Southern Region
Rural Entrepreneurship
Roundtable Sessions

September - November 2005

Total Attendees: 273

Sponsor:
Southern Rural Development Center

Contacts:
Bo Beaulieu and Alan Barefield
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu

Southern Rural Development Center
SRDC
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship
Roundtable Sessions

Purpose:
- To develop an understanding and appreciation of the innovative entrepreneurship programs being undertaken by individuals, organizations, and communities across the Southern region;
- To identify the strongest set of information and educational resources that is being used by individuals and organizations in the South engaged in entrepreneurship education and technical assistance activities;
- To assess the type of resources that are needed to further support an effective entrepreneurship development system for people, organizations, and communities in the rural South;
- To identify specific steps for creating coalitions of individuals and organizations (at the local, state, regional, or national levels) committed to working as a team in expanding entrepreneurship opportunities in rural areas.

Agenda:
9:30 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

Overview of the Day’s Activities

10:00 a.m. World Café — Round 1:
Sharing What Works! Programs, Activities, and Resources that Make a Difference in Supporting Entrepreneurs

10:45 a.m. World Café — Round 2:
If I Had Three Wishes!! What I Would Love to See Happen to Strengthen Entrepreneurship Efforts in My Community, State, or Region

11:30 a.m. Sharing the Wealth: Ideas Generated from the Morning Café Dialogues
- What ONE topic or issue did you find to be most common in your morning café discussions?
- What ONE idea did you hear about in your café discussions this morning that resulted in an “AHA” moment for you?
- What ONE idea, topic, or strategy did you hear about that you hope to implement when you get back home?

12:00 p.m. Lunch and Guest Speakers
1:30 p.m.  World Café – Round 3:
Creating Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities – Places That Are Doing It Right!
New Ideas for Building Entrepreneur Friendly-Communities!

2:15 p.m.  Capturing Highlights of the World Café — Round 3

2:30 p.m.  Rapid Response Assembly

**Topic:**

"Let’s Keep Talking: Building Alliances, Strengthening Our Voices for Policies that Support Entrepreneurship”

**Procedure:**

Use the index cards that have been provided to you. Write your responses to the questions being posed under each topical area on these index cards.

**Here are the two major topics we are asking you to address:**

**Topic 1: Building Networks/Alliances:**

What type of network/alliance would be most valuable to you? Identify the level at which the network should operate (local, state, Southern region, national), the specific things this network should do that you would find most valuable, and the people or groups who should be part of this entrepreneurship network. [Note: Please write your responses on one of the index cards].

**Topic 2: Policy Efforts:**

1. What policies exist right now that you believe are helpful to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial communities? What policies are needed to build rural entrepreneurship and at what level should they implemented -- local, state, multi-state, federal?
2. Who has to be at the table if we want to effect these policy changes?

*Note: Please write your responses to these questions on an index card.*

**Sharing Results:**

All index cards will be posted on the wall under the appropriate topic. Individuals will be asked to walk around and study the information on the index cards. Each person will be given colored dots and invited to place the dots on those responses they found to be most important or valuable.
3:15 p.m.  The Next Steps (Entire Group)

- On an index card, write down THREE things you are going to do as a result of attending this meeting (for example, will be sending my business card to people I met at this meeting; will write an article for the local paper on entrepreneurship, etc.).
- What should the SRDC do to support the work of this group, or to strengthen rural entrepreneurship efforts in the Southern region? Please jot your ideas down on another index card.
- Sharing Our Thoughts: Discussion of the key items included on the index cards.

*If you don’t mind, please write your name, address and e-mail on the index cards so that we can follow-up with you at some later time.

4:00 p.m.  Adjourn
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship
Roundtable Sessions

Clemson, SC

October 14, 2005

Attendees: 48

Sponsor:
Southern Rural Development Center

Host:
Clemson University

Contacts:
Kathy Wilson
Clemson University
864-656-6284
wilson5@clemson.edu

Bo Beaulieu and Alan Barefield
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu
Clemson, SC Listening Session  
October 14, 2005

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Roundtable on Rural Entrepreneurship
October 14, 2005
Madren Center, Clemson University

Summary

The Clemson entrepreneurship roundtable hosted participants from North Carolina, South Carolina, and northern Florida. The majority of participants were from entities that provided technical assistance and services to the small business community, as well as a small number of entrepreneurs and other interested stakeholders (educators, elected officials, community leaders, etc.). Most common among the topics that these participants addressed in their work was education and technical assistance of a group of audiences that primarily included businesses and persons from the education community. Other topics addressed by the participants included policy, communication, and collaboration and additional audiences that were targeted by the participants included community leaders and technical assistance/service providers.

Products and services utilized by the participants centered mainly around educational programs and curriculum, but also included data (primarily market-related data) and tools that dealt with specific business operations and programs like incubators, human resource management, and marketing. Best resources mentioned included networking, councils of governments, and educational resources at both the K-12 and college/university levels.

Future of Entrepreneurship

When asked about factors that would strengthen entrepreneurship efforts, the participants focused on three distinct areas. Regarding community, the participants felt that an awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship to the economic development of the community the sharing of a unified vision within the community (including a major wand to resolve turf issues), and moving funding and control of that funding to the local level. With regard to service providers and the educational system, it was felt that important issued to be addressed included developing strong youth entrepreneurship programs and educational curriculum for K-12 schools, funding designed to stabilize all entrepreneurship and business development programs and the establishment of an entrepreneur resource center were prevalent. Finally, business assistance topics focused on the simplification of administrative codes, capital acquisition, and the availability of technology (including broadband internet services) for everyone.

While the proceeding issues were the most common ones expressed by the participants, the most important factors for strengthening entrepreneurship in rural communities followed the same basic lines of thought. Participants felt that community’s recognition of entrepreneurs and small business was of vital importance, as was a rethinking of current economic development policies to make entrepreneurship more accessible (including the reallocation of existing dollars) and a paradigm change of resource allocation. With regard to business assistance, the participants felt that making entrepreneurship less intimidating for providing more technical assistance to research
entrepreneurship educational programs at the primary, secondary, and college/university levels.

Entrepreneurship policies that the participants felt were needed included establishing entrepreneurship friendly business zones, increasing the levels and quality of technical assistance and business resources, streamline or eliminate the barriers to starting, owning and operating, and expanding a business, and providing resources to establish maintain, and expand entrepreneurship education programs.
Roundtable on Rural Entrepreneurship
October 14, 2005
Madren Center, Clemson University

World Café – Round 1

Facilitator Notes:

Three Keys Topics You Address in Your Work

- Entrepreneurial education
- Education and training
- Education/training; micro-loans; mentoring; networking personnel; money management; TA/accessing capital, etc.
- Policy; youth (k-12); development of markets; “placed-based” economy;
- Youth partners
- Business sustainability/support; business development; digital media; participating web development
- Technical assistance community building
- Technical Assistance (wide range of topics/linking resources)
- The “How to’s”
- Mentoring and resource sharing
- Developing a entrepreneurial mindship
- Facilitation
- Education
- Motivation
- Innovation
- Leveraging Resources
- Partnerships/alliances/collaborations

Major Audiences You Target in Your Work

- Broad range supports available
- Working with people not ready for owning their own business
- Potential entrepreneurs
- Potential current (but don’t realize on home support)
- E-commerce
- Need for paradigm shift – employee – entrepreneur
- Appreciate system start ups not yet funded
- Consumers of digital content was of “trade”; government; existing business startups; home based businesses; (25-55 – low income high school education); technical college; high school; small town main street business; small business/already existing; teachers/instructors; faith-based & community based, non-profits, education service providers; leaders, economy developers, farmers/fishermen
- Getting micro loans to low wealth small business folks
- Capital acquisition
- Businesses seeking financing
- Financing
- Training access to capital
- Soft skills – credit, financial fitness, communications
- Financing – RLFs, Micor-loans, seed capital
- Technical assistance
- Businesses needing assistance (financial planning, marketing, etc)
- Cash flow management
- Financial – personal savings – MR auction
- Marketing/sales strategies
- Marketing assistance – process, export, matchmaker
- Legal issues
- Incubator – space (low-cost), secretarial, technology, conference room, networks to provider system

- **Policy and Collaboration**
  - Governor’s mentor/protégé program
  - Helping borrowers/small business to rely on each other through networking
  - Work ethics – the need to be entrepreneurship
  - E-Environment in Communities thru entrepreneur funding initiative
  - Statewide regional “EFC” (Entrepreneur Friendly community) and CALL program
  - ESB coordinating network – created exec. Order by governor
  - Service learning
  - Youth Entrepreneurship training
  - Student choice – participation in a market society/economy
  - Education
  - Rural Entrepreneurship

- **Career and Workforce Development**
  - Career choices/ exploration interdependence of all players
  - Job creation
  - Personal responsibility
  - Enhancing partnerships to provide information and support for managing personal as well as small business finances
  - Cooperative, be good worker, dream and goals
  - Support self, family, able to take care of self

- **Communication and Collaboration**
  - People with ideas who need help formulating plan and starting the business
  - Positive communication
  - Collaboration/networking
  - Sharing of resources/of collaboration among those who have and those who need
  - Alliances
- Adults statewide
- National training institute, statewide, nationally, internationally
- People who have been to technical college

- **Communities**
  - Communities – ED, C of C
  - GAs 159 communities

- **Service Providers**
  - State and federal partners at table to oversee state level activity
  - Business resource providers
  - Referral sources, bankers, chambers of commerce, DDAs, CPAs, Attorney, state offices (Dept. Econ Development, Dept of Community Affairs, secretary of state office)

**Three Products You Use in Support Your Work**

- **Business Services**
  - TA to existing businesses
  - Micro-loan funds for USDA
  - CDBG funds
  - Revolving loan fund
  - RLFs, seed capital investments, Dept of Equity
  - Small grants for seed support
  - Human resources
  - Marketing Asst. tools
  - Surveys
  - Public relations and print products
  - Quick books
  - Business Incubator
  - Listening to needs of the entrepreneur
  - Mentors

- **Curriculum and Education**
  - Online local business guide
  - E-friendly outline – leader, awareness, team and enhance relationship with resources, interviews
  - Instructor-led training
  - Curriculum training
  - Recognized curriculum
  - Business development class
  - Enhanced FDIC money smart
  - Financial literacy
  - Core four-business planning for success
  - Mini REAL curriculums
  - Partners in education business partner
  - Mentor protégé “program”, trade development and education
  - Risk management association (RMA) data
  - Reference USA Business lists
• USDA IRP
• Micro $
• Micro lenders
• SBAs business express loans

• Assistance Providers
  • SBDCs
  • SCORE
  • DTAE – dept technical and adult education
  • ACE – Appalachian Community Enterprises
  • MESO – Mountain Entrepreneur support Organization
  • Dr. Paul Delargy
  • REAL
  • Partnerships – SBDC, GMEN, UGA, Chamber, Local government, Dept H&D, GA REAL
  • Community based programs
  • Excellent vehicle to get state agencies together and make aware of each other’s resources
  • Regional staff – funding and support, marketing department to get the good word out
  • Appalachian Regional Commission (Fall conference) – you are exposed to a variety of rural entrepreneur opportunities models
  • Microsociety

• Education
  • Service learning programs
  • Joyce Epstein’s work (Chicago, IL)
  • Universities (Human Resources)
  • New wave – research based text that promote FE &E
  • Intellectual capital/expertise available thru the university
  • PTA Website
  • Students
  • Youth programs
  • Retirees

North Carolina

Three Keys Topics You Address in Your Work

• Entrepreneurship Development
  • Sustainability of business/projects support/system training
  • Entrepreneurship and small business development
  • Entrepreneurship development program partnerships, high country business network
  • Education/knowledge transfer business assessment ENVI
  • Access to business development resources for entrepreneurs
  • Develop interest in entrepreneurship

• Business Assistance
o Future forward

Major Audiences You Target in Your Work

- Businesses and Audiences
  o Entrepreneurs
  o Entrepreneurs – rural municipalities
  o Entrepreneur – young adult, tech
  o Existing businesses
  o Chamber of Commerce members
  o Start-ups and businesses under 5 years old; 60% women, 40% men, 70% proprietorships, 10% partnerships, 10% S-corps, 10% LLC/other (includes 501.c.3s)
  o People who want to start business
  o Pre start-up, start ups, struggling businesses
  o Aspiring entrepreneurs and small business people
  o Would be and start-up entrepreneurs
  o Entrepreneurial nonprofits
  o Enterprises positioned for growth
  o Chamber members who need assistance in growing business one level to the next
  o Ag economy development
  o Plan based business – crafts people, aggressive farming, retailers, tourism, construction, students/college and technical college, focus on small town main street
  o Individuals seeking small business service
  o Dislocated workers
  o Focus on displaced and underemployed
  o Individuals at or below 80% medium income
  o Retirees
  o ESC/joblink/byoffs
  o Entrepreneurs and educational service providers
  o Regional service providers
  o Service providers – legal, accounting
  o Investors – private equity
  o Consumers of digital content
  o Participatory content providers (web 2.0)

- Service Providers
  o Service providers, non-profits, state agencies, entrepreneurs and community leaders
  o Small business associations in each community in county
  o Local and elected officials
  o Elected officials community leaders, economic developers
  o Established business community and local leaders – elected officials too
  o Existing pubic and private inst and agencies (CC, Tech college)
- Tourism guidebooks and packaged items

- **Technological Resources**
  - Web base and materials CDs handouts
  - Email newsletter
  - Adobe Inc.
  - Macintosh
  - Open Source
  - Retirees website (DSL)
  - Website and resources referral network under development

- **Financial and Other Resources**
  - CDBG Entrepreneur assistance grant
  - Dare to Dream program
  - Building community by design materials

**Best Resource You Want People to Know About**

- **Entrepreneurs**
  - Entrepreneurs themselves!
  - Business resource alliance (service provider, collaborative)
  - Small business center network
  - The variety of Eship education curriculums/programs available

- **Technology**
  - Digital content creation on apple
  - Computers and open source software
  - Websites

- **Educational Programs**
  - ABI Institutes, main street programs
  - BRNHA Resource Network
  - SDC, EDC, SBTDC, IES
  - Use of flexible education to promote rural entrepreneurship development
  - Regional universities
  - HMACU – masters on entrepreneurship program
  - Community College, small business development directive
  - Support available at community college SBDC
  - Mini-REAL
  - 3 day REAL retreat
  - REAL curriculum – adapts well to all ages, industries, educational backgrounds, experience levels, etc. Can be taught in a wide variety of formats from traditional classroom instruction to retreat format.
  - Fast Trac, SBIR, Austin Chamber of Commerce website, CED conferences
  - Use of Monrad – vast such as Hispanic churches for same
  - Enterprise facilitation (Sirolli)
  - Rural e-commerce re: marketing rural ag & crafts product

