

**SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER**



**ANNUAL REPORT  
2002-2003**



# Table of Contents

FROM THE DIRECTOR.....	4
MISSION & GOALS.....	5
PRIORITIES.....	5
INSTITUTIONS SERVED.....	5
RESEARCH.....	6
RESEARCH SUPPORTED BY THE SRDC.....	6
RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE SRDC.....	11
RESEARCH CONFERENCES ORGANIZED.....	13
EXTENSION.....	15
EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES ORGANIZED.....	15
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES PRODUCED/SUPPORTED BY THE SRDC.....	17
CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE BY STATE.....	21
PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES ESTABLISHED.....	22
PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED .....	27
WEBSITES.....	30
FUNDING.....	31
BOARD OF DIRECTORS.....	32
TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.....	33
CENTER STAFF.....	34



The theme of our 2002-2003 annual report – *Winds of Change* – is designed to reflect our view of key changes occurring in the South, in the region’s land-grant institutions, and at the Southern Rural Development Center. The past decade, for example, has brought about fundamental shifts in the complexion of our region’s rural population, their educational status, and the economic make-up of rural places. In essence, our people are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, the educational attainment of our residents is improving, and the economy of the rural South is expanding and diversifying. These shifts magnify the importance of having a strong rural development capacity in the South’s land-grant institutions that can help individuals, families and communities adjust to and benefit from these changing circumstances.

At the same time, positive shifts are occurring in our region’s land-grant university system. At the top of the list is the increasing presence of faculty and Extension educators engaged in community and rural development activities. In my 26 years of work in the South, I cannot remember a time when the support of Extension and Research Directors and Administrators for rural development has been as visible as it is today. Moreover, land-grant universities in the region are expanding their efforts to create multi-state, multi-capacity, multi-institutional teams that can better address the common rural development challenges facing their states. And more than ever, land-grant institutions are building important bridges with public and private sector partners who have a common commitment to rural people and places in the South. It is these type of changes that are prompting Extension community development leaders and the four regional rural development centers to work together in establishing a new national Extension association that will bring formal recognition to the community development activities of Extension educators across the United States.

The SRDC has attempted to build on the key “Winds of Change.” Thanks to the support of land-grant administrators and faculty, the Center now has in place one of the most comprehensive community/rural development training programs in the country – training activities that are keeping our Extension educators on the cutting edge of current and emerging community development opportunities in the South. Furthermore, the Center is building critical partnerships that are helping advance land-grant activities in the region. For example, the SRDC partnership with the Economic Research Service is expanding the number of social scientists in the South engaged in high quality food assistance and nutrition-related research in the country. With support from the Ford Foundation, the SRDC is helping to build new and lasting bonds between Cooperative Extension Services and rural community colleges in the South. And at present, the Center is spearheading a national effort to help advance the capacity of land-grant universities to develop and deliver e-commerce educational programs to small rural businesses in the South and beyond. These are but a sampling of the key efforts that the SRDC has been engaged in over the past year.

As you read our 2002-2003 annual report, we are hopeful that you discover the host of ways in which the “Winds of Change” are prominent in the South, in the region’s land-grant schools, and at the SRDC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bo Beaulieu". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bo Beaulieu  
Director and Professor

## MISSION & GOALS

The Southern Rural Development Center seeks to strengthen the capacity of the region's 29 land-grant institutions to address critical, contemporary rural development issues impacting the well-being of people and communities in the rural South. SRDC Goals are to:

- Stimulate the formation of multi-state research teams.
- Coordinate the development and revision of educational materials and maintain a centralized repository of educational resources.
- Organize and deliver high priority rural development research and educational workshops/conferences.
- Provide leadership for the preparation of science-based rural development policy reports.
- Build partnerships that link the South's land-grant university system with other key entities committed to rural development activities in the region.



## PRIORITIES

- Priority 1 Strengthen the engagement of rural people and organizations in the civic life of their communities.
- Priority 2 Promote sound rural economic and workforce development strategies that improve job quality and the competitiveness of workers in the rural South.
- Priority 3 Assist rural communities in developing sound strategies for addressing the challenges associated with the expansion of urban and suburban localities into rural areas.
- Priority 4 Expand efforts to improve health care access in the rural South and explore strategies for reducing the prevalence of food insecurity and hunger among the region's most vulnerable rural populations.
- Priority 5 Explore the prevalence of a "digital divide" among various populations and communities in the South and assist in the development of educational programs that advance the information technology capacity of rural people and places.

## INSTITUTIONS SERVED

### Alabama

Alabama A&M University  
Auburn University  
Tuskegee University

### Arkansas

University of Arkansas  
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

### Florida

Florida A&M University  
University of Florida

### Georgia

Fort Valley State University  
University of Georgia

### Kentucky

Kentucky State University  
University of Kentucky

### Louisiana

Louisiana State University  
Southern University

### Mississippi

Alcorn State University  
Mississippi State University

### North Carolina

North Carolina A&T State University  
North Carolina State University

### Oklahoma

Langston University  
Oklahoma State University

### Puerto Rico

University of Puerto Rico

### South Carolina

Clemson University  
South Carolina State University

### Tennessee

Tennessee State University  
University of Tennessee

### Texas

Prairie View A&M University  
Texas A&M University

### Virgin Islands

University of the Virgin Islands

### Virginia

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Virginia State University





## RESEARCH SUPPORTED BY THE SRDC

During FY2003, the Southern Rural Development Center made numerous contributions to research activities in the South. This support has been directed at strengthening the capacity of the Center's research colleagues to carry out rural development activities within their states, counties, parishes and territories. The SRDC remains committed to investing in high quality research, and this year's investments are outlined below.

### Senior Fellows Program

The Southern Rural Development Center established the Senior Fellows Program, with the support of its Board of Directors, in order to expand the number of land-grant faculty carrying out substantive research or Extension work in support of the activities of the SRDC. This program is designed to provide special support and recognition, for a period of one year, to an individual (or a team/committee of individuals) who is undertaking a special project that addresses a priority issue of the Center. The Senior Fellow is provided with financial resources by the SRDC to facilitate the successful completion of his/her project. The Senior Fellow will take a leadership role in carrying out a specialized activity/project (be it research or Extension) in support of one of the priority issues of the SRDC. This year's research projects are listed below.

### Assessing the Impacts of Urban Expansion into the Rural South

*Mitch Renkow, North Carolina State University*

This research sought to address two fundamental questions. One, to what extent does the expansion of urban and suburban localities into rural areas of the South represent a broadening of the geographical extent of urban labor markets (as in North Carolina), as opposed to indigenous expansion and relocation of new business into rural locations? Two, what are the ramifications of these trends for rural communities, in particular the impacts on local public finance, and what mechanisms exist for rural communities to deal with the "growing pains" associated with population growth? The results of this research will be published in the coming months as the third issue in the SRDC Policy Series under the working title, "Population, Employment and Mobility in the Rural South." The paper will discuss recent trends in population and employment growth in the South and the attendant impacts on rural communities.

### Community Action and Economic Development in Alabama's Forested Black Belt Areas

*Andrew Zekeri, Tuskegee University*

The purpose of this research is to estimate the effects of local economic development efforts on growth and change in the well-being of rural communities in Alabama's Black Belt forested areas and to identify characteristics, problems and consequences of local economic development efforts in selected rural communities exhibiting distinctive patterns of growth and change associated with the use of forest resources.

### Food Assistance Research Small Grants Program

The Southern Rural Development Center, in partnership with the USDA's Economic Research Service, continues to invest in a small grants research program that is designed to fund innovative, scholarly projects that explore food assistance issues among vulnerable populations in the rural South. These vulnerable groups include the elderly, children, minorities, the impoverished, and rural places that suffer from economic decline or stagnation. Both the soon to be completed studies, as well as the most recent pool of new grant awardees, are briefly described in this section.

### 2003 Grant Recipients

#### Women, Infants and the Food Environment: Influences on Food Security and Obesity

*Barbara Laraia and Peggy Bentley, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Obesity rates are increasing in the United States, with no signs of slowing; obesity is increasing in all age groups, races and both sexes. The project will explore neighborhood-

level influences on nutrition and obesity by collecting qualitative data from key informants. Key informants will be postpartum women, infant care givers, WIC nutritionists and administrators, anti-hunger advocates, supermarket management, and city and county officials. The project's specific aims will be: 1) to identify environmental influences on shopping behaviors, dietary intake, meal patterns and physical activity among postpartum women, infant caregivers and infants; 2) to understand political and economic processes that may shape the food environment; and 3) to develop a conceptual framework of neighborhood-level influences on food access among postpartum women. Further-more, identification of neighborhood variables that may influence food security, food-related coping behaviors, dietary intake and obesity will be used to inform two ongoing prospective cohort studies: one of postpartum weight retention and one of infant feeding.



### **Geographic Variation in Food Stamp and Other Assistance Program Participation Rates: Identifying Poverty Pockets in the South**

*William Hoyt and Frank Scott, University of Kentucky*

A result of the 1996 welfare reforms was that Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/Aid for Families with Dependent Children rolls declined dramatically, while Supplemental Security Income enrollment increased slightly. Since food stamp participation rates were considerably lower among SSI recipients than among TANF recipients, food stamp enrollment was significantly affected by welfare reform even though it was not directly targeted by the legislation. Understanding changes in food stamp participation thus requires a simultaneous analysis of participation in TANF and SSI. This project will study variation in participation rates across geographic locations in the Food Stamp, TANF, and SSI programs using county-level data. Data will be collected and simultaneously analyzed for participation in all three programs in order to compare the pre- and post-welfare reform periods.

