeconomic aspects impact a disaster's effect on households and communities. To gain clarity on how best to provide vulnerable households and communities with needed knowledge, tools and capacity for disaster response, the Southern Rural Development Center, in partnership with land-grant university Extension educators in five key states, conducted community-based field assessments to explore disaster awareness and preparedness among 10 strategically selected communities in Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, and Oklahoma. In its newly released reports, the SRDC evaluates how well the resources from FEMA's Emergency Preparedness Demonstration (EPD) Project prepare communities to address the unique needs facing local vulnerable audiences during times of disasters. The brief report is a four-page executive summary that overviews the project, while the full report offers extended details along with tables and other resources. To access both reports and learn more about this initiative, visit <http://srdc.msstate.edu/epi/>.

### **RIDGE Center for Targeted Studies seeks food assistance and nutrition research grant proposals**

Joining forces with the Economic Research Service, USDA, the SRDC is excited to announce the "Request for Proposals" (RFP) associated with the new RIDGE Center for Targeted Studies @ the SRDC. The RIDGE (Research Innovation and Development Grants in Economics) program is designed to invest in social science-based research that helps advance our understanding of key food assistance and nutrition challenges impacting rural people and places in rural America. For 2010, the geographic focus of the RIDGE Center for Targeted Studies grants program will be on the U.S. South, although other geographic areas are acceptable if compared with the Southern region, its counties and/or communities. The deadline for submission of a completed proposal is July 15. Grants of up to \$35,000 will be available to support selected projects. Please join us on Wednesday June 23 at noon CDT for a Webinar to learn more about this opportunity as

well as plans to expand the geographic focus in the coming years. To access the RFP, visit <http://srdc.msstate.edu/ridge/>.

### **Early bird registration for 2010 Joint Meeting of SR-PLN, AEA & ASRED ends July 15**

Now is the last month for early bird registration for the 2010 SR-PLN, AEA & ASRED Joint Meeting. While registration will continue until early August, early bird prices are only good through July 15. PLN will be in Memphis, Tennessee on August 23-27, 2010 with the theme, Affecting a Changing Economy. Topics to discuss include funding options, programming and staffing priorities, and partnership opportunities. A tentative agenda along with hotel information is available at the 2010 conference information page. For more information about the Joint Meeting, please visit <http://srpln.msstate.edu/>.

### **SRDC welcomes interns for research and publications/communications**

The SRDC is excited to announce that Stephanie Pink and Rachel Jenkins have joined the SRDC staff for the summer to assist in numerous initiatives. Pink, a doctoral student at MSU in Public Policy and Administration, is originally from Auburn, Alabama. She has launched into completing evaluation data for the Turning the Tide on Poverty project. She will also assist in supporting Delta research and exploring entrepreneurial efforts across the U.S. Working to expand the Center's communication activities, Jenkins, an undergraduate public relations major at MSU, will help launch and promote the updates of both Cashing in on Business, Care for Your Local Economy curricula and new e-commerce modules. In addition, she will produce content for the Web along with print publications.

## **OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST**

### **USDA releases five-year strategic plan featuring rural community development goals**

As part of the USDA five-year plan, the Secretary of Agriculture Thomas J. Vilsack announces rural community development as a major goal. In the report, Vilsack writes "Now more than ever, America's agricultural and rural communities face challenges that jeopardize the livelihoods and well-being of people working the land or living in rural areas.[...] These challenges and others will require USDA to not only provide a reliable safety net for farmers and ranchers, but also help communities and businesses to innovate by implementing new technologies and modernizing their infrastructure to ensure access to new markets, increased competitiveness, and greater resilience of their productive resources." Accordingly, the first strategic goal is to "Assist Rural Communities to Create Prosperity so They Are Self-Sustaining, Repopulating, and Economically Thriving." To view how the USDA plans to achieve this important goal, access the full report at <http://www.ocfo.usda.gov/usdasp/sp2010/sp2010.pdf>.