- **Regional and State Development Agencies**
  - Advantage West
- Operations
  - Intellectual property
  - Import/Export SC
  - Insurance costs – health care, workers comp
  - Economic incentives – job tax credits, income tax
  - All phases of business – business plan creation; strategic planning, identifying funded programs for businesses

- Economic Development
  - Applied research related to rural economic and business development; providing assistance
  - Rural economic development
  - Partnership development training
  - Downtown development – land use, issues that protect downtown areas
  - Market studios that pinpoint commercial leakage and potential new business opportunities
  - Rural broadband
  - Regulated Utilities – electricity, gas, telephone
  - Small farmers economic flight
  - Senior citizen farmers market nutrition program
  - NIC farmer market nutrition

- Training and Education
  - Adult training
  - Education/training
  - Youth leadership and development
  - Workforce development – Tech colleges, reg. apprentice

Major Audiences You Target in Your Work

- Businesses
  - New start-ups in distressed areas across SC
  - Potential entrepreneurs
  - Potential and existing generally new entrepreneurs
  - Potential startups
  - Potential Entrepreneurs
  - Potential entrepreneurs
  - Entrepreneurs with business that want to go global a) established, b) new, c) potential
  - Entrepreneurial development and TA in Economically distressed or low wealth counties
  - Existing business
  - Existing business
  - Existing businesses
  - Existing entrepreneurs
  - Industry

- Geographic Areas
  - 5 rural counties pop = 105k, medium income = 28.5
  - Native Islanders in Beaufort County, SC (which are African American)
- On-line government resources (databases, USP10, census data, agency reports)
- Other university resources (faculty, market research center, SBDC, etc)
- University library databases – access reports unavailable to general user
- SC Dept of commerce- business/industry data
- Economic and land use data on $ and people going out of the community
- Charts
- Students and marketing reports

**Other Resources**
- Outside resources – partners, potential funders
- Governmental agencies
- Nonprofit agencies
- Individuals and any others
- Media, Trade Association, nonprofit groups

**Best Resource You Want People to Know About**

**Training and Technical Assistance**
- Business expertise
- Technical assistance
- Benedict has a recently formed business incubator
- Business incubation facility
- Has also a CDC focusing indirectly on commercial development
- Small business development centers
- Education/training
- RLF

**Networking**
- Network
- Networking (collaborations)
- Local networks
- Working with local community development corporation and local community foundation
- SCMEP
- SCWTC
- Mini-society

**Other Resources**
- Council of governments
- Local and state universities
- Students – Erskine grant
- Contribution that agriculture make to society – without agriculture we will be naked, homeless and hungry, agriculture provide the basis for all economic development
- 4-H is a youth development program that allows youth to grow through a variety of projects and programs.
• Health care
• Investment group (angels)/network
• Technology, can be a tool
• Need for data
• Internet use and access for everyone
• Affordable broadband

Georgia

• Education
  • Require at least one course of entrepreneurship for all technical college students – to include building a business plan
  • Seamless education
  • Have economic education including entrepreneurship part of all elementary, middle and high school curriculum statewide
  • Require/offer entrepreneurship and financial literacy in K-12
  • More parental involvement
  • More business involvement
  • Youth business leadership development
  • Youth development
  • Middle school participation
  • Less BOE control – local control of Elementary education curriculum – experiential learning
  • Seamless information for start ups
  • Strong mentoring program
  • Offer courses (internships) to high school students that promote entrepreneurial skills for individuals not interested in college (perhaps a service learning diploma)
  • Real and honest dialog and identification of what provider serve which entrepreneur and how? No turfs – no competition between providers
  • TA geared to/for rural entrepreneurship through continuum (pre startup needed – feasibility – 1st year in business)
  • Education that supports entrepreneurship and creativity
  • Mini REAL program
  • The ability to have REAL businesses hire students for youth
  • District mini REAL program
  • Access to training, TA and capital
  • Increase funding for the SBDC program nationally

• Community and Agencies
  • Unlimited regional efforts of chambers and DDAs
  • Continued emphasis on entrepreneurship as a viable economic development strategy by state officials
  • Improve understanding of linkages between community development and economic development
  • To bring about an awareness of the importance of entrepreneurship to individuals, family and communities
  • Focus on rural counties in GA, national and international
- DPI to mandate entrepreneurship training or at least make it accessible in all schools
- Reality vs. theory educational – prepare people for flexibility and entrepreneurship within the education system, certified business skills
- Financial literacy help more available to all residents
- Educate baby boomers on investor capital
- Involve faculty to devote time for applied research and policy issues relevant to economic development – faculty fellows on regional level
- Integrate entrepreneurship and self employment into schools
- Expanded resources (go through – community, college, AdvantageWest, SBA, SCORE, etc.)
- Make educational institutions more aggressive on spinning out research
- Focus on the future vision – get over the past – entrepreneurship institute
- How to start a business
- Reality – define entrepreneurship as a job

- Local and State Service Providers
  - Local funds allocated to recruitment of external businesses be equal by incentives for local enterprises
  - Financial reallocation of resources for state
  - State funding services
  - Get off the incentives a focus on mentoring/incubation/development
  - Economic developers and community leaders to understand entrepreneurship as an economic development tool and support local entrepreneurs
  - Change the thinking in our department of commerce and reallocate resources
  - Stop spending inordinate amounts on industrial recruitment
  - Paradigm shift in thinking
  - Create a virtual collaboration network for entrepreneurs
  - Collaborative community vision – support each other
  - Destroy the good old boy network through the democratization of information
  - $ multi-year funding for demonstration projects
  - Case management model for client referrals
  - Simplify the administrative code (NC)
  - Simplify the tax code
  - Service providers combine marketing effort
  - Institutional turf (cease fire for 2 years)

- Policies
  - Development of a system that moves design and creation of niche markets for state industries ie. Textile and furniture
  - State - Legislation and policies that support entrepreneurship development via secondary and post-secondary institute as well as community-based entrepreneurial “one-stops”
  - One stop shop
  - Make the governors who are former entrepreneurs
- Change state public policy from recruiting to entrepreneurship
- Enact federal legislation and enforcement that prohibits state giveaways to big business recruitment
- Have policies at the national, state, and local level work together to encourage entrepreneurship
- Reallocation of resources at all levels to facilitate the process of entrepreneurship
- Resources to provide needed resources

**Capital Acquisition**
- Money – access to capital
- Cheaper transaction costs for small loans
- Organized early stage capital (angel network) to fund new ventures
- Have access to capital and markets

**Networking/Community**
- Solid network – accountant, attorney, market research)
- Community support
- Local level connection and state support – generate understanding of entrepreneurship through better measures
- Recognition/respect for small business
- I would grant rural people the desire to want to work together to develop entrepreneurship in their community

As a group, select the THREE most important wishes that you want the whole group attending this meeting to hear about.

**Facilitators’ Notes**

- **Community/Training**
  - Organize/coordinate/collaborate – share resources/joint work at local, state and regional levels
  - Small business friendly state government (leg, gov)
  - Employment support
  - Societal change
  - Entrepreneur friendly policy not buffalo chasing
  - Re-think and revise existing policies to make entrepreneurship more accessible – reallocating existing $
  - Needed resources: paradigm changes, supportive implementation structure, public service/information activities
  - Awareness of/recognition of entrepreneurs/small business – the idea is a climate change leading to awareness of opportunities/resources that will then grow businesses

- **Business Assistance**
  - Make entrepreneurship less intimidating; provide more technical assistance to research markets and create viable business plan
  - Access capital entrepreneurship
- Rethink and revise existing policy and reallocate resources to facilitate entrepreneurship
- The people of the rural America in developing economic opportunities in their communities through entrepreneurship
- Provide less intimidating information to make entrepreneurship easier from programmatic
- More supportive
- Resources
- Local $ and control over $

**Business Resources**
- Incubators
- Funding access
- Financing – more accessible/with different underwriting criteria

For the “top three wishes,” identify what it will take to make these wishes a reality in your community, state, and/or Southern region.

**Facilitators’ Notes**

- **Policy**
  - Mind-sets need changing – most systems (ed, business, industry, legislative)
  - Advocacy (org) – have a presence and a voice
  - Advocacy (org)
  - Cost-benefit analysis – entrepreneur/approach redefine what is success
  - More supportive policy environment from all levels of government
decision makers and other stakeholders
  - Share data – from counties/commerce who get support and what were the results
  - $ more
  - Accountability
  - Accountability – evaluation
  - How can information by SBA/federal level be translated to help track and support local entrepreneurial development

- **Education**
  - Public instruction (which influences private and home schooling) all
educational systems should be encouraged and allowed to innovate
  - Education plan why and how
  - Embedding/promoting entrepreneurship through educational and other
community resources
  - Look at a different research mission at state and university

- **Capital**
  - Access to funding, capital and other resources that lead to change
  - Incentive for private people to invest
As a team, select FOUR key activities a community should undertake if it wants to become recognized as an “entrepreneur friendly” locality.

- **Community**
  - Community development – know what’s there and how to leverage it
  - Plan – outcome
  - Entrepreneurship leadership development
  - Entrepreneurial support commitment, etc. local
  - Leadership that is business friendly
  - Community leadership buy-in/awareness
  - Open access to contribute/innovate
  - Relaxing barriers
  - Have a vision and put your $ behind or “track it” and get it
  - Visible gatekeepers
  - Know the community – community developed assets
  - Targeting an asset based voice
  - Promoting/embedding community pride and heritage
  - Celebrating
  - Pre-k – 12+ olds

- **Business**
  - Entrepreneurship network (training, referral)
  - Linking people with products and skills
  - Capital access
  - Communication/marketing
  - Level of infrastructure (economic development, office, chamber, create programs/support systems)

What 3-4 activities can we – the people and organizations attending this roundtable session – do to help communities become “entrepreneur friendly”?

- **Networks**
  - Develop local networks
  - Bring three states together to share experiences/best practices
  - State-state peer to peer
  - Electronic networks
  - Don’t forget about micro enterprises (1-5 people)

- **Community Support**
  - Stress importance of creating entrepreneurship friendly communities
  - Small business expos
  - Economic support – (spokesperson, corp support for entrepreneurship/SBA/ minority suppliers)
  - Communication between groups so there are no “wrong doors” website
  - How to for community/entrepreneurial PR
  - Publicizing successes
  - Getting word out
  - Emotional pull (bring your kids here)
Think of a community that you would identify as “entrepreneur friendly.” What is this community doing specifically that makes it a great place for entrepreneurs? Try to think of at least 2-3 examples of “entrepreneur friendly” activities this community is undertaking.

Facilitator Notes:

- Community
  - Network
  - Business referral networking
  - Visibility of business
  - “How to” website
  - Real estate
  - Broadband coalition
  - Amenities
  - “Coffee shops”

- Business Assistance
  - Financing
  - Investing in startups (70%)  
  - Capital back stop (city back up loans by 50%)
  - Business license (exempt from fees)
  - Incubators

- Education/Training
  - Partnering with universities
  - Youth involvement (k-12)
  - Retaining young adults
  - Buy local (supply chain)
  - Support groups who assist entrepreneurs (mentoring)

Georgia:

- Communities
  - Asheville
  - Asheville, NC – downtown markets, malls, beautification, using existing resources; educational/networking workshops, financial resources available, community involvement at all levels, tourism with heritage
  - Asheville – active downtown, active community and business association, strong cultural/artists communities, beautification projects
  - Rosemary Beach, FL – multi-use
  - Seaside, FL – interdependent

- Community Involvement
  - Growing community
  - Inviting
  - Includes entrepreneurship development as part of consolidated plan or growth strategy
- **Community Vision**
  - Encouraging entrepreneurship attitude
  - Cooperation and support of local government – EDC, chamber, schools, county and city officials, business community
  - Support and self-confident that “they are the place to be”
  - New tools that communicate the vision
  - Positive vision for the future
  - RTP
  - RTP – CED – city partnerships
  - Aggressive expansion of resources and support
  - Formed a new economic development group made up of 24 members from all resources in the community
  - City funded a loan pool for new business startups
  - Entrepreneurship new ventures institute
  - Industry cluster dev, internet based marketing of indigenous products, economic development leadership training
  - Retaining young adults – Austin, TX (#1 place to be single)

- **Business Assistance**
  - How to start up a business – website and hard copy
  - Go to the entrepreneurs don’t make them come to you. Treats them like heroes not “dirty capitalists.” Work together, make easy for the entrepreneurs to access resources.
  - Incubator program Needs
  - Ebay – virtual organizations that are open ended
  - Investing in startups – Raleigh gets 75% of capital (Levi Strauss sold things to gold Miners)
  - Buying local – sell picks to miners
  - Buy local supply
  - Business plan contest

- **Education**
  - School superintendent supported instructors to offer REAL training
  - Assisting in education
- Access to capital
- Capital
- Consolidated plan – micro
- Model
- Risk takers – attitude (change about failure) (mistakes happen for risk takers)
- Information – resources best practices

- Community
  - Vision
  - Progressive leadership
  - Target an asset based focus – have a vision and put $ behind it
  - Leadership
  - Asset based/place based
  - Diverse/progressive
  - Communication

- Education
  - Education – all levels
  - E-conference for youth
  - E-camp for middle and youth
  - Involve youth

North Carolina
- Create networks, mentoring and referral
- How to startup a business – website and hardcopy
- Capital

South Carolina
- A plan to be an entrepreneurial friendly community
- Ease of access to training
- Protection

What 3-4 activities can we – the people and organizations attending this roundtable session – do to help communities become “entrepreneur friendly”?

