



Southern Rural Development Center

*Shaping  
Tomorrow  
Together*

2025 Annual Report





# Letter from the Director



“Shaping Tomorrow Together.” This is the title we chose for the annual report to draw attention to and celebrate the importance of collaboration in the mission and work of the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC). The phrase invokes images of people partnering across organizational, institutional, and territorial barriers to pursue new possibilities for development in rural America. Focusing attention on capacity building through collaborative research and Extension, we can work together with rural people and places to better meet their interests and needs in an ever-changing world.

I hope the content of this report helps readers to appreciate the breadth and depth of these collective efforts. As documented here, the SRDC and our numerous partners have continued and expanded our work together to help shape a more prosperous future. The shared expertise of the network, combined with support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and other partners, has enabled us to put the power of the Land-Grant System to work for rural development.

Pursuing a brighter future, we will need to continue to strengthen the core foundations and processes of research Extension as models of public service. SRDC staff look forward to working with the Board of Directors and Technical and Operational Advisory Committee, NIFA, partners in the Land-Grant System, and our collaborators with other colleges/universities, nonprofits, and foundations.

In Partnership and Collaboration,

*Find us on social media*



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Development Center



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@so\_dev\_center



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Special thanks to our host institution



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## ABOUT SRDC & CONTACT

### Mission

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 wellbeing of people and communities in the rural South.

### Background

The Southern Rural Development Center is one of four Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) coordinating rural development and Extension education programs cooperatively with Land-Grant Institutions regionally and nationally. The RRDCs are supported by the United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

#### Mailing & Physical Address

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

#### Websites



Southern Rural Development Center | [srdc.msstate.edu](http://srdc.msstate.edu) & Regional Rural Development Centers | [rrdc.info](http://rrdc.info)

Graphic Design | Carmen Kelly

Photo Credits | Adobe Stock, Pexels, Shutterstock, Freepik



# National Digital Education Extension Team and ECOP Broadband Access & Digital Skills Program Action Team

## Future Focused

The National Digital Education Extension Team & ECOP Broadband Access & Digital Skills Program Action Team gathered in Denver, Colorado for an energizing and forward-focused convening to identify the emerging digital and broadband needs shaping the future of Cooperative Extension. Hosted by the Extension Foundation, the event served as a catalyst for strategic planning and collaboration across key issue areas.

The NDEET Strategic Planning Team is excited to announce the identification of three priority areas for research and content development:

- Economic Development
- Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology
- Cybersecurity

## Projects:

### Update Web Page:

The NDEET team enhanced its online presence through the redesign of its web page. The updated site provides current information on Advancing Digital Access, Digital Skill Building, Digital Volunteering, Access and Availability, Adoption and Utilization, and Awareness.

### Bridging the Digital Divide:

13

Digital Literacy lessons  
are now available

### Top 3 classes taught:



Introduction to Word:  
141 Participants

401

Participants from  
six states

93%

Increase in change  
of knowledge



Computer Basics:  
75 Participants



Online Etiquette:  
42 Participants

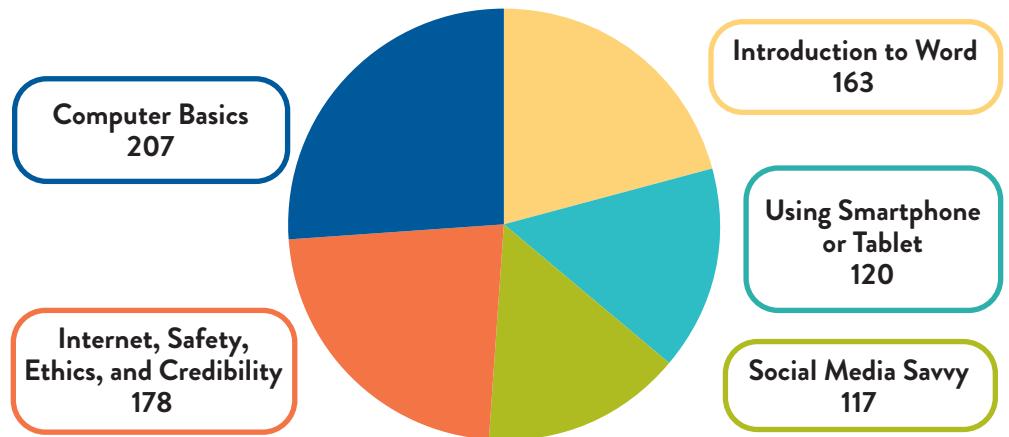


## Presentations:

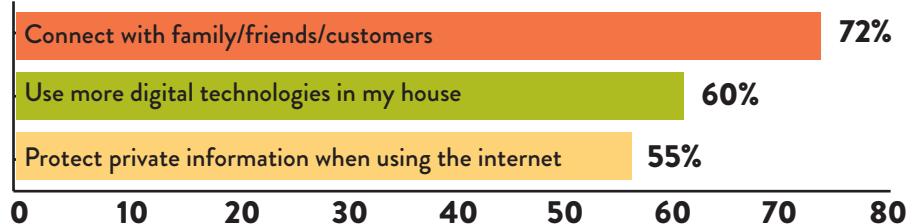
Six presentations delivered across three national forums.