### **Economic Burden of Obesity among Uninsured Individuals in the Rural South: A Case Study of Southeastern Kentucky**

*Eric Scorsone and Janet Tietyen, University of Kentucky*

Obesity has been documented as major health threat in the United States. It has been shown to be linked to higher rates of heart disease, hypertension, diabetes and other illness. The economic burden has also been demonstrated to be very large, rivaling or exceeding that of cancer, smoking and excessive drinking. To date, however, no study has examined the incidence of this economic burden. Obese individuals who are also members of a vulnerable population, such as those lacking health insurance, are likely to bear an even greater economic burden than those who are not obese. This study will test the hypothesis that obese individuals bear a greater economic burden, in the form of health care service use and out-of-pocket expenditures, than those who are not obese. This information will be useful in providing economic justification for Extension and government programs designed to address diet and health concerns.

### **The Economic Impact of Obesity in the South: Assessing Medical Spending Attributable to Obesity**

*Jerome Kolbo, Amal Khoury and Wendy Bounds, University of Southern Mississippi*

Recent national estimates of the economic costs of obesity are staggering. However, in the Southern region where obesity rates are among the highest in the country, no comprehensive study of the medical expenditures related to obesity has been conducted. This study will assess the medical spending attributable to obesity in the Southern region. Two national data sets will be linked to computer per capita and total spending attributable to obesity. These data provided the first and only estimates of obesity-related medical costs in this region. These estimates will form the basis for developing obesity-related programs through public agencies, private healthy plans and employers. Policymakers will have information needed to strengthen food and nutrition assistance programs so that appropriate strategies can be targeted to address weight loss and prevent weight gain.



### **Effects of Weight History, Resource Cycling and Fast Food on Overall Diet Quality and Health in Low-Income Louisiana Women**

*Carol O'Neil and Pamela Monroe, Louisiana State University*

This project will investigate short term and long-term physical and psychosocial outcomes associated with obesity in 100 low-income women in Louisiana, including those living in rural areas, with an emphasis on the association of resource cycling and reliance on fast foods on obesity. Previous work by the investigators has shown that overweight/obesity is common in low-income Louisiana women. Approximately 62 percent of participants in a previous study were overweight, and half of these individuals were obese. Women receiving food stamps have a heavy reliance on fast food, which depletes their food dollar and contributed to overall poor diet. Findings of the study will aid policymakers, nutrition educators and the women themselves understand more fully the relationship between income, food choices, and past and present weight.

### **Participation of Latino/Hispanic Population in the Food Stamp Program in the South**

*Safdar Muhammad and Fisseha Tegegne, Tennessee State University*

The Latino/Hispanic population is growing rapidly in the South but is characterized by high poverty rate and poor living standards, especially among those with children. The poverty level is about twice than that of the total U.S. population. The above indicate the potential need for public assistance including the Food Stamp Program. The goal of this study is to acquire an understanding of the dynamics of the Latino/Hispanic population and their participation in the FSP. Results of this project are expected to help in identifying and implementing programs and strategies to enhance their participation.

### **Assessing the Food Security Status of Nonprofit Assistance Recipients in Alabama, North Carolina and Tennessee**

*Odili Onianwa, Alabama A&M University, Godfrey Ejimakor, North Carolina A&T State University, Fisseha Tegegne, Tennessee State University, and Andrew Zekeri, Tuskegee University*

Assessing the food security status of nonprofit food assistance recipients in the South is especially important in view of recent trends in the regional economy such as the increasing number of racial and ethnic populations using nonprofit food assistance agencies to meet their food needs since the enactment of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act. Though a pilot study has been conducted that studied food security status, an improved study to understand the food security status of these populations in Alabama, North Carolina and Tennessee will contribute to the base of information decision makers need to make sound food assistance policy decisions now and for the future.

## **2002 Grant Recipients**

The following highlights projects in progress by the five recipients of the SRDC's Food Assistance Research Small Grants Program. These projects received funding in October 2002.

### **Assessing the Prevalence of Childhood Obesity among Limited Resource Latino and Non-Latino Families in Virginia**

*Elena Serrano and Ruby Cox, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*

Responding to the nation's growing concern with childhood obesity, this study sought to augment the existing data by evaluating the prevalence of children who are overweight in Virginia. A total of 200 fourth, fifth and sixth grade children's weight was assessed using four different methods of data collection. The children were representative of rural and urban localities with a significant Latino population. A supplemental assessment of one-fifth of the sample addressed body mass index, diet, physical activity, acculturation, body image, and preferred methods of education on nutrition and physical activity. By helping to obtain baseline data on overweight children as well as the factors contributing to their condition, the results of this study can be used to guide programming efforts for this population as well as shed light on different mechanisms for assessing children's weight.



### **Food Assistance and Working Poor Families in the Rural South**

*Bradford Mills and Christiana Hilmer, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*

The tenet that able adult household members should work to support their families and, thereby, escape poverty is the rationale underlying recent changes in social policy. Recent statistics, however, defy this logic. With the aim of providing the necessary information to tailor current assistance programs to better support the needs of working poor families in the rural South, this study sought to develop a comprehensive portrait of working poor families and their utilization of public assistance programs. In doing so, the factors underlying changes in the utilization of assistance programs were identified and the implications of increasing food stamps and other assistance programs among working poor families in the rural South are discussed. The findings are being disseminated to those responsible for the design and implementation of public assistance programs.

### **The Incidence of Overweight and Obesity in Southern Adolescents**

*Mellie Warner, Clemson University*

Recent literature indicates that there is a higher incidence of obese and overweight adolescents in the South and in communities that are primarily African-American and Hispanic. This study examined the demographics of this population in the South and compared them to other regions. The effects of sports, after school activities, and social and family support on body mass index were considered. This study sought to determine the relationships between age-adjusted body mass index and other variables.

### **Prevalence and Consequences of Child Obesity in North Carolina**

*Debra Parker and Esther Okeiyi, North Carolina Central University*

Obesity has become a disease of epidemic proportion and with profound negative health, psychological and social consequences for both children and adults in the United States. Using children from Head Start, preschool and kindergarten, this study sought to assess the prevalence of obesity among children ages 3 to 6 in North Carolina; compare child obesity by age, gender, ethnicity, parents' education, religion, income level, parents' attitude toward obesity, parents' motivation for nutrition education, and nutrition knowledge of the parents or care taker; assess the dietary and exercise habits of the children by demographic factors; and assess the consequences of child obesity on children's health, self-confidence, educational performance, physical activities, and dietary habits. The results were intended to raise awareness and increase the participation among childcare providers to prevent and reduce the incidences of obesity among youth.

#### **FOOD ASSISTANCE AND NUTRITION RESEARCH SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM SURVEY**

The SRDC recently surveyed all grantees from the past five years of the SRDC-sponsored Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Small Grants Program to determine the activities they generated as a direct or indirect result of the SRDC grant funds. The following is a summary of the outputs that the grantees noted were linked to the SRDC grant resources:

Professional Journal Articles Published.....	12
Professional Journal Articles in Review.....	11
Technical Reports Prepared.....	13
Proposals Submitted for Additional Funding.....	24
Dissertations/Theses Written.....	12
Papers Presented at Professional Meetings.....	80
Other Activities Not Covered.....	10

### **Retail Globalization and Food Access in the South**

*Troy Blanchard, Mississippi State University*

During the last 30 years, the South has experienced an unparalleled spatial concentration of retail activity due to the growth of large retailers, such as Wal-Mart, that fundamentally reshape the accessibility and cost of food. While many studies have addressed the effect of individual characteristics on food security and nutrition-related health issues, the role of community-level macro factors remains largely unexplored. Thus, this study assessed the level of access to supermarkets and super centers to identify food accessibility for local populations as well as the relationship between access to supermarkets and super centers





and nutrition-related health outcomes in the nonmetropolitan South. This study attempted to inform policymakers and researchers by identifying the contours of nutrition-related illness in the South and by explaining how the structure of the food distribution system relates to nutrition-related health outcomes.

### **Sustainable Communities Innovations Grants (A Southern SARE/SRDC Partnership Initiative)**

Healthy and prosperous rural communities are a key factor in sustaining the future of U.S. agriculture, and innovations in agriculture are important to the future of many rural communities. Despite this mutual interdependence, agriculture and community development have too often been studied and conducted without regard to one another. The Southern Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) and the Southern Rural Development Center now offer a pilot grants program that will invest in projects that strengthen both agriculture and Southern communities through explicit linkages between sustainable agriculture and community development and improve understanding of the mutual benefits of such linkages.

The Sustainable Community Innovation Grants Program funds projects that pursue local strategies that link sound farm and nonfarm economic development with agricultural and natural resource management. Applications are chosen based on their ability to increase knowledge, build capacity and make connections among on- and off-farm sustainable agriculture activities, economic and community development, civic engagement, nutrition and health, and local government policy. The following grants were funded by the SRDC.

### **2003-2004 Recipients**

#### **A Strategy for Sustaining Henderson County Agricultural Communities**

*Joshua Freeman, Henderson County, North Carolina*

Henderson County is a network of rural communities built on agriculture but facing change both in agricultural markets and in rapid urban development. Despite a long history of producing outstanding agricultural products, there is mounting evidence that farming communities in Henderson County are threatened. Old apple varieties are less popular, and processors are leaving. Dairy farms are closing. Agricultural land is facing rapid urbanization. Noting that agriculture is broadly supported in the county and the agricultural community is well organized, the coordinators of this project will put together an agricultural strategy to be included in the Henderson County Comprehensive Plan. That inclusion will allow them to coordinate policies and actions to sustain the agricultural communities as the county grows.

#### **Linking Small-Farm Agriculture to Community Development Efforts in Northern Louisiana**

*Elizabeth Higgins, Louisiana Tech University*

The purpose of this project is to investigate the degree of interest that farmers, community leaders, and agriculture and community development technical assistance providers in Northern Louisiana have in enhancing and developing local markets for produce grown in Northern Louisiana and in engaging in value-added activities such as processing and agritourism. This information will be used as the starting point to develop projects in the region to improve the profitability of small-scale and limited resource farms and to enhance local markets as an economic development strategy in a low-income, rural region of Louisiana.