Georgia
- Institutions
  - Strong chamber of commerce
  - Institutions – get better at who we serve
  - Raise the identity of one’s own organization

- Community
  - Awareness training – start early in articulating vision and goals to stakeholders/community
  - Inform – get the word out
  - Teaching community/leaders how to do PR
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpful Existing Policies</th>
<th># of dots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NC has the qualified business venture tax credit for investors. 25% tax credit towards</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state income taxes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDOL self employment act (SEA) makes UI benefits available to unemployed</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individuals seeking self-employment or business startup including funds for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entrepreneurial training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One GA SB guarantee loan fund established 7/1/05, filled funding gap identified by</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esbs and bankers; rapid depreciation (to fed. Code), extra $500 tax credit when</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creating jobs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC - policies none now, policies needed: pooled health insurance, moratorium (1 year)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on business tax for startup, commerce dept/chamber of commerce/state rep/state</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>senator</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tax break for businesses, educational policies (GA)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies that provide for business license abatement for new businesses, loan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guarantees in existence are helpful. Additional policies to help small business owners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provide benefits (esp. health insurance) at reasonable cost would be a great asset.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDA funding to start revolving loan, SBA funding programs (GA)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC rural center initiatives – Kellogg grant get the word out</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with state department of education, state dept for adult and technical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education, the governor’s network for entrepreneurs and small business and cell 21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agencies (state level); any and all appropriate members of the local community that are</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>able to be involved that are interest, have resources and will make a commitment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(local level); rural centers, foundations, regional agencies, training sites are all age</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>levels (ARC, etc. commerce) (Regional)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NC - The 21st Century community – a statewide policy is encouraging strong</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>development in rural community. Policy should be developed at a local level and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>should include implementing entrepreneurship into the school system.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Superintendents and local principals have the ability if they see fit to make these</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To implement local changes the following should be on board: colleges and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universities, public schools, hospitals and large institutions, large and small industry,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large and small businesses, government units, town, city and county chamber of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commerce, arts, tourism and agricultural community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local ed programs, some tax incentives, small development centers, generally, not many</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“policies” exist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA is currently using key train software to promote entrepreneurial skills, service</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning through out youth apprenticeship program (YAP), partnerships with local</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technical schools to promote these skills and trainings at school to encourage students</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>in marketing and management strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited funding initiatives to develop young entrepreneurs; community initiative to</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hire economic development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More policies are needed to afford potential entrepreneurs to take advantage of</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>business ideas and skills they can move into the “world of business”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very few but the climate is changing. State dept of commerce has begun to support</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entrepreneurial demonstration projects (NC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needed Policies</td>
<td># of dots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies are needed to require educational institutions to teach/encourage entrepreneurship.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More state dollars go to development of ESB programs: broaden, (i.e. market research efforts, state portal)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cut through red tape. Access to capital. Include entrepreneurship in state and local education curriculums</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC - Continue to work with other organizations in my local area to create a strong collaborative entrepreneurial support network. Learn more about K-12 entrepreneurial education efforts/programs in my community. Begin developing a strong network of retirees as potential mentors for new/growing entrepreneurs.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralization of information on regulations related to small business (one stop for information on labor requirements, tax requirements, etc). Minimizing b. red tape. Incentives for venture capitalist and banks to invest in small business</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement at all levels – support for technology, policies needed: tax incentives, $, help with health insurance. Global - $, entrepreneurial exchange and coaching networks</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy to increase the risk among funding entities for those individuals who are considered “high risk”</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies should be reviewed that affect the distribution/allocation of available resources. Policies related to TANF and workforce development should be directed towards self-employment or entrepreneurial opportunities including access to training, TA and capital. These policies should be implemented at all levels</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that adequate technical assistance is available to help existing entrepreneurs grow their businesses and instruct potential pre-ventures on the initial assessments necessary as well as the visioning and planning required to start and build a new business.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver better assistance to the aspiring entrepreneur – it is a confusing web and inconsistent in its quality. Change the thinking and culture of the elephant hunters – they must become more information-oriented and less golf-game oriented – and incorporates entrepreneurs as their customers.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should be implemented locally but supported by state and fed government. We need user friendly policies that are non-threatening to individuals wanting to make investments in business. Policy needs to include “tax breaks” for beginning entrepreneurs, needs to give comparable health insurance policies.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and growing the small business center network. Addressing health care issues for small businesses. Allow the Dept. of Commerce to invest more into entrepreneurship development. Make locating and starting a business within the state equal (one gets the same benefits regardless of where they come from). Allow entrepreneurship education in our K-12 schools</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro business zones/districts and entrepreneurial zones/districts. Providing capital, incentives to micro businesses in designated areas</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to change the paradigm from elephant hunting to growing local businesses job by job. Define entrepreneur as a job at local, state and national level. Some SBA programs are quite entrepreneurial friendly need to hold incentive recipients</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship Roundtable Sessions

Granbury, TX

September 29, 2005

Attendees: 16

Sponsor:
Southern Rural Development Center

Hosts:
Texas Cooperative Extension Service
Southern Rural Development Center

Contacts:
Greg Clary
Texas Cooperative Extension
903-834-6191
g-clary@tamu.edu

Bo Beaulieu and Alan Barefield
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu
Granbury, TX Listening Session  
September 29, 2005

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Granbury, TX Entrepreneurship Roundtable  
September 29, 2005

Summary

The Granbury, TX Roundtable contained a mix of entrepreneurs, service providers, and elected officials. The vast majority of topics dealt with by the service providers concerned entrepreneurship and business development as well as topics that directly concerned the operational aspects of the business such as the workforce and human resource issues, financial management and capital legislation, firm management, and marketing. Other issues addressed by the participants on a regular basis dealt with community development including community visioning and overall rural economic development.

The most innovative topics listed by the participants that are issued to address their issues included websites hosted by the Small Business Administration and the Texas Workforce Commission, the Rural Enterprise Accreditation Partnership, and the Siroilli Institute method of business development and management (this method views the training of product/service, sales and marketing, and financial management as the key to business success.) While these innovative resources were certainly included in the list of the best resources issued by the participants, other “cream of the crop” resources included numerous websites, research materials, and the Texas Department of Agriculture.

The range of audiences addressed by this group was among the widest of any of the roundtables. While almost all participants dealt with some facet of small business and entrepreneurship, other audiences included business and economic development service providers, civic and governmental organizations, community residents and educational institutional that included both public school districts and regional university.

Strengthening Entrepreneurship
In the discussion that centered around the participants thoughts on how entrepreneurship in their communities could be strengthened, several factors emerged. Cooperation amount city/county elected officials and changing the focus of these officials from an economic development strategy solely based on industrial recruiting to one that incorporates the notion of entrepreneurship and small business development. The other strongly emerging factor concerned the development of entrepreneurship networks that dealt with not only the support of entrepreneurs, but also with enhanced training and educational needs of small businesses.

Entrepreneur Friendly Communities
Several communities were mentioned being entrepreneur-friendly. Characteristics of these communities included building on existing assets to strengthen their entrepreneurial base, recognition of entrepreneurs as being important in the economic development fabric of the community, and cooperation among governmental and civic organizations within the community. Other factors that communities should address if they want to be perceived as entrepreneur friendly include developing community-based marketing programs, enhanced
Granbury, TX Entrepreneurship Roundtable
September 29, 2005

Round 1
Three Key Topics You Address in Your Work

- Business Development
  - Business development
  - Enterprise development
  - Development of new entrepreneurship in Hood County
  - Enterprise facilitation – Lam County and the City of Anton
  - Growing business through product or business area specific technology
  - Entrepreneurship is a process (how) but not the “what.” So entrepreneurship needs to be coupled with innovation and technology transfer.
  - Small business challenges
  - Rural Enterprise Accelerator Partnership (REAR) – Littlefield, Levelland, Lamesa, and Hobbs, NM. Rural business incubator network with SBDC.
  - General entrepreneurship
  - Mechanics – establishing a business
  - Technical assistance to existing businesses

- Business Retention
  - Business retention
  - Business retention and expansion

- Specific Business Operational Topics
  - Workforce and Human Resources
    - Business service from workforce center
    - Education of workforce
    - Predicting growth trajectories (or decline) – ripple effects in the labor market
    - Updating the curriculum (e.g., math/science) for just-in-time delivery of appropriately trained workforce.
    - Contract labor
  - Financial
    - Cash flow
    - Funding for low-income/minority producers
  - Marketing and Promotion
    - Promotion
    - Providing marketing support for area businesses
  - Management
    - Successful business management techniques

- Specific Business Sectors
  - Hood horticulture
  - Agriculture production
  - Hay sales, crop distribution
  - Pecan crop

- Community and Resource Development
  - Rural economic development
• Identify and secure necessary resources to facilitate networks
• Cooperation among government and elected officials
• Pristine Lake Granbury
• Buy local mentality
• Maintain hometown feel while community grows
• Have an open, caring network of people that is easily accessible
• Entrepreneurship in schools – kindergarten through life
• Grow your own
• Revive the Federal and State Technology (FAST) liaison for Texas entrepreneurs and innovators to SBIR, SBTT
• Get elected officials to quite focusing on the big splash – big corporations locating in big cities. Look instead to stem the brain drain of rural communities (understand net gains)
• Understand that biotech is greater than big pharmaceutical companies. Biotech also includes genetically engineered foods, crops, and livestock with Texas A&M in the lead. Biotech also is telemedicine/telehealth to deliver health services to medically underserved areas with the Department of Rural Family Practices at the Texas Tech medical school in the lead.
• Build on your comparative advantages like ag biotech and telemedicine rather than “Field of Dreams” jumping on the bandwagon in the hopes of getting “glamorous” plumbs like a pharmaceutical company that isn’t very likely to leave San Diego or the Research Triangle of North Carolina or Harvard/MIT in Cambridge, MA.

Round 3
Creating Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities – Places That Are Doing It Right!
New Ideas for Building Entrepreneur Friendly-Communities!

Think of a community that you would identify as “entrepreneur friendly.” What is this community doing specifically that makes it a great place for entrepreneurs? Try to think of at least 2-3 examples of “entrepreneur friendly” activities this community is undertaking.

• Early – same sheet of music
• Canadian – a plan
• Canadian
  o Economic Development/Chamber of Commerce Cooperation
  o Encourages technology infrastructure
  o Capitalizes on their natural resources and markets them to the max
• Fredericksburg – markets community as a whole place to visit
• Salado
  o Trades on a specific culture reputation
  o Community is “visitor” friendly
  o Community hosts a wide variety of activities
• Granbury
  o Economic development
  o Marketing
Facilitators’ Notes

- Help businesses expand (easements, parking lots, ADA, minimize waste of finances and obstacles to help businesses expand)
- Build and Support Local Branding and Marketing – produce lake, services, and non-ag products
- Branding (Fredericksburg Peaches/Poteet Strawberries/Colorado Beef/Iowa Angus) – pooling local resources for common marketing even though technically they are competitors
- Get local financial institutions to connect with external venture capitalists, SBA, etc. To some extent, underwrite early stage risks.
- Quarterly government meeting with potential entrepreneurs. “The Roadmap for Launching a Business in Our County/City: Key Ingredients.”
- Communication – “Two-way exchange” (mentoring groups, government listening to needs of entrepreneurs, launch SCORE programs, link to community colleges)
- E-government initiatives
- EDC/Chamber – “Grow Your Own” initiatives

What 3-4 activities can we – the people and organizations attending this roundtable session – do to help communities become “entrepreneur friendly?”

- Embrace cultural diversity
- Local buyin
- Develop community pride
- Develop leadership
- Create incentives to attract entrepreneurs – incubation, taxes, help community to determine core values, provide space
- Facilitate needs of entrepreneur
- Create incentives to attract entrepreneurs
- Marketing and recognition
- Community reinvestment (encourage)
- Bring in $ to support programs
- Foster entrepreneurship education in K-12 and beyond

Facilitators’ Notes

- Develop community pride
- Develop leadership
- Embrace cultural diversity
- Tell the story about local assets, products, amenities
- We’re all in this together (in-fighting has to sop; all work together to promote entrepreneurship, business growth and expansion)
- Give preference to local firms when it comes to procurement requests by county and city governments, schools, etc.
- Create incentives to attract entrepreneurs – incubation, taxes, help community to determine core values, provide space
- Level: Local
  - Players: Local officials with emphasis on majority being business owners, anyone who wants to (self-selecting)

- Regional economic development network to educate economic developers, share resources, and work on regional projects
  - Level: Local and Regional (supported by the State)
  - Players: Workforce Development, educational institutions, economic development boards

- Regional network that provides/coordinates business data of raw materials utilized in manufacturing or production in region – should be broken down in local, regional, state data. Identify all raw materials purchased. Keep data updated, including new and expanded businesses. Help coordinate data and marketing of what’s produced in region so other businesses can buy “locally.” Provide and identify new business opportunities for suppliers inside region rather than purchasing outside region, state, and country. (2 votes)
  - Level: Regional
  - Players: Higher education, workforce development, economic development boards, local businesses

- Impact network – only allow positive attitudes – share your story to see the impact on your sphere of influence. Believe and take action to be remarkable.
  - Level: Local, State, and Regional
  - Players: People who get it

- Tourism network – special activities, location, friendly attitude, historical

- Entrepreneur Mentor Network – not another club. Entrepreneurs “gather” to tell their story. To learn. To grow. To spill over the knowledge. Allow user to openly contribute. This will lead to great strength in ventures. This will grow the pie not cut it into smaller pieces.
  - Level: Has to be Local to not be onerous for the user (entrepreneur)
  - Players: Self selecting – see value and stay; contribute and grow

- Entrepreneurial Boot Camp – educate, mentor, support
  - Level: Local
  - Players: Local government, chambers of commerce, economic development corporations with “guest” experts from within and outside of the community

**Policies**

- Funding to implement the Texas Entrepreneurship Network legislation; payroll taxation policy favorable to genuine, new, small businesses; risk management (e.g., health/medical insurance) alternatives that provide a reasonably priced product for the small, young entrepreneurship firms; expanded sources and availability of loan and grant funds; streamline advertising and applications for existing loan and grant funds (1 vote)
  - Level: State
  - Players: Representatives for groups to be impacted

- Federal and state elected officials recognizing that rural counts and specify dollars that are funneled down to encourage entrepreneurs to set up businesses in non-metro environments
• Workforce
  • Resource and educational support
  • Legislative updates
  • Policy changes

What will I do when I get back home?
• Have a “Chamber Supper” in conjunction with the Texas Cooperative Extension office for entrepreneurs
• Utilize new resources to support business retention and expansion program
• Investigate Sirolli model and Hometown Competitiveness
• Build more relationships
• Get current and stay current with the Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and Southern Rural Development Center
• E-mail other participants
• Share information with County Extension Agents in my service area
• Share relevant information with clientele and students
• Explore Texas Mezzanine Fund
• Explore funding options through tcrc.org
• Continue to push Enterprise Facilitation
• Explore recommended websites
• Renew efforts to bring attention to entrepreneurs as an economic impact to a community
• Work to develop angel and/or funding sources for region
• Update marketing material
• Improve the land – leave it better than I found it
• Enhance hospitality at my bed & breakfast and the barn
• Finish my web site
• Develop new brochure and business card
• Write an article for the local paper
• Capitalize on what I have!
Meridian, MS Listening Session
November 16, 2005

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Meridian, MS Listening Session
November 16, 2005

Summary

The Meridian listening session had the most diverse participation of any listening session the Southern region. Approximately 15 entrepreneurs attended the roundtable, along with business service and technical assistance providers, legislators (local, state, and federal), and representatives from the educational community. Much of the input from this session was categorized between entrepreneurs and the other groups and the differences in opinions was dramatic. The service providers indicates that their primary topics that they addressed in their work centered business training and operations, education and the community. Issues that were much more prevalent in the entrepreneurs’ response were macroeconomic issues that were faced by small business owners, production challenges, barriers to business ownership and operations and human resource issues. Regarding the audiences that we addressed by each group, the entrepreneurs had a much better vision of their target markets than the service provider community has generally believed. The primary audiences addressed by the service providers included businesses, technical assistance and service providers to business entities, the education community, and the community as a whole.