## Digital Skills Overall:

Top Five Trainings Presented & Number of Participants:



## Top Three Ways Participants Plan to Use Their Newly Acquired Skills



# JANUARY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
				New Year's Day		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	Martin Luther King Jr. Day					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

# PROPEL Initiative

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA), a federal regional commission promoting economic development within an eight-state service region, is partnering with the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) and the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD) on this initiative.

PROPEL provides targeted support and resources to help communities increase capacity and alleviate challenges on issues such as public infrastructure and business development.

## Southern Region PROPEL Partner Institutions:

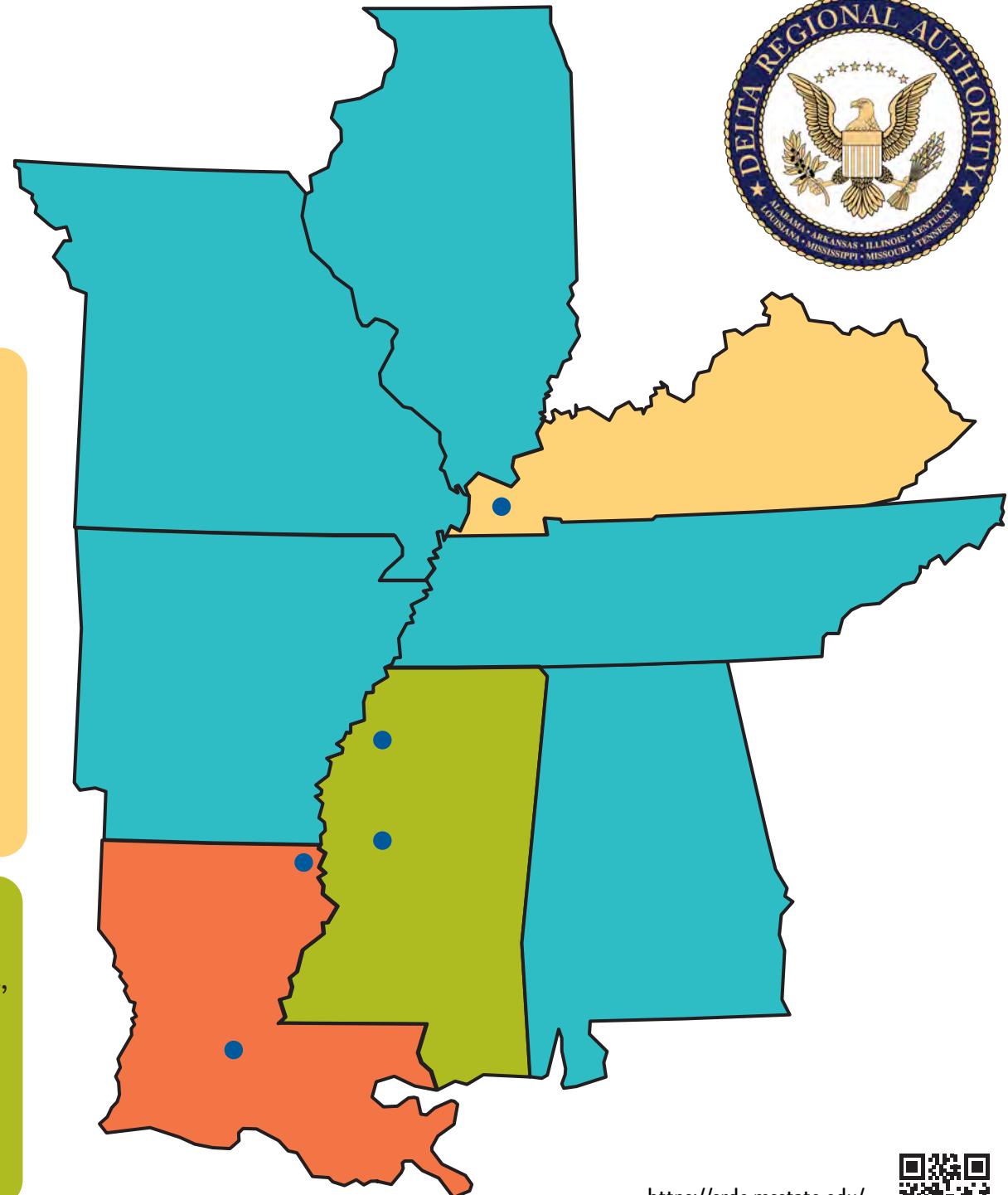
Blueprint Kentucky, University of Kentucky, Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment; LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service; Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center

## Southern Region Communities Involved:

- Ville Platte, LA
- Lake Providence, LA
- Marks, MS
- Holmes County, MS
- WAVE (West Kentucky Alliance for a Vibrant Economy)  
region includes: Fulton, Hickman, Ballard, and  
Carlisle (Eligible tracts) Counties

