The team here at the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) is pleased to present this 2019 annual report and 2020 calendar and to share with you some of the accomplishments of the Center and our 30 Land-Grant University (LGU) partners across 13 southern states and territories. Two new members of the SRDC staff are Emily Green and Laura Narmour. Emily is our Grants and Contracts Specialist and is a recent graduate of Mississippi State University in International Business. Laura joins us as an Office Associate with over 15 years experience in the health care sector. These two, along with Rachel Welborn, Katherine Spiering, Grace Langford, and Russ Garner constitute one of the best staffs I have been associated with in my 33 years in academia. This energetic and enthusiastic group of individuals are a personification of the SRDC’s mission and vision.

On these pages you’ll find information about several major projects that were initiated or continued in 2019. For instance, the interest surrounding heirs’ property is spreading and is increasingly being recognized as an impediment to community development. The SRDC is working with Extension and research partners in the South to explore regional responses to this growing issue. Also, the 2020 Census will be released on April 1, 2020, and an accurate count is important to every community and person in the nation. Together with our Extension partners, the SRDC is exploring ways to increase the response rate in hard to count areas which include much of the rural South. Another major effort in 2019 was a cooperative arrangement with the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement at the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) to encourage the formation and support of local prosperity councils to address pressing economic and community issues. And Rachel Welborn continues to coordinate “Coming Together for Racial Understanding,” a national program that addresses a sensitive and enduring topic. Other projects include work on digital literacy with the National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET), retail workforce development (CREATE BRIDGES), and local foods (SERA 47).

As you can see, the SRDC is engaged in an array of efforts as directed by our Board of Directors and Technical Operation and Advisory Committee. With their direction and the support of USDA’s National Institute for Food and Agriculture and multiple other partners, we continue to leverage resources with our LGUs to provide assistance to rural communities in America. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steve C. Turner
The Southern Rural Development Center seeks to strengthen the capacity of the region's 30 Land-Grant Institutions to address critical contemporary rural development issues impacting the well-being of people and communities in the rural South.

**Priorities:**
- Develop Pathways to Resilient Communities
- Build Strategic Partnerships
- Mobilize Resources around Emerging Issues and Opportunities

To view all the Land-Grant Institutions that we serve, please visit: srdc.msstate.edu/about/landgrant/

**MISSION**

**CONTACT US**

P.O. Box 5187 | 150 Lloyd-Ricks-Watson | Mississippi State, MS 39762
Phone: 662.325.3207 | Fax: 662.325.8777

**Websites**
Southern Rural Development Center | srdc.msstate.edu
Regional Rural Development Centers | rrdc.info

**Graphic Design:**
Katherine Spiering
Mary Hannah Ruff

**Photos from:**
shutterstock.com, istockphoto.com, unsplash.com, pexels.com
SRDC DIRECT IMPACTS

SPENDING PATTERNS

$1,351,369
$828,308
$204,670
$23,643
$376,001

Operations
Convening multi-state groups
Training Events
Funding Leveraged
Subgrants/Mini-Grants

ADVANCING SCHOLARSHIP

Curricula
- 4H Tech Changemakers
- CREATE BRIDGES
- Coming Together for Racial Understanding
- Community Prosperity Summit Series

Briefs, Infographics, Reports
- Annual Report
- SRDC Brochure
- CRD Indicators

Presentations by Staff
The SRDC staff has presented 22 times at multiple events on a multitude of topics, such as:
- Racial Understanding
- Leadership Development
- 2020 Census
- Heirs’ Property

MULTI-STATE INITIATIVES

Serving 45 states

States Served
States Not Served
Federated States of Micronesia
Puerto Rico & US Virgin Islands

Universities Served: 63
Total Participants: 949

REACH

13 webinars, 267 participants
401 followers, 352 likes
358 followers
896 newsletter subscribers
JANUARY 2020

SUNDAY  MONDAY  TUESDAY  WEDNESDAY  THURSDAY  FRIDAY  SATURDAY

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5  New Year's Day  

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19  Martin Luther King Jr. Day  

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In 2019, the Community Resource Development (CRD) specialists in the Southern Region continued their successful webinar series aimed at showcasing some of the best community development programs the region has to offer. In 2020, these will transition to periodic high-priority topic sessions.