Resources utilized by both groups to support their work basically fell into the same categories, although the entrepreneurs tended to have a relatively higher use of networks and business sector specific resources than did the service providers for the most common resourced used. However, when asked about the best resources that were available, both groups focused on the categories of education networking, and business service organizations. Of these, networking resources and resources provided by educational institutions were deemed to be the “Cream of the Crop.”

When surveyed about factors that would strengthen the entrepreneurship situation in the community, business owners discussed issues that primarily centered on networking and mentoring, business operations (including a very heavy emphasis on training resources, capital acquisition, and the elimination of barriers to small business ownership and management), community support, and education. These categories were mirrored by the other participants, although they did place much less emphasis on the barrier elimination category than did the entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneur Friendly Communities
The participants listed many communities from across the nation as being entrepreneur friendly. Surprisingly, there were very diverse reasons why communities enjoyed a reputation of being open to the small business and entrepreneurial communities. These reasons ranged from community planning and the provision of housing programs to the presence of capital funds that are designed to assist business startups and expansions. When asked what key activities should a community undertake if it wanted to become entrepreneur friendly, responses fell into the categories of capital funding, the community tax base, barriers and regulations, and most often mentioned community vision and attitude.
Meridian, MS Listening Session  
November 16, 2005

Round One  
Small Business Owners  
Three Challenges That You Face

- Business Startup
  - Understanding what it takes to own a small business
  - Who to talk to when you want to start a new business (loans, grants)
  - Who I need to talk to when starting a new business
  - Finding resources/expertise in my area

- Macro Issues
  - Changing environments
  - Chain store competition
  - Price competition from big boxes and on-line
  - Rapid change in technology
  - Technology – MRP, marketing

- Business Operational Issues
  - Production
    - Design
    - Development
    - Manufacturing
    - Estimating time allotted for project
    - Time to balance workload/marketing/networking
    - Estimating the value of your time
    - Increasing overhead, difficulty in improving appearance of location
    - Consistent product
  - Capital Acquisition
    - Lack of financial assistance
    - Funding for expanding
    - Funding for expanding and access to capital
    - Obtaining funding to service low/moderate income individuals
    - Access to capital – funds to expand, matching funds for start-up costs
    - Access to capital
  - Financial Management
    - Cost control
    - Cash – develop operating cash
    - Managing cash flow (getting clients to pay in a timely manner)
    - Managing cash flow
  - Marketing
    - Marketing
    - Marketing
    - Marketing plan and costs
    - Affordably educating the public on your service/product
    - Educating people about services provided and getting customers to understand the value of “time”
• Tax incentives
  • Discounts and various tax breaks to “small” biz owners leasing, buying property, employing members of the community (e.g., no FICA, reduced costs for health benefits)
  • Tax incentives – leveling for all (transparency)
  • Small business would get the same tax breaks and incentives that big business gets
  • More support by East Mississippi Business Development Council
  • State regulations and guidelines reviewed
  • Change in state law that prohibits government agencies from doing business with small businesses that have a connection to that agency – especially if that connection has no purchasing power
  • Changing ordinances and laws that “squash” the abilities of small business to function
  • Red tape
  • Eliminate special interest groups
  • Unselfish attitude toward government agencies
  • Government agencies understanding the true purpose of business
  • Friendly legislation
  • An entrepreneur Wal-Mart for starting and growing a business

• Community Support
  • Provide small businesses with access to a chamber that would provide affordable health insurance, training, business incubator, etc.
  • Weekly chalk talks on areas of interest to entrepreneurs (e.g., marketing and advertising, financing through grants, dealing with problem employees)
  • Identify and start entrepreneur organization that meets regularly (monthly) to network, sponsor speakers, workshops, etc.
  • Yellow Pages advertising for government/state funding free entrepreneurial help and guidance
  • Business friendly environment
  • Doing away with negativity toward new businesses
  • Develop entrepreneurial culture/climate
  • Support the economy as a whole
  • Community support because we’re as good as it gets
  • Partner with local newspaper to highlight and feature entrepreneurs and local column of tips or other topics (similar to Extension Service)
  • Skills available in hiring area
  • The use of the “Flat World”; advancing beyond physical boundaries. Culturally specific support organizations

• Education
  • Education – general thinking
  • Workforce training
  • Educate people early on entrepreneurship principles
  • Start courses in community college on “How To” be an entrepreneur (start future businesses)
What can the SRDC do?

- Be sure that all providers of technical assistance for entrepreneurs are identified and cataloged for entrepreneur and technical assistance use
- Apply pressure to state and local governments to be friendly to entrepreneurs
- Coordinate the work of all technical assistance for entrepreneurs to minimize duplication and overlap and [eliminate] waste of resources
- Identify successful models from around the nation to offer to local/regional entities to implement to encourage entrepreneurship *networking *on-line chats *one-stop shops etc.
- Continue to facilitate discussions regionally on what’s working and what we can work together to fix
- Advise all of the many entities offering entrepreneurial support on how to best streamline this process
- Start by bringing the message of entrepreneurship to community leaders/city council
- If well received collaborate plans to create programs based on the needs of that particular community
- Go to school boards, propose entrepreneurship programs for students
- Sponsors should develop follow up activities to encourage on going dialogue on entrepreneurship at the local level
- Continue to work with local governments to educate citizens about your services
- Speak with local churches
- Help locals seek funding for business start up
- Universities can continue or begin serious research to assist entrepreneurs
- Community college can make entrepreneurship opportunities and assistance a regular and routine part of work force or similar programs
- All the above can work with a managing partner to make opportunities/services more easily available to entrepreneurs
- Should use results of roundtables as input for a national initiative on entrepreneurship through the land grant system with appropriate funding
- Should publish results of roundtables in a format for use in schools (k-12) and university level audiences to build awareness of the grassroots interest.
- Organize and host the “key participants” in a session to gain an understanding of the opportunities at hand and develop an action plan to promote and expose entrepreneurship in that area
- Facilitate networking
- Do research
- Publish info
- Provide opportunities for more ent. café’s
- Issue report
- Hold meetings for implementation of suggestions hold annual meeting to report progress with evaluation of impacts
- Network, network, network
- Learn more about SRRE
- Promote collaborations many educational institutions
- Involve students
• Offer specific courses and/or seminars to attract further educate entrepreneurs
• Focus on entrepreneurship as a career choice
• Be more open to partnering with private businesses that foster an entrepreneurial environment for students and faculty alike. tech transfer, STTR, etc.
• Meet regular to discuss policy issues for Alabama and Mississippi as far as entrepreneurship business and economic development are concerned
• They need to cooperate more
• Business and economic drafts
• Business and economic assessments
• Provide specific classes on items such as labor education, manager/owner education, constant contact
• Network
• More seminars
• Offer more step by step educational workshops to those who want to become business owners
• MSU has done a great job doing this workshop, the info was very helpful
• The university could continue to supply us with an update on things we can do to enhance our business
• Do what your getting paid to do and do it well
• Teach people/students what business world is looking for
• Teach people how to make money not just how to get jobs
• Put your heart and soul in what you teach
• If you cannot do this, find another job
• We need more classes on small businesses and knowledge of when and where they will be held
• Develop entrepreneurial courses and/or degree
• Develop pro active internship with emphasis on development of entrepreneurial skills
• Advertise availability, promote in local newspapers, share success stories
• Host workshops, seminars, network groups (include seniors with business leaders)
• Identify key participants in the entrepreneur process
• Technical product validation, market assessments and financial planning assistance
• Provide workforce training once new businesses get started
• Provide voter training for employees
• Refer new businesses to SBDC’s
• Contact people I met today
• Keep pushing entrepreneur development
• Become more proactive in entrepreneur education
• Community colleges IHL
• Work with high schools to teach entrepreneurship
• Focus more on rural entrepreneurship awareness throughout the state
• Spread the word more about SRRE
• Support tax code revision
• Demand excellence from school systems
• Promote consolidation of Government
• Speak with my uncle whose a local elected official regarding promoting economic
development and empowerment in the rural community where I am from.
• Talk about it! Talk about it!
• Apply for a grant to teach entrepreneur in rural areas
• Finalize dissertation proposal on student motivational factors for taking entrepreneurial
courses.
• Continue to work with students on understanding the free enterprise system
• Encourage allocation of resources at the university level in support of entrepreneurship
• Commit to better networking with other service providers
• Network more with business owners from East Mississippi
• Network more with business and economic development providers from both states.
• Waiting for your call or your email
• Conduct a business seminar
• Give out index cards with my name so that I may be contacted
• Try to network with presenters that were present here today
• Contact the resources I have learned about to get more information on the steps to
starting a business
• Implement a business start-up series in my region
• Share this information with my co-workers
• Get involved in right organization
• Share my experiences with others
• Teach others how to be useful in life
• Contact Kemper Messenger to do article re entrepreneurial topic
• Research for organization association in my line of business. Join or start depending of
availability
• Start dialogue with my economic chamber staff
• Take time to read all my handouts
• Take advantage of the networking I acquired here today
• Make contact with other business
• Talk with other small businesses in my area to share what I have learned
• Promote a positive image for my business as well as helping others do the same
• Talk with local officials, state legislator, etc. to find the necessary funding for other small
businesses to get started.
• Spread the word at my university
• Follow up with colleagues I met at the SRRE roundtable
• Network through the SRRE and other agencies to promote entrepreneurship
• Communicate a entrepreneurial message
• Facilitate communication and partnerships/collaborations
• Keep focused on making a difference in my community for the welfare of all citizens
• Contact those persons I’ve met today to continue networking/building relationships
• Respond to requests for participation in similar events in the future
• Encourage others who can be of assistance to actively support the efforts of the MS
entrepreneurial alliance
• Meet with SBDC on how we can work closer with him
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship
Roundtable Sessions

Norman, OK

October 19, 2005

Attendees: 27

Sponsor:
Southern Rural Development Center

Hosts:
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
Southern Rural Development Center

Contacts:
Glenn Muske
Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service
405-744-9931
glenn.muske@okstate.edu

Bo Beaulieu and Alan Barefield
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu
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Norman, OK Listening Session
October 19, 2005

Summary

The Oklahoma participants represented a broad cross section of individuals whose primary role, in total or in part, is the support of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial development in Oklahoma. Represented were government agencies (local, state, and Federal) Native American tribes, nonprofit agencies, and educational institutions. In addition, several entrepreneurs were present. The group started the day with a great deal of enthusiasm and actively participated throughout the entire day.

Sharing What Works
Overall, the group focused on providing some type of help or assistance to business owners, prospective owners, and local communities. Other audiences that group members worked with were elected officials, the educational community, local leadership and civic groups as well as specific subsets of the population such as low-income, Native American, minorities, etc. Ideas of how the participants supported these groups were wide ranging. One common theme mentioned by several participants was work on how communities are impacted by and can impact entrepreneurship development and growth. Other ways that participants offered assistance included helping to develop networks, business plan development, being a resource to other assistance that was available, developing economic support, and helping business owners through the basic steps of starting and operating a business. Participants offered a lengthy list of “best” resources that they used in their efforts.

When summarize what the common themes were, businesses support/development/growth/retention led the list. Also recognized was the need for networking including knowing what was already available and how to best direct an entrepreneur to that source. Leadership and support from family, one’s culture, and government were two other themes acknowledged. What the participants found most innovative or unique were the various inclusive programs, such as the Food and Ag Products Center, Rural Enterprises, Manufacturing Alliance, and some Native American efforts, that existed. Overall, the group was interested in the work being done to bridge from innovation and research to commercialization and efforts such as agri-tourism, what it is and how it might offer to struggling rural individuals, families, and communities. The “cream of the crop” resources included:

- Capital Review – an effort to list available funding sources
- Agri-tourism development work
- Food Products Center (OSU) – Pilot facility
- OSU New Products Development Center
- Partnerships (agencies, organizations)
- Information technology (web resources, video conferencing)
- State and national programs
- Career Tech
- Rural Enterprises in Durant, OK
Also, communities need to identify their unique resources and strengths and then determine how each may be used as a building block. This identification process should include an acknowledgement of local champions and pioneers. Comments among the group indicated that what was being discussed represented change and that, to be successful, it would be necessary to educate and support the leadership and the community as a whole to embrace change and diversity. This idea included fostering acceptance of outside ideas and people. Such change also included the development of entrepreneurial-friendly policies and programs.

Final Thoughts
During the rapid response segment, the group encouraged the development of an association that could bring together best practices and technical assistance. Such a team might develop a common vision and even consider the development of service standards and communication links. Another strongly supported idea was the understanding that for entrepreneurship development to work it must be done at the local and/or regional level.