## Southern Region Activities:

- Fall 2025 Southern Region Meeting
  - Agenda highlights: Presentations on community successes, panel discussion on resources for communities, and community project plans
- Technical assistance with grant proposals
- Needs assessments through interviews, walking audits, and listening sessions
- Community-specific capacity-building activities



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



# FEBRUARY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Presidents' Day						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

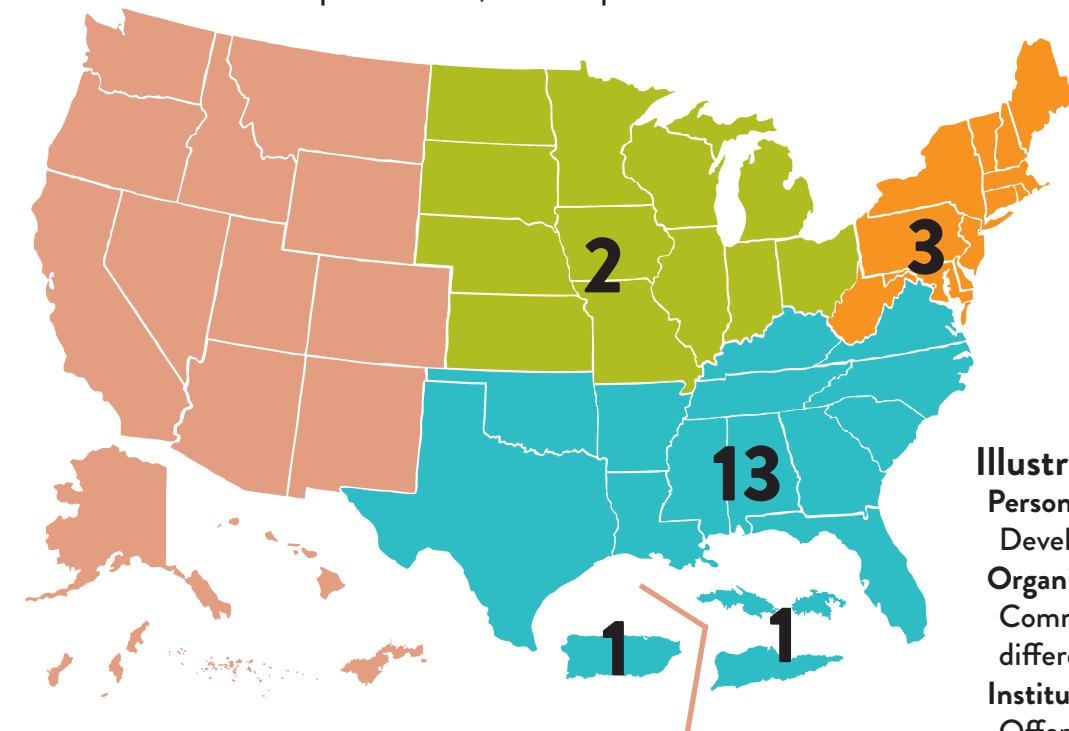
# 1890 and 1862 Research Collaborations

Purpose: Assess and pursue improvement of research collaborations between 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant Universities

## Methods:

### Survey of Research Administrative Leaders

- 1890 and 1862 institutions (13 states in the Southern region and 3 states in the Northeast and 2 in the North Central regions, and 1 university each in the territories Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands)
- N=39: 1890 respondents=19, 1862 respondents=20



### Research Interviews

- Open ended, discussion-oriented questions
- Conducted over Zoom and audio-recorded
- N=19: 1890 participants=9, 1862 participants=10
- 14 interviewees were connected to 1 other interviewee through collaborative projects
- 8 states represented

## Key Findings:

### REASONS FOR COLLABORATION

“No one in the world can solve all issues by himself or herself. No institution can solve all issues by itself. So, this is why we have to put our hands together and work in collaboration...” --Interviewee

### CHALLENGES TO COLLABORATION

“We are building the plane as we fly it.” --Interviewee

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURSUING COLLABORATION

“Know your history and know how it lives every day in your work.” --Interviewee

## Illustrative Recommendations from Researchers and Administrators:

### Personal/interpersonal Interaction

Develop soft skills, build relationships, and make time for the collaboration.

### Organizational Culture

Communicate openly, bring together partners with diverse expertise, and appreciate differences between organizations.

### Institutional Structures and Processes

Offer workshops and networking opportunities for convening around common topics, provide trainings on partnering on grants and contracts, and increase support for 1890 capacity.

## Takeaways and Next Steps:

Next steps for advancing collaboration should include discussion of what can be done...