## ☞ 2002-2003 Recipients

### **Agri-tourism: A Strategy toward Sustainable Farm, Business, Family and Community Development**

*Brian Calhoun, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*

Virginia Cooperative Extension and its collaborators identified several needs related to economic development in Southwest Virginia and adopted a strategy of development of agritourism. Linkages were developed with community developers and other stakeholders to develop an innovative plan to access what agri-tourism is already in place, what other opportunities exist, and other community infrastructure that needs to be in place in order to insure both sustainable agriculture and sustainable communities.

### **Downtown Farmer's Market: Linking the Farm to the Community**

*Rob Gordy, Carroll County Farmland and Rural Preservations Committee*

Carroll County, GA, and the surrounding region provide excellent opportunities to link agriculture and urban and suburban communities. There is a steady agricultural base and a steady urban/suburban shift into Carroll County. Farmers in this area have a great need for local marketing opportunities. In order to help these farmers, Extension and its collaborators organized the Carroll County Farmland and Rural Preservation Partnership. Programs were conducted to educate farmers about participating in the market and helping them realize better prices for their crops.

### **Keen on Beans: Establishing Edamame Awareness and Demand for Kentucky Consumers and Growers**

*Martha W. Lee, University of Kentucky*

Kentucky agriculturists are continuously searching for alternative sources of farm income. Many alternative, non-commodity crops are being investigated for potential profitability. Edamame (green vegetable soybean) is one of those promising crops. Nutrition education and market development for edamame soybeans was conducted in Daviess County, KY, in 2002 for targeted groups. Following production, harvesting and storage of test plot beans, the diverse team of producers, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension, and state and local officials collaborated with marketing and industry officials in five states to produce significant marketing/producer awareness milestones.

## **RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE SRDC**

The Southern Rural Development Center has been directly involved in conducting applied research that seeks to discover new information and knowledge that relate to the priority activities of the Center. In addition, the SRDC has partnered with key federal, regional and state agencies in organizing research forums that showcase important applied research activities on topics of concern to rural America and the rural South. We briefly highlight these key research efforts conducted by the Center over the course of the past year.

### **Examining the Educational Needs of the Southeast United States: The SERVE Regional Educational Laboratory Grant**

The 1990s has been a period of significant demographic and economic changes in the nation, and such shifts are likely to have profound impacts on the educational system of our nation. With an increasingly diverse population, coupled with the continued growth of complex, technology-oriented jobs, the demand for skilled workers is on the upswing. At the same time, many rural communities are struggling in their capacity to retain the best and brightest during a time when their economic futures appear uncertain.





These trends suggest that the economic health of many rural communities over the long-term will be dependent on the availability of educated workers. Recognizing the critical role of education, the SERVE Regional Education Laboratory contracted with the SRDC to examine a host of educational, economic and demographic trends in the six southeastern states that are part of the SERVE region. These states are Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The SRDC completed a comprehensive assessment of the educational challenges facing the Southeast region of the United States. The report detailed the changing demographic features of the region, the set of key factors that are shaping the educational progress of the region's youth, the level of performance being realized by school districts in metro and nonmetro areas of the Southeast in meeting the requirements associated with the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation, and a host of Internet based sources of data on schools in the six-state region. The report concluded with a series of recommendations that were designed to offer SERVE a roadmap of its activities in the months and years ahead.

### **Delta Rural Revitalization Initiative**

The Mid-South Delta Region has faced a number of economic, social, political and environmental challenges over the span of many years. These include limited population and economic expansion, low educational attainment, a limited pool of skilled workers, high rates of poverty, and low community capacity to address priority issues of importance to the welfare of the area. The SRDC, for the first time ever, has embraced the challenge of collecting, analyzing and generating information to guide the activities and investments of leaders, organizations and citizens in an 18-county region in the Mississippi Delta. Over the past several months, it has assembled a variety of demographic, economic and educational data. These data are now being organized in tabular form and are being made available on the SRDC website. In addition, the SRDC joined forces with the National Rural Funders Collaborative (and two of its subcontractors) to prepare a comprehensive assessment of the Mid-South Delta region. The SRDC prepared a detailed assessment of the changes occurring in the 58-county/parish region in terms of population, education, income/poverty, and industrial shifts. In addition, the SRDC prepared a shift-share analysis of the region to determine the set of local and extra-local forces that were instrumental in driving the economic changes in the region over the 1990-2000 period. A detailed listing of major opportunities and challenges facing the region was also developed. In the months ahead, the SRDC will undertake further analysis of the comprehensive data base that it has created and will highlight its analyses in a series of policy briefs that will give special focus to the 18-county area that is part of the northwest Delta region of Mississippi.

### **National Research Initiative Project: Exploring the Influence of Family, School and Community Social Capital on the Educational Outcomes of Rural Youth**

The SRDC Director, Bo Beaulieu, has continued his research with Glenn Israel of the University of Florida. Over the past year, these two individuals have prepared two important articles that help further advance their work on the role of social capital in promoting the educational success of young individuals in rural America. Their first product is a book chapter titled, "Promoting Educational Achievement: A Partnership of Families, Schools and Communities." The article, which will appear in a 2004 Penn State Press book edited by Louis Swanson and David Brown titled, *Challenges for Rural America in the 21st Century*, offers a synopsis of the extensive work that Beaulieu, Israel and others have undertaken over the past decade that details how young people are more likely to do better academically, more likely to finish high school, and more likely to attend college when they are embedded in strong social capital environments in the home, school and community. The second paper, titled, "Investing in Communities: Social Capital's Role in Keeping Youth in School," describes how social capital in the broader community context mediates the effects of family and school social capital on keeping students in school. The results offer community development practitioners and

local leaders with a host of strategies that can be used to enhance the educational outcomes for local youth, something that is vital to the long-term economic vitality of these communities. This article has been accepted for publication in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of the Community Development Society*.



## RESEARCH CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

Over the course of the past year, the SRDC has organized and/or supported two research-based conferences, both of which have had important print outcomes. These conferences and their products follow.

### Measuring Rural Diversity Conference

**November 21-22, 2002, Washington, D.C**

USDA's Economic Research Service has had a long and distinguished series of research products that have provided social scientists with a systematic set of procedures for measuring the social and economic character of rural areas. Such typologies as the urban-rural continuum codes, the urban influence codes and the natural amenities scales have all emerged from the work of social scientists working in the ERS.

In an effort to explore new and innovative strategies for examining the social and economic complexion of rural America, ERS and the SRDC joined forces to sponsor a conference titled, "Measuring Rural Diversity." This important research workshop, held in Washington, D.C., Nov. 21-22, 2002, showcased some of the cutting-edge work being carried out by social scientists both nationally and internationally. Attention was given to approaches being used by Canadian and European researchers in their quest to measure rural areas; new methods for examining the sociodemographic features of rural America; avenues for measuring economic activity in nonmetro areas; procedures for exploring economic distress; new efforts at creating sub-county and place-based typologies; and the role of new information technologies in shedding additional light on important rural issues. The proceedings from this conference are available on the SRDC website at <http://srdc.msstate.edu/measuring/ruraldiversity.htm>.

The SRDC has developed a new policy series in partnership with ERS based on the papers presented at this conference. The first issue will be released in November 2003. This issue, "Persistent Poverty and Place: How Do Persistent Poverty Dynamics and Demographics Vary across the Rural-Urban Continuum?," contributed by Kathleen Miller of the Rural Policy Research Institute and Bruce Weber of Oregon State University, will examine how poverty and persistent poverty vary across the urban influence codes developed by ERS and where poverty is concentrated in the United States. Other issues to be released in 2004 are listed below.

■ **Is Rural Location to Blame? Accounting for Lower Income Levels in Tribal Areas**

*Robin Leichenko, Rutgers University*

■ **Exploring Diversity in Rural Canada**

*William Reimer, Concordia University*

■ **The Growing Importance of Rural Proprietors**

*Stephan Goetz, Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development, Pennsylvania State University*

■ **Measuring Economic Distress: A Comparison of Designations and Measures**

*Amy Glasmeier and Larry Wood, Pennsylvania State University, and Kurt Fuellhart, Shippensburg University*

■ **Creating Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas**

*Michael Ratcliffe, U.S. Census Bureau*



## **Promoting the Economic and Social Vitality of Rural America: The Role of Education**

**April 14-15, 2003, New Orleans, Louisiana**

The issue of education and human capital development has held a high position on the national domestic policy agenda in recent years. A case in point is the new federal legislation titled, *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, a law that has introduced a new era of increased school accountability and performance mandates. This legislation is intended to ensure that our public schools adequately prepare their students for the changed economic climate in which we now live. Rural schools and communities, however, may face a distinctive set of challenges as they seek to implement the various reforms associated with this new law.

Given the central role that education has played and will continue to play in shaping the economic and social welfare of rural communities, a national conference was organized by the Economic Research Service and the SRDC for the purpose of engaging a cadre of highly talented researchers in addressing the important subject of rural education. The Rural School and Community Trust served as a co-sponsor for this important event. The intent was to stimulate a focused attention on rural education-related issues in America, particularly the capacity of rural schools to offer students a high quality education to serve as an engine for local economic development activities. A more contemporary understanding of these linkages is vitally important for articulating a possible set of education/economic development strategies that make the most sense for rural areas of the United States. It is also needed for helping fine-tune federal education policy activities so that it may consider the unique issues present in rural schools and communities in the United States.

The national workshop titled, "Promoting the Economic and Social Vitality of Rural America: The Role of Education," was held April 14-15, 2003, in New Orleans, LA. Thirty-five participants gathered to hear 12 papers presented from researchers and education experts arranged in four sessions: 1) achievement in rural schools; 2) rural schools, communities and at-risk populations; 3) schools and local community impacts; and 4) education and the labor market in rural communities. The conference offered one of the rare opportunities to discuss and debate a host of issues related to rural education and training in this country.

