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SSRC Annual Report 2015

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Authors

Amber Stewart, M. Alan Burns, Devin Dedeaux, Kelly Ford, Adam Sullivan, and Elizabeth Tewolde



ANNUAL REPORT 2015



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY™

SOCIAL SCIENCE
RESEARCH CENTER

A RESEARCH ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE,
FORESTRY, AND VETERINARY MEDICINE

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

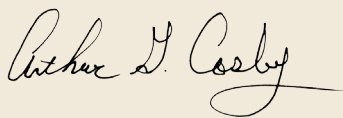
This year the Social Science Research Center completes its 65th year as a university-level research center at Mississippi State. The Center has a long and proud tradition as a location for meaningful social science research for scholars on our campus and beyond. Its origins can be traced to the Social Science Round Table that began meeting shortly after World War II. This body's goal was to promote research in sociology, history, economics, political science, and other related disciplines that participated in the forum. Its signal contribution was to advocate for the creation of a research organization to facilitate social science research on campus. From their vision and efforts grew the Social Science Research Center, which was formally recognized in 1950 as the first campus-wide research enterprise. The Center, from its origin, has emphasized interdisciplinary research and the application of social science knowledge to the most critical problems facing the state, region, and nation. The number of disciplines participating in the Center has grown to include psychology, business, social work, public administration, anthropology, communications, public relations, law, public health, and computer science. Because it is an interdisciplinary entity, it is not uncommon to find projects that blend the social sciences with agriculture, engineering, medicine, and education.

The Social Science Research Center has become a place for scientists from other institutions to come and conduct research and study while participating in the special environment of the Center. Collaboration across disciplines, across institutions, and even across nations is an essential feature of the Center's strategy of development. This strategy markedly expands the capacity of the Center's scientists to address the most difficult research questions. These collaborations invigorate and stimulate the intellectual dialogue in the Center and play a major role in shaping our organizational culture.

The Center has had a highly successful year that is reported only in part in this annual report. The level of productivity is reflected in numerous publications, reports, and presentations. Our work is sponsored by numerous federal agencies, a wide array of private foundations, and strong backing from state agencies in Mississippi. We are humbled and appreciative of their fine support and strive to earn the trust they have in us by making such substantial investments. Our students, both graduate and undergraduate, are among the most talented and successful on campus and play a key role in our research endeavors. Our support staff is recognized campus-wide for its talent and ability to facilitate the conduct of faculty and student research.

My colleagues and I are most appreciative of the fine support we receive from the leadership of Mississippi State University and are thankful for the opportunities that this fine institution has provided us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Arthur G. Cosby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Arthur" and last name "Cosby" clearly legible.

Arthur G. Cosby

William L. Giles Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Director Emeritus

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ABOUT THE SSRC

The Social Science Research Center (SSRC) was established at Mississippi State University (MSU) in 1950 to promote, enhance and facilitate social science research and related scholarly activities. The Center is organized with university-wide responsibilities and reports to the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and the Vice President for Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. The Center offers a superior research environment with an impressive array of research opportunities and options, state-of-the-art facilities, laboratories and support units that enhance and expand both the scope and quality of social science research. The SSRC fosters a rigorous and independent research environment to ensure objective, relevant and unbiased analyses.

The success of the SSRC relies primarily on the expertise, talents and entrepreneurial skills of its scientists. Individual scientists, or self-organized teams of researchers, provide the impetus and direction of funded research projects. They determine their research agendas and benefit from the SSRC facilities as they so choose. Research fellows and research associates, supported by an administrative staff and graduate and undergraduate research assistants, conduct both sponsored and unsponsored research projects. Funding for projects comes from a variety of sources including federal and state agencies, foundations, MSU units and other public and private entities. The SSRC research portfolio usually exceeds \$10 million a year.

Research issues that social scientists face are now so profoundly complex that their solutions demand the combined resources of multiple disciplines, multiple professions and multiple institutions. From its origin, the SSRC has had a strong interdisciplinary emphasis. Scientists from a number of disciplines, both on campus and off, come together in the SSRC to work on common research problems. It is the norm to find various combinations of such diverse disciplines as psychologists, business professors, sociologists, social workers, geographers, historians, economists and political scientists joining together to bring to bear their expertise on various research problems.

The range of interdisciplinary involvement goes beyond the social sciences. The Center often becomes a place where social scientists team with colleagues from agriculture, engineering and other disciplines. The SSRC also forms partnerships, strategic alliances and collaborative agreements with entities such as state agencies, off-campus national-level research organizations and professional groups. These various interdisciplinary research enterprises provide a steady stream of innovative projects and creative investigations.

MISSION STATEMENT

The SSRC conducts research to explore social, economic, political, human resource and social-environmental problems facing the state, nation and world. Scientists strive to present findings to a variety of constituents in a meaningful way to improve the health, safety and well-being of all people.

SSRC FACILITIES

The SSRC currently occupies 22,051 square feet in the Mississippi Technology Center, located in the Thad Cochran Research, Technology and Economic Development Park. The Mississippi Health Policy Research Center (MHPRC) changed the location of its office in October 2007 from the Paragon Centre in Ridgeland to the CAVS E building located in Canton. The MHPRC occupies 1,758 square feet. In addition to the core space at CAVS E, the SSRC has access to state-of-the-art conference and meeting facilities.

STATEMENT OF GOALS

The Social Science Research Center strives to be a center of excellence for social science research that serves the entire university community. This collective ambition is reflected in our institutional goals:

- To contribute to the University's graduate and undergraduate programs by involving students in research projects through assistantships and other work arrangements.
- To conduct rigorous, objective and unbiased research on relevant social, economic, political, human resource and social-environmental problems facing the state, nation and world.
- To provide a vehicle for unique social research and public service programs that do not fit more traditional academic structures.
- To provide a support system for the University to plan, develop, secure funding for and conduct social research on problems of interest to the scientific community and to consumers of research findings.
- To provide a mechanism whereby existing social science research capabilities in the University can be matched with funding sources.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organizational structure of the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) is purposely flat, with several internal research units, normally led by coordinators, reporting to the Director. Project directors operate with a great deal of autonomy and take full responsibility for the conduct of their projects.

Over the years, the SSRC has developed strong working relationships with faculty members and administrators in the College of Arts & Sciences, the Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station, the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine, the College of Business and the College of Education. In addition, it has established strong linkages with outside funding sources, including federal and state agencies, research entities and foundations.