Participants concluded their day by developing a list of what each individual person would do after leaving the session. A long list of activities resulted including raising awareness, doing a follow-up on new contacts and new program ideas, helping to develop the micro-enterprise association called for in today’s meeting, and simply sharing the information with others. Future meetings such as this were encouraged as well as meetings of “entrepreneurs-only.” Such meetings should be done locally, regionally, state-wide, and at a national level.
Norman, OK Listening Session  
October 19, 2005

Round 1  
Three key topics you address in your work  

- Education and Technical Assistance  
  - Technical assistance  
  - Training  
  - Education – Trends in tourism; Value of current resources; Where to get help  
  - PRIDE program  
  - Entrepreneurship  
  - Business and marketing plans. Developing solid business plans before they get started  
  - Business structure, proper paperwork for business loan applications, business plan, and permits/licenses  
  - Resource locating  
  - Resource supply identification  
  - Market/Market development  
  - Need for particular business venture in the area, competition and customer demand  
  - Determining best possible resources for clients/prospective clients  
  - Obtaining a good inventory of what we have to offer  
  - Information processing  
  - Engineering assistance – process design, product design, equipment design, facility design  
  - Technology transfer  
  - Proper tax and legal set-up  
  - Risk management/Equity  
  - Incubator certification  
  - Woman-owned business certification  
  - Education people who own businesses or people who would like to start a business on the proper way to set the business up and their responsibilities as a business owner  
  - Support services to businesses we have funded  
  - Tourism  

- Capital Acquisition  
  - Financing  
  - Start-up financing/Business licensing information  
  - Lack of funding and/or funding education (i.e., approaching a bank, business plan)  
  - Capital formation in OK  
  - Financial; Financing  
  - Financial literacy  
  - Credit  

- Networking and Communication  
  - General lack of getting information to “real people” in the process
o Civic groups
o Grass roots support
o Native Americans in OK and across US

Three products you use to support your work

- Technical Assistance and Training
  o SBA Small Business Guide
  o SBA – Loans & website
  o Dept of Commerce
  o FDIC
  o BR&E material
  o REI Business Center
  o ODOC Manufacturers Directory
  o Inventors Assistance Service
  o Resource – How to get started book
  o Website producer/consumers
  o Business licensing website
  o Workshops/Conferences
  o Custom “short course” training program
  o Small business training courses (Office Dept free downloads)
  o OTC workshop (and other partners’ workshops)
  o Nx Level entrepreneurship training
  o Kauffman T2C Conference
  o Computer research center
  o Library in BIC for various business ventures
  o Agri-tourism
  o On-site visits
  o Interagency referrals

- Capital Acquisition
  o Banks
  o Revolving loan funds – IRP, REDL& G
  o Rural Business Enterprises grant
  o Guaranteed business loans
  o Grant writing
  o Value-added producer grant
  o OK Capital Review
  o OCBDC
  o OCAST
  o Revolving loan program (SBA website)
  o Matched savings program
  o REI
  o REI & other agency websites

- Educational Institutions
  o OK Alliance for Manufacturing Excellence
  o OSU faculty; OSU system
  o FAPC; Food Business Basics CD
- Info from Federal Reserve Bank
- BEA
- Planning process
- Internet
- Websites

**As a group, what were the three most common themes/topics?**
- Finance – Knowledge; funding available
- Start-up assistance – Business plans, marketing plans, incubating, etc
- Support structure – Cultural, family, governmental
- Technical assistance
- Creating awareness of possible assistance
- Business development/growth/retention
- Networking and building alliances is important to success
- Leadership development in the community
- Community awareness of what they have to offer

**As a group, what were the most innovative/unique topics?**
- Support structure
- Native American program
- Inclusive programs – REI; Manufacturing Alliance
- Business plans; SBA loans; Incubators
- Value-added ag program
- Bridge innovation and research with commercialization
- Agri-tourism

**As a group, what were the three “cream of the crop” resources?**
- Capital Review
- Agri-tourism
- Food Products Center (OSU) – Pilot facility
- OSU New Products Development
- Partnerships (agencies, organizations)
- Information technology (web resources, video conferencing)
- State and national programs
- Career Tech
- REI
- Business incentives in OK
• An on-going education program for community leaders on resources available for rural development
• Educate the public on the availability of resources
• Theme – entrepreneurs welcome
• Grant vision of economic impact of buying local
• Networking with other programs. Networking group of service providers where each can get to know what the others offer. Market website to the public so that they can find the information.
• Real people networking through conferences with scholarships, email lists, newsletters, etc.
• Increase awareness of local talents, products and opportunities
• Unlimited supply of local community volunteers. Enthusiastic leaders and volunteers.

- Education
  • Increased support system for community-based entrepreneurial development (K-12)
  • Promote financial literacy for youth
  • Increased involvement of youth in local leadership positions to increase understanding and representation
  • Make good intentions education driver of econ dev instead of politics
  • Education. Regional education rather than state, county, or city
  • Commitment to make opportunities for youth to remain in local community

As a group, select the three most important wishes that you want the whole group attending this meeting to hear about.

• Foster understanding in local businesses of competitive edge
• Centralized small business development resource communication system. Centralized small business development resource clearing house.
• Awareness and coordination of assistance and resources to support entrepreneur activities, i.e. financial literacy
• Financial assistance, small, no-hassle loans
• Restructure tax system, more tax incentives
• Help entrepreneurs realize they need assistance
• Mentorship program
• Tracking system used by resource providers
• Development of an entrepreneur mindset throughout the educational system. Not just training/education to get a job
• Regional approach to development to promote coordination rather than competition (good intentions education driver of econ dev instead of politics)
• On-going education for community leaders
• Internal and external good image, local and state.
• Volunteers. Enthusiasm in volunteers. Strong leadership, can-do attitude
• Alva – VAP, Baker Equip; City leadership looks for opportunities
• Stillwater – A more progressive community; Culturally diverse driving a variety of businesses; A draw to sporting events brings money to the community, those coming to town are more educated and have more money
• Buffalo – City bought buildings to open businesses; Sold school on e-Bay to bring in a new business
• Cordell, Sulphur-Davis, Perry, Cherokee
• Main St program; Promotes 4-H as an entrepreneurial program; Visionary person or persons; Have pride in community
• Hugo – Skating park, walking trail; Community pride; Boys and Girls club; American Native beef; Circus USA; Main St program
• Develop a group of town people to visit with people who want to open new businesses in the community; Leadership development classes; Promoter for city, seeing volunteers, promoting tourism; Golf tournament

As a team, select four key activities a community should undertake if it wants to become recognized as an “entrepreneurial friendly” locality.
• Plan strategically and follow through
• Utilize local resources, human capital, natural resources
• Utilize local resources where you have a competitive advantage (natural resources, retirees, scenic beauty, culture, history)
• Embrace change – cultural, technology, diversity, new ideas, outsiders
• Keep community clean. Develop a positive image. PRIDE
• Develop community through local newspaper, its own currency, community promoter, active chamber, legislative golf tournament, town clean-up, town BBQ, local activities
• Leadership development. Leaders mentor leaders, entrepreneurs mentor entrepreneurs. Creation of new leadership
• Clearinghouse for business info
• Open to new ideas and outside help
• Seek outside resources
• Parallel movement (infrastructure, housing, businesses)
• Incentives (Fair rent, low interest loans, tax rebates)
• Government support that helps entrepreneurs
• Welcome programs to new businesses – Chamber and City office
• Business-friendly activities
• Market or brand themselves effectively

What 3-4 activities can we do to help communities become “entrepreneurial friendly?”
• Encourage communities to adopt entrepreneurial friendly policies and programs, i.e. Main St, incubator business centers
• Help leaders to embrace change and diversity. Foster outside acceptance. Help foster leaders
• Celebrate champions. Promote pioneers
Rapid Response Session

**Topic 1: Building networks/alliances – What type of network/alliance would be most valuable to you.** Identify the level at which the network should operate, the specific things this network should do that you would find most valuable, and the people or groups who should be part of this entrepreneurship network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VOTES</th>
<th>SUGGESTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>OSU Extension, ODOC, SBDCs, Career Tech, &amp; others work together and communicate a common vision to communities (suggested that the state agency coalition might be a beginning (Stacy Cejka))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Statewide association of organization that assist microenterprisers (small, start-up businesses of 1-5 employees requiring minimal capital – such as daycare, catering, landscaping, auto detailing, etc). - share best practices and technical assistance - advocate for funding and policy support - establish shared service standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Group of community citizens, business leaders, elected officials, chamber leaders, youth, entrepreneurs come together in a positive manner to set achievable goals for their community (local) - make a short and long list of goals - prioritize goals and begin immediately to start on the 1st set goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>More connection with other programs that work with entrepreneurs. Conferences (or roundtable discussions) available throughout the year for the purpose of learning what is working in other communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A clearinghouse of resources available through a website that could continually be updated with contacts and programs. The clearinghouse could also include workshops that are going to be held for entrepreneurs (a calendar of events). We are too fragmented for the ordinary person to know who does what.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Develop a statewide microenterprise development association or group. This network would provide information sharing, networking and advocacy. All service providers that assist entrepreneurs should be part of this group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Regional level – Community groups should be part of this entrepreneurship network. Network most valuable asset would be data base list of all local businesses, products, and services the business provides. Also a list of local and state agencies that are available as a resource to local businesses for financial information – funding, loans, grants, business plans, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A network of successful or retire entrepreneurs. People get tired of listening to those that have never been an entrepreneur. We need a mentoring program or at least a group that is willing to share their personal experiences to prospective entrepreneurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Quarterly meeting of statewide providers (different host each quarter, etc). Have 15 minute roundtable discussions on various topics, everyone rotates. Guest speaker on a given topic. State-wide level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coordination of funding sources and restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Provide additional resources toward training and technical assistance to microenterprise owners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1. Local – A welcome policy with strong encouragement to local entrepreneurship. Encourage diverse participation and put your money where your mouth is. 2. Elected officials, community leaders, bankers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1a. I am not sure what policies exist. 1b. Loan policy for small loans We should ask the entrepreneurs, we are probably missing something. 2. We do, legislators, entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Entrepreneurs have to understand politics and that their presence at the OK Capitol makes a difference. They have to become involved in the political infrastructure of OK. Policy changes take a state-wide coordinated effort. OK’s State Chamber already represents small businesses at the Capitol, but they can’t be expected to do it alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tax and small business workshops for new and existing businesses. All levels need to implement policies to assist entrepreneurship. 2. Community leaders, entrepreneurs, youth, education leaders, organizations, and the public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1a. The fact that so much assistance is available, i.e. business planning, product development, marketing assistance 1b. I don’t know what policies are needed to help rural entrepreneurs. Let’s ask them 2. The entrepreneurs themselves must be at the table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Target a percentage of state community development block grant funds towards microentreprise loan support – provision of loans less than $10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1a. Tax incentives for OK inventors and manufacturers that spend money on product development 2. State legislature, state resources (service providers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The “AHA” Moments**

- Tribal resources
- OSU data base (share!!) – Develop integrated list of clients
- Directory of entrepreneurs to use as resources in the schools

**What should OSU/SRDC do to support the work of this group or to strengthen rural entrepreneurship efforts in the Southern region?**

- Get Kansas City Fed involved in national coalition for rural entrepreneurship.
- Convene a policy summit on rural entrepreneurship in OK to discuss important issues and options. Target state legislators (many are new), dept. leadership, universities,
- OSU & SRDC can organize a meeting such as this one with entrepreneurs instead of service providers
- Provide a contact list of participants from today
- Develop an entrepreneur/service provider annual conference to share ideas and network (include all levels of operation up to southern region level)
SOUTHERN REGION RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP
ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS

PIKEVILLE, KY

November 8, 2005

ATTENDEES: 32

SPONSOR:
Southern Rural Development Center

HOSTS:
Kentucky State University
University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

CONTACTS:
Gae Broadwater
Kentucky State University
502-597-6325
gae.broadwater@kysu.edu

Bo Beaulieu and Alan Barefield
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu
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Thirty-two participants attended the Rural Entrepreneurship Listening Session in Pikeville. This allowed 5 roundtables for discussion during each of the rounds. These represented of individuals from 3 Appalachian states that continue to seek ways of improving their isolated communities’ economies. The majority of participants represented organizations with economic development missions. However, there were a number of participants who came from educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, as well as volunteers and locally based entrepreneurs.

Round 1- What Works!
Connecting budding and established entrepreneurs to resources was a common thread throughout the table teams’ discussions. The key topics they find themselves addressing in their work are networking, promotion of available resources, and general support of entrepreneurs. Specific topics that they reported that need attention are:

- Marketing
- Grant writing
- Financing
- Start-up / expansion support
- Myths about entrepreneurship

Audiences identified in this round split among new and existing entrepreneurs. Within these 2 groups the participants noted that entrepreneurs come from a variety of settings— independents, educators, micro-enterprises (e.g. childcare), and the corporate sector. Discussants agreed that there are valuable resources available and that the challenge is getting information in the hands of the entrepreneurs who need it. These products and organizations include:

- Score.org
- BR&E programs (Business, retention, and expansion)
- Kentucky Innovation Centers
- University based-training—SBDC’s, Extension, Business Schools
- Northern Kentucky University Entrepreneurship Institute
Peer to peer networks need to be encouraged with support of state or local resources such as chambers of commerce.

2. **Policy Efforts:** Policies that are already in place favor large businesses and those that will create 100+ jobs. Additionally, the incentives for recruitment of large industry are in place and not so for small scale development. The group strongly believes this needs to be examined in order to support local economic development through entrepreneurship.

State and local support for entrepreneurial education programs in the public schools and post-secondary settings—formal and informal.

Broadband access is another area that requires local investment and policy remedies.

Health insurance, OSHA, and Workers’ Compensation concerns of small businesses and entrepreneurs must be reconsidered.

**Final Thoughts**
Each participant as well as though who wanted to attend but were unable received a list of their names and contact information as well as the raw data notes. From the conversation during the closing activity and subsequent e-mails, it is apparent that participants intend to continue discussions and may seek to form a regional Appalachian alliance to support their work. Those unable to attend wanted to know when the next meeting would be held and perhaps there needs to be attention by local hosts to organizing occasional meetings 2-3 times a year for these discussions to continue.
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship Roundtable Session
Pikeville, Kentucky
November 8, 2005

MEETING NOTES

World Café – Round 1
Sharing What Works! Programs, Activities, and Resources that Make a Difference in Supporting Entrepreneurs

1. Reflect on the activities that you (or the organization that you might represent) are involved in (either directly or indirectly) that are designed to strengthen local entrepreneurship activities
29. Funding to develop studies
30. Take findings and set-up centers addressing findings
31. Market/encourage/educate entrepreneurial programs for K-12
32. Virginia adopts “entrepreneurship” as a standard of learning objective
33. Local per capita income grow at a rate comparable as the state as a whole
34. Local poverty rates decrease to a point equal the state as a whole
35. Software development component
36. State and local support for small business
37. Technical community 2nd to none
38. Encourage entrepreneurs to market their various products
39. Educate entrepreneurs on how to start a business
40. Educational opportunities
41. Investment Fund- equity investments
42. One stop resource center
43. Road building, local money
44. All businesses would have option of choosing occupational accident insurance instead of workman’s comp
45. The public school would embrace “Youth Entrepreneurship” with curricula for K-12
46. Easier access to start-up capital
47. Small town community acceptance of failure
48. Non-partisan political support of entrepreneurship at state level
49. Build out technological infrastructure statewide
50. More funding opportunities in rural areas
51. All predatory loans would be abolished and de-legislated
52. Financing would be available at 100%
53. Broadband access
54. Multi-county collaboration
55. Political power
56. $20 million endowment
57. Funds for startup
58. Information/big list of what is needed and what would be successful
59. Workers comp and health insurance re-worked
60. Loan funds/grants

5. As a group, select the THREE most important wishes that you want the whole group attending this meeting to hear about. Included in team summaries

6. For the “top three wishes,” identify what it will take to make these wishes a reality in your community, state, and/or Southern region.