This workshop had three important print outcomes. First, the Summer 2003 issue of *Southern Perspectives* was devoted entirely to abbreviated versions of four of the conference papers. Second, the conference organizers, Robert Gibbs of the Economic Research Service and Bo Beaulieu of the SRDC, will serve as guest editors for special rural education issues of two refereed journals: the *Journal of Research in Rural Education* and the *Review of Regional Studies*. Finally, the SRDC will publish a single-volume collection of policy briefs based on the full conference manuscripts. This collection will feature papers contributed by eight of the conference presenters and will be published in 2004. Ultimately, it is the hope of the SRDC, as well as the two co-sponsoring organizations, that these published products will mobilize a larger share of rural social scientists, in the South and beyond, to actively take part in advancing the state of knowledge and application regarding rural education in the years ahead.

## EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

This year the SRDC has continued offering workshops from its comprehensive training plan, which is described below, offering a total of 14 trainings and conferences to 981 total participants from across the region (see "Conference Attendance by State" on page 21).



### Creating Vibrant Communities in the South: Training Resources for Building Community Development Skills

In an effort to link communities with Extension educators in their state with strong community development-related training and skills, a comprehensive training plan was established by the SRDC in FY2002. This training effort is in cooperation with the Southern Community Resource Development Program Leaders, the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors and the Association of Extension Administrators. Training workshops and educational resources were offered in five key thematic areas: economic diversification, community planning tools, service infrastructure, civic engagement and youth/adult workforce development.

All offerings from this comprehensive training plan, as well as select conferences dating back to 2000, are now available on the SRDC website at [http://srdc.msstate.edu/resources/conf\\_proc.htm](http://srdc.msstate.edu/resources/conf_proc.htm). The overviews, proceedings and faculty are accessible for each training. The training workshops offered during the past year include:

#### Business Retention & Expansion

**October 28-30, 2002, Biloxi, Mississippi**

Studies have shown that between 40 and 90 percent of all new job creation comes from existing businesses. Learning to build on the business/industrial base of a community is a valuable tool. The purpose of this conference was to provide professionals with the in-depth training necessary to implement a local economic development program focused on the retention and expansion of existing businesses. Specific emphasis was placed on the use of volunteers to visit existing businesses and administer a survey designed to solicit input about the local community, business climate, availability of qualified labor, and the need for additional training and technical assistance. Sixteen participants attended the training and have been certified as BR&E consultants through the Business Retention and Expansion International process.

#### Rural Health Institute

**November 4-8, 2002, Talladega, Alabama**

In today's environment, Extension professionals are increasingly being asked questions about health systems and their role in the community. This training was designed to give participants an increased understanding of health systems, Extension's role in health, and tools and strategies for working with individual, family and community health issues. Thirty-four Extension professionals from seven states in the Southern region attended this week-long indepth training. Thirteen faculty members from throughout the South focused on the following topics: organization of a health system; the language of health; vital statistics/community health assessment; facilitation and skill building for local decision makers; helping decision makers maintain primary care services in rural communities; and designing effective health education programs.

#### Value-Added Entrepreneurship

**December 3-5, 2002, Franklin, Tennessee**

With an eye toward an ever-changing business environment, entrepreneurs are on the lookout for opportunities to expand their operations, many times through value-added products. This workshop served to prepare 34 Extension faculty in the development and implementation of an economic development program

### FACULTY CONTRIBUTORS

#### Business Retention & Expansion

**Hank Cothran**

University of Florida

**Kathleen Tweeten**

North Dakota State University

#### Rural Health Institute

**Bo Beaulieu**

SRDC

**Bonnie Carew**

Mississippi State University

**Tracy Carter**

University of Alabama

**Bobbi Clarke**

University of Tennessee

**Gerald Doeksen**

Oklahoma State University

**Barbara Garland**

North Carolina State University

**Peggy Hickman**

University of Kentucky

**Martha Johnson**

Auburn University

**Rick Maurer**

University of Kentucky

**Linda Patterson**

Mississippi State University

**Carolyn Perkins**

Prairie View A&M University

**Joe Schmidt**

Mississippi State University

**Val Schott**

Oklahoma State University

**Kathleen Taju**

Auburn University

**John Wheat**

University of Alabama

#### Value-Added Entrepreneurship

**Alan Barefield**

SRDC

**Lee Curtis**

TN Department of Tourist Dev.

**Clark Garland**

University of Tennessee

**Rodney Holcomb**

Oklahoma State University

**Steve Murray**

Mississippi State University

**Kent Wolfe**

University of Georgia

**Tim Woods**

University of Kentucky



based on entrepreneurship for businesses focusing on value-added agricultural products. This course was designed to be an in-depth examination of the factors critical in developing value-added projects. Specific topics that were discussed included developing a business plan; developing a marketing feasibility study for a new product and/or new organization, including instruction on conducting marketing research; developing a marketing plan, including advertising alternatives; developing technical feasibility analysis and operational plan; developing a management plan and/or management analysis; and financial feasibility analysis for a new product.

### **Economic Impact Analysis**

**February 24-26, 2003, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

Communities often experience significant changes in the local economic base. A first step in responding to change is understanding the magnitude of the change. Change can be represented by a new business moving to the community, increased tourism activity or in-migrating retirees. Economic impact analysis offers an approach to quantify the impacts of these types of change on the local economy. Often local leaders may also desire to estimate the impacts of existing business or industry. For example, what are the economic impacts of local manufacturing firms or the local health care sectors? Again, impact assessment provides methodologies for measurement. This training session provided 33 participants with an overview and hands-on training of economic impact analysis. Other topics addressed were economic analysis versus fiscal impact analysis; what is the multiplier; using impact analysis in Extension programming; measuring economic impacts of the health care sector; IMPLAN, a tool for analysis; and using IMPLAN for target industry analysis.

### **FACULTY CONTRIBUTORS**

#### **Business Skills Training**

**Alan Barefield**  
SRDC  
**Barbara Cunningham**  
University of Missouri  
**Beth Duncan**  
Mississippi State University  
**Betty Emarita**  
IACED  
**Patricia Harris**  
Cobb Micro-Enterprise Center  
**Dave Kohl**  
Virginia Tech  
**Jim McConnon**  
University of Maine  
**Richard Outcalt & Patricia Johnson**  
Outcalt & Johnson: Retail Strategists, LLC  
**Greg Passewitz**  
Ohio State University  
**Patty Rai Smith**  
University of Kentucky  
**Greg Taylor**  
Texas A&M University  
**John Toman**  
University of Tennessee  
**Kent Wolfe**  
University of Georgia

### **FACULTY CONTRIBUTORS**

#### **Economic Impact Analysis**

**Suzette Barta**  
Oklahoma State University  
**Gerald Doeksen**  
Oklahoma State University  
**Fred Eilrich**  
Oklahoma State University  
**Jack Frye**  
Oklahoma State University  
**Stan Ralstin**  
Oklahoma State University  
**Cheryl St. Clair**  
Oklahoma State University  
**Mike Woods**  
Oklahoma State University

#### **Smart Growth in the Rural South**

**Steve Austin**  
Bluegrass Tomorrow  
**Jeff Dorfman**  
University of Georgia  
**Ron Fleming**  
University of Kentucky  
**Lori Garkovich**  
University of Kentucky  
**Ted Grosshardt**  
University of Kentucky  
**Barry Kew**  
University of Kentucky  
**Tad Long**  
NewCities Foundation, Lexington, KY  
**Bill Park**  
University of Tennessee  
**Mitch Renkow**  
North Carolina State University  
**Eric Scorsone**  
University of Kentucky

### **Smart Growth in the Rural South**

**May 13-14, 2003, Lexington, Kentucky**

The southern United States is facing great challenges involving land use and growth management. With rapid economic and population growth have come the challenges of suburbanization and urban sprawl. Rural communities are searching for answers to these challenges such as planning and zoning. At the same time, landowners are worried about their ability to use private property. This meeting provided an awareness of current issues and tools for addressing educational programming for smart growth in the rural South to 29 state specialists and county agents from eight states. Emphasis was on developing a foundation for the navigation of land use issues in communities along with tools to assist communities in the search for a balance between public and private interests.

### **Business Skills Training**

**September 2-6, 2003, San Antonio, Texas**

The goal of this training was to sharpen business skills in order to effectively assist entrepreneurs in building profitable enterprises in rural communities. It was sponsored by the SRDC and the Cooperative Extension Service Home-Based & Micro Business Design Team through a grant to encourage the development of business skills among USDA service providers.

## **EXTENSION ACTIVITIES PRODUCED/SUPPORTED BY THE SRDC**

Other projects and educational workshops conducted during the year and not mentioned above follow.

### **Senior Fellows Program**

The Southern Rural Development Center established the Senior Fellows Program, with the support of its Board of Directors, in order to expand the number of land-grant faculty carrying out substantive research or Extension work in support of the activities of the SRDC. This program is designed to provide special support and recognition, for a period of one year, to an individual (or a team/committee of individuals) who is undertaking a special project that addresses a priority issue of the Southern Rural Development Center. The Senior Fellow is provided with financial resources by the SRDC to facilitate the successful completion of his/her project. The Senior Fellow will take a leadership role in carrying out a specialized activity/project (be it research or Extension) in support of one of the priority issues of the SRDC. This year's Extension projects are listed below.

### **Rural Community-Based Planning: Developing and Implementing a Tool for County Extension Agents**

*Gene Theodori and Gregory Taylor, Texas A&M University*

The primary purpose of this project was to develop and implement a community-based planning process module that county Extension agents, regardless of their subject-matter training and expertise, can employ to assist communities with their attempts to build, strengthen and/or sustain their local and social economic structures.

### **Economic Development: Strategies and Options for the Rural South**

*Michael Woods and James Nelson, Oklahoma State University*

This project proposed to build a curriculum for providing educational programs related to local economic development. Actual materials include PowerPoint presentations, handouts, background materials and a teacher's guide. The materials were pilot tested on July 22, 2002, in Meridian, MS, at the Montgomery Institute during a session with the Commission on the Future of East Mississippi and West Alabama. The revised materials were recently presented at the RCCA conference in San Antonio and were well received. Woods and Nelson are currently using the materials in Oklahoma and Idaho, respectively.