The research faculty members in the SSRC are the driving force for the Center's activities. Together, they define the Center's goals, develop research agendas, prepare and submit proposals and conduct research. The SSRC maintains a small staff of full-time research faculty to support ongoing research activities. These individuals are normally affiliated with an academic department. Other faculty members hold joint appointments on a continual basis between academic departments and the SSRC. A third category of faculty members works in the Center on a periodic basis, depending upon funding of a particular grant or contract, or is supported via summer appointments while developing research proposals. In order to facilitate the efforts of the research faculty, the SSRC seeks to maintain collegial, cooperative relationships with academic departments and other campus entities.

The Center maintains a core staff of experts to assist in the financial and personnel aspects of preparing, submitting and administering research grants and contracts, as well as individuals who manage specific Center programs, such as the Mississippi Alcohol Safety Education Program (MASEP). Research associates and graduate and undergraduate assistants support research and administrative activities. In addition, the Center employs many individuals on an intermittent basis to serve the needs of the individual projects.

The continued success of the SSRC is clearly dependent upon the personnel who participate in its activities. Attracting bright, capable, energetic and entrepreneurial individuals and then encouraging their continued intellectual and professional growth is a key element in the SSRC organizational philosophy. By keeping bureaucratic requirements to a minimum, the SSRC seeks to create an environment that fosters, facilitates and enables innovative and creative research efforts.



“THE SSRC SEEKS TO CREATE A RESEARCH CULTURE THAT FOSTERS, FACILITATES AND ENABLES INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE RESEARCH EFFORTS.”



PUBLICATIONS

Broughan, G.T., Tidwell, D.K., Cross, G.W., and Briley, C.A. (2014). Examining the influence of nutritional behaviors, knowledge and attitudes on Body Mass Index of Adults in North Mississippi. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 114(9), A84.

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Buffington, A., & Walker, B. (2015). Following the Data: 2015 Final Report. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Social Science Research Center, MSU.

Buffington, A., Walker, B. H., Bell, L., McCown, J., Richards, A., Barr, S. G., Zhou, X. & Southward, L. H. (2015, March). Present and Counting: A Look at Chronic Absenteeism in Mississippi Public Schools. Publication developed for the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Available at: <http://kidscount.ssrc.msstate.edu/>

Cossman, R.E., Cossman, J.S., & Mason, P.B. "Demographic Attributes of Mississippi Nursing Students and Family Influences." *Emerging Techniques in Applied Demography*. Vol.4. Ed. Nazrul Hoque and Lloyd Potter. Springer, 2015. 379-387. Print.

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Echebiri, N., McDoom, M., Aalto, M., Fauntleroy, J., Nagappan, N., Barnabei, V. (2015). Prophylactic use of Negative Pressure Wound Therapy after Cesarean Delivery. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*. 2015; 125 (2): 299-307.

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Eterno, L., Licciardello, O., Cosby, A.G., & Rosas Gutierrez, M.A. (2014, April). Perceptions of Social Discrimination and Residentail Segregation between North African Immigrants in Sicily and Black Citizens in Mississippi. *Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences Journal*. Volume 127, 225-229.

Hood, K. B., Robertson, A. A., & Baird-Thomas, C., (Forthcoming). Implementing Solutions to Barriers to On-site HIV Testing in Substance Abuse Treatment: A Tale of Three Facilities. *Evaluation and Program Planning*.

McDoom, M. (2014, March). Rural Hospital Viability in Mississippi: Challenges and Opportunities for Service Delivery. White Paper Brief commissioned by the Mississippi Healthcare Solutions Institute/ Mississippi Economic Council.

McDoom, M., Bokhour, B., Sullivan, M., & Drainoni, M. How older Black women perceive the effects of stigma and social support on engagement in HIV care. *AIDS Patient Care & STDS*. 2014 E-publication available ahead of print. Doi:10.1089/apc.2014.0184.

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McDoom, M., & Brewster, G. (2015, April). Funding Mechanisms for Early Researchers. *Gerontology News*, Gerontological Society of America.

McDoom, M., Koppelman, E., & Drainoni, M. (2014). Barriers to accessible health care for Medicaid eligible people with disabilities: A Comparative Analysis. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*. 2014:25 (3): 154-63.

McKee, C., Neaves, T., Burns, A., Farrell, B., Falls, A., Singletary, K., Nguyen, J., & Ginn, A. (2014). Mississippi Traffic Safety Data book. Released during the Safety Training and Recognition Symposium (STARS) conference in Olive Branch Mississippi, September 23-26.

McKee, C., Southward, L., Baird-Thomas, C., Walker, B., McCown, J., Buffington, A., Bell, L., Campbell, R., Blalock, L., Bryan, J., Long, B., & Rutland, S. (2014). Project Fit America Program Evaluation Executive Summary Booklet.

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Neaves, T. T., Mann, S.C., Myers, L. B. & Cosby, A.G. (2014, July). Assessing Reverse 911®: A Case Study of the 2007 San Diego Wildfires. *Journal of Emergency Management*. 12(4), 315-25.

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Parker, J., & Cross, G. (2015). Be Smart, Be Active, Be A Leader: A Health Science Education Curriculum and Instructional Materials for Early Childhood Classrooms in Mississippi. *Journal of the Mississippi Academy of Sciences*, 60(1), 146.

Parrish, D.R., Morgan, D., & Suddoth, D. (2015, February). 2014 Mississippi Child Restraint Survey. Publication developed for the Mississippi Governor's Office of Highway Safety, Division of Public Safety Planning, Mississippi Department of Public Safety. Available online at <http://psdl.dps.ms.gov/>

Parrish, D.R., Morgan, D., & Suddoth, D. (2015, February). 2014 Seat Belt and Motorcycle Helmet Survey. Publication developed for the Mississippi Governor's Office of Highway Safety, Division of Public Safety Planning, Mississippi Department of Public Safety. Available online at <http://psdl.dps.ms.gov/>

PUBLICATIONS

Ragsdale, K., & Cross, G.W. (Under Revision). Can Children's Museums Deliver Effective Health Outreach? Evaluating HealthWorks! Be A Food Groupie Program for Elementary Students. *Journal of Health Disparities Research & Practice*.

Ragsdale, K., Harper, S. K., & Crawford, C. (2014, August). Midtown Teen Wellness Clinic: Outcomes Evaluation: 2014 Final Report. Women's Foundation of Mississippi. Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University.

Ragsdale, K., Harper, S.K., Kathuria, S., Bardwell, J.H., & Penick, C.B. (Under Review). Social Media to Enhance Sexual Health Education for Youth: FactNotFiction's (Re) Design and Launch. *Case Studies in Strategic Communication*.

Sinclair, H.C., Felmlee, D., Sprecher, S., & Wright, B.L. (2015). Don't Tell Me Who I Can't Love: A Multimethod Investigation of Social Network and Reactance Effects on Romantic Relationships. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 78(1), 77-99.