More competition in KY providers
Education in K-12 core content
Networking
Government and media instruction
Educate policy makers of importance of content standards
➤ Get economic experts to visit and know the communities so they will better understand the avenue and the problems of the community get out of their ivory towers. Continue to provide and support extension activities outside of Ag.

➤ Organize Appalachian small town economic developers alliance

➤ Increase support to those that have positively impacted entrepreneurship, eliminate duplication or programs

➤ Work together to create an online resource center for entrepreneurship, develop an online training for entrepreneurs wanting to learn how to start a business, develop a program that can be used to teach students entrepreneurship.

➤ Promote entrepreneurial coaching

➤ SRDC can help build network/alliance in each of the states it deals with and this is key to changing state policy, the university in each state can take responsibility for this alliance in terms of list serve, website, meeting facilitation.

➤ Review some best practices identified, Jacksonville Center, School of Craft, review youth curriculum, review NKU innovation center

➤ 44. Promote family oriented projects, such as recycling, work with local school systems to
➤ begin educational process for community involvement, lobby governments for needed funding, legislation, etc. to promote a high level of intensity.

➤ Continue KECI program from UK. Could be similar program in other states/regions. Provide network support, push to affect policy changes

TOPIC 2: Policy Efforts: What policies exist right now that you believe are helpful to entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial communities; Who has to be at the table if we want to effect these policy changes? ? {# dots received in ( )'s at end of each entry}

➤ Change policy of offering incentives to only large business that will create jobs for 100 or more employees. Change economic development policy efforts from recruitment to entrepreneurship support. Change needs at both levels. (9)

➤ Policies needed – entrepreneurship in middle school education, public support for broadband infrastructure. Who is at table-local school board, local government officials and state representatives? (8)

➤ No current policies supportive to entrepreneurs. Needed-universal health insurance, opportunity to opt out of worker’s com. Eliminate unfair enforcement. Example – OSHA
◇ State level – Larger cities (in VA) need to support rural entrepreneurship – in VA alone most of the state is considered “disadvantaged” by the governor- all need to be working together. (1)

◇ Policies that exist that are helpful – USDA inspection on meat/eggs/, Paducah, clustering support, Predatory lending act – actually, supports predatory lending, needs to be de-legislated!!! Need KY Bankers Association to take charge of the lobbying direction. (1)

◇ Financing-a range of programs that address current saps, programs that target “recruitment” (development from within one region) of entrepreneurs. (1)

◇ ARC has entrepreneurial planning dollars, set up arts district, tax incentives, more funds needed to move plans ahead more quickly.

◇ Support importation of firms vs. support of local firms, local incentive that is fair to local industries, rural economic policy is incorrectly tied to National Farm Policy.

◇ Local government officials specify that entrepreneur’s be utilized for outsourcing for larger companies, tax incentives

◇ Incubators to link/educate on starting a business and finding capital to start project. Also assist in developing business plan. Streamline applications and approval of resources. Also, make it easier for entrepreneurs to find.
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship
Roundtable Sessions

Pine Bluff, AR

October 24, 2005

Attendees: 31

Sponsor:
Southern Rural Development Center

Hosts:
Southern Good Faith Fund
Winrock International
Southern Rural Development Center

Contacts:
Angela Duran
Southern Good Faith Fund
870-535-6233
aduran@southerngoodfaithfund.org

Bo Beaulieu and Alan Barefield
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu
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<tr>
<td>Best Resource You Want People To Know About</td>
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<td>Round 2</td>
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<td>What Three Wishes Would You Grant</td>
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<td>Top Three Wishes</td>
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<td>Round 3</td>
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<td>Entrepreneur Friendly Communities</td>
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<td>Four Activities A Community Should Undertake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three to Four Activities Participants Should Undertake</td>
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<td>Networks</td>
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<td>Policies</td>
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<td>Things For The SRDC To Look At</td>
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<tr>
<td>Things I Will Do When I Get Back Home</td>
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PINE BLUFF LISTENING SESSION
Pine Bluff, Arkansas
October 24, 2005

Sponsors: Southern Good Faith Fund
Winrock International
Southern Rural Development Center

The listening session held in Pine Bluff, Arkansas included approximately 25 participants from Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. Individual entrepreneurs, state/federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, consultants, banks, and universities were represented. Discussion was lively and all in attendance contributed.

The group began by listing and discussing key topics related to entrepreneurship. Areas of work mentioned included business planning, marketing, finance, and other business development topics. Additional areas of emphasis included community development, youth development, technical assistance, and research on entrepreneurship.

There were a number of resources identified by the group that can be helpful. These resources are state, regional, and national in terms of delivery areas and represent both the public sector and the private sector. Key resources identified include:

- Arkansas Procurement Association Center
- Extension Service
- SBA
- AR Science Technology Authority
- AR Department of Economic Development
- Southern Good Faith Fund
- Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
- Enterprise Corporation of the Delta
- USDA.

**Strengthening Entrepreneurial Efforts**

Several ideas emerged that the group felt are necessary to enhance success. Encouraging a culture of entrepreneurship was mentioned more than once. Involving the educational system and supporting youth entrepreneurship was one strategy listed. The group also felt it was important to provide access to non-traditional financial resources. Another strategy identified is to share success stories so individuals, firms, and communities can understand success is possible and can be exposed to best practices.
## World Café – Round 1

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<tr>
<th>Three Key Topics You Address In Your Work</th>
<th>Best Resource You Want People To Know About</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alzheimer needs to have gasoline business</td>
<td>We need to get some jobs for the citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer needs to have more than grocery store</td>
<td>the city of Alzheimer has a 20 area of land that was given to the city so that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alzheimer needs to have cafes</td>
<td>we could get some industries to locate in Alzheimer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Mostly statistic/data gathered by non-profits or government studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Ethic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas for new businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Community development</td>
<td>1. Small Business Development Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Economic development</td>
<td>a. Arkansas Procurement Association Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Youth development</td>
<td>b. Extension Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Strategic marketing</td>
<td>c. SBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Entrepreneurial communities</td>
<td>d. AR Science Technology Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Partnership</td>
<td>e. AR Department of Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Business Plans</td>
<td>1. How to really start your own business &amp; internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Market Demand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Financing</td>
<td>1. Talk to local successful entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Preparation-Education, studies, Objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Financial condition</td>
<td>1. The best resource locally is the Southern Good Faith Fund. They not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Time to succeed</td>
<td>only prepare financing requests for their customers, but also educate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Finance</td>
<td>their clients as well. The Good Faith Fund also offers continuing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education</td>
<td>support to established entrepreneurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Research into entrepreneurship best practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Resource development to assist non-profit micro-enterprise producers with capacity &amp; strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Advocacy and reprove and state level for micro-enterprise entrepreneurship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Technical Engineering</td>
<td>1. Cooperation works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Market Research</td>
<td>2. Small business advancement institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Legal Research</td>
<td>3. Community development institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Financing</td>
<td>4. private consultants</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Funding sources</td>
<td>1. MDCIIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Key Topics You Address In Your Work</td>
<td>Best Resource You Want People To Know About</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Many of my customers are “thinkers.” They have a good idea but don’t know how to make it reality. Many haven’t worked in the industry they want to leap into.</td>
<td>PCCUA/alt.consulting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create more businesses</td>
<td>Training programs beginning 10/25/2005 at 5:15 p.m., fine Arts Building, Helena, AR. Corresponded by the Phillips County &amp; Southern Financial Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand existing businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Retain existing businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Funding sources for non-profits</td>
<td>1. Various funding source listings publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Networking opportunities</td>
<td>2. Legislative resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Marketing Arkansas products (opportunities)</td>
<td>3. Various projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to finance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical assistance</td>
<td>1. IDA Accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA Accounts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Capabilities – does the potential business owner have background, skills, knowledge to perform this business service?</td>
<td>Grants – Federal Foundational Use Grant writes on state staff workshop provided for guidance – instruction Business packages available at local lenders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Funding – can the business owner qualify for traditional funding; then, alternative funding, grants, SBA loans? Do they have a business plan, projected budget, 1, 2, 3 year projection?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Facilities – does business owner have office space, shop, equipment (office &amp; product development)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relates to business development preparation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Strategic Planning Assistance for Communities in SW Arkansas (19 Counties) (i.e., Administrate the AR Communities of Excellence Program)</td>
<td>1. Mark Peterson Coop Ext. 1800arkansas.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Resource to communities for information from other state agencies and grant opportunities</td>
<td>2. Mark Young, ASU Delta Center for Economic Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Facilitator training for Community leaders</td>
<td>3. Kurt Navmann, Research, ADCD, Community Development digest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mark Young, ASU Delta Center for Economic Dev.</td>
<td>5. Mark Young, ASU Delta Center for Economic Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. One-on-one technical assistance to rural entrepreneurs</td>
<td>1. Fast Trac - First Step curriculum focused on feasibility studies for start ups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Classroom training to individuals looking to start businesses-feasibility studies</td>
<td>2. Entergy business retention and expansion guide for rural communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Access to finance for start-up and growing entrepreneurs</td>
<td>3. Innovative bank community express</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Business retention and expansion BFE efforts in rural communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Educators &amp; support, financial literacy, technical assistance &amp; global marketing</td>
<td>1. Federal &amp; State, SBA, USDA, State Economic Development &amp; Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and post of website effects of entrepreneurial organizations to create collaborative efforts within local communities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Three Things I Can Do After This Meeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify entrepreneurial resources for AR Communities and send to County Agents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Link to national entrepreneurial network</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Keep abreast of entrepreneurial activity in Arkansas</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SRDC</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Keep entrepreneurial network information of national activity &amp; state</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Research material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Conferences/workshops</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Three Things I Can Do After This Meeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organize an entrepreneur advocacy group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bring to the community successful entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Do a community survey on potential entrepreneurial interest</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SRDC</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provide capital that can be used in non-traditional innovative funding for potential entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Seek to partner with SBA, and other philanthropies to mass these funding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Three Things I Can Do After This Meeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop and distribute a list of organizations engaged in assisting rural entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider organizing a network of practitioners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Publish results on our website - AREC</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Three Things I Can Do After This Meeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Look into entrepreneurial friendly communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Continue provision of entrepreneurial support services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Enhancement of training activities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Three Things I Can Do After This Meeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Tell others about Good Faith and Winrock Int.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Continue to stay connected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Seek out for entrepreneurs in my community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SRDC</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Continue to have additional roundtable sessions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Give participants a copy of all information gathered at the meeting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Follow-up to see if you can give more guidance for entrepreneurs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Three Things I Can Do After This Meeting</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Promote entrepreneurship training more heavily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Educate community about entrepreneurship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Include entrepreneurship in our Business Retention &amp; Expansion Committee’s list of responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship
Roundtable Sessions

Quincy, FL

October 26, 2005

Attendees: 27

Sponsor:
Southern Rural Development Center

Hosts:
Florida A&M University
University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Contacts:
Allen Wysocki
Florida A&M University
352-392-1826 ext. 403
afwysocki@ifas.ufl.edu

Hank Cothran
Florida A&M University
352-392-1845 ext. 409
hmc@ifas.ufl.edu

Bo Beaulieu and Alan Barefield
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu

Southern Rural Development Center
University of Florida
IFAS Extension
Florida A&M University
CESTA
Quincy, FL Listening Session
October 26, 2005

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Quincy, FL Listening Session
October 26, 2005

Summary

The Quincy Roundtable had one of the more diverse audiences of any of the sessions held in the Southern region. Attendees included entrepreneurs, service providers, and representatives from educational institutions and non-profit entities that had a distinct interest in entrepreneurship. As with many of the other sessions, most of the issues addressed by one participant dealt with business development (startups, business plans, marketing, and financial management) as well as with capital acquisition through both public and private sources. However, many participants also dealt with issues regarding service and technical assistance providers as well as communities and their resources (capacity building, economic development policies, and community visioning and planning).

As expected, audiences targeted by the participants were related to the above issues. While businesses (startup, existing, and expanding) comprised the majority of audiences addressed by the participants, community organizations (non-profits and faith-based, governmental entities, and local community organizations) merited a significant effort. Products and services used to address the needs of these audiences focused mainly on the provision of services and technical assistance for small businesses. Common products/services included educational tools and processes, computer and internet tools and resources, and business relates programs such as loan and grant funds, certification programs, etc. The best resources identified included various entrepreneurship training programs, informational resources such as the internet and Department of Transportation traffic data, and social and economic service agencies such as the Small Business Development Center network and USDA grant and loan programs.

Strengthening Entrepreneurship

In identifying factors that could strengthen entrepreneurship efforts in their communities, the participants focused on four distinct areas. These included capital sources for small businesses and entrepreneurial forms, policies which included having more of a focus on small business as well as the development of business incubators that would enhance the chances for success of startup businesses, more partnering and collaboration among service providers and communities, and entrepreneurship education programs in K-12 and college settings.

There were several factors identified that would be necessary if these factors were to become a reality. First, there would have to have forms on local leadership that would stress the importance of entrepreneurs in the economic development factors of the community. Second, communities would need to encourage the types of businesses that appealed to the “creative class” of entrepreneurs and develop public/private funding mechanisms to provide business startup and expansion resources. Finally, the participants identified a stronger commitment to educational and informational resources as being key to the strengthening of a community entrepreneur sector. They suggested that an in-plan curriculum in the primary and secondary education system as well as a website that listed all resources that could be used by
universities. The participants overwhelmingly focused on collaborative efforts for the SRDC, but did also mention that they wanted the SRDC to focus on efforts such as a regional investigation of funding allocation for small businesses, capital acquisition, and enhanced training opportunities for entrepreneurs. While the same basic themes emerged for the universities from the represented states, the emphasis was much heavier on business development services and capital acquisition than on collaborative efforts.