- Within and between universities
- Across universities through the regional associations and funders (acknowledging other actors in complex systems)

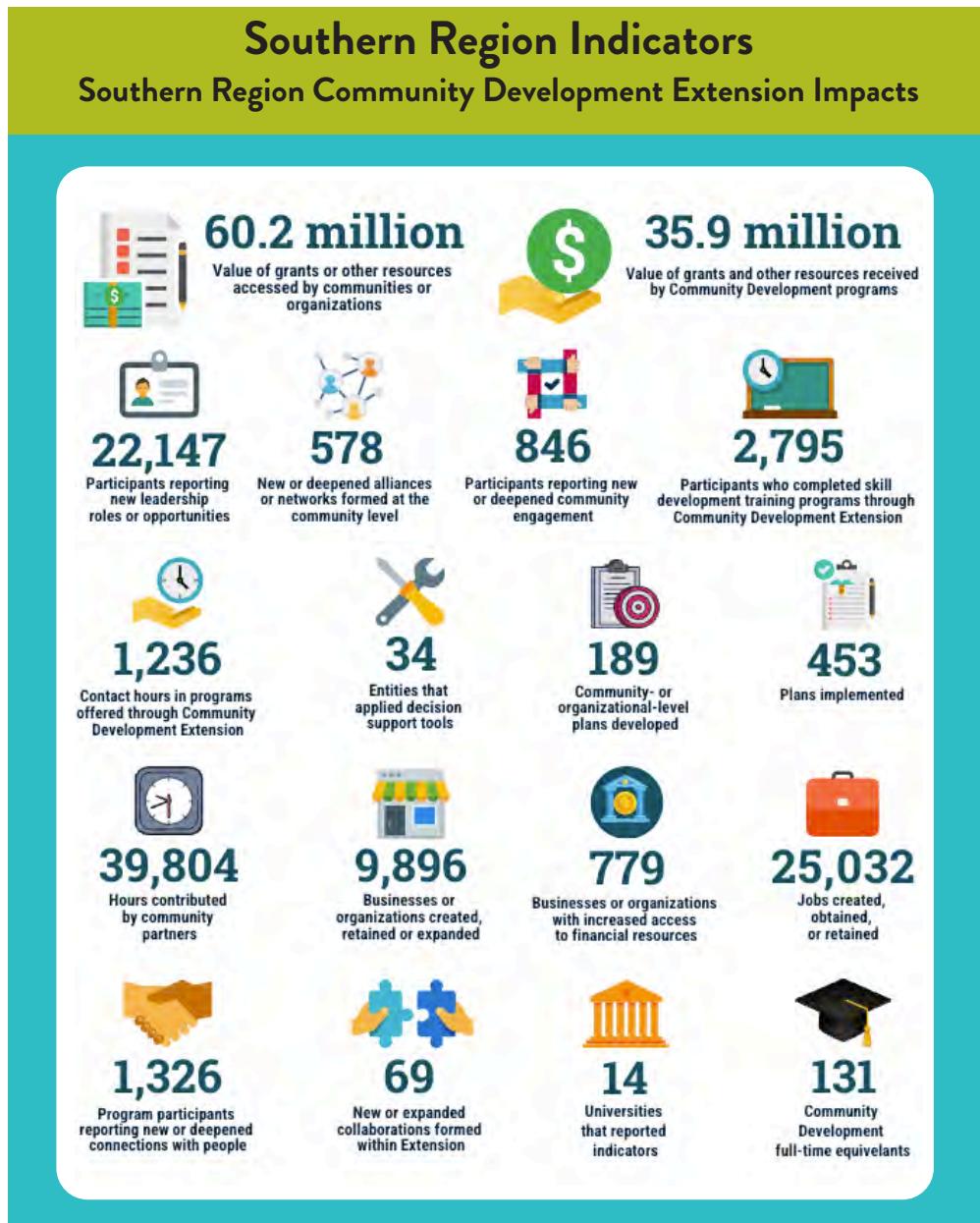


# MARCH 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Daylight Savings Begins						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
		Saint Patrick's Day				
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

# National Efforts to Implement Additional Impact Indicators

The Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDCs) are undertaking an effort to review, update, and expand the set of impact indicators used to capture Extension's Community, Resource, and Economic Development work at the national level. Beginning in 2025, 13 new indicators were added, bringing the total to 20 measurable impact areas. These indicators will strengthen the ability of Land-Grant Universities and Extension professionals to share compelling stories at the local, state, and national levels, highlighting the collective impact of their community and economic development efforts.



## Community Development

Through an interdisciplinary approach that integrates theory, practice, and application, Land-Grant Universities are advancing leadership development to address disaster recovery, legislative issues, and community strategic planning. This work strengthens community development by reducing the vulnerability of youth, families, and seniors, while enhancing overall resilience.



### Examples from:

Mississippi State University, North Carolina A&T University, University of Arkansas, University of Florida Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food, & Environment, University of Tennessee

## Community Health & Well-Being

Land-Grant Universities are addressing food system insecurity, rural mental health, and active living initiatives to improve quality of life across the lifespan.



### Examples from:

Kentucky State University, Florida A&M University Cooperative Extension, North Carolina State Cooperative Extension, University of Puerto Rico

## Entrepreneurship and Workforce Development

Land-Grant Universities are collaborating with national, state, and local partners to foster rural entrepreneurship, with a focus on strengthening and sustaining workforce development through expanded educational opportunities.