Southward, L.H., Walker, B., McCown, J., Buffington, A., & McKee, C. (2015, February). 2015 KIDS COUNT Fact Book. Annual Data Book Sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Available at Mississippi KIDS COUNT website:<http://www.KIDSCOUNT.ssrc.msstate.edu>

Southward, L. H., Walker, B. H., McCown, J., Blalock, L., Bryan, J., & Xhou, X. (2015). 2015 Philanthropic Giving in Mississippi. Report developed by the Social Science Research Center for the Mississippi Association of Grantmakers (MAG). Available at msgrantmakers.com

Southward, L.H., Walker, B. H., McCown, J. S., Hanna, H., Patev, A., McMillen, R., & McKee, C. (2015, June). Health insurance knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of Mississippi residents. Final report submitted to the Center for Mississippi Health Policy.

Walker, B.H., McCown, J.S., Bowser, D., Patev, A.J., Raede, F.S., Razavi, M., Dzielak, D., & Southward, L.H. (2015). An Assessment of Emergency Department Use Among Mississippi's Medicaid Population. *Journal of the Mississippi State Medical Association*, 56(5): 120-124.

Wilson, K.M., Torok, M., McMillen, R., Tanski, S., Klein, J.D., & Winickoff, J.P. (2014). Tobacco smoke incursions in multi-unit housing. *American Journal of Public Health*, 104, 1445-1453, 10.2105/AJPH.2014.301878. <<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2014.301878>>

Winickoff, J.P., McMillen, R.C., Tanski, S., Wilson, K., Gottlieb, M., & Crane, R. (2015). Public Support for Raising the Age of Sale for Tobacco from 18 to 21: A Representative National Survey. *Tobacco Control*. doi:10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2014-052126.

Dr. Ronald E. Cossman, Director of the Mississippi Center for Health Workforce, unveiled a new video that explains "How We Overstate Access to Primary Care in Mississippi." The video points out that we should count physician practices, not individual physicians, when assessing access. The revised method of measuring access to primary care has health access implications for the entire country. The video can be found at the bottom of the MCHW webpage at: http://nemsahc.msstate.edu/?page_id=1577

THE EMPOWR PROGRAM

The Empowering Mentors to Promote Women's Retention Program (EMPOWR) seeks to increase the social integration, engagement, and ultimately, retention of nontraditional female students attending East Mississippi Community College's Golden Triangle Campus through a unique peer mentoring program. Now in its second year, EMPOWR is sponsored by the Women's Foundation of Mississippi.

Researchers at the SSRC developed the concept following the completion of their 2013 study, also commissioned by the Women's Foundation, in which focus groups were conducted on six Mississippi community college campuses to examine the challenges and barriers that women students face in achieving their community college goals. From these discussions, it became evident that female students, and in particular, those who are juggling family commitments and outside employment often need an avenue to be heard by their peers as well as community college administrators.

Last year, the EMPOWR pilot study was conducted in partnership with administrators at the East Mississippi Community College Golden Triangle Campus. Anne Buffington and Heather Hanna served as Co-Principal Investigators of EMPOWR which included a control group to measure the gains that participating students had over their peers who were not a part of the program. EMPOWR was augmented by interactive speaker sessions where students learned more about available student services, career planning, financial aid, health and wellness, and relationship management. Additionally, student comments regarding needed school supports were confidentially conveyed to school administration to create a policy-related organizational feedback loop.

Participants and control group members were recruited by EMCC through their drop guard system that alerts the college of students who may need extra help and attention.

Mentors and mentees were matched together, and all of the mentors went through mentor training. The program started with a kickoff event that allowed for mentors and mentees to meet each other for the first time. After the kickoff, program participants agreed to spend at least three hours per month together in one-on-one conversations. One of the surprises of the EMPOWR program was the success of the monthly interactive sessions. The five sessions, held on the EMCC Golden Triangle campus, were also avenues for mentors and mentees to strengthen their relationships with one another while being informed on topics of interest. The informal gatherings offered participants a place to interact with each other in a non-judgmental environment. Year One concluded with a celebration dinner in May sponsored by the Women's Foundation of Mississippi and the CREATE Foundation.

Year Two includes an expansion of the program from a class of 24 (12 mentees/12 mentors) to a class of 40. The plan is mostly the same, but it comes with a deeper understanding of the difference EMPOWR can make in the lives of the women who are part of it. Anne Buffington, Principal Investigator, sums up its impact.

“When we look at the data collected last year, we see that participants did make significant strides over their control group peers in reporting greater satisfaction with overall social life on campus, interaction with other students that impacted their intellectual and personal growth, attitudes, and values, but their voices confirm that EMPOWR was valuable to both mentors and mentees in addressing the issues they face on a daily basis. We are hopeful that what we are learning at EMCC can be replicated across the community college landscape to create lasting opportunities for this population of students.”

by Devin Dedeaux

SURVEYS

Mississippi State University Brand Recognition Survey – Mississippi State University Office of Public Affairs

Family Nutrition Program (SNAP-Ed) Telephone Needs Assessment Survey – Mississippi Department of Human Services & Economic Assistance

Tara Wildlife Satisfaction Survey – Tara Wildlife

2014 National Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control – American Academy of Pediatrics

2014 Mississippi Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control – Mississippi State Department of Health

Evacuation-Based Use of Twitter by Coastal Residents during Superstorm Sandy – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Employee Survey – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

2014 Meter/ Irrigation Survey – Delta Sustainable Water Resources Task Force

2015 Mississippi Vocational Rehabilitation Client Survey – Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services

Mississippi Health Insurance Survey (Statewide) – Center for Mississippi Health Policy