### **4-State Heartland Community Development Conference**

**November 7-8, 2002, Bartlesville, Oklahoma**

The 4-State Heartland Community Development Conference is an annual event involving Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Arkansas. It focuses on issues of multi-state relevance in this region and upon the smaller, rural communities. On-going sponsorship and planning depends upon the community development specialists of the respective Extension Services, with the collaboration of economic development districts, local legislators and others. The 2002 conference theme, "Critical Skills for Community Leaders and Community Survival," brought together a wide range of local, regional, state and national leaders with a goal of fostering sustainable community development on a region-wide basis. The 2002 conference focused on measures and resources available to help small cities survive and thrive.

### **Hispanic Audience Outreach: The Texas Experience**

**February 17-20, 2003, South Padre Island**

The SRDC supported this national meeting that was hosted by Texas A&M University. Over 120 participants from 20 states attended, with evaluations indicating a most successful opportunity. In addition to financial support, the Center convened a concurrent session focusing on the results from the research roundtable hosted by the Center in 2002. As the Hispanic population continues to grow in the South, more and more emphasis will be placed on the Center to support efforts in rural communities.







### **Strengthening and Building Partnerships for Workforce Development**

**March 2-5, 2003, Orlando, Florida**

This national effort was coordinated by the SRDC. A national conference planning team was assembled which facilitated this three-day staff development effort for nearly 120 workforce development Extension professionals from throughout the country. The Center provided all logistical support for this conference.

### **Farmers Forum**

**April 22-23, 2003, St. Croix, Virgin Islands**

At this conference, farmers from St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix participated in sessions on education and research, marketing and production, development of local labor and management skills, and funding for agricultural development. Sponsored by the University of the Virgin Islands' Cooperative Extension Service, with financial assistance from the SRDC, this forum focused on improving the future of agriculture in the Virgin Islands and initiating the revision of the territory's agricultural policy.

### **Joint Meeting of PLN, AEA & ASRED/Middle Management Conference**

**August 24-29, 2003, Little Rock, Arkansas/April 7-10, 2003, Roanoke, Virginia**

The Program Leadership Network has expanded and involves the regional program planning committees as well as the Association of Extension Administrators and the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors. The Center maintains heavy involvement with the SR-PLN as efforts are made to increase communication and planning among Extension program leaders in the South, develop a common understanding among program leaders, improve Extension programs through the sharing of ideas and resources, and identify emerging issues of importance to the South. As part of this regional coordination effort by the Center, the Southern Region Middle Management Conference is also supported biannually.

### **Southern Institute for Rural Development**

**September 8-10, 2003, Fort Myers, Florida**

The SRDC, in cooperation with USDA Rural Development, the University of Georgia, USDA Forest Service, and the University of Florida IFAS Extension, joined forces to provide advanced rural development training to key agency representatives in the region. This Institute was designed for professionals who are, or wish to become, actively involved in rural development work at the local, multi-county, state or regional levels. It provided participants more in-depth understanding of two topics that are vital to the long-term health of rural areas: expansion of economic development opportunities and the broadening of citizen involvement in shaping the future of their communities.

### **Southern Community Development Educators: New Horizons-New Beginnings**

**May 19-21, 2004, Tampa, Florida**

This meeting will:

- build upon the current momentum of Extension community development programming at the national, state and local levels;
- provide an opportunity for individuals to network with others from throughout the Southern region on common interests;
- provide much-needed professional development opportunities; and
- discuss and pursue the formation of a national association of community development educators.

### **National Extension Tourism Conference 2004 (NET 2004): People, Places and Partnerships: Keys to Success**

**September 27-30, 2004, Kissimmee, Florida**

More than ever, successful tourism planning hinges on integrating the needs of people, communities and special places through viable partnerships. As the demographic composition of many communities transition, and as demands on urban and rural landscapes intensify, establishing partnerships will become increasingly challenging.

As one of the world's leading tourism destinations, the Orlando area (Kissimmee) and Central Florida will provide an excellent backdrop for discussing opportunities and challenges of planning for successful tourism. Participants will be invited to:

- explore ways to strengthen and develop partnerships,
- identify strategies to work with increasingly diverse communities and publics,
- share techniques for enhancing urban and rural tourism attractions,
- see examples of successful ventures in Central Florida, and
- identify strategies to enhance Extension's capacity to provide technical assistance.

### **LeadershipPlenty Training Resources**

The Pew Partnership for Civic Change has made a commitment to improved community engagement through their LeadershipPlenty training materials. They recruited national organizations to become partners, and the SRDC submitted an application and has since become a full partner in this effort. The guide is designed to train individuals in the process of community development. The SRDC supported a regional team to participate in the national training. This regional team is in the process of working with the Southern Growth Policies Board and the Pew Partnership in facilitating regional training to further enhance the abilities of Extension professionals in their efforts to encourage more active community participation.

### **The Rural E-Commerce Extension Initiative: An SRDC Demonstration Project**

The SRDC received support from Congress through the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service in the amount of \$357,660 to support a national demonstration project to expand and strengthen e-commerce programming by Cooperative Extension educators in the United States. This effort is designed as a first step in helping to expand the depth and breadth of e-commerce programming being delivered to rural small businesses, governments and communities by the Cooperative Extension Service system in the United States. SRDC staff are working closely with the national ECOP E-commerce Task Force to facilitate the effective expansion of our efforts to rural areas across the United States.

The first phase of this effort has been devoted to investing in promising rural e-commerce Extension educational programs currently in place in three pilot states (Mississippi, New Mexico and Nebraska) for the purpose of refining, testing and expanding their application, as well as facilitating their distribution, to states in the nation. Initial efforts have brought together specialists and directors from the Cooperative Extension Services from the three states to outline a procedure for refining, testing and delivering these materials. After these initial efforts, the plan calls for taking these materials to the next level and having them available to other states.

Another aspect of this first phase is the inventorying and cataloguing of all current and emerging e-commerce educational products produced by Cooperative Extension educators for use with rural, small businesses, rural governments and rural communities. The intention of the project is to create the "E-Team Electronic Library," a website that will centralize key research and outreach education products available.

The SRDC, in cooperation with the pilot states, has outlined strategies for strengthening the capacity of Cooperative Extension Service educators to become engaged in the delivery of sound outreach e-commerce educational programs. The Mississippi State University Extension Service is holding three educational programs for small, rural businesses in the state. New Mexico, in cooperation with Utah, Nevada and Arizona, is planning a four-corners training in 2004 that will demonstrate the Cooperative Extension Services' capacity to deliver sound e-commerce programs to small businesses. Nebraska is using survey instruments to determine educational needs and planning the development of new curricula products that will focus on these new e-commerce educational resources in hopes of accelerating their use across the state.





Also planned for next year is a Southern region conference that will highlight and train Extension staff in the use of these e-commerce materials to reach the small rural businesses, communities and governments. As additional funds are received, other pilot states will be selected for involvement, and additional resources will be used to support more involvement in regional and multi-state training.

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

The SRDC has played a major role in promoting the establishment of a national association with primary emphasis on Extension professionals involved in community development work. The National Community Resource and Economic Development conference held in 2002 was the first step in this effort. The Center maintained a close relationship with the national CRED base team and facilitated conference calls and the face-to-face meeting at Galaxy in September 2003. The Galaxy meeting resulted in the formation of NACDEP. The Center continues to play a key role as this organization is established.

### **SERA-IEG 19: Rural Health**

In addition to the training through the Southern Rural Health Institute, the Center serves on the SERA-IEG 19 Rural Health. The group meets annually to review ongoing research and Extension activities. Also, efforts are made to determine strategies for improving the health status of individuals and communities through cooperative projects, research and training. SERA-IEG 19 was given additional support by the Extension directors and Experiment Station directors through formal channels of renewal.

# Conference Attendance by State

Conference	Date	Location	AL	AR	FL	GA	KY	LA	MS	NC	OK	PR	SC	TN	TX	VA	VI	Other	Total
Rural Community College Alliance	Oct. 7-9	Memphis, TN	3	7	1	0	17	0	10	16	2	0	5	7	13	7	0	64	152
Business Retention & Expansion	Oct. 28-30	Biloxi, MS	2	0	2	0	0	0	7	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	16
Rural Health Institute	Nov. 4-8	Talladega, AL	8	0	0	0	7	4	8	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	34
Value-Added Entrepreneurship	Dec. 3-5	Franklin, TN	0	0	0	11	2	2	3	0	1	0	0	9	1	0	0	5	34
Economic Impact Analysis	Feb. 24-26	Oklahoma City, OK	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	0	15	0	0	0	1	0	0	10	33
Strengthening and Building Partnerships for Workforce Development	March 2-5	Orlando, FL	5	0	14	0	7	3	3	1	1	1	0	2	6	3	0	72	118
SERA-IEG 19	March 18-19	Nashville, TN	3	0	0	0	3	0	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14
Rural Community College Initiative Institute	March 24-27	Kansas City, MO	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	25	0	0	0	0	11	2	0	50	98
Middle Management	April 7-10	Roanoke, VA	3	6	2	3	11	3	13	14	5	0	1	13	6	12	0	4	96
Rural Education	April 14-15	New Orleans, LA	0	0	1	0	1	5	2	0	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	21	35
Smart Growth in the Rural South	May 13-14	Lexington, KY	1	0	2	1	19	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	29
Joint Meeting of PLN, AEA & ASRPED	Aug. 24-29	Little Rock, AK	8	18	19	11	18	17	24	11	10	6	5	12	16	8	1	10	194
Business Skills Training	Sept. 2-6	San Antonio, TX	2	1	2	1	4	2	11	0	0	1	2	2	16	5	1	18	68
Southern Institute of Rural Development	Sept. 8-10	Fort Myers, FL	1	0	21	16	1	1	5	1	1	0	4	2	0	0	0	7	60
<b>Total Participants</b>			<b>37</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>981</b>



## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES ESTABLISHED

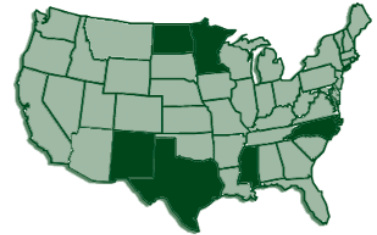
During this fiscal year, the Southern Rural Development Center has spent time strengthening current partnerships and embarking on new important relationships with organizations that have a common commitment to rural people and communities in rural America. These partnerships and their outcomes are described below.