### Examples from:

Alabama A&M University, Clemson, Prairie View A&M University, South Carolina State University, West Virginia State University



# APRIL 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Easter Sunday						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

# Southern Extension Research Activity (SERA) 49

## Heirs' Property: Impacts at Family, Community, and Regional Levels

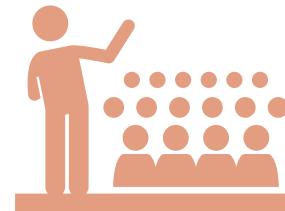
### Five Year Objectives:

- Increase multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations and networking efforts among Extension and research professionals addressing heirs' property issues across the Southern Region.
- Identify current and emerging issues specific to heirs' property in the Southern Region.
- Assess federal, state, and local government policies related to heirs' property, including variations in county tax office practices, state property tax policies, and legal and policy options at the federal level necessary to meet the needs of heirs' property owners.
- Support civil society organizations in serving the needs of the ultimate stakeholder, the owners of heirs' property.



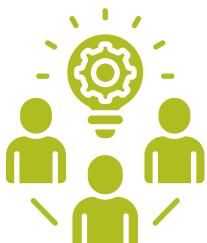
### Current Projects:

- Heirs' Property Network Analysis Report
- Understanding Heirs' Property at the Community Level Train-the-Trainer
- Advanced Train-the-Trainer: Heirs' Property Volunteer Navigator, Land Use and the 2018 Farm Bill, Land Valuation
- Heirs' Property Ethics



### Train-the-Trainer:

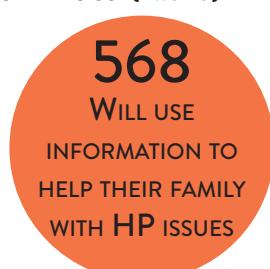
6 Workshops  
conducted in 2025



244 Extension/outreach  
professionals trained



35 States and D.C. sent  
team members to trainings



### Top five topic areas participants report the highest knowledge gained:

The importance of  
working with other  
family members and  
friends

How tax sales  
and partition sales  
can lead  
to land loss

Impacts  
of  
heirs' property

Preventing  
heirs' property  
when  
establishing  
a will

Why  
heirs' property  
exists



# MAY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mother's Day						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Memorial Day					

## Delta Scholars

The Delta Scholars Program (DSP) is an eight-month undergraduate leadership, community development, and public service initiative.

11 undergraduate students-leaders participated in the 2025 cohort.

Beginning in 2018, there have been 122 Delta Scholars from 37 institutions, including 41 from 9 different Land-Grant Universities



Delta Scholar activities include:

- Two-week summer session with community-university activities
- Delta Regional Forum
- Cultivating Leaders Fall Conference with professional development opportunities
- Capstone Project

The Delta Scholars Program is led by the Mississippi State University Shackouls Honors College in collaboration with other partners in the Delta Directions Consortium, including the Southern Rural Development Center, Brandeis University, University of Mississippi, Rutgers University, Harvard University, and the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi.



**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™**  
JUDY AND BOBBY SHACKOULS  
HONORS COLLEGE

The Delta Directions Consortium is an interdisciplinary network focused on creating positive social change in the multi-state region. Participants include individuals working with academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, and foundations.



<https://www.honors.msstate.edu/delta-scholars/> & <https://cfnm.org/programs/delta-directions/>

## Delta Regional Forum

The Delta Regional Forum is hosted by the Delta Directions Consortium and the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi (CFNM) at the Coahoma County Higher Education Center in Clarksdale, Mississippi. It engages community development practitioners and scholars working in the multistate Delta Region. Organized by CFNM, the Community First Research Center for Wellbeing and Creative Achievement (CREW) at the University of Mississippi, and the Southern Rural Development Center (housed at Mississippi State University), the event was held in Clarksdale, MS, in June 2025. There were 99 participants from 49 different organizations working across sectors.

The June 2025 forum:

- Provided opportunities for development practitioners to share their perspectives on topics ranging from agriculture to education
- Entailed presentations on successful community-university collaboration
- Featured capstone project proposal presentations from 11 Delta Scholars
- Introduced CFNM's Next Generation Leaders Program (sponsored by the Walton Family Foundation)
- Engaged participants through a networking and resources fair



 **DELTA  
DIRECTIONS**  
Health & Economic Renewal in the Mississippi Delta

 THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MISSISSIPPI

**CREW**  
Community First Research Center  
for Wellbeing and Creative Achievement



# JUNE 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Father's Day						
28	29	30				

# CREATE BRIDGES:

## Celebrating REtail, Accommodations, Tourism and Entertainment by Building Rural Innovations and Developing Growth Economies

The Southern Rural Development Center created a desk reference building from the CREATE BRIDGES curriculum

### Starting Retail And Tourism Focused Community Development

- Forming a steering committee
- Costs and funding
- Best practices

### Community Engagement

- Asset map
- Civic forum
- Economic Data Review
- Strategy development
- Community-focused initiatives

### Business Engagement

- Business retention and expansion (Retail and tourism focused)
- Business-focused initiatives

### Workforce Engagement

- Employee surveys
- Workforce-focused initiatives



### Links:

- CREATE BRIDGES curriculum  
<https://srdc.msstate.edu/programs/create-bridges/curriculum>
- Community Development Extension Library  
<https://cdextlibrary.org/resource-library/create-bridges/>

<https://srdc.msstate.edu/programs/create-bridges>



# Scholars Junction

In 2023, the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) partnered with Mississippi State University Libraries to launch a notable initiative, creating a digital home for SRDC's collection of resources through Scholars Junction. This collaboration opened the door for researchers, educators, and community leaders to access knowledge that drives rural development forward.