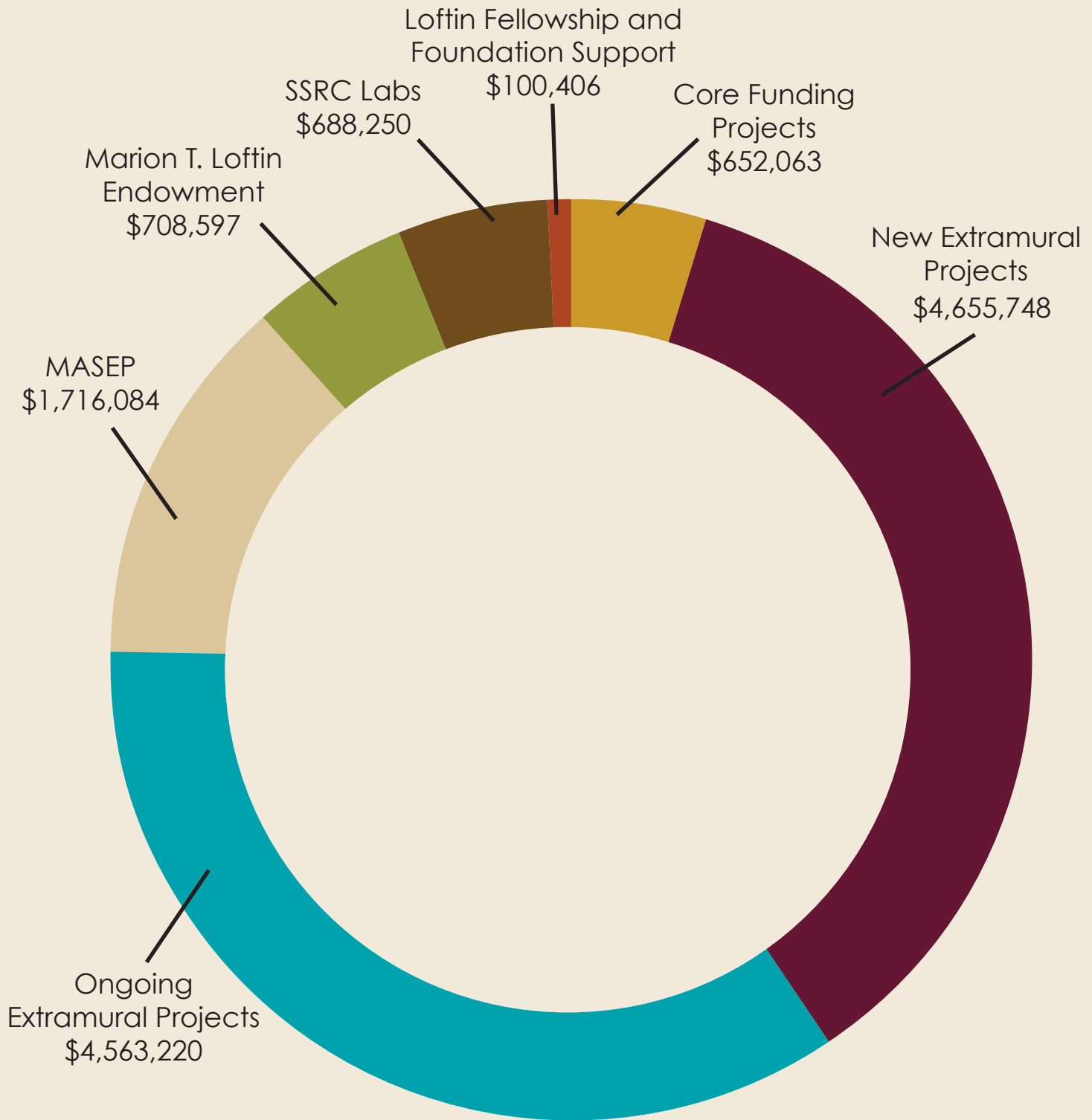
Mississippi Health Insurance Survey (Statewide by Health Districts) – Center for Mississippi Health Policy

Exercise and Health in Rural Southeast Missouri – Prevention Research Center at Washington University in St. Louis

Food Animal Services Survey – Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine

Mississippi Race Relations Survey – W.K. Kellogg Foundation

GRANTS & CONTRACTS



TOTAL FUNDING: \$13,084,368

GRANTS & CONTRACTS

NEW:

Baird-Thomas, C. (2015, March). "Evaluation of the Fatherhood Initiative," Mississippi Department of Human Services.

Buffington, A. (2014, July). "KIDS COUNT Education and Health Policy Grant," Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Buffington, A. & Hanna, H. (2014, October). "Empowering Mentors to Promote Women's Retention (EMPOWR)," The Women's Foundation of Mississippi.

Cross, G. (2014, September). "Partnerships to Promote Healthy Lifestyles for Children and Communities, Year 4," National Institutes of Health, SEPA.

Cross, G. (2014, October). "DUI Electronic Citation/Tracking System," Mississippi Office of Highway Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Cross, G. (2014, October). "eCite Maintenance and Daily Activity Reporting System," Mississippi Office of Highway Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Gardner, S. (2014, November). "Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI)," Mississippi Attorney General's Office.

Gardner, S. (2015, March). "2014 DYS Report," Mississippi Department of Human Services.

Hanna, H. & Rico, G. (2014, August). "Assessing FWS Employee Attitudes and Beliefs Toward the Strategic Habitat Conservation Business Model," United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Haynes, S., May, D., & Burns, M.A. (2014, October). "Thinking About Corrections," National Institute of Corrections.

Haynes, S. & Ragsdale, K. (2014, December). "Prison Health Research Group: Mental and Physical Health Among Incarcerated Women," Mississippi State University Office of Research & Economic Development.

McMillen, R. (2014, July). "Richmond Center of Excellence Data Sets," American Academy of Pediatrics, Flight Attendant Medical Research Center.

McMillen, R. (2014, July). "Surveillance and Education Services for the Mississippi Tobacco Control Program," Mississippi State Department of Health.

Millea, M. & Ragsdale, K. (2014, December). "Women Empowering Women (WEW): Equipping Rural Women with Entrepreneurship Skills and Supporting Education of the Girl Child," Mississippi State University International Institute.

Mohanty, S. (2015, June). "Event Anomaly Detection in High-Velocity Streaming Data," Distributed Analytics & Security Institute (DASI – MSU), Pacific Northwest National Laboratory.

Parrish, D. (2014, October). "Seat Belt, Motorcycle Helmet, and Child Restraint Observational Survey, Year 22," Mississippi Governor's Office of Highway Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Robertson, A. (2014, July). "Evaluation Services for Mississippi Delta Heart Disease," Mississippi State Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control.

Robertson, A. (2014, July). "Mississippi TRIALS Research Center," National Institute on Drug Abuse.

GRANTS & CONTRACTS

Sinclair, C., Goldberg, R., Wu, S., & Miller, M. (2014, September). "Balancing Connectedness and Self Protection Goals," Center for Open Science.

Sinclair, C. & Goldberg, R. (2014, November). "Balancing Connectedness and Self-Protection Goals in Close Relationships: A Levels-of-Processing Perspective on Risk Regulation," Center for Open Science.

Southward, L. (2014, July). "Pre-K Collaborative Pilot Study," Center for Mississippi Health Policy.

Southward, L. (2014, September). "2014 Mississippi Health Insurance Survey," Center for Mississippi Health Policy.

Southward, L. (2014, December). "Mississippi KIDS COUNT," Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Valentine, N. (2014, July). "2013-2014 Mississippi Youth Tobacco Data Survey," Mississippi State Department of Health.

Walker, B. (2014 December). "Mississippi School Health Council Technical Assistance," Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi.

ONGOING:

Baird-Thomas, C. (2013, September). "Affordable Care Act Implementation Project Evaluation, Year 2," Mississippi Health Advocacy Program.