**January**

Exploring Ways to Engage Limited Resource Communities in Disaster Education
Michelle Eley, North Carolina A&T State University

**February**

Empowering Minority Students with an Entrepreneurial Mindset
Dave Shideler, Ron Cox, & Elber Arroyo-Rivera
Oklahoma State University

**March**

Equipping Georgia's New Farmers for Success
Andrea Scarrow & Rob Martin
University of Georgia

**April**

Building a Regional Coalition for Natural Resource Conservation
Dan Kahl, University of Kentucky
Sreedhar Upendram, University of Tennessee

**May**

Community Food Systems: A Space for Ecology, Justice, and Markets
Eric Bendfeldt, Virginia Cooperative Extension

**June**

Telling the Whole Story: Economic Contribution and Cotton Cooperatives
Rebekka Dudensing & John Park
Texas A&M University

**July**

Creating Bridges for the Rural Retail Workforce
Alison Davis, University of Kentucky
Stacey McCullough, University of Arkansas
Dave Shideler, Oklahoma State University

To view other webinars, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/trainings/crdwebinars.html
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- **Valentine’s Day**
- **Presidents’ Day**

- **February 2020**
- **Joint Council of Extension Professionals Leadership Conference: San Antonio, TX**
Within the past two years, 26 states joined the Coming Together for Racial Understanding initiative. The purpose of the training is to build capacity within Cooperative Extension Service (CES) to help communities engage in civil dialogues around racial issues.

**Overview**

**Building Capacity at Home**

Following the train-the-trainer workshop, the process for expanding capacity is two-fold:

1. Engage professionals within the CES system in the home state in dialogues
2. Host a dialogue in at least one community

**How Administrators Can Support This Work**

Provide time to other Extension employees to participate

Allow adequate resources to support efforts (funding, travel, materials)

Demonstrate support even in the face of dissention or risk

Actively communicate support for this work as a priority to Extension

Value efforts in promotion and tenure process

Participate in dialogues

**Participating States**

To learn more, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/civildialogue/index.html
# March 2020

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- **Saint Patrick’s Day**
- **Daylight Savings Begins**
The Decennial Census, conducted since 1970, is required in the U.S. Constitution. This short form questionnaire is now being offered online, by phone, mail, and in-person. Census data is used for political apportionment, allocating government funds, defining rural-urban status, and to help inform decision making.

Programs Impacted by Census Data

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<td>Land-Grant Universities</td>
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Average Mail Response to 2010 Census

- States & DC: 73%
- Metro Counties: 75%
- Non-Metro Counties: 68%

Participation Tools

- Census Explorer - 2010 Participation Rates: https://www.census.gov/censusexplorer/2010ratemap.html?
- Response Outreach Area Mapper: https://www.census.gov/roam

How Communities Can Get Involved

1. **Educate**
2. **Motivate**
3. **Remind**

To learn more, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/2020census/index.html
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To read the full report, visit: https://tinyurl.com/crd-indicators-2019
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- **Mother’s Day** on May 10th
- **National Health Outreach Conference: Kansas City, MO** on May 20th
- **Memorial Day** on May 25th
Entrepreneurship

Mississippi State University helps businesses with online marketing tool and has helped increase sales through the Bricks-To-Clicks™ Extension Program.

Kentucky State University helped to support small businesses through free workshop for minority, underserved, and underrepresented business owners.

University of Georgia & Fort Valley State University delivered the USDA Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Workshop to raise awareness about the grant and its application process.

Leadership Development

North Carolina A&T University’s Community Voices program helps to develop leadership skills in areas such as housing, health, and economic development, with participants securing funding for their work.

Prairie View A&M University’s Nonprofit Consortium helps nonprofits, collaborate, improve best practices, and build their capacity to grow through writing grants.

University of Arkansas Extension provides statewide ballot education to increase awareness of ballot initiatives through printed and online voter guides.

Quality of Life

Oklahoma State University partners with local entities to hold community meetings in towns affected by the opioid crisis.

Virginia Cooperative Extension is fighting the opioid crisis by delivering prevention programming through the PROSPER program.

University of Puerto Rico was able to aid those affected by Hurricanes Irma and Marie through their Emergency Plan courses.