With these resources being available online, it is more than an archival system, it is a pathway to innovation and shared progress—fostering collaboration and empowering communities with the tools they need to thrive.

Fast forward to 2025, SRDC materials have been downloaded 2,455 times by individuals representing 244 institutions across 111 countries, demonstrating that rural development conversations are resonating on a global scale.



Map from SRDC's Scholars Junction dashboard, showing downloads for 2025.



<https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/srdc/>



# JULY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	1	2	3	4
						Independence Day
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

# Southern Region Planning Leadership Network



The mission of SR-PLN is to foster and strengthen Extension education programming throughout the southern region by promoting multistate cooperation, anticipating emerging program issues and needs, and implementing action processes to address them in a timely manner. The annual meeting convened in Atlanta, Georgia in August hosted 391 participants representing state program leaders from eight committees, the Association of Extension Administrators (AEA), and the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors (ASRED). Participants from each group are depicted here.



## 2025 Excellence in Extension Awards presented at the SR-PLN, AEA, and ASRED Annual Meeting



### Awards presented by the Association of Extension Administrators (AEA), Southern Region:

Kristen Woods, Food Systems Resource Specialist at Tuskegee University; Lindsey Lunsford, Assistant Professor of Food Systems Education and Policy at Tuskegee University; and Rukeia Draw, Program Leader for 4-H Youth Development, Prairie View A&M University.

### Awards presented by the Association of Southern Region Extension Directors (ASRED):

#### Excellence in Extension Southern Region Individual Winner:

Nelly Nelson, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences



#### Excellence in Extension Team Award Winner:

The Arkansas Discovery Farm Program (ARDF): Mike Daniels, Team Leader

Team Members: Kris Brye, Trent Roberts, Shannon Speir, Amanda McWhirt, Bronc Finch, Mike Daniels, Mike Hamilton, Jared Rushing, Julie Robinson, and Tomekia White

#### Excellence in Extension Team Award Runner Up:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's Promoting Early Education Quality (PEEQ) Online Training Program: Stephen Green, Team Leader

Team Members: Jodi Nerren, Amy Foster-Palmer, Beverly Reed, Gabriela Mayer, Shawna Manning, Treya Rice, and Brian Faries



# AUGUST 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Southern Region Program Leadership Network, Association of Extension Administrators & Association of Southern Region Extension Directors Joint Meeting						
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

# Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging (INRPHA)



The Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging facilitates innovative research on exposures and aging trends among different rural populations and regions in the United States.

University of Minnesota, Pennsylvania State University, Syracuse University, University of Colorado Boulder, and the Southern Rural Development Center at Mississippi State University

## INRPHA seeks to identify the following:

- Trends and disparities in the health and well-being of middle-aged to older rural Americans, along with the mechanisms driving them
- The resulting social, economic, political, and societal implications of population health and aging trends in rural areas
- Relationships between economic livelihood, economic health, and physical health among middle-aged and older people in rural America
- The effects of physical and social isolation on physical, mental, and cognitive health and aging in different rural areas
- Where and how exposures to environmental change and/or climate hazards have affected rural middle-aged and older populations
- Heterogeneity across rural people and places
- Places where rural older adults are thriving

## 2024 and 2025 Pilot Project Topics:

- Older adults' quality of life in rural communities
- Health and social context as determinants of end-of-life care
- Adult family relationships and cognitive health
- Living arrangements of older adults and impacts on physical health
- Challenges faced by adult offspring and parental cognitive health

## INRPHA activities include:



Funded by the National Institute on Aging (grants R24-AG065159 and 1R24-AG089064)

<https://sph.umn.edu/research/projects/inrpha/>



The Rural Population Research Network (RPRN) is a multi-state research committee project focused on the causes and consequences of demographic change in rural America.

RPRN's primary goal is the production of relevant and high-impact research that informs users about demographic trends and their implications for rural policy. RPRN by the numbers include:



**60**

Presentations, panels, and workshops over the past year



**122**

Peer-reviewed publications in 2024 and 2025

Over the past year, the SRDC partnered with RPRN leaders for:

- A webinar with 100+ attendees focused on rural research needs to inform Extension (hosted by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development).
- The 2025 annual meeting held in Park City, Utah with 28 attendees who shared research, participated in an impact statement writing workshop, and planned collaborative activities.