Cosby, A. (2013, July). "MAFES/Social Media Tracking and Analysis System," MAFES.

Cross, G. (2013, October). "Mississippi Electronic Citation Implementation, Year 5," Mississippi Office of Highway Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Hanna, H. (2013, October). "Assessing FWS Employee Attitudes and Beliefs Toward the Strategic Habitat Conservation Model," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Hanna, H. (2014, May). "Assessing FWS Employee Attitudes and Beliefs Toward the Strategic Habitat Conservation Model," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Henderson, B. (2013, October). "Law Enforcement Training Logistics," Office of Highway Safety/Public Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Henderson, B. (2013, October). "Police Traffic Services," Office of Highway Safety/Public Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Matthews, R. (2013, January). "Evaluation for HIV State Services Part 3," Mississippi Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Matthews, R. (2013, May). "Evaluation for MSDH Oral Health," Mississippi State Department of Health, DeltaQuest Foundation.

Matthews, R. (2014, January). "Evaluation for MSDH Oral Health 2," Mississippi State Department of Health.

McDoom, M. (2014, January). "Delta Public Health Fellow," Harvard School of Public Health.

McKee, C. (2013, April). "Mississippi Project Fit American Phase II Evaluation," Mississippi Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation.

McKee, C., Chi, G, French, P., & Baird-Thomas, C. (2013, October). "Mississippi Public Safety Data Laboratory, Year 6," Mississippi Office of Highway Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

GRANTS & CONTRACTS

McMillen, R. (2013, July). “Surveillance and Evaluation Services for the Mississippi Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program,” Mississippi State Department of Health.

McMillen, R. (2013, July). “Richmond Center of Excellence Data Sets,” American Academy of Pediatrics, Flight Attendant Medical Research Center.

Parrish, D. (2013, October). “Seat Belt, Motorcycle Helmet, and Child Restraint Observational Survey Point, Year 21,” Mississippi Governor’s Office of Highway Safety, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Parrish, D. (2014, January). “A Comprehensive Approach Toward Commercial Motor Vehicle Data Quality Improvement: Phase I,” Department of Public Safety, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

Ragsdale, K. & Dan Reyonlds. (2013, November). “USAID,” University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, US Agency—International Development.

Robertson, A. (2013, July). “Mississippi TRIALS Research Center,” National Institutes of Health.

Southward, L. (2013, January). “Mississippi KIDS Count,” Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Southward, L. (2013, December). “Mississippi Children & Families Kellogg Data Project,” W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

Southward, L. (2014, January). “Mississippi KIDS Count,” Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT.

Valentine, N. (2013, July). “2013–2014 Mississippi Youth Tobacco Survey,” Mississippi State Department of Health.

THE SOCIAL RELATIONS COLLABORATIVE



The Social Relations Collaborative (SRC), founded in 2005 as the Advanced Social Psychology lab, is part of Mississippi State University's

(MSU) Social Science Research Center (SSRC). The SRC seeks to foster interdisciplinary scientific research combining perspectives from multiple fields such as psychology, sociology, education, counseling, marketing, computer science and communication.

The primary goal of the SRC is to produce quality research that increases our understanding of interpersonal relations. The SRC is also working to make science more accessible and transparent.

"We like collaboration over competition and want to be a resource for MSU that facilitates collaboration on social science projects across the campus," Dr. Colleen Sinclair, co-director of the SRC, said. "In addition, we value the dissemination of the findings and advocate for open science."

The collaborative is also a "teaching lab" which seeks to equip Mississippi State students with experiences that are needed to be competitive applicants for graduate school and research-based positions.

Depending on project demands, the lab is comprised of 7 to 34 undergraduate and graduate research assistants, affectionately referred to as "Minions." Dr. Colleen Sinclair and Dr. Rebecca Goldberg oversee the SRC and its research assistants.

The lab is currently running a number of projects. Working along with the Association for Psychological Science, the SRC is participating in a replication study. This study seeks to replicate a finding that commitment to one's romantic partner helps lessen the damage done when a partner lets you down. The SRC is one of 10 labs that have volunteered to replicate this single study. This type of replication is known as a narrow and deep approach.

Earlier, the lab participated in a broad and shallow approach to replication being one of 100 labs to participate in the Reproducibility Project – many labs each replicating a separate study - now published in Science.

The SRC tried to replicate a study that examined how individuals who vary in self-esteem levels deal with partner criticism.

"These studies are like killing two birds with one stone for us," Sinclair said. "We get a relationship study done and also get to contribute to the growing discussion about the rates of reproducibility in psychology."

In addition to the reproducibility studies, the SRC is conducting a study looking at how friends provide advice to one another in regards to romantic relationships.

"Friends are often who we go to first for advice about romantic relationships and yet, we know basically nothing about that process," Sinclair said.

There is research that shows that friends more accurately predict if a relationship will end than the members of the couple themselves. The hypothesis the lab is testing examines how the advice friends provide – depending on their belief the relationship will succeed or fail - shapes how people see their partner.

The SRC is currently in the process of expanding and looking to further build lab resources. The lab is hoping to expand the tools at its disposal such as reaction time measures and psycho-physiological measures. With this expansion, the researchers at the lab are hoping to offer the services of the SRC to department heads and faculty across campus who want to run an experiment, but do not have the resources to do so on their own.

"Just like the Survey Research Lab can run your telephone survey, the SRC can run your experiments," Sinclair explained.

At its core, the SRC is a place on campus where people can study social relations and can examine how people influence one another.

"A lot of people are interested in how humans interact, and the study of that is something we want to facilitate," Sinclair said.

by Adam Sullivan

PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Ty Abernathy, Assistant Research Professor, attended the Wiley EdTech Summit for Introductory Psychology on February 26 – 28 in Nashville, Tennessee. The conference brought together educators from across the country for two days of energizing and interactive sessions. The conference was dedicated to exploring how innovations in technology advance student readiness, improve learning outcomes, and support teaching psychology in a digital classroom. The participants learned about the latest student workflow research, discussed best practices in course design, and experienced personalized learning.

Baird-Thomas, C., & McKee, C. (2014, December). Mississippi Grantee Data Workshops. W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Presented in Biloxi, MS.

Baird-Thomas, C., & McKee, C. (2015, January). Data Workshop. Workshop for the Sunflower County United for Children conference. Presented in Memphis, TN.

Dr. Connie Baird-Thomas attended the W. K. Kellogg Community Leadership Network meeting in Biloxi, MS, August 6-7.

Dr. Connie Baird-Thomas attended the W. K. Kellogg Foundation/Mississippi/New Orleans regional team meeting in Battle Creek, MI, August 25-27.