University of Kentucky compiled the results of statewide community assessments to find local priorities which included economic development and substance abuse.

Texas A&M University is building a local food center that will serve rural areas through education and entrepreneur development.

Building Capacity in Agriculture

Tuskegee University supports farmers by strengthening technical/managerial knowledge and raising awareness about financial wellbeing, marketing, comparative cluster farming, and more.

University of Tennessee focuses on projects improving community viability and rural competitiveness including rural broadband, risk mitigation strategies, an Affordability Index, and market feasibility of hard cider production and sales.

North Carolina State University’s Farmerworker Health and Safety Program engages farmworkers, farm operators, and farm labor contractors with interactive training.

To read the full stories, visit: https://tinyurl.com/crd-indicators-2019
JUNE 2020

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- National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals Conference: Portsmouth, NH
- Father’s Day
Throughout the summer of 2019, in partnership with USDA's Office of Partnership and Public Engagement (OPPE), the four Regional Rural Development Centers hosted four Community Prosperity Summits around the country. These summits brought together community partners from across the nation to build capacity to address the USDA Agriculture and Rural Prosperity Priorities.

**SUMMIT OBJECTIVES**

- Fostering progress toward the Agriculture & Rural Prosperity Priorities
- Connecting USDA & other federal programs of value to agriculture & rural communities
- Demonstrating how to identify & approach relevant partners
- Modeling a planning process for helping participants work within local communities
- Developing & implementing Local Prosperity Councils

**PARTICIPATING STATES**

- Philadelphia, PA
- Phoenix, AZ
- Atlanta, GA
- Houston, TX

To learn more, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/community-prosperity/
### JULY 2020

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- **Independence Day** on 4th July
- **50th Annual Meeting of the Community Development Society: Columbia, MO** on 19th July
The mission of this group is to foster and strengthen Extension education programming throughout the southern region by promoting multi-state cooperation, anticipating emerging program issues and needs, and implementing action processes to address them in a timely manner.

In August 2019, 248 participants representing state program leaders from eight committees, the Association of Extension Administrators (AEA), and the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors (ASRED) convened for joint regional planning and collaboration. The number of participants in each group are depicted below.

185 PARTICIPANTS FROM 31 STATES + D.C.

To learn more, visit: https://nationalextensionsummits.com/

To learn more, visit: http://srpln.msstate.edu/
Southern Region Program Leadership Network, Association of Extension Administrators & Association of Southern Region Extension Directors Joint Meeting: Fort Worth, TX

Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting: Westminster, CO
CREATE BRIDGES: Celebrating Retail, Accommodations, Tourism and Entertainment by Building Rural Innovations and Developing Growth Economies

Through funding from Walmart, CREATE BRIDGES is an initiative to strengthen retail, accommodations, tourism, and entertainment industries which often make up a large portion of the jobs & businesses that drive rural economies. CREATE BRIDGES was designed to raise awareness of the important role these businesses play in the local economy, determine challenges and assets impacting those businesses, and develop and implement strategies to strengthen these sectors.

The Business Retention & Expansion process was used to engage CREATE sector businesses to assess their strengths/challenges and inform strategies to address issues that impact business and workforce well-being.

SURVEYS COMPLETED
ARKANSAS | 117
KENTUCKY | 46
OKLAHOMA | 80

-create bridges process-

States & Regions

Arkansas
- Big Sandy Region
- EKCEP FOCUS Region

Kentucky
- Ozark Foothills Regions
- 3C's Region

Oklahoma
- Sandstone Hills Region
- Crossing Borders Region

Partnership Leads

Alison Davis
University of Kentucky

Stacey McCullough
University of Arkansas

Dave Shideler
Oklahoma State University

States & Regions

To learn more, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/createbridges/index.html

Funding for CREATE BRIDGES provided by:

Walmart
According to the Federal Communications Commission’s 2018 Broadband Deployment report, over 24 million people in the U.S. do not have access to broadband Internet (25 Mbps download/3 Mbps upload). The National Digital Extension Education Team (NDEET) in partnership with the National 4-H Council, Microsoft, and Georgia 4-H trained youth and adult leaders to address the digital divide across the U.S. through the 4-H Tech Changemakers program. This includes working with 4-H youth and educators, broadband service providers, community members, civic leaders, and Microsoft to help people thrive in a digital economy and benefit from high-speed connectivity.

