



## Items of Interest

### The Southern Rural Development Center Announces New Associate Director



The Southern Rural Development Center is excited to announce Dr. Roseanne Ellison Scammahorn as the new Associate Director for the Southern Rural Development Center, housed at Mississippi State University.

Originally from Darke County, Ohio, Scammahorn received her bachelor's degree in organizational leadership and MBA in Management, Innovation, and Change from Wright State University in Dayton, OH. She continued her education at Mississippi State University, earning an Educational Specialist degree in Counseling and a Doctorate in Extension and Agricultural Education where her dissertation examined the attrition risk of agricultural educators in the southern region.

Scammahorn joined the Southern Rural Development Center as a graduate research assistant in 2010. Her research focused on understanding poverty in the mid-south Delta region, entrepreneurship, and e-commerce. In 2018, she relocated to Ohio State University Extension and served as Darke County's SNAP-Ed Program Assistant and Family and Consumer Sciences Educator III. During her time at Ohio State, she created and taught programming on healthy relationships, finance, and sustainable communities. In 2023, she relocated to Mississippi for the role of Extension Research Associate III for the Southern Rural Development Center and supported the outreach efforts for the *Understanding Heirs' Property at the Community Level* team, the National Digital Education Extension Team, and the Program Leadership Network.

As Associate Director, Scammahorn will lead the Center's outreach-oriented activities as well as uphold its mission to strengthen the capacity of the region's 30 Land-Grant Universities to address critical contemporary rural development issues impacting the well-being of people and communities in the South. "I look forward to supporting our national, regional, and local partners and educators in our collective efforts to create resilient communities, improve holistic well-being, and foster healthy collaborations. I am excited to serve others, helping them to live their best lives," said Dr. Scammahorn.

## Webinars:

BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) Broadband Navigator: Empowering Tomorrow's Digital Nation Through Local Projects Convening

**December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**10 AM – Noon CT**

**9 AM – 11 AM ET**

More information available in the "Items of Interest" section in this month's *Around the South* issue.

**Follow this link to register for this webinar:**

[BEAD Broadband Navigator](#)

## BEAD (Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment) Broadband Navigator: Empowering Tomorrow's Digital Nation Through Local Projects Convening

In partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation, Penn State Extension and the Southern Rural Development Center are excited to co-host a convening designed to share new, publicly available, spatial analysis tools important for local community broadband development projects. The online meeting will be held **December 5th, 10am-noon EST/9am-11am CST**.

The BEAD Broadband Navigator meeting is an essential gathering of key stakeholders dedicated to enhancing broadband connectivity and development projects in areas currently unserved by high-speed broadband. The program's goal is to share these new spatial analysis tools, open doors to local relationships and conceptual project development, and help make a positive difference connecting farms, businesses, individuals, families, and communities. Your participation will be invaluable in driving meaningful discussions and leveraging the power of these new tools.

The project aspires to make significant strides in advancing broadband expansion and digital inclusion across local communities.

Please let the team know if you can join them or, if possible, designate a representative who can actively contribute to the discussions and bring your community expertise to the table. Should you have any questions or require further information regarding the BEAD Broadband Navigator Convening, please do not hesitate to contact the event coordinator, Dana Ollendyke, at [djm428@psu.edu](mailto:djm428@psu.edu).

Follow this link to register for this webinar: [https://msudafvm.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1F8ieGwkND7GbAi](https://msudafvm.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1F8ieGwkND7GbAi)

## Southern Rural Development Center Repository: Readership Snapshot Update

- *Breaking Barriers: Examining Heirs' Property Legislation and Access to USDA Programs*, added this summer, in partnership with the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research Center at Alcorn State University **had 15 full-text downloads**.
- *Food Assistance* had one article, *Food Availability and Food Deserts in the Nonmetropolitan South* **downloaded 16 times**.
- The most downloaded publications were from the *Heirs' Property* section of the repository with **48 full-text downloads**. The most downloaded article from this section was *How Much Heirs' Property is There? Using LightBox Data to Estimate Heirs' Property Extent in the U.S.* with **23 downloads**.

These publications and others are hosted by the Southern Rural Development Center on Mississippi State University's platform, Scholars Junction, which allows users to explore published content from the Center and its partners. To access these topic areas and others, visit the SRDC archival system at <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/srdc/>

## Regional Spotlight

### The Power of Partnership Through Grant Writing Training (University of Arkansas)

UADA-Extension's EDA University Center for Rural Resilience and Workforce Development provides training and technical assistance, applied research, and information sharing through Arkansas' eight planning and economic development district with a focus on rural, Hispanic, and Marshallese communities state-wide.

On September 4th, 60 participants from two states and more than 6 counties attended a 'Capacity Building Through Grant Writing' workshop in Sebastian County. Hunter P. Goodman and Brandon L. Mathews from Community, Professional, and Economic Development led the training as part of Extension's EDA University Center for Rural Resilience and Workforce Development. Since January 2024, UADA-Extension has shared 17 workshops supporting 505 Arkansans. The curriculum was built through collaboration and thanks to the Southern Rural Development Center and colleagues across the South.