Dr. Connie Baird-Thomas attended the Mississippi State Department of Health meeting about Delta Heart Disease Evaluation Project in Ridgeland, MS, August 28.

Drs. Connie Baird-Thomas and Sheena Gardner attended a training session for the Juvenile Justice Translational Research on Interventions for Adolescents in the Legal System (JJ-TRIALS) project in Ft. Worth, Texas February 25-26.

Drs. Connie Baird-Thomas and Linda Southward attended the quarterly convening of the New Orleans/Mississippi regional team for the WK Kellogg Foundation. The meeting was held in New Orleans on December 9-10.

Broughan, G.T., Tidwell, D.K., Cross, G.W., and Briley, C.A. (2014). Examining the influence of nutritional behaviors, knowledge and attitudes on Body Mass Index of Adults in North Mississippi. Poster presented at the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics 2014 Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo. October 18-21. Atlanta, GA.

Brown W, McDoom M, Preston M, Cosby A. School, Race, Money and Place: Have the Social Determinants of Health Changed in their Ability to Predict Mortality Over Time? Society for the Analysis of African-American Public Health Issues Annual Meeting, November 2014. New Orleans, LA. (Oral)- Selected as the 2nd place for Best Oral Prize Paper.

Buffington, A., & McKee, C. (2014, July). Counting What Counts: An Overview of Mississippi KIDS COUNT. Presented at the 2014 Mississippi Early Childhood Education Conference, Natchez, Miss.

On March 18, Anne Buffington was an invited guest at the Women's Foundation of Mississippi annual Women of Vision luncheon held at the Jackson Convention Complex. Buffington and EMPOWR student mentor Melissa Howell presented a preliminary report about the EMPOWR project, a pilot peer mentoring program for nontraditional women at EMCC's Golden Triangle campus.

PRESENTATIONS

Buys, D., Mathews, R., & Byrd, S. (2014, October). Hunger and Food Insecurity in the US and Across the World. Presented at the 8 True Maroon Freshman Classes at Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS. These lectures were developed and presented as part of World Food Day awareness-raising activities for MSU students. The week culminated with a food packaging event where students prepared 10,000 meals for distribution to food insecure and vulnerable populations in the developing world.

Cosby, A., & Mohanty, S. (2014, October). Big Data and Disaster Response: The Superstorm Sandy Case Study. Presented at the Center for Public Services, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.

Cosby, A.G., & Mohanty, S. (2015). What do Tweets Tell Us? Presented at the Federal Communication Commission to the Connect2Health, Washington, DC.

Cossman, R.E., Kelly, R., (MS Rural Health Association) & Atkinson Smith, M., (University of MS Medical Center). (April, 2015). Community Access Network for Elderly in Rural Communities. Presented at the National Rural Health Association's 38th Annual Rural Health Conference. Philadelphia, PA.

Dr. Ronald E. Cossman was a featured speaker at the Hypoxia Task Force meeting at The Ohio State University, May 18-21, 2015. The meeting brought together environmental and agricultural experts from 13 land grant institutions, representing the state the Mississippi River basin. Dr. Cossman spoke on the value of social indicators to establish strategic mitigation goals.

Dr. Ronald E. Cossman, SSRC Research Professor participated in the groundbreaking ceremony for the Lynn Lane Multi-Use Path in Starkville. Dr. Cossman was the lead author of the \$1.2 million MDOT grant to the City of Starkville. He continues to be a member of Starkville in Motion (SIM), a grass roots organization devoted to improving the built infrastructure and health-oriented culture in Starkville. The 2.4 mile path will connect the City's Sportplex and McKee Park to residential neighborhoods and the MSU campus.

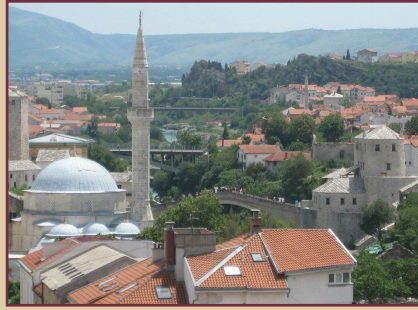
Cross, G.W. and Loden, D. (2014, October). WannaBee Healthy? Catch the Buzz. Poster presented at the 2014 Southern Obesity Summit. October 7. Louisville, KY.

Cross, G., Long, L., Gallman, S., Loden, D., Parker, J., Burns, A., & Buffington, A. (2015, May). Partnerships to Promote Healthy Lifestyles for Children and Communities. Poster presentation (by G. Cross) at the 2015 NIH SciED Conference in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Ginger Cross, Ms. Alicia Falls, Ms. Colleen McKee, Mr. Bill Henderson, Mr. Bryan Farell, Mr. Alan Burns & Mr. Rusty Miley attended the Safety Training and Recognition Symposium (STARS) hosted by the Mississippi Office of Highway Safety, Olive Branch, Miss., September 22-25, 2014.

Dr. Ginger Cross attended the 40th International Forum on Traffic Records & Highway Information Systems in St. Louis, MO. October 25-29. The forum provides opportunities for traffic records professionals to share best practices, technologies and innovations relevant for traffic records and highway safety.

Dr. Ginger Cross, Dr. Tonya Neaves, Mr. Rusty Miley, Mr. Chastin Qualls, and Mr. Brian O'Born trained the entire Mississippi Highway Patrol Cadet Class 61 on the use of eCite for writing electronic citations in Mississippi on December, 2014.



BIG DATA: DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

On July 13-17, 2015, seven faculty and staff members of the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) traveled to Dubrovnik, Croatia to participate in the Big Data for the Social and Policy Sciences Seminar. Those participants were: Arthur Cosby, PhD., John Edwards, PhD., Mr. Josh Richardson, Ms. Megan Stubbs-Richardson, Mr. John Gavin Buffington, Ms. Gina Rico-Mendez, Ms. Sarah Rogers, Linda Southward, PhD., and Lindsay Peterson, PhD.

In conjunction with three students and four professors from the University of Zagreb, the group led a weeklong seminar at the Centre for Advanced Academic Studies in Dubrovnik where they discussed emerging trends in big data usage, and how participants can use social media tracking as basis for understanding big data.

The four-day seminar consisted of daily brainstorming techniques to educate participants and enhance their experiences with big data. Team leaders would speak about specific studies related to topics such as healthcare, social media, or feminism, and participants would state important factual information regarding each topic. The team would then identify the search terms and collaborate to find information on that research topic.

“Everyone was very interested in the topics. Because everyone presented on something, people were very engaged, and everyone had something to contribute,” said Megan Stubbs-Richardson, a research associate at the SSRC.

“If I had to pick a favorite part of the seminars, I would definitely say the afternoons of developing

and collaborating with people that you can continue working with were the most enjoyable part,” said Stubbs-Richardson.