### SERVE Education Lab

The SRDC completed a comprehensive assessment of the educational challenges facing the Southeast region of the United States. The report detailed the changing demographic features of the region, the set of key factors that are shaping the educational progress of the region's youth, the level of performance being realized by school districts in metro and nonmetro areas of the Southeast in meeting the requirements associated with the federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation, and a host of Internet based sources of data on schools in the six-state region. The report concluded with a series of recommendations that were designed to offer SERVE a roadmap of its activities in the months and years ahead. More information about the SERVE project is available on page 11.

### Rural Community College Initiative

The SRDC has completed its first year of coordinating the Rural Community College Initiative, a joint program with the Ford Foundation, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, and rural community and tribal colleges and Extension Services in participating states. The partnership is designed to assist rural community and tribal colleges in strengthening their efforts in economic development, expanding the access to their educational programs, and enhancing the participation of traditionally underserved citizens of the community/tribal college service area by utilizing the resources of the land-grant system.



The 13 RCCI teams chosen represent 20 rural community and tribal colleges in six states (see map). Over the past six months, the RCCI teams and land-grant university faculty participated in several activities designed to enhance the ability of the partners to achieve the RCCI goals. These activities include:

## RCCI SCHOOLS



#### Minnesota

- Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College
- Northeast Higher Education District
- Rochester Community & Technical College

#### Mississippi

- East Central Community College

#### New Mexico

- Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell
- Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso
- Mesalands Community College

#### North Carolina

- Carteret Community College
- Piedmont Community College
- Western Carolina Partnership
  - Haywood Community College
  - Southwestern Community College
  - Tri-County Community College

#### North Dakota

- United Tribes Technical College
- Williston State College

#### Texas

- Howard College
- Coastal Bend College

### RCCI Coaches Workshop

February 18-20, 2003,

One of the key components of the RCCI concept is the use of coaches to work with the community and tribal colleges. In Phase II, this role is filled by land-grant university (primarily Extension) faculty rather than the consultants that were previously hired to assume this role. However, this role is typically a very different one for Extension and other university faculty to assume since it requires that the coach be a "guide on the side" rather than a "sage on the stage." To assist the coaches in making this transition and to educate them about the philosophy and operational beliefs of community and tribal colleges, the SRDC and NCR-CRD hosted a Coaches Institute in Kansas City, MO.

The Coaching Institute proved to be an unqualified success. While this method of working with partners was new to the majority of the participants, many of them have embraced it and are now using it in their everyday Extension work. Furthermore, the diversity of coaches (while most of the coaches were from Extension, the three New Mexico coaches are located in the College of Education at New Mexico State University) provided insight into learning and partnering factors that many of the participants had not been exposed to.

A major product of the Coaches Institute was the development of an educational coaching curriculum by Mary Emery of the NCRCD with assistance by Ken Hubbell of Ken Hubbell Associates and Carol Lincoln of MDC, Inc. This curriculum will be invaluable not only in the second phase of the RCCI program, but also to other colleges and universities who wish to emulate the RCCI process.



### **RCCI Institute**

**March 24-27, 2003, Kansas City, Missouri**

Another of the vital components in the RCCI process is to formalize the partnerships inherent in the RCCI process. With the land-grant university system now playing the major coordinating and coaching roles, a gathering of the RCCI schools and partners was even more important than in years past. The Institute offered RCCI partners a unique opportunity to learn about the history of the program, its key principles and goals, and past successes as well as the process of creating the vision-to-action plan and discussing some of the potential strategies that could be used to increase the level of economic development, educational access and civic engagement that takes place in their college's service area.

### **RCCI Team Progress Report**

RCCI teams and coaches have been developing the underpinnings of the vision-to-action plans over the past several months. This process started with the community/tribal college team and the land-grant university coach becoming familiar with each other and the process of creating a community level strategic plan in which the college is a major impetus.

In order to successfully develop these plans, the teams have been identifying community leaders that are critical to the process and seeking their input and guidance regarding the factors that will be necessary to the success of the plan. In many cases, these leaders were not receptive to the idea that the community college was trying to participate in a community-wide planning effort, particularly in the economic development arena. However, many of these challenges have been addressed and overcome as the communities have realized that this is not a power play on the part of the community and tribal colleges and that the colleges are entities that can make substantial contributions to the economic and social well-being of the community above their traditional roles.

As this is being accomplished, the colleges are finding out that the land-grant system has a great deal to offer in terms of technical expertise. The land-grant coaches have, in many cases, been intimately involved with activities such as data collection and analysis, issue identification and conflict resolution, strategic planning methods, and helping to insure that the team involved in the vision-to-action effort is representative

## **RCCI COACHES**



### Minnesota

Deanna Himango, University of Minnesota  
Bruce Schwartau, University of Minnesota  
Elizabeth Templin, University of Minnesota

### Mississippi

Carolyn Lott, Mississippi State University  
Chance McDavid, Mississippi State University

### New Mexico

Eduardo Arellano, New Mexico State University  
Ramon Dominguez, New Mexico State University  
Mary Prentice, New Mexico State University

### North Carolina

Doug Clement, North Carolina State University  
Harvey Fouts, North Carolina State University  
Ed Jones, North Carolina State University  
John O'Sullivan, North Carolina A&T State University  
Robin Roper, North Carolina State University

### North Dakota

Linda Hauge, North Dakota State University  
Barbara Schmitt, United Tribes Technical College  
Kathleen Tweeten, North Dakota State University

### Texas

Fela Leal, Texas A&M University  
Brenda Rue, Texas A&M University  
Gene Theodori, Texas A&M University



of the entire community. This has led to meaningful relationships between the community/tribal colleges and Extension and other land-grant university faculty that should last well beyond the formal end of the program.

#### **RCCI Year One Report**


The SRDC and the NCRCRD produced a Year One Report to describe the activities of the first year of Phase II of RCCI. Close to 1,000 copies were distributed to all RCCI colleges and team members, to Extension directors and administrators, and to state community development program leaders. In addition, these reports will be distributed at the 2003 RCCA meeting.

#### **Rural Community College Alliance 2nd Annual Conference: Revitalizing Rural Economies**

**October 6-8, 2003, San Antonio, Texas**

In order to further the impact of the Rural Community College Initiative, the SRDC has continued its partnership with the Rural Community College Alliance. The RCCA is a network and advocacy group that seeks to effect educational policy changes that will enable member community colleges to increase their capacity to improve the educational and economic prospects for rural America. The SRDC has had several roles in this partnership. First, the Center worked with the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development to organize the 2nd annual RCCA Conference held in San Antonio, TX. Second, the SRDC is helping the RCCA to transition to hosting the conference on its own. This is extremely important if the RCCA is to be recognized as a true voice for the colleges it seeks to serve. Finally, the Center played an instrumental role in help the RCCA Policy, Research and Advocacy Committee draft a mission statement that recognizes the value that the land-grant system resources can play in helping rural community colleges achieve their goals.

While the goals of the conference remain: learn from the past experiences of the RCCI program; interact with peers and nationally recognized authorities on the issues facing rural communities and community colleges; and discover strategies and programs designed to increase economic capacity, enhance educational access, expand college capacity, and increase the participation of citizens in the civic process. In addition, 30 of the 150 conference participants were from land-grant universities, a further sign that the partnership between the land-grants and community/tribal colleges continues to grow.



**“... I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for the highly informative and motivating sessions that comprised the RCCI Institute... My greatest ‘aha’ was a renewed sense of commitment to the cause of community colleges. Being in the room with people who share my passion for the small communities we serve and who have dedicated their careers to community education made me even more confident and convinced that there is more that I can do with my remaining years of service.”**

**-- RCCI Teammate**

#### **Public Issues Education: Increasing Competence, Enabling Communities**

The SRDC, along with the other three regional rural development centers, supported the efforts of the National Public Policy Education Committee in the publication and dissemination of a document that serves as a catalyst for increasing the knowledge, skills and abilities of Extension professionals in public issues education. Over 4,000 copies were produced and distributed throughout the nation. The publication was designed to guide development of materials and programs for training Extension professionals in public issues education.



### **SERA-IEG 16: Rural Infrastructure**

During the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists meeting in Mobile, AL, a joint session between SRSA and SAES was convened to highlight the ongoing infrastructure research and provide a forum for continued discussion. This SERA was terminated in the summer of 2003, and efforts will be made to revise and resubmit a proposal with more focus during the next year.

### **Southern Growth Policies Board**

The SRDC Director served in an advisory capacity in helping shape the regional activities of the Southern Growth Policies Board. He participated in two of the Board's planning activities over the past year, the first addressing the community leadership needs of the region and the second focusing on globalization and its potential impacts on the South's economy. Both of these activities will result in a strategic blueprint that will be used to guide the work of the Southern Governors on a near-term basis.

### **The RUPRI National Rural Poverty Center: SRDC Serving as a Partner**

The Rural Policy Research Institute received federal support in the past year to establish a National Rural Poverty Center. The SRDC served as a collaborator with RUPRI in the creation of this rural poverty center, along with the other three regional rural development centers. In particular, the SRDC has detailed the role it will play in coordinating a regional poverty conference in the South, has helped link the poverty center to the work of researchers and 1890 institutions in the region, and has served in an advisory capacity guiding the launching of this important national center. The SRDC will continue to promote the work of this Center in advancing quality research on rural poverty issues in the South and beyond.

