



2026 Bonnie Teater

**Community Development
Lifetime Achievement
Award Recipient**

Dr. Alison F. Davis

University of Kentucky, Blueprint Kentucky

The Southern Rural Development Center is proud to honor Dr. Alison F. Davis as the 2026 recipient of the *Bonnie Teater Community Development Lifetime Achievement Award*. Dr. Davis is the first recipient of both the Early Career and Lifetime Achievement Awards, receiving the *Bonnie Teater Early Career Achievement Award* in 2011. Dr. Davis has served as Executive Director of Blueprint Kentucky and as a professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics, Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment at the University of Kentucky since 2010.

Dr. Davis' service in extension exemplifies her unwavering commitment to collaboration, community development, and entrepreneurship within the Kentucky community. Her contributions have extended to national leadership and program innovation in economic development, establishing a strong network in academia, federal and state government agencies, and local communities. Throughout her career, Dr. Davis has provided invaluable resources for extension professionals and rural Kentucky communities and has been actively involved in collaborative research and project-based initiatives such as Celebrating REtail, Accommodations, Tourism, and Entertainment by Building Rural Innovations and Developing Growth Economies (CREATE BRIDGES), Stronger Economies Together (SET), Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (REAP), AccelerateKY, Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program, SizeUp Kentucky, Kentucky Economic Recovery and Resilience Project (KERRP), Small Business Innovation Research, and Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). Notably, she spearheaded the expansion of the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) program, now known as Blueprint Kentucky, into a nationally recognized center for community and economic development by the American Ag Economics Association (AAEA).

Dr. Davis has secured over \$19 million in extramural funding since 2019 as a principal investigator (PI) or co-PI for more than 20 projects aimed at addressing challenges in housing, economic development, health, and sustainability within rural communities in Kentucky. These projects have been funded by government agencies, universities, and private entities. Dr. Davis' scholarly contributions consist of co-authored book chapters, peer-reviewed curricula, and published journal articles. Her work has been nationally recognized through numerous awards and honors for her exceptional achievements in extension programs, community development, and collaborative leadership.

In support of Dr. Davis' nomination, Dr. Stacey McCullough, Assistant Vice President for Community, Professional and Economic Development at University of Arkansas System-Division of Agriculture (UADA) Cooperative extension Service (CES) states that Dr. Davis continues to inspire her to "take risks and think creatively about achieving greater impact." At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Davis opened a restaurant business, which, according to Dr. Timothy Woods, extension Professor of Agricultural Economics at University of Kentucky, imparts her "empathy and awareness of real challenges small businesses face, positioning her as a credible figure when engaging with business, community, and academic audiences." Dr. Davis' success is attributed to her "sheer will, strength of character, resolve (and sense of humor)" as well as her ability to address "real life and societal challenges through a community and economic lens" according to R. Brent Elrod, Chief of Staff of U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Dr. Alison F. Davis' remarkable work in Community Development truly represents the essence of this prestigious award, making her a highly deserving recipient of the Southern Rural Development Center's 2026 *Bonnie Teater Community Development Lifetime Achievement Award*.