However, the participants felt that their strengths lay exploring collaborative efforts. While many participants indicated that they wanted to contact general entities such as several churches and universities, a large number said they planned to follow up with specific individuals that they met at the roundtable session on specific programs and services that were shared during the session.
Quincy, FL Listening Session
October 26, 2005

Round 1
Three Key Topics You Address in your Work

- **Business Development and Startups**
  - Business ownership as a career/employment alternative
  - How do I start a new business?
  - Starting a small business
  - Small business development
  - Farm business development and planning
  - Business plan development
  - Business plan
  - Business professional development
  - Business plan development (guide)
  - Feasibility studies
  - Planning process – especially marketing
  - Start-up basics
    - Self assessment
    - Credit worthiness
    - Compliance
  - Sustaining the business
    - Collaboration
    - Professional development
    - E-commerce
    - Products/services
    - Database management
  - Entrepreneurship enterprising
    - Business startups
  - Capacity building
    - Business expansion
  - Business growth/retention
  - Business retention and expansion
  - Self-assessment (do you have what it takes)

- **Business Financing**
  - Financial management and strengthening the financial status of small business
  - Financial needs of entrepreneurs
    - Servicing our portfolios
    - Marketing loans
  - Financing
    - Business plan
    - Funding resources
    - Capacity building
  - Credit worthiness
  - Financing options (credit worthiness)
  - Financing loan (credit score)
• Websites
  o Websites
  o www.tallytownmall.com/cesta
  o www.consumer.org
  o www.annualcreditreport.com
  o www.census.gov
  o www.floridastartup.com
  o www.dinkytown.com (business calculator)
  o www.dcronline.com (disaster registration)
  o www.sba.gov
  o Google Local
  o Google Scholar
  o HAAS Center for Business and Economic Development
  o Dodge Room
  o National economic development – finance template
  o Rural Cross Roads Instate
  o U.S. Industrial Outlook
  o Heifer International (2)
  o Heifer International websites for
    ▪ Incentives
    ▪ Marketing
    ▪ Resources
  o NNFC – small farmer distribution network (link between farmers and schools)
    • Extension Network
  o Virtual Teams

• Capital Acquisition
  o Where they can get the capital they need
  o How to position themselves to obtain available capital
  o 504 Loan (FFCFC)
  o John A. Riley Foundation
  o Riley Foundation
    ▪ What our procedure guidelines are for each of our programs in local areas
      (Riley Foundation)
    ▪ Money Smart – curriculum for entrepreneurs
      1. Free materials
  o CDCs
    ▪ Community Development Resource
    ▪ Florida CDC – Enterprise Florida
  o USDA Program Matrix
  o SBLOs
  o Dollars (2)
  o USDA
  o USDA Program Matrix
  o Media
The three “Cream of the Crop” Resources or Products

- Business plan
- SBDCs and workforce boards
- NxLevel/Fast Track programs
- Computer/internet research
- DOT traffic data by street
- National FD finances
  - NDC-alive.org
- USDA Program Matrix
- Money Smart
- Social/economic service agencies

Round 2
You have been granted the special powers to “make things happen”!! What THREE wishes would you personally grant that would have a positive impact on entrepreneurship in your community, state, or Southern region? Share your ideas with the group at your table.

- Business Assistance
  - Discuss small business curriculum and needs as well as how to met those needs (such as capital)
  - Business center where new businesses can be developed, trained, funded, and mentored
  - Resource sharing – centralized resources that becomes immediately available
  - Creating a seamless process for an entrepreneur to move through the process of creating/expanding a business – knowing all the resources that are available
  - Establish a business incubator
  - Business innovations
  - Community feasibility and needs study posted publicly
  - Sustainable business growth/development
  - Entrepreneur curriculum
  - Entrepreneurship/all university
  - Make businesses aware we are in a new economy with global challenges and opportunities
  - Working for yourself is much harder than working for someone else

- Capital Resources
  - Financial resources to be available based on need or purposeful impact (rather than political influence)
  - Microloan programs that would work with local banks in guaranteeing funding to small businesses
  - Access to capital for start-up project
  - Access to capital
  - That resources be put in place to assist entrepreneurs in gaining access to the capital pool
• A database that everyone in different areas/region can access (resource tools) that would link each organizations as one
• A region-wide business match-making program where business owners serving different areas but are in the same industry
• Educate the public on resources available
• Collective database of available resources
• Increase level of funding to agencies
• See more jobs become available for low or 12th grade educated individuals in rural areas
• Entrepreneurship in the school system
• Youth entrepreneurship training
• Focus on entrepreneurship at the high school and community college level – creative thinking
• Chance to keep our young, university, and technical college trained young people to stay in South Georgia instead of going to large, urban cities to find jobs and opportunities
• More start-up businesses that would hire these young graduates and help keep them in south Georgia

Summaries
As a group, select the THREE most important wishes that you want the whole group attending this meeting to hear about.

• Capital
  • Sufficient capital (access) for small business (knowledge of where $s are)
  • Improved access to capital
  • Increased access to resource fund
  • Financial resources – shift in focus from big to small (remove politics) and to:
    • Show me the money!

• Policies
  • Policies which include small businesses
  • Business incubators in all communities that become a revolving type of program

• Partnering
  • More partnering/collaboration among/between service providers
  • Community buy-in

• Education
  • Mandatory training in entrepreneurship – global message
  • Stop the brain drain!
  • Entrepreneurial education in K-12
  • Focus on entrepreneurship in high schools/community colleges

For the “top three wishes,” identify what it will take to make these wishes a reality in your community, state, and/or southern region.

• Encouraging the kind of businesses that are attractions to workforce “creative class”, quality of life – recreation, real estate, schools
• Regulation – before business license
- Bethlehem, PA – using CDBG funds to invest in a revolving loan fund for unsecured startup and nascent firms
- Northampton County, PA – established county level small business advocate office to represent the interests of small businesses in the procurement process and to represent small business interests when new laws and policies are proposed
- Midway, FL – encourage new and existing businesses by removing unnecessary regulations, speeding up building permits time and applying for economic development grants to help with moving costs and providing infrastructure. Also, helping developers to provide low to moderate income housing.
- The State of Georgia has started an initiative that is called an “Entrepreneur Friendly” community designation. The community goes through a process where they identify their resources, identify strategies that can be implemented to make starting a business in the community easier. This is recognition at a state level.
  - Event festivals
  - Continuing education for retirees who may want to start a business

- Policies
  - Smart growth
  - Key West, FL – local suburb communities and funding/licensing
  - Main Street projects
  - Interstate exit expansion
  - Infrastructure for business development
  - Facilities and infrastructure for business development
  - Tax incentives or other economic incentives
  - Tallahassee community area
    - Tax credits to new business development and entrepreneurship
    - Other incentives
    - Local assistance to expand and start businesses in target areas
    - Housing incentives
    - Funding programs
    - Education – K-12
    - Entrepreneurship programs (technical assistance and training)
    - Regulation (local involvement in development and growth)
  - Government/community support (advertisement, etc.)
  - Sufficient/adequate workforce availability and/or training for workers
  - Collaborating
  - Supporting each business

**Summaries**

Think of a community that you would identify as “entrepreneur friendly.” What is this community doing specifically that makes it a great place for entrepreneurs? Try to think of at least 2-3 examples of “entrepreneur friendly” activities this community is undertaking.

- GA – state designation – by government – entrepreneur friendly committee – spotlights community – work with local communities to remove barriers (i.e., 10 days to get a business license)
- Take advantage of programs such as E-squared
- Facilitate development of CDCs
- Help communities to identify obstacles to entrepreneurship
- Help communities to identify existing resources
- Provide access to information (web-sites) on community, markets, etc.
- Tell the story

**Networks**

- Provide information for start-up businesses: funding (independent and government), programs available. Resources available include funding, information, business start-up info. 1 vote
  - Level: Local and then State
  - Players: Government Agencies, Local Agencies, State Agencies, SBDC and SBA Centers, CDCs
- Create financing resources and programs for small rural entrepreneurs network. 1 vote
  - Level: Local, State, and Federal
  - Players: CDCs, Grass Root Community Leaders, Local Banks, Credit Unions, Educational Institutions, Foundations
- Network of Service Providers. 4 votes
  - Level: Regional
  - Players: SBDCs, SBA, Chambers of Commerce, State Legislatures, Faith Based Organizations, Universities
- Technical assistance provider network – provide information on programs and services that foster entrepreneurial development. 6 votes
  - Level: State-wide
  - Players: Economic Development Organizations, Universities, SBDCs
- Quarterly round table of county wide agencies. 2 votes
  - Level: County-wide or multiple counties
  - Players: County Commission, Economic Development Commission, Community Colleges, Rural Economic Development Initiatives, Small Business Development Centers, Workforce Initiatives, Chambers of Commerce
- Florida Small Farms Network – place (probably on a website) much needed information. Should have producer exchange, upcoming programs, trends, new crop ideas, etc. 4 votes
  - Level: State
  - Players: Alliance of various universities/colleges, USDA, Small Business Administration, FDACs, various community associations
- A virtual network that shares resources and information but meets locally. A network that consists of resource providers and entrepreneurs that are informed and knowledgeable and able to navigate through the network while receiving help. Should provide training, financing, etc. Assists with education, capital, growth planning, and development. Provide ongoing assistance. Tracks the success of the entrepreneur. 3 votes
  - Level: Multi-regional with a basic core region that meets often to share information
- **Players:** Banks, SBDCs, CPAs
  - Network to improve access to available educational resources. State fuel networks to provide information specific to individual states.
    - **Level:** State, Regional, and National

- **Small farm-to-school –** facilitating small scale farmers to supply locally grown produce for school needs (NNFC/Small Farmers Distribution Network). Provides marketing and quality control (one centralized entity) for liability, name recognition, unified packaging, established reputation, etc.) and provide training to small scale farmers (production, business development, delivery and transportation logistics, etc.) 8 votes
  - **Level:** Locally and Regionally
  - **Players:** Farmers, Cooperatives, Universities, School Districts, NGOs

- **Faith Based Community Service.** Specific things: clearinghouse for startup, not-for-profit organizations – “Best” Practice Examples of: incorporation, business planning, 501(c)3, funding options, collaborations, marketing. 5 votes
  - **Level:** Local and Regional
  - **Players:** Churches, Community Leaders, Local Businesses

- **State Rural Economic Development Council to address state and regional issues**
  - **Level:** State
  - **Players:** Federal, State, and Local Economic Development Practitioners

**Policies**

**Community and Service Providers**

- **Entrepreneur-Friendly Community Designation –** access to capital and microloan funds. Community supported loan funds. Policies that focus on create business friendly entrance into a community – make it easier to obtain licensing, get assistance in starting a business, a local government based small business assistance office that focuses on advocating reduction in regulations that eliminates red tape. Enacted on a local level as well as a state level. 3 votes

- **Exists now:** SBA, SBDC, CDC – all of these are helpful. What is needed to build rural entrepreneurship? **More money** to develop either more rural programs or to further fund programs where needed that exist presently. More representatives of agencies that work to develop rural programs and to man resource centers. The ones who are “in the trenches” and deal with the problems of the rural entrepreneur on a daily basis. 4 votes

- **Small Business Liaison Officers (SBLO) lists made available.**

**Business Policy Issues**

- **Florida needs comprehensive workers compensation reform to eliminate a substantial barrier to business start-ups and growth.** Needs to involve government office, OTTED, legislature. 6 votes

- **Standardize processes for the business community.** Local government and state legislators at the table.

- **Establish incentives and decrease regulations that benefit the small, limited-resource entrepreneurs.** 5 votes
• **Capital Acquisition**
  - Assemble names of solid and committed financing sources for small businesses. These funds could then be made available to intermediary lenders (CDCs) for financing businesses.
  - Where are sources of funds located for development of rural businesses?
  - Hold a seminar in which loan programs and agencies that make funds available for rural counties are there to explain how their programs work and what steps are taken in the loan or funding process.

• **Collaborative Efforts**
  - Continue to find ways to encourage collaboration with stakeholders.
  - Help educate and “plug in” interested parties into the rural development network. As a person new to this area, I have a lot to learn and need guidance and access to the “players.”
  - Coordinate all Southern region universities to make sure collaboration is taking place.
  - Receive a bi-yearly report of activities to compile and give back to the university to compare with other universities.
  - Continue the dialog and develop action items to be developed and materialize.
  - Publish some “best practices” and success stories.
  - Consider hosting a regional conference on Rural Entrepreneurship Development. Bring in national speakers but also invite practitioners from the region to present on their best practices and their successful programs. Even highlight the outcomes of these listening sessions.
  - Consider becoming a clearinghouse for dissemination of information on events, successes, practices, etc., on (rural) entrepreneurial development.
  - Serve as a clearinghouse for the region.
  - Continue to offer and promote programs of this nature to entrepreneurs.
  - Continue the effort.
  - Get the report back to this group.
  - Keep us informed.

• **Rural Development Research**
  - Locate and address barriers to rural growth.
  - Compile lists of agencies by county, region, and/or state doing community resource development work.
  - Continue to advocate nationally for policy changes that benefit limited resource entrepreneurs.

What can the state universities do to enhance the entrepreneurship effort?

• **Business Development**
  - Develop a curriculum for entrepreneurs to help foster creative thinking, risk evaluation, and self assessment for starting your own business.
  - Assist in getting entrepreneurs to participate in the training.
  - Provide free education/training for new entrepreneurs.
  - Offer free education/training for existing small business entrepreneurs.
  - More of the same.
  - More BR&E activity.
Southern Region Rural Entrepreneurship
Roundtable Sessions

San Marcos, TX

September 27, 2005

Attendees: 17

Sponsor:
Southern Rural Development Center

Hosts:
Texas Cooperative Extension Service
Southern Rural Development Center

Contacts:
Greg Clary
Texas Cooperative Extension
903-834-6191
g-clary@tamu.edu

Alan Barefield and Bo Beaulieu
Southern Rural Development Center
662-325-3207
alanb@srdc.msstate.edu
ljb@srdc.msstate.edu
San Marcos, TX Listening Session  
September 27, 2005

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San Marcos, TX Listening Session  
September 27, 2005

Summary

The San Marcos, TX Entrepreneurship Roundtable was held on September 27, 2005 at the Hays County Extension Office. Sixteen small business service providers attended the session and provided input on the following topics:

The Three Key Topics You Address In Your Work
Input regarding the typical issues that these small business service providers focus on three distinct categories. Many topics dealt with community and networking issues that centered around entrepreneurship and small business development. These included identifying and securing funding for community resources and opportunities (including infrastructure) and the development of networking arrangements between various community factors.

The second set of issues identified by the participants centered around the provision of business assistance services. These issues ranged from facilitating the creation of new businesses and expansion of existing ones to workforce development and training. Finally, the majority of topics identified for this questions centered around issues in business operations. While the most often-mentioned topic was obtaining financing, business startup analysis, marketing, and sector-specific business issues were also frequently mentioned.

Major Audiences You Target In Your Work
Four distinct audiences were identified. Community leaders included Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Boards, community leaders and policy makers, and non-profits. Business relates audiences primarily included business owners and potential business owners, but it also included service providers. The other audiences consisted of community residents and the educational system.

Three Products You Use To Support Your Work
Participants listed a wide variety of products that were used to support their efforts with targeted audiences. While business-related products such as training curriculum, websites, tools, and funding legislation topped the list. Participants also made heavy use of methods, tools, and programs targeted to civic and governmental entities that target community resources such as infrastructure.