## **State of the South 2010 report finds recessions nearly erased Gilded Age**

A new analysis of the Southern economy shows that the two recent recessions knocked the South off an upward trajectory that had broadened the middle class and nearly closed the poverty gaps that perennially separated it from the rest of the country. In the first chapter of *The State of the South 2010*, researchers at MDC found that the boom of the 1980s and '90s amounted to a "gilded age" for the region, reducing poverty at a rate faster than the rest of the U.S. But the 2000s were a lost decade in the region as well as the nation. Over the past ten years, median household income declined more in the South than in any other region, and the South returned to the poverty rates of a decade ago. The pain has not been equally shared, the report finds. Hardest hit were rural counties with persistent poverty, metropolitan areas with a growing population of poor or near-poor people, and locales burdened with massive job losses. The report points out that the millions of low-skill, low-wage jobs lost in manufacturing probably have disappeared for good, so the South will have to put itself on a new track, creating jobs that pay a middle-class wage or better. The South, says the report, must move beyond coping with the immediate problems and look for the new ideas and policies that will sustain the region beyond recovery. To access the full report and learn about upcoming chapters, visit <http://mdcinc.org/knowledge/sos-2010.aspx>.

## **ARC grant competition now open for community energy projects**

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has announced the fourth round of a grant competition to assist Appalachian communities in leveraging renewable-energy and energy-efficiency resources to revitalize their economies. ARC expects to provide eight to ten awards of up to \$75,000 each, for a total of \$545,000 in awards, to successful applicants. The goal of this grant competition is to develop a community infrastructure that grows markets for those enterprises, generating new energy jobs in Appalachia in the process. ARC will fund two complementary activities as part of this grant competition: the development of community energy plans; and the implementation of a demonstration energy-efficiency or renewable-energy project in target communities. To learn more about this opportunity, view the RFP at <http://www.arc.gov/images/programs/energy/ARC2010EnergyRFP.pdf>.

## **Vayda Named New Dean for Bumpers College, Associate Vice President of Division of Agriculture**

The University of Arkansas has selected Michael Vayda to serve as dean of the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences and associate vice president for academic programs in the Division of Agriculture. Provost Sharon Gaber announced the decision and said that Vayda will assume his duties July 1. Vayda currently serves as the associate dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Vermont and associate director of the Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station. He holds a doctoral degree in molecular biology and a Master of Arts in biochemical sciences from

Princeton University, and a Bachelor of Science in biochemistry and Bachelor of Arts in zoology from the University of New Hampshire. He held a post-doctoral appointment at the University of California, Berkeley, in plant molecular genetics.

### **Auburn Names Batchelor as New College of Agriculture Dean**

William Batchelor, head of the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering at Mississippi State University, has been named dean of Auburn University's College of Agriculture. He also will assume the directorship of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, pending approval by the Auburn University Board of Trustees at its June 18 meeting. Batchelor earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in agricultural engineering at the University of Georgia in 1986 and 1987, respectively, and his doctorate in agricultural engineering at the University of Florida in 1993. He led the development of the Sustainable Energy Research Center at Mississippi State University in 2005 and currently serves as its director. Batchelor will begin his appointment on July 15. He succeeds Richard Guthrie who is retiring after more than 25 years of service to Auburn.

### **FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES**

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

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/funding/grantconnections>

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**

#### **Community Development Society / International Association for Community Development Joint Annual International Conference**

July 24-28, 2010

New Orleans, Louisiana

[http://comm-dev.org/inside/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=63&Itemid=7](http://comm-dev.org/inside/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=63&Itemid=7)

#### **Agricultural & Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting**

July 25-27, 2010  
Denver, Colorado  
<http://www.aaea.org/meetings/>

### **73rd Annual RSS Meeting**

August 12-15, 2010  
Atlanta, Georgia  
<http://www.ruralsociology.us/>

### **Southern Economic Development Council**

2010 Annual Conference  
August 14-17, 2010  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
<http://www.sedc.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=4>

### **2010 Joint Meeting of SR-PLN, AEA & ASRED**

August 23-27, 2010  
Memphis, Tennessee  
<http://srpln.msstate.edu/conferences/10pln/info.html>

## **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Association Manager, National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals**

View announcement:  
<http://nacdep.net/RFPAssocMgr.pdf>

### **Research Agricultural Economist, Economic Research Service/USDA**

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

### **Research Associate, Office of Research and Innovation, North Carolina Economic Development Center**

View announcement:  
[http://srdc.msstate.edu/newsletters/ats/files/06\\_05-nc\\_rural\\_center\\_research\\_associate\\_desc.pdf](http://srdc.msstate.edu/newsletters/ats/files/06_05-nc_rural_center_research_associate_desc.pdf)

## **Research Social Science Analyst, Economic Research Service/USDA**

View announcement:

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

### **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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