### **Southern Institute for Rural Development: A Partnership Initiative**

The combined efforts of the SRDC, the University of Georgia's Office of Economic Development Assistance, the USDA Forest Service (Southern region), University of Florida, and USDA Rural Development resulted in an indepth workshop for professionals involved in rural development work at the local, multi-county, state and regional levels in the Southern region. This conference focused on broadening economic development opportunities and improving citizen involvement in rural communities. Over 60 persons attended this meeting that was held in Fort Myers, FL. More information on the Southern Institute for Rural Development can be found on page 18. Continued efforts will be made to host a 2005 meeting in another state.

### **Sustainable Communities Partnership Initiative (with North Carolina State University and Audubon International)**

In a spirit of expanding the understanding of sustainable development strategies among land-grant leaders and community development partners, the SRDC is working closely with North Carolina State University Extension and Outreach administrators, along with officials of Audubon International, in the establishment of a Sustainable Communities Partnership. In recent months, the Center has worked with these two organizations to organize a meeting of key individuals and organizations involved in sustainable development activities. The meeting was designed to bring together representatives of leading organizations, universities and agencies with a history of engagement in sustainable community development and management activities; to share experiences and provide ideas on how to establish a sustainable community development assistance program in various states; and to introduce the National Sustainable Communities Partnership, initiated by NC State University and Audubon International, Inc., as a potential vehicle to link national, state and local sustainable community service providers. The SRDC will continue to work with these two entities in helping bring the establishment of this national partnership to fruition.

### **National Rural Funders' Collaborative**

The SRDC worked closely with the National Rural Funders' Collaborative over the past year on a number of activities. As reported under the Delta Rural Revitalization Initiative section





of this report, the SRDC helped prepared a comprehensive statistical report on the Mid South Delta region that is being used to facilitate more effective targeting of investment activities by several philanthropic organizations that are part of this national collaborative. In addition, the SRDC has attended planning and priority setting activities of the National Rural Funders Collaborative for the purpose of apprising them of the unique opportunities and challenges in rural areas of the South. The SRDC has also developed an electronic survey that is being adapted by the Collaborative to better document the current and proposed activities of the various foundations that are formally tied to the rural collaborative.

#### **Foundation for the Mid South “Communities of Opportunity Initiative”**

The SRDC has spearheaded a new partnership between the Foundation for the Mid South and the 1862 and 1890 Extension leadership in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. This important partnership is designed to help bring greater coordination to the Mid South efforts of the FMS and the land-grant university Extension efforts across the three-state area, particularly in the Delta region. The group has begun to meet on an ongoing basis and is currently preparing a memorandum of understanding that will establish a formal working relationship between Extension and FMS, particularly in those counties and parishes in the three-state area that is being targeted by FMS as part of its “Communities of Opportunity Initiative.” The hope is that the extensive outreach educational programs available through the Extension programs in the three-state area will be targeted, as needed, to address the educational needs of the people, families and communities that are part of this important new program being launched by the FMS in this region. The hope is that this emerging partnership will serve as a model of how to build strong ties between Extension and the philanthropic community.

#### **Walton Family Foundation: SRDC Serving in Major Evaluation Role**

The Walton Family Foundation is undertaking a major financial effort to support work by the Foundation for the Mid South and Southern Development Corporation in handful of rural counties in Mississippi and Arkansas. The SRDC Director has been working in partnership with Zettie Page at the University of Arkansas in the development and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation strategy that will bring a scientifically sound assessment of the economic, education and social gains realized in the target sites as a result of the Walton Family Foundation investments. The evaluation plan, to be initiated in late 2003, will represent a multi-year, multi-dimensional effort that will include a variety of data collection strategies in those counties being targeted for major activities by the two grantees.

## PUBLICATIONS PRODUCED

The publications produced by the Southern Rural Development Center are a collaborative effort of the director, writer/editor, publication assistant and the various authors who submit their research and policy briefs. In addition to the continuation of the SRDC newsletter, *Southern Perspectives*, and the Food Assistance series, this year the Center has undertaken a new policy series to replace the 21st Century Millennium Series.



### Southern Perspectives

This quarterly newsletter features a theme of regional interest in each issue. The hard copy is distributed to nearly 2,750 individuals and to more than 600 electronically. The newsletter is also made available on the SRDC website in PDF format. Newsletter themes published during the past year include:

#### ■ Latinos in the South

Volume 6, Number 1, Fall 2002

##### Contributing authors:

*Rubén Hernández-León, University of California*

*Victor Zúñiga, Universidad de Monterrey*

*Deborah Erwin, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences*

*Jorge Atilas and Stephanie Bohon, University of Georgia*

*Javier Stanziola, Florida Gulf Coast University*

*Josh McDaniel, Auburn University*

The set of articles included in this issue represented abbreviated versions of some of the important papers that were presented during the course of the “Latinos in the South” symposium held in April 2002. These articles offered the land-grant system, community colleges and others involved in community development work much food for thought regarding the continued need to develop and deliver educational programs that meet the needs of Latino residents in the region.

#### ■ The Globalization of Food

Volume 6, Number 2, Winter 2003

##### Contributing authors:

S-276 Multi-State Research Team

*Ronald Wimberley, North Carolina State University*

*Brenda Vander Mey and Edward L. McLean, Clemson University*

*Betty Wells, Iowa State University*

*Godfrey Ejimakor, North Carolina A&T State University*

*Conner Bailey, Auburn University*

*Larry Burmeister, University of Kentucky*

*Craig Harris, Michigan State University*

*Marlene Lee, University of Wisconsin*

*Joseph Molnar, Auburn University*

*George Ohlendorf, Louisiana State University*

*Terry Tomazic, St. Louis University*

*Gerald Wheelock, Alabama A&M University*

In an effort to capture the sentiment of Americans on a host of issues associated with our nation’s food production system, this issue was devoted to information that was collected by a team of land-grant university social scientists engaged in multi-state research designed to

“... informing the South of vital information ...”

40 copies of *Southern Perspectives* Volume 6, Number 1 were requested by the Organizational, Staff and Leadership Development Department at the University of Arkansas to issue to participants of a statewide leadership program in February 2003.

#### HEADLINE:

“AgW. Survey indicates Americans trust U.S. agriculture.

Information for this article came from the winter 2003 edition of *Southern Perspectives*, an SRDC publication.”

-- Ag Weekly, May 10, 2003

address the consequences of globalization on agriculture. The data presented in this issue captured the opinions of a diverse group of U.S. citizens. The opinions were shared with readers in hopes of stimulating discussions regarding the major strengths and challenges associated with American agriculture today.

■ **Rural Education**

Volume 6, Number 3, Summer 2003

Contributing authors:

*Mark Henry, David Barkley and Haizhen Li, Clemson University*

*Bradford Mills and Elton Mykerezi, Virginia Tech*

*Gary Paul Green, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

*Stephen Goetz and Anil Rupasingha, Pennsylvania State University*

The educational status of rural areas in the South has long been viewed as a major impediment to the social and economic progress in the region. However, as a product of innovative state policies, coupled with the increasing demand for better-educated workers in the South, the 1990s produced some meaningful improvements in the educational standing of many nonmetro residents in the South. This issue captured an abbreviated version of four of the many research papers presented over the course of the Rural Education Conference (complete information regarding the Rural Education Conference can be found on page 14). These articles were highlighted because of their special focus on the South.



**“When you said you would ‘put them in an envelope and mail them today’ you were not making an empty promise! I received the copies of *Southern Perspectives* I requested today and certainly appreciate your prompt action ... I will distribute these to members of two different groups: The People of the Road Coalition and people involved in Hispanic Ministry with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Savannah, GA. Both will be very interested in the publication.”**

**-- Saint Juliana Migrant Ministry**



■ **Food Assistance Needs Of The South’s Vulnerable Populations**

The SRDC continued this policy series which addresses issues surrounding the food assistance needs in the South. This special series is funded in part by the Economic Research Service and the Farm Foundation, in partnership with the Center.

■ **Opinions of EBT Recipients and Food Retailers in the Rural South**

Number 6, July 2003

Contributing author:

*Andrew Zekeri, Tuskegee University*

A key research question with regard to the introduction of EBT is whether it helps reduce fraud, theft, abuse and social stigma compared to the paper system it has replaced. This report examined the opinions of food stamp recipients and food retailers in the rural South about the EBT system.

■ **Knowledge of Charitable Choice among Food Pantry Directors in the Deep South**

Number 7, October 2003

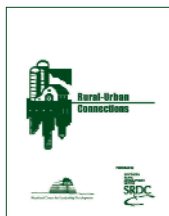
Contributing authors:

*Suzie Cashwell, Western Kentucky University*

*John Bartkowski, Mississippi State University*

*Patricia Duffy, Joseph Molnar, Vanessa Casanova, and Marina Irimia-Vladu, Auburn University*

This study was primarily concerned with assessing food agency directors' knowledge about charitable choice. In doing so, it contributed to the growing body of research focused on the challenges of welfare reform implementation in the Deep South in general, and in Mississippi and Alabama in particular.



**Rural-Urban Connections**

Published during this fiscal year in color, this publication is a combination of three publications in one: *Key Issues Facing Rural Youth* by Daniel F. Perkins, *Urban Youth* by Anthony J. LaGreca and *Annotated Bibliography: Youth Issues* compiled by Ronald L. Mullis. In *Key Issues Facing Rural Youth*, the purpose is to examine the challenges and prospects of youth living in rural areas. In addition, a framework is provided that offers a powerful way of harnessing the energy and potential of youth for the betterment of their own development and the development of the rural communities in which they live. *Urban Youth* presents a selective introduction to a representative array of considerations paramount to understanding our urban youth. The *Annotated Bibliography* offers publications dealing with the following youth issues: careers, crime, culture, education, family relations, health, peers, risk and protection, teen pregnancy, technology, and other miscellaneous topics.