<https://rprn.org/>

# SEPTEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Labor Day					
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

# Community Development 101

This is a national community of practice comprised of community development specialists who have developed and delivered a train-the-practitioner workshop. The purpose of this program is to build an understanding of community development, why it is important, and how Extension professionals and other community development practitioners can utilize community development to support community resilience by providing core competency skill training.

**Training Team:** Hunter Goodman & Stacey McCullough (University of Arkansas), Patti Schmitt (Colorado State University), Kara Salazar (Purdue University), Dan Kahl (University of Kentucky), Rachael Carter (Mississippi State University), Charlie French (University of New Hampshire), David Kay (Cornell University), Sreedhar Upendram (University of Tennessee), Natriez Peterson (Prairie View A&M University), Jamie Rae Walker (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension), Grace Langford & John Green (Southern Rural Development Center).

## CD 101 Timeline of Events:



**February 2025**  
Received \$30,000 in funding to host pre-conference workshops



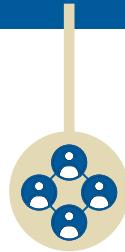
**June 2025**  
Conducted pre-conference workshop at the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals Annual Conference



**August - November 2025**  
Developed the training into a curriculum  
Delivered workshop to Virginia Cooperative Extension Central District staff



**March - May 2025**  
Revised workshop agenda and materials



**July 2025**  
Conducted pre-conference workshop at the Community Development Society Annual Conference



**December 2025**  
Curriculum coming soon to the Community Development Extension Library website

2025 activities were delivered in partnership with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)

<https://cdextlibrary.org/>



## Evaluation Findings:

**79%**

Of evaluation respondents for CD 101 Training indicated they plan to use what they learned.

“I have a better understanding of my role as a CED Extension Agent. I was able to get ideas that I plan to implement in my community with the other agents.”  
--Participant Feedback

“It was insightful and piqued my interest, particularly with asset-based community development.”  
--Participant Feedback

# OCTOBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Columbus Day					
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
					Halloween	

# Southern Extension Research Activity (SERA) 47: Local Foods

SERA 47 Local and Regional Food Systems Extension and Research is a multi-state group focused on building the capacity of the Research and Extension system to foster community collaboration and become a trusted source of high-impact education and research supporting all aspects of local foods.



## Tea & Coffee Hour Quarterly Webinars

### March:

Eleanor M. Green, Mississippi State University – Local Food and the Delta Scholars Program  
Tim Woods, University of Kentucky – Farmer's Markets and Community Engagement

### June:

Kenrett Jefferson-Moore, Obed Quiacoe, Jarvetta Bynum, Mecca Straughter, and Destiny West, North Carolina A&T State University – Value-Added Agricultural Products and Consumer Preferences

### September:

Joshua Stoll and Jessica Joyce, University of Maine – The Local Catch Network and the Local Seafood Summit  
Audrey King, Oklahoma State University – Rural Renewal Symposium  
Kaylee South, Virginia Tech – Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Summit East



Virtual annual meeting  
held  
December 9, 2025.

<https://sera-47.extension.org/>



Hosted a panel featuring Kenrett Y. Jefferson-Moore, Russ Garner, and John J. Green, at the 2025 Southern Rural Sociological Association and Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists Annual Meeting



Hosted a Working Group meeting and identified four new groups:

- Successful Models of Local Food Systems
- Marketing Local Food Systems
- Sustainable Agriculture in Local Food Systems
- Building Resilient Communities and Food Security

# NOVEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Daylight Savings Ends						
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
			Veterans Day			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
				Thanksgiving Day		
29	30					

# Bonnie Teater Community Development Early Career Achievement Award

For 30 years, Bonnie Teater provided valuable support to the Southern Rural Development Center as a staff member. She served as an inspiration through her dedication to 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 superior work of an individual who has made an important contribution to the Extension Community Development area. Below is this year's recipient.

## Hunter P. Goodman



The Southern Rural Development Center is proud to honor Dr. Hunter P. Goodman as the 2025 recipient of the Bonnie Teater Community Development Early Career Achievement Award. In August 2021, Dr. Goodman was named Assistant Professor of Community Workforce and Economic Development with the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture (UADA).

Dr. Goodman's work in Extension community development focuses on building trust-centered relationships and understanding opportunities for Extension to best collaborate and deliver services that advance community, economic, and development change within Arkansas communities. Her cross-sector partnerships are reflected in initiatives such as the Center for Resilience & Workforce Development, the Rural Health and Safety Education Extension Health Ambassador program, the BankOn Arkansas+ program, and Strengthening Rural Resilience: Agricultural Workforce Development in Risk Management.

On behalf of Dr. Hunter P. Goodman's nomination, Dr. Stacey McCullough, Assistant Vice President for Community, Professional & Economic Development, University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service stated, "Her work is innovative and impactful, and she embodies everything we look for in an outstanding community development professional and faculty member." Dr. Daniel Kahl, Associate Professor, Community and Leadership Development and Associate Director, Blueprint Kentucky, Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment, University of Kentucky describes Dr. Goodman as being "... a very bright 'rising star' in the community development field. She is having influence in the work and efforts of academics and practitioners across the U.S. and around the globe."