During the seminars, Stubbs-Richardson presented on metadata techniques and codification through the Social Media Tracking Analysis System (SMTAS). There were also information sessions in which researchers and students could learn about and use SMTAS.

“The concept of big data is that it is data so large that we don’t have statistical software to run the data. It’s messy data so you have to figure out how you’re going to classify it,” Stubbs-Richardson said with a laugh. “Metadata is just a component of all of that. It’s the data about the data.”

When asked of how the big data



seminars would affect research in the SSRC, Stubbs-Richardson stated that big data provides endless educational opportunities.

“The data is unlimited, and we need to move towards establishing new methods and methodologies as well as software systems to process this large data. This type of work is the future. There’s so much more that can be done and we’re just at the beginning of it,” said Stubbs-Richardson.

The Big Data for the Social and Policy Sciences Seminar is not the first of its kind, as researchers attended a similar weeklong seminar on social media in 2012. Stubbs-Richardson and other researchers alike believe that these seminars offer opportunities for collaboration and research

that would have been otherwise untapped.

“We will actually be having three students from the university [of Zagreb] here in the SSRC sometime this semester,” said Stubbs-Richardson. “We are excited for them to collaborate with us on future projects.”

The big data seminar has allowed the SSRC multiple opportunities for collaboration, and Stubbs-Richardson and her colleagues hope to begin yearly visits there.

“Everyone has expressed interest in going again next year. We definitely want to continue it because this one was very productive,” said Stubbs-Richardson.

As big data continues to play a major role in the social science

research landscape, these chances for combining ideas and creativity will be vital in the continuance of progression for SSRC scientists. These opportunities will give SSRC researchers the ability to sit in the forefront of research findings, and serve as agents of change in the research community.

by Amber Stewart

PRESENTATIONS

On March 5-7, Dr. John F. Edwards attended the 9th Annual Meeting of the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations (AASRO) at Rutgers University. The SSRC's Wolfgang Frese Survey Research Laboratory is one of approximately sixty member organizations belonging to AASRO. The association fosters direct relationships between academically-based survey centers across the country. Collaboration between leaders in survey research assures that all projects conducted by member organizations uphold the highest standards of data integrity. Additionally, AASRO serves as a conduit for sharing best practices in survey research with issues such as research methodology and data management.

On May 25-26, Drs. John F. Edwards and Somya D. Mohanty attended a meeting of the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut Sea Grant Consortium at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, where they presented the final results of their Sea Grant research project title, "Assessment of Social Media Usage during Severe Weather Events and the Development of a Twitter-based Model for Improved Communication of Storm-related Information." This research succeeded in meeting the following objectives: a) Residents from coastal areas affected by Hurricane Sandy were surveyed to better understand the sources and quality of storm-related information they received throughout the event; b) Using the Social Media Tracking & Analysis System, a proprietary software platform developed at the SSRC, approximately 13 million Twitter messages and 600,000 images sent before, during, and after Hurricane Sandy were captured, filtered, codified, and analyzed to help identify key impact factors affecting the dissemination of weather-related information during Hurricane Sandy; Lastly, c) The researchers designed and developed a novel software application that can provide emergency managers with a real-time, Twitter-based, bidirectional communication system for capturing and disseminating weather-related information. The final results of this

research effort were well received by all in attendance. Mississippi State University was the only university outside the Northeast to be awarded research funding by the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut Sea Grant Consortium. Other universities that conducted research for the same consortium included Princeton, Carnegie Mellon, Columbia, New York University, and Hofstra University.

Ellithorpe, C. & Sinclair, H. C. (2015, February). *Revising Romeo & Juliet: Examining the Roles of Defiance, Destiny and Disapproval in Romantic Relationships*. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology conference, Long Beach, CA.

Gardner, S. (2015, March). *Factors Affecting Organizational Involvement among Multiracial College Students*. Presented at the Southern Sociological Society Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Dr. Sheena Gardner, attended the 2014 Mississippi Association of Drug Court Professionals (MADCP) conference held August 20-22 in Natchez, Miss.

Dr. Sheena Gardner, attended the State Level Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative work group meeting August 22, 2014. The meeting was held at the Attorney General's Office in Jackson, Miss.

Dr. Sheena Gardner, attended the Juvenile Detention and Alternatives Task Force meeting September 5, 2014. The meeting was held at the Mississippi state capitol building.

Dr. Sheena Gardner, attended the Judicial Outreach Liaison (JOL) Task Force meeting September 9, 2014. The meeting was held at the Office of Public Safety Planning.

Glisson, S., Walker, S., Southward, L., & Green, J. (2014, August). *Social Development in a Shifting Socioeconomic Context: The U.S. Gulf South*. Presented at the 77th Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, New Orleans.

PRESENTATIONS

Knight, D., Belenko, S., Robertson, A. A., Wiley, T., Wasserman, G., Leukefeld, C., DiClemente, R., & Brody, G. (2014, October). EPIS as a Theoretical Framework for Selection and Timing of Implementation Interventions. Presented at the Addiction Health Services Research Conference, Boston, MA.

Leukefeld, C., Knight, D., Belenko, S., Robertson, A. A., Wiley, T., Wasserman, G., DiClemente, R., Brody, G., & Knudsen, H. (2014, October). Community Partner Involvement in a Juvenile Justice Behavioral Health Service Organizational Implementation Trial. Presented at the Addiction Health Services Research Conference, Boston, MA.

On November 14th, Bradley Long and Anne Buffington attended the annual Commission on the Future of Northeast Mississippi legislative luncheon sponsored by the CREATE Foundation in Tupelo. Mississippi KIDS COUNT provided county fact sheets for the 17 counties represented by the Commission and assisted in the planning of the event. Part of the agenda was dedicated to a discussion of the importance of Pre-K developmental screens. The legislative luncheons are coordinated as part of the Pre-K Policy Grant sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

McClelland, E. (2014, August). Tobacco and the state of the state. Presented at the American Lung Association Lung Summit, Jackson.

McDoom, Bokhour B, Sullivan M, Drainoni M. How older Black women perceive the effects of stigma and social support on engagement in HIV care. Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Conference, November 2014. Washington, DC. (Oral)

McKee, C. (2014). Findings from the final report on the two-year Project Fit America Program Evaluation project. Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation Board of Directors quarterly meeting. Jackson, MS.

McKee, C., Ragsdale, K., & Southward, L. H. (2014, November). Do Mississippi Parents Support Sex Education in Public School?: Results of a State-level Survey. Poster presentation at 2014 American Public Health Association, New Orleans, LA.

McKee, C., Long, L., Southward, L., Walker, B., McCown, J. (2014, November). Parental Misperception of Children's Obesity in Mississippi. Poster session at the annual APHA conference in New Orleans, LA.