**PROGRAM GOALS**

1. Empower community members to adopt and use technology to improve their opportunities and outcomes through the use of broadband Internet. Community members will gain technology awareness and skills related to what broadband Internet can provide.

2. Raise the visibility of the partnership and mission as 4-H Tech Changemakers. Engage with lawmakers, media, and other stakeholders. Teen leaders will be trained as spokespeople to lift up and expand youth voice in this critical conversation.

3. Infuse positive youth development approaches in relation to citizenship and technology skills development throughout the life cycle of the project. Teen leaders will successfully engage their local community to address their digital literacy issues.

**NDEET & SRDC’S ROLE**

- Writing and adapting curriculum
- Conducting regional trainings
- Coaching and supporting state teams

To learn more about this project, visit: https://tinyurl.com/techchangementakers
To learn more about NDEET, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/
HEIRS’ PROPERTY

The USDA defines heirs’ property as land that has been passed down informally from generation to generation, in most cases, without a will. African American communities in the southern Black Belt have been particularly affected, although similar situations exist in the Mississippi Delta, in white communities in Appalachia, with Native Americans living on tribal lands, and in the Hispanic Colonias in South Texas. SRDC is partnering with CES, researchers, and non-profits in the South to explore opportunities for a regional capacity building response. The steps taken to better understand these important issues so far are illustrated below along with 2020 events planned.

Partners

2020 Events

FEbruary 24-25
Southern Region Planning Meeting
Atlanta, GA

To learn more, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/heir_property.html
# November 2020 Calendar

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- **Veterans Day** on the 11th
- **Thanksgiving Day** on the 25th
BONNIE TEATER EARLY CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Bonnie Teater is a special individual to friends of the Southern Rural Development Center. For 30 years, she provided valuable support and day-to-day assistance to the Center as a member of its staff. She served as an inspiration to all because of the dedication she brought to her work and her passion for the rural development research and Extension outreach mission of the region’s Land-Grant Universities. She currently is enjoying retirement in Kentucky.

The Early Career Achievement Award is awarded on odd number years and honors the work of “rising star” who has already achieved great things in his/her early career in community development. Below is this year’s recipient.

Ramona Madhosingh-Hector

Ramona is a Regional Specialized Urban Sustainability Agent at the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) in Pinellas County, Florida.

In Ramona’s nine years of serving in this role, she has received more than 30 state and national awards and has also presented at nearly 100 conferences. Her determination to raise the status of Community Resource Development (CRD) work across Florida Extension and the state of Florida led her to launch a National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals state chapter.

She has been a dominant player in developing and launching a new UF/IFAS Extension Program: CIVIC, Community Voices, Informed Choices. This provides a platform for deliberative dialogue and feedback through a two-way exchange versus a one-way program delivery style. Last year, she traveled to Maynooth, Ireland with her team to the 2018 World Development Conference. There, they shared program successes and learned from community development colleagues from around the world.

Another one of Ramona’s achievements includes a program called Sustainability Connections which is a community film series. Also, in the field of sustainability, Ramona was an integral part of the planning team for the 2019 National Sustainability and National Extension Energy Joint Summit in Tampa, Florida.

To learn more, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/funding/bonnieteater/

SERA 47: LOCAL FOODS

A visioning group was established at the Annual Meeting in December 2019. They are tasked with drafting a proposal for the next 5-year plan of work for the SERA which is due in 2021. See the visioning group members to the right.

WORKING GROUPS

- Impact Evaluation
- Resource Bank/ Digital Repository
- Successful Models
- Learning Communities

TOP 10 ISSUES IDENTIFIED

This group, chaired by Quisto Settle of Oklahoma State University, completed their work of finding the top 10 issues facing local foods using a Delphi Study. Their work is currently being reviewed for publication.

To learn more, visit: http://srdc.msstate.edu/foods/index.html
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**December 2020**

- Christmas Day
- New Year’s Eve
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Purdue Center for Regional Development

Rural Sociological Society
Rural Development, USDA
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Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
Southern Extension Risk Management Education
Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program
Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Agency
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