<https://srdc.msstate.edu/bonnie-teater-award>



## 2025 SRDC Support & Sponsorships

The Southern Rural Development Center operates as a hub for capacity building, and it relies on numerous partners to pursue its mission. In securing financial resources for this work, much of the support goes out to the people and organizations in the broader network doing research, Extension programs, and technical assistance.



In the past year, the SRDC provided...

- 22 Contracts with individuals, non-profits, and universities
- 17 Travel scholarships
- 9 Subawards with universities
- 4 Conference sponsorships

<https://srdc.msstate.edu>



# DECEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	Christmas Day	
					New Year's Eve	

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## 2025 SRDC Partners

Scan the QR code below or visit our  
webpage to view a full list of the SRDC  
partners and download the complete  
annual report:  
<https://srdc.msstate.edu/annual-reports>



## **2025 Southern Rural Development Center Partners**

### **Community Development 101**

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)  
Colorado State University  
Cornell University  
Mississippi State University  
Prairie View A&M University  
Purdue University  
Texas A&M University, AgriLife Extension  
University of Arkansas  
University of Kentucky  
University of New Hampshire  
University of Tennessee

### **Celebrating Retail, Accommodations, Tourism, and Entertainment by Building Rural Innovations and Developing Growth Economies (CREATE BRIDGES)**

Community Development Extension Library

### **Delta Scholars and Delta Regional Forum**

Brandeis University  
Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi  
Delta Directions Consortium  
Harvard University  
Food Law and Policy Center  
T. H. Chan School of Public Health  
Mississippi State University Shackouls Honors College  
Rutgers University  
University of Mississippi Community First Research Center for Wellbeing and Creative Achievement

### **National Digital Education Extension Team - Broadband Access & Digital Skills - ECOP Program Action Team**

National Digital Education Extension Team  
Extension Committee on Organization and Policy  
Extension Foundation  
Fort Valley State University - College of Agriculture, Family Sciences and Technology  
North Carolina State Extension  
Oregon State University – OSU Extension  
Penn State Extension  
Purdue University – College of Agriculture, Extension  
University of Idaho Extension – Digital Economy Program  
University of Missouri System – Division of Extension  
University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension  
Washington State University – Division of Government Studies and Services

## **Bridging the Digital Divide in Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Communities in the South**

Alabama A&M University Extension

Florida A&M University Extension

Fort Valley State University - College of Agriculture, Family Sciences and Technology

North Carolina State University – Agricultural Extension

Prairie View A&M University – Extension, Community and Economic Development

Purdue University

    Agricultural Economics Department

    Extension

Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center

## **Heirs Property**

Center for Heirs' Property

JPMorganChase

National Policy Research Center at Alcorn State University

Southern Extension Risk Management Education

USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station

Auburn University

    Alabama Cooperative Extension

    Department of Consumer and Design Sciences

    Department of Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology

Gregory Varner & Associates, P.C.

Lady Heirs Property, LLC

Mississippi State University Extension

New Mexico State University

    Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business

North Carolina State University

    College of Natural Resources

Tuskegee University

    Integrative Public Policy and Development

Vermont Law and Graduate School

    Center for Agriculture and Food Systems

10K Appraisers Foundation

## **SERA 49**

Auburn University

    Alabama Cooperative Extension

    Department of Consumer and Design Sciences

    Department of Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology

Federal Reserve Bank - Bank of Atlanta

Georgia State University – US Forest Service

Vermont Law and Graduate School

    Center for Agriculture and Food Systems

## **Interdisciplinary Network on Rural Population Health and Aging**

National Institute on Aging

### **Propel Initiative**

Delta Regional Authority

Blueprint Kentucky, University of Kentucky, Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service

Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center

WAVE Region, KY (Fulton, Hickman, Ballard, and Carlisle\* Counties)

City of Ville Platte, LA

City of Lake Providence, LA

North Central Planning and Development District, MS (Holmes County)

Quitman County Economic Tourism and Development, Inc., MS (City of Marks)

\*eligible tracts

### **Regional Rural Development Centers**

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Western Rural Development Center

### **Research Collaborations**

Association of Research Directors

AgInnovation South

### **Rural Population Research Network**

### **Southern Region Planning Research Network**

Association of Extension Administrators

Association of Southern Region Extension Directors

### **SERA 47 Local and Regional Food Systems Extension and Research**

Journal of Rural Social Sciences

Southern Rural Sociological Association

University of Maine

Virginia Tech

## **Other Partnering Organizations**

University of Mississippi Center for Populations Studies

Community Development Society

Federal Reserve Bank

Bank of Atlanta

Bank of St. Louis

Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund

Heartland Forward

Joint Council of Extension Professionals

LiKEN Knowledge

Mississippi State University Libraries

National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals

National Extension Climate Initiative

National Extension Outdoor Recreation Working Group

Purdue Center for Regional Development

Rural Coalition

Rural Sociological Society

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Economic Research Service

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

West Virginia University