Participants learned how to develop SMART Goals, construct a Logic Model, and collaborate using Asset-Based Community Development best practices to forge strong partnerships and write better grant proposals. To quote one attendee, "...I have discovered that I can become a great resource and contribution in my community with the skills, resources, and networking gained through this program and its workshop. So, thank you!"

Special thanks to Amanda Spradlin from Sebastian County Extension office and Western Arkansas Community Foundation for their planning efforts and community outreach. The workshop was the first between EDA's two newest University Centers in Arkansas—one at UADA-Extension and one at the University of Arkansas, Fort Smith – Center for Economic Development—with more to come. Other partners included Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, and EDA's Austin Region Office.



Pictured: Attendees listen to Dr. Hunter P. Goodman at 'Capacity Building Through Grant Writing' workshop held at the Bakery District in Fort Smith, AR on September 4.

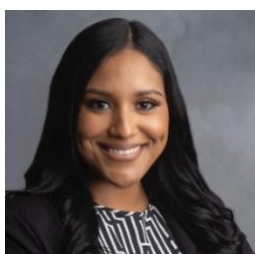
## Staff Spotlight

### Southern University Agricultural Research Center: Dr. Ashlyn Harrison, Assistant Specialist for Mental Health & Jasmin Matthews, Assistant Public Health Specialist



Dr. Ashlyn Harrison, a Licensed Professional Counselor and educator with over a decade of experience, currently serves as the Assistant Specialist for Mental Health at Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Her work focuses on enhancing mental health services for students, faculty, and rural communities across Louisiana. Through programs aimed at reducing mental health stigma, expanding access to care, and supporting underserved populations, she has been able to contribute to a healthier and more resilient population. Dr. Harrison's efforts directly address the mental health disparities in the region, ensuring that resources and services are available to those who need them most. Dr. Harrison

can be reached by email at [ashlyn\\_harrison@suagcenter.com](mailto:ashlyn_harrison@suagcenter.com).



Jasmin Mathews, Assistant Public Health Specialist for the Southern University Agricultural Center, is dedicated to advancing equity across Louisiana through comprehensive health programming. Her work focuses on promoting healthy living, enhancing immunization education, raising awareness about tobacco use, and expanding access to teletherapy services. By addressing these critical areas, Jasmine aims to empower underserved communities, reduce health disparities, and foster a culture of wellness throughout the state. The importance of her role lies not only in improving individual health outcomes but also in contributing to the overall health infrastructure, ensuring that all residents can lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. Ms. Mathews can be reached by email at [jasmin\\_plowe@suagcenter.com](mailto:jasmin_plowe@suagcenter.com).

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Recognizing a need in Louisiana's most vulnerable and rural communities; Dr. Ashlyn Harrison and Mrs. Jasmin Mathews developed a program that directly addresses the negative stigma of mental health services.

The new counseling program, *Rural Connections to Rural Resilience*, offers free telehealth mental health services to rural communities across Louisiana.

Running from October 2024 to July 2025, the program provides eight counseling sessions for participants and is supported by licensed mental health professionals. The initiative targets up to 45 individuals per two-month cycle and is designed to bridge the gap in mental health services in rural areas, where access is often limited.

By providing critical support, the program aims to reduce mental health stigma, address high rates of depression and anxiety, and foster long-term resilience in these underserved communities.

THE SU AG CENTER PRESENTS

# RURAL CONNECTIONS FOR RURAL RESILIENCE

**Free** VIRTUAL COUNSELING SERVICES via Teletherapy

Provided by Licensed Counselors For Up to 8 Sessions

**STARTING OCTOBER 1, 2024**

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT:

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## Conferences, Workshops, Trainings

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### 2024 Professional Agricultural Workers Conference (PAWC)

**In-Person: November 17-19, 2024, Renaissance Montgomery Hotel and Spa, Montgomery, Alabama**

*“Global Stewardship: Addressing Climate and Sustainability Challenges for Food Security”*

[LEARN MORE AND REGISTER](#)

### 2025 Southern Rural Sociological Association (SRSA) Conference

**In-Person: February 2-3, 2025, The Westin Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas, Irving, Texas**

[LEARN MORE AND REGISTER](#)

### 2025 Extension Leadership Conference (ELC)

**In-Person: February 19-20, 2025, Savannah, Georgia**

Save the date and location of the 2025 ELC Conference. More details to come.

### 2025 Public Issues Leadership Development Conference (PILD)

**In-Person: April 7-8, 2025, Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, Virginia**

Save the date and the location of the 2025 PILD Conference. More details to come.

### 2025 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) Conference

**In-Person: June 9-12, 2025, Charleston, West Virginia**

Join the West Virginia State University Extension Service and West Virginia Extension Service in Charleston for the 2025 NACDEP Conference: Country Roads, Connecting the Farm to the Country. More details to come.

### 2025 Community Development Society (CDS) Conference

**In-Person: July 6-9, 2025, Geneva, New York**

The conference theme is *Innovative Pathways to Thriving Communities: People, Technology, and Place-based Collaboration*.

[LEARN MORE AND SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT](#)

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