SRDC Plan of Work 2025

Core Capacity Building Initiatives

- Continue to support the work of the Southern Region Program Leadership Network's (PLN) committees and annual joint meeting
- Advance integration of community development research into community development Extension training
- Explore opportunities for collaboration across types of Land-Grant institutions
    - Identify program topics that benefit all components of the institutional systems (and explore what capacity and specialization is needed)
    - Explore opportunities for collaborative efforts among research and Extension partners
- Integrate research and Extension efforts
    - Train for joint research and Extension grantsmanship and project management
    - Define intentional linkages between research and Extension – document both research outputs and Extension impacts (Southern Region Community Resource Development Indicators)
    - Engage research faculty and Extension faculty/specialists to partner as Co-PIs
    - Maintain website with programmatic resources and other info
- Advance leadership
    - Continue with the SRDC Fellow position with the next fellow positioned to be project specific
    - Develop a plan to reinstate the SRDC Assistant Director position

Developing Pathways to Resilient Communities

- Local and Regional Food Systems
    - Support SERA 47 Local and Regional Food Systems Multistate Project
    - Support annual virtual and face-to-face meetings
    - Monitor future opportunities for related issues

- Heirs' Property
    - Support SERA 49 Heirs' Property Multistate Project
    - Expand heirs' ethics research as special area of contribution, building on existing collaborations
    - Finalize AFRI-funded heirs' property project
    - Complete train-the-trainer workshop agreements
    - Shift leadership and coordination on training efforts to SERA 49 and other partnerships

- Digital Skills
    - Facilitate work of the National Digital Education Extension Team and the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) Program Action Team
    - Advance and amplify research on rural policy, cooperative efforts, and affordability issues
    - Finalize AFRI project on digital skills

- Coming Together to Build Relationships
    - Expand dialogue to change model to other topical areas
    - Support national team and working groups
    - Evaluate impacts and lessons learned from this area of work

- Supporting Healthy Communities Across the Life Course
    - Build research and Extension capacity around the community development aspects of health systems for health across the life course
    - Support the NIA-funded Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging (review pilot proposals, mentorship for early career scholars, webinars)

Building Strategic Partnerships
- Delta Scholars/Delta Directions
    - Support the student research and leadership initiative with the MSU Honors College
    - Organize the Regional Forum with other partners
    - Explore expansion of the concept to focus on multiple southern regions (Delta, Blackbelt, Appalachia)

- Engage with other rural research and rural development initiatives to identify research and Extension opportunities

Mobilizing Resources around Emerging Issues and Opportunities
- Grantsmanship and Capacity Building
    - Complete technical assistance on agreement for the PROPEL initiative with the Delta Regional Authority (community partners in MS, LA, and KY)
    - Expand PROPEL model to help prepare community leaders to address other topics, such as adaption to population change and severe weather events
    - Research variability in rural development funding and initiatives

- Recreation Economy
    - Engage in partnership discussions concerning the Rural Development, NIFA, Forest Service MOU on outdoor recreation in forest gateway communities
    - Research and amplify issues faced by communities
    - Complete responsibilities on the Appalachian Regional Commission funded outdoor recreation leadership development program being developed in WV, KY, and NC

- Economic Resilience in the Face of Extreme Weather Events
    - Explore collaborative opportunities with multi-state projects
    - Identify southern indicators and explore opportunities to update
    - Ensure the community development perspective is considered
    - Research and extension training/curriculum concerning population change and planning
    - Convene organizations working on these issues to identify what is already being done and the gaps that need attention

SRDC Website: http://srdc.msstate.edu/

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