The best resources that participants utilized in their work primarily focused around organizational and support agencies such as the Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship and federally sponsored programs including the Small Business Development Centers.

Future of Entrepreneurship
The participants felt that the development of a community that is supportive of entrepreneurship is a factor that is critical to the strengthening of entrepreneurship in their communities. Communities must be united in their vision for entrepreneurship and that rural leaders must have resources with which to work. Other factors deemed critical included developing
San Marcos, TX Listening Session
September 27, 2005

Round 1
Current Entrepreneurship Activities
Three Key Topics You Address in Your Work

- Community/Networking Issues
  - Assessing community resources to support entrepreneurship
  - Develop interest going from communities being entrepreneurship-neutral to entrepreneurship-friendly
  - Community downtown development (personal) not work related
  - Building supportive communities
  - Cooperative arrangements
  - Networking resources
  - Building capacity
  - Identify funding for community projects
  - Funding entrepreneurship support/infrastructure in place filling in the gaps
  - Infrastructure
  - Addressing resource concerns
  - Define technologies ripe for economic development – translate for lay people and community leaders
  - Rural opportunities
  - Rural organizations
  - Border concerns
  - Community planning for recreation

- Business Assistance
  - Starting new businesses
  - Business creation/funding
  - Assisting existing companies to grow
  - Business planning
  - Referral to resources
  - Assistance via SBDC, connectivity (e.g., IC2 Institute) – Bringing in business
  - Providing training needed by employees
  - Assist with basic needs related to workforce
  - Skill development (welding, computers)
  - Provide on-going support in pre-screening applicants
  - Working with “challenged” audiences

- Business Operations
  - Business plan
  - Business startup and capitalization
  - How to get started
  - Finance
  - Identifying borrowers through SBDCs
  - Obtaining financing
  - How to get funding
Business owners
Existing businesses
Established employers
Existing companies needing to change directions or startup a new division because of changing technology
Emerging employers
Entrepreneurs
Nascent entrepreneurs
Startup entrepreneurs
Existing entrepreneurs
Growth entrepreneurs
Troubled entrepreneurs
New businesses for computer training
Very small companies just getting started
Potential small business borrowers
SBDC and other resources that identify potential borrowers
Existing business owners in small rural communities
Troubled businesses
Individuals wanting to start up
Farmers and ranchers – ag operations
Ag producers
Landowners

• Education
  o Schools
  o School superintendent

Three Products You Use to Support Your Work

• Civic and Governmental Entities
  o Chambers of commerce
  o Non-governmental organizations
  o Local organizations – non-profits to develop grants
  o EGID, WHIP, BCRP
  o RC&D network
  o USDA networks
  o Governments
  o Texas Parks and Wildlife LIP program
  o RCWFDB
  o UT-IC2
  o Austin Community Development Corporation material (incubator kitchens)
  o Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship
  o Economic development e-lists

• Media
  o Newspaper articles
  o Newsletters sent with utility bills
  o Radio discussions
- SBDC
- SBDC assistance
- SBA Centers
- UT-IC2
- IC2 Institute
- Virtual Incubator offered by the UT-IC2 Institute
- Community colleges
- Training courses offered at Temple College at Taylor
- RuPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship

- Federal
  - USDA-RD
  - USDA-RD
  - Federal and state cost-share programs
  - RC&D
  - RC&D Councils
  - RC&D network
  - CRP and CSP green payments
  - Technology strategic planning – planning and decision making tools developed within U.S. intelligence community. We are adapting method for regional economic development. Excellent tool for knowing your resources, knowing your competitors resources, and develop a strategy to ?????

- Other
  - Referral to other resources
  - Business service representatives and employer services
  - Deliver other agency/group programs to rural communities
  - 8 common scenarios for point-of-contact, phone customer service

Facilitators’ Notes

Three Most Common Themes/Topics
- Entrepreneurship friendly communities
- Referral/networking
- Training/education
- Business support and training
- Bringing expertise to communities
- Identify opportunities and methods for implementation
- Assessing Community Resources and Building Infrastructure
- Training regarding services or specific skills
- Infrastructure/finance

Most Innovative/Unique Topics
- TCRE
- Build bridge between universities/colleges and economic development boards
- DeGoLa RC&D revolving loan program to fill financing gap for new businesses
- Act as regions and networks within and without regional areas for global and regional connections
• Startup financing
• Target some 4A/4B money to small businesses
• Money – a way of organizing and a knowledge of where money can be located
• Local source of finance (community venture fund)
• Trained Personnel – for businesses to provide a quality product
• Educate on planning

**Group Reports**
- Supportive and united community
- Easy access to abundant resources
- A known resource for rural leaders to help potential businesses. A change in “get the big one” attitude
- Develop support group – coach – for entrepreneurs who want to start up
- Teach entrepreneurs how to be successful before they start spending money, not after they have gone bust and are in debt
- An educated workforce

**Round 3**

Creating Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities – Places That Are Doing It Right!
New Ideas for Building Entrepreneur Friendly-Communities!

Think of a community that you would identify as “entrepreneur friendly.” What is this community doing specifically that makes it a great place for entrepreneurs? Try to think of at least 2-3 examples of “entrepreneur friendly” activities this community is undertaking.

- **Communities**
  - Bastrop, Cameron, Georgetown, Salado
  - Bastrop
  - Buda
  - Cameron
  - Cuero
    - Active economic development corporation
    - Revolving loan fund
    - Technology center with business incubator
  - Eden
    - Come together as a group
    - Formulate plan for support
    - Enthusiastic recruitment
    - Accepting attitude
  - El Campo
    - Proactive recruitment of industry and business
    - Invites new businesses in where many small towns are governed by a few majority owners that drive businesses and don’t want new businesses to come in (fear of competition)
• Recognize unique characteristics
• Embrace culture and the community
• Collaborative community culture
• Provide governmental guidelines – help to establish their business
• Coordinate local resources to focus on the common goal of being entrepreneurially friendly
• Economic development corporation
• Active chamber of commerce
• Strong chamber of commerce/business community
• In-place policies to have business and industry handle new demands on infrastructure (drainage, schools)
• Streamlined business development
• Streamlined business development processes including resolutions of conflicts
• Streamline business development
• Committed local leaders
• Elect pro-economic development officials
• Cooperative civic leadership
• Cooperative civic leadership
  o People – key stakeholders
  o Processes – business development, zoning, business permitting, certificate of occupancy
  o Programs – leadership, youth entrepreneurship, CCRS
• Provide financial assistance to start-up companies (loans, grants)
• Promote Junior Achievement programs

What 3-4 activities can we (the people and organizations attending this roundtable session) do to help communities become entrepreneur friendly?
• Community-based planning – resource team, Texas rural Leadership Program
• Changed paradigm for economic development
  o Cost/benefit analysis
  o Education
• Awareness of resources
• Coordination of resources
• Rural focus of resources
• Identify communities result demonstration field trip (e.g., Salado, Georgetown, etc.)
• Nurture youth entrepreneurship

As a group, select the THREE most important wishes that you want the whole group attending this meeting to hear about.

Group Reports
• Local response team
• Entrepreneurial support group (AA 12 step model for entrepreneurship)
• “Trial” incubator
- For local community leaders – To help overcome local issues in getting things done and help the community become more friendly to growth and development.
  o Level: Local
  o Players: Should include community leaders along with key influential people and those that have been successful in overcoming the status quo.
- For technical expertise – Share experiences, marketing knowledge, and help with grant writing.
  o Level: Should have a statewide and national focus.
  o Players: Those with expertise and practical knowledge connecting with those needing this help.
- Funding network to provide sources of funding and help in applying for loans and grants.
  o Level: Local and State
  o Players: Include bankers, investment counselors, business angels. (1 vote)
- Referral network for technical assistance. Referral of businesses in need of technical or business assistance (nascent start-up, existing, growth, troubled).
  o Level: Local
  o Players: Members include all small business/economic development stakeholder groups. (2 votes)
- Referral network for financial. Referral of businesses seeking financing (start-up or existing).
  o Level: Local
  o Players: Members include financial institutions and technical assistance providers (SBDCs, community colleges, etc.) (2 votes)
- Network of leadership programs operating in the state to share curriculum, program ideas, speakers’ bureau, legislative influence. (1 vote)
- Rural community colleges network to share common interests/concerns regarding funding, support, etc.
- Network of local/regional economic development leaders or those who are interested
  o Level: Local and Regional
  o Players: Includes elected/appointed officials, business owners, chambers of commerce to share resources, lobby for funding, etc.
- Mentoring network whose purpose is to connect new entrepreneurs in areas of business interest.
  o Level: Local, State, and National
  o Players: Members include entrepreneurs, business professionals, consultants, and agency personnel. (3 votes)
- Regional network to address I-30/I-35 corridor issues. Inform community leaders () of issues that impact them in short term and long term issues.
  o Level: Regional
  o Players: Mayors, City Managers, Councils of Government, and RC&D Councils
- Information/resource network operating at the state level to share information on resources and opportunities for training.
  o Level: State
  o Players: Members include agencies and education.
- Elementary education network – a statewide network that would act as a resource for educational materials that teachers could use to teach entrepreneurship. (3 votes)
- Texas Community Development Network – a group focused on adding value to local community development networks to develop and implement community based plans (2 votes)
- A local network that includes entrepreneurs, philanthropic folds, community and agency representatives and local real estate owners (buildings) as well as “access experts”
- State clearinghouse (similar taxing provisions) for information and examples.
  - Level: State
  - Players: Members include federal, state, and NGO organizations.
- Community based organizations for a more effective dissemination of information. Operates on a local level for “one-stop shopping for information.
  - Level: Local
  - Players: Members include local assistance programs and agencies. (2 votes)
- Operate somewhat in a regional level (because Texas is too big to be active on a state-wide level) but should be organized within the “region” around community “types” and/or locations.
  - Level: Regional within state
  - Players: Includes people from state and local agencies/organizations as well as entrepreneurs, “funders”, and economic development people.
- Response team focused around supporting entrepreneurial activity. This network must be linked to regional/state/national networks.
  - Level: Local
  - Players: Involves leaders, organizations, and agencies appropriate to area (schools, chambers, economic development corporations, government, and Extension). (3 votes)
- Network of resource providers policy makers that can contribute to entrepreneurial development to local/national networks.
  - Level: State, but must be linked to local/national networks
  - Players: Extension, SBDCs, COGs, legislatures, departments of economic development, NRCS RC&D, etc.
- National network of resource providers and policy makers that can contribute to entrepreneurial development (USDA, DOC, etc.). This network must be linked to regional/state/local network. (2 votes)

Policies
- Use TLM or TRLP to train rural elected/unofficial/emerging leaders in entrepreneurship/economic development/community development efforts and laws (3 votes)
  - Level: State and Local
  - Players: Texas Rural Leadership Program, Texas Municipal League, All county leaders
- Support TCRE funding, expansion, marketing (2 votes)
  - Level: State
  - Players: Texas legislators, Entrepreneurs who access TCRE
- Reduction/lessening of state and local requirements for start-up businesses (building fees, zoning, etc.) (1 vote)
• Help build viable networks of access information
• Form, promote, and support regional and national networks for entrepreneurship
• Facilitate and implement formation of Extension centered networks for entrepreneurship at state and county levels
• Develop financing directory
• Development tax abatement reference guide
• Support borrowers in preparing to own, manage, and grow a business before they get started

• Education/Research
  • Integrate research and Extension efforts directed at entrepreneurship
  • Do a study of what types of economic development things do not work in small towns (industrial parks)
  • Develop a catalog of rural assets – historical, industrial, resources, workforce, etc. – what are the competitive advantages? How can they be exploited/promoted?
  • Develop a catalog of rural liabilities – what are the barriers to development? How can they be overcome?
  • Help develop youth entrepreneurial curriculum and promote it with state agencies and organizations
  • Develop educational materials for teaching entrepreneurship in elementary schools
  • Help with rural entrepreneurship curriculum for modules for classes – continuing education, college, and community training
  • Develop educational materials that can be used by community leaders to develop support for entrepreneurship in the community
  • Rural entrepreneurship curricula for policy makers to teach them how to promote rural entrepreneurship
  • Training and support at the local level
  • Case studies of entrepreneurial communities
  • Clarify: Is the SRDC about self-employment/small business or entrepreneurship? These are not the same things.

What can the Texas Center for Rural Entrepreneurship do?
• Community Awareness and Involvement
  • Publicize who you are and what you can do for rural communities – may have to go in person to address community leaders. E-mail is sometimes ignored.
  • Meet and work with local officials in small towns that are in danger of “dying” out yet are interested in surviving
  • More meetings involving more people (last one was by invitation, only 60) to get more ideas generating
  • Pursue a marketing plan that will assist staff in delivering the word out to community developers
  • Continue to pursue statewide establishments
  • Promote state agencies and organizations (TDA, ORCA, TCD, TCE) to focus on entrepreneurship
farmers/producers to assist them in making a change to a way of life that can be entrepreneurial by using the skills they possess

- Networking/Partnerships
  - Get funded
  - Continue to educate 4A/4B organizations about TCRE and its objectives
  - Provide information to 4A/4B organizations to help us provide political support so you receive funds to support your efforts
  - Establish local entrepreneurship networks
  - Network with these communities that did things that work and where it didn’t
  - Help develop networks and introduce communities to what groups are already available
  - Partner with IC2 on next round of NSF Partnership for Innovation Grant (Spring 2006)

What do you plan to do when you get back home?

- Respondent 1
  - Register at TCRE
  - Consider listing success stories on the Internet
  - Contact Comptrollers Office about 4A and 4B corporations

- Respondent 2
  - Follow-up with contacts made at meeting
  - Follow-up on Texas Rural Entrepreneurial Network

- Respondent 3
  - Share the info and summary of today’s meeting with my boss
  - Share info with local partners such as EDCs, Chambers of Commerce
  - Touch base with people/contacts from today

- Respondent 4
  - Write some columns on rural entrepreneurship
  - Follow-up with some contacts made

- Respondent 5
  - Will take what I’ve learned to my local communities – where I live and where I work – and help them with contacts so when they are ready to organize a group they will know who to contact.
  - I enjoyed your presentation and enjoyed knowing that someone is working or interested in the problems rural communities are facing and trying to help.

- Respondent 6
  - Try to build an “entrepreneurial support section” into our ED Board orientation to get our Board members on board in supporting entrepreneurship efforts
  - Check out SRDC and TCRE websites to gather more information regarding entrepreneurial support
  - Encourage more entrepreneurial efforts in local education entities to nurture youth entrepreneurship

- Respondent 7
  - Study TCRE website for loan info