**NEW SRDC Policy Series**

The SRDC has initiated a new policy series that highlights themes from the Center's five focus areas: civic engagement, economic and workforce development, rural-urban interface, health/food assistance, and digital access and use. These briefs present, in nontechnical language, information that could be useful to people and organizations outside the academic community. The series is being distributed in hard-copy to land-grant administrators and faculty, federal and state agency personnel, Congressional representatives, and other interested individuals. Electronic versions of each report are also available on the SRDC website. Two reports have been released to date, with five more scheduled to be completed in FY2004.

■ **Workforce Development Networks in Rural Areas of the United States**

Thematic area: Economic and Workforce Development

September 2003, Number 1

Contributing author:

*Gary Green, University of Wisconsin*

This premier issue, written by Gary Green at the University of Wisconsin, examined how workforce development networks are organized, why employers and community colleges participate in them, and the factors influencing their success.



### ■ **Children and Poverty in the Rural South**

Thematic area: Economic and Workforce Development  
December 2003 (forthcoming), Number 2

#### Contributing authors:

*Rosalind Harris and Julie Zimmerman, University of Kentucky*

This report will examine child and family poverty within the rural South, the forces that perpetuate poverty, and the long-term consequences of poverty for children, families, communities and the region as a whole. The report will conclude with an exploration of policy considerations for addressing the challenges facing families in poverty in the rural South.

Fourteen copies of **Ca\$hing in on Business Opportunities** were sold from September 2002 to October 2003. Copies have been shipped to all four regions of the continental United States as well as to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and to Ankara, Turkey.

### **Ca\$hing in on Business Opportunities: A Guide to Building a Home-Based and Micro-Business Program**

First developed in early 1998 and revised in January 2000, SRDC staff worked closely with the National Home-Based and Micro-Business Design Team to further update the 22-chapter curriculum in June 2003 by revising the CD-ROM with the addition of an evaluation chapter. The revised CD-ROM was distributed as part of the materials to participants at the Business Skills Training (see page 16 for complete details regarding this training).

#### **Grant Connections**

Despite the difficult financial situation in many universities and colleges, there remains a number of funding opportunities that are designed to support sound community and economic development research and outreach activities. 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. In addition, we have listed grants that are most appropriate for community-based groups to pursue, organizations that universities and colleges are often working closely with on community improvement activities. Six issues were compiled this year:

- Volume 5, Number 1, November 2002
- Volume 5, Number 2, January 2003
- Volume 5, Number 3, April 2003
- Volume 5, Number 4, May 2003
- Volume 5, Number 5, July 2003
- Volume 5, Number 6, September 2003

## **WEBSITES**

### **Southern Rural Development Center**

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

### **Community Resource and Economic Development**

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/cred/>

### **Rural Community College Initiative**

<http://srdc.msstate.edu/rcci/>

### **Southern Region Program Leadership Network**

<http://srpln.msstate.edu/>

### **Cooperative Extension Curriculum Project**

<http://srpln.msstate.edu/cecp/>

### **e-Extension Project**

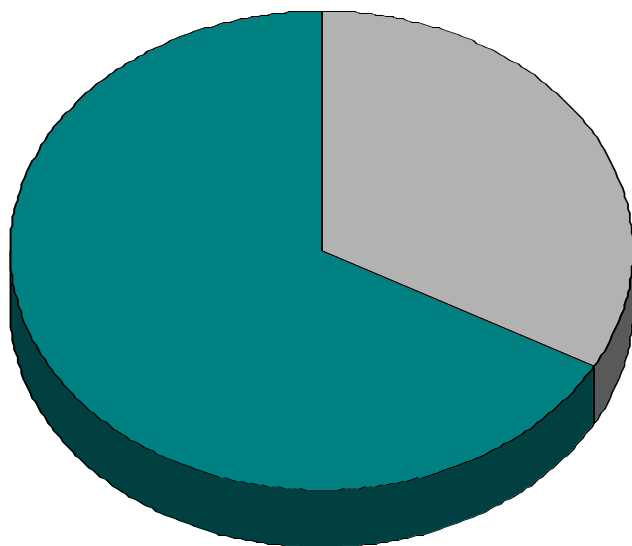
<http://e-extensionproject.info>

## FY 2003 FUNDING

The SRDC has enjoyed another year of sizable levels of extramural funding in FY2003; extramural funding approached the \$728,000 mark. In addition, the Center's base funding increased to \$357,421. Major grants/contracts were awarded to the Center from the Economic Research Service/USDA, the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, National Rural Funders Collaborative, and the SERVE Education Laboratory. The SRDC is grateful to those agencies and organizations for making a financial investment in the work of the Center.



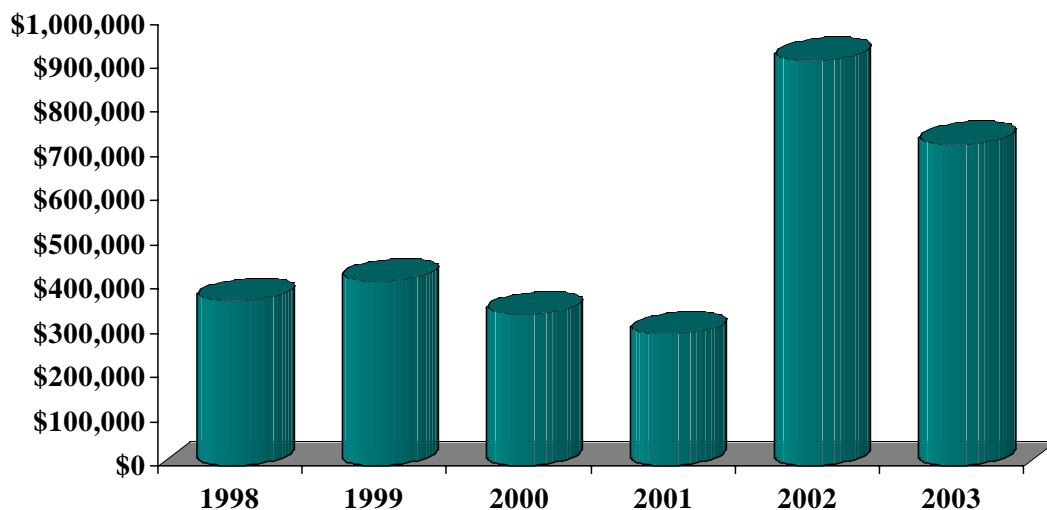
■ Base Funding ■ Extramural Funding



Total FY2003 Funding: \$1,084,922.13

## TRENDS IN EXTRAMURAL FUNDING, FY 1998-2003

The following chart highlights the level of extramural resources that the SRDC has been able to secure over the past six years. Outside monies captured in support of the mission of the SRDC have increased significantly over the course of the last two fiscal years. Total extramural funds generated by the SRDC over the six year period has now surpassed the \$3 million mark.



Total Since FY98: \$3,074,542



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The ten-member Board of Directors is composed of four representatives from Extension (three from 1862 institutions and one from an 1890 institution) and four representatives from Research (three from 1862 institutions and one from an 1890 institution). One representative is from the Farm Foundation, and one is selected from the private sector. Each member serves for a term of three years. Current members are as follows:

**Walter Armbruster**  
Farm Foundation

**John Jensen**, 2003-2006  
Auburn University

**Lawrence Carter**, 2003-2006  
Florida A&M University

**Carter Catlin, Jr.**, Chair 2004-2007  
Tennessee State University

**Margaret Hale**, Chair-Elect 2001-2004  
Texas A&M University

*Ex Officio*

**Sally Ward Maggard**  
USDA-CSREES

**Susan Jenkins** 2002-2005  
Cherokee Preservation Foundation

**Joseph McGilberry** *Host Representative*  
Mississippi State University

**Roland Mote**, 2002-2005  
University of Tennessee

**Ken Roberts**, 2003-2006  
Louisiana State University

**Vance Watson**, *Host Representative*  
Mississippi State University

**Robert Gibbs**  
USDA-ERS

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Technical and Operational Advisory Committee of the Board of Directors advises the SRDC staff in the development of priority goals and strategies for the Center. The committee seeks suggestions and support from the directors and administrators of the various state Extension and research units in the region, from land-grant faculty, and from rural development stakeholders. The committee reviews the proposed direction and activities of the Center and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. The committee meets annually. Current members are:



### 1862 EXTENSION

**Hank Cothran** 2002-2005  
University of Florida

**Beth Duncan** 2001-2004  
Mississippi State University

**Gregory Taylor** 2000-2003  
Texas Cooperative Extension

### 1862 RESEARCH

**Arthur G. Cosby** 2000-2003  
Mississippi State University

**Bradford Mills** 2001-2004  
Virginia Tech

**Lori Garkovich**, Vice-Chair 2002-2005  
University of Kentucky

### NON LAND-GRANT

**Kenneth Fern, Jr.** 1999-2002  
Southern Legislative Conference

**Frank Garcia** 2000-2003  
South Carolina State Rural Development

**Sarah Rubin** 2001-2004  
MDC, Inc.

### 1890 EXTENSION

**Charles Q. Artis**, 1999-2002  
South Carolina State University

**Mabel Diane Edlow** 2000-2003  
Florida A&M University

*New person to come*

### 1890 RESEARCH

**Yvonne B. Oliver** 2001-2004  
Fort Valley State University

**Alfred L. Parks**, Chair 2000-2003  
Prairie View A&M University

**Alton Thompson** 1999-2002  
North Carolina A&T State University

### ADVISOR

**Margaret Hale**  
Texas Cooperative Extension





## **CENTER STAFF**

**Lionel J. (Bo) Beaulieu**  
Director

**Alan Barefield**  
Associate Director

**Bonnie P. Teater**  
Assistant to the Director

**Emily Elliott Shaw**  
Writer/Editor

**Christine Fleming**  
Accounting Assistant

**Angie Forrester**  
Administrative Secretary

**Terri Canaday**  
Graduate Research Assistant

**Michelle R. Yankee**  
Publication Assistant