McMillen R., Mohanty S., Edwards J., & Klein, J. D. (2014). Applying the social media tracking and analysis system to social science research. Presentation to the World Association of Public Opinion Researchers, Nice, France.

McMillen, R., Tanski, S., Wilson, K., Shaefer, R.M., Klein, J.D., & Winickoff, J.P. (2014). Susceptibility to Electronic Cigarette Use Among Current Nonsmokers. Paper presented at the 141st Annual Conference of the American Public Health Association, New Orleans, LA.

McMillen, R., (2014). Invited Speaker, Infant Safe Sleep Conference, Mississippi State Department of Health District IX, Gulfport, MS.

McMillen, R., (2014). Invited Speaker, FACT Conference, Mississippi Board of Examiners for Social Work and Marriage and Family Therapists, Tupelo, MS.

Dr. Robert McMillen, Associate Director of the Social Science Research Center's Tobacco Control Unit and associate professor in the Department of Psychology, testified in the month of January before the New Orleans City Council about the economic impact of smoke-free laws on restaurants and casinos at the request of the American Lung Association. The New Orleans City Council voted 7-0 to pass a smoke-free ordinance that applies to all bars and casinos. A Louisiana state law already requires restaurants to be smoke-free.



Associate Director of the Tobacco Control Unit, Dr. Robert McMillen, Project Coordinator, Nell Valentine, Data Management Coordinator, Emily McClelland, and Senior Graphic Designer, Miranda Robertson, at the 2015 Mississippi Municipal League Conference in Biloxi, MS.

MISSISSIPPI TOBACCO DATA CELEBRATES 16 YEARS OF SERVICE

The history of tobacco use in the state of Mississippi is a long one, filled with many ups and downs. While people may have been working on reducing tobacco use in the state for many years, significant changes were not seen until just over two decades ago.

In 1994, a lawsuit was filed with the Chancery Court of Jackson by former Mississippi Attorney General Mike Moore. This lawsuit was the start of important change in the state of Mississippi. The lawsuit accused the tobacco industry of being dishonest about the dangers of tobacco use and requested that they pay for the Medicaid expenses that they were responsible for. In 1997, Mississippi won the lawsuit and a settlement agreement was reached that required the tobacco

industry to pay the state \$170 million dollars and to also make annual payments.

The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi was formed in 1998 with the goal to create an environment in which smoking is considered unacceptable. The Mississippi State Department of Health then created the Office of Tobacco Control in 2008. The focus of these statewide tobacco control efforts is primarily on youths rather than on adults.

Nell Valentine, Research Associate and Project Coordinator for the Mississippi Tobacco Unit, says many smokers pick up the habit when they are in high school and many even as young as middle school.

“Almost ninety percent of the people who start smoking start doing so before they’re 18,” Valentine stated. “So if you can get to these kids before they start, then usually you’re not going to have a smoker later in life.”

Since the implementation of the tobacco prevention programs in Mississippi, tobacco use amongst young people has noticeably decreased, specifically with cigarette and cigar use. However, in recent years, a rising problem in tobacco use has been the increasingly popular electronic cigarettes. With the various and attractive flavors, e-cigs are advertised as being a safe alternative for cigarettes.

According to Dr. Robert McMillen, Associate Professor of Psychology

“ALMOST 90% OF THE PEOPLE WHO START SMOKING START DOING SO BEFORE THEY’RE 18.”

- MRS. NELL VALENTINE



Mississippi Tobacco Data publications at the Social Science Research Center/ Mississippi Tobacco Data booth at the 2015 Mississippi Municipal League Conference in Biloxi, MS. Publication Design & Photo Credit: Miranda Robertson, Senior Graphic Designer, Mississippi Tobacco Data.

at Mississippi State University and Director of the National Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control, e-cigarettes are not as safe as many have been led to believe.

“It’s a real challenge because there’s a lot of misinformation about e-cigarettes being safe,” McMillen explained. “But they’re not safe, they’re just less dangerous than combustible tobacco, the leading cause of death in the world.”

Over the past 20 years, there have been many steps in the right direction such as implementing programs geared toward reducing tobacco use, passing local smoke-free ordinances, and raising the tax on cigarettes. However, the work is not done yet. Despite the

progress that was made, there have been some setbacks including the rise of electronic cigarettes and funding being cut off from tobacco prevention programs. With smoking still a prominent issue in the state of Mississippi, McMillen would like to see some tax changes on tobacco products in order to reduce smoking habits.

“I’d like to see more regulations and kind of a more equivalent tax structure...you shouldn’t have a nonexistent tax on e-cigarettes and cigars and a modest tax on cigarettes,” McMillen said. “I’d like to see an even larger tax on cigarettes and taxing e-cigarettes at about the level we’re doing cigarettes currently.”

by Elizabeth Tewolde

PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Robert McMillen attended the Community Research Fellow Training Faculty for the Office of Health Disparity Elimination of the Mississippi State Department of Health, December 2014.

McMillen, R., Whitmore Shaefer, R., Tanski, S., Gottlieb, M., & Wilson, K. (April, 2015). Support for e-cigarette regulations that protect children and adolescents: Results from a nationally representative survey. Platform presentation accepted to the Pediatric Academic Societies' Annual Conference, San Diego, CA.

McMillen, R., Gottlieb, M., Shaefer, R., Winickoff, J., & Klein, J. (2015). Trends in Electronic Cigarette Use Among U.S. Adults. Poster presented at the 14th Scientific Symposium of the Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute, Miami, FL.

McMillen, R., Whitmore Shaefer, R., Tanski, S., Gottlieb, M., & Wilson, K. (2015). Support for E-Cigarette Regulations that Protect Children and Adolescents: Results from a Nationally Representative Survey. Poster presented at the 14th Scientific Symposium of the Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute, Miami, FL.

McMillen, R., (2015). Goals and Metrics and Indicators ... OH MY! - Evaluating Health Equity and Public Health Programs. Presented at the 7th Empowering Communities for a Healthy Mississippi Conference: Lead, Connect, and Inspire, Jackson, MS.

McMillen, R., (2015) The Social Climate of Tobacco Control. Presented at the 7th Empowering Communities for a Healthy Mississippi Conference: Lead, Connect, and Inspire, Jackson, MS

McMillen, R., Wilson, K., Torok, M., & Rosas Gutierrez, M. A. (2015). Tobacco Smoke Incursions in Multi-Unit Housing Among Spanish and English Speaking Hispanics. Poster presented at the 2015 Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Dr. Robert McMillen served as panelist at the FDA's Electronic Cigarettes and the Public Health: A Public Workshop (2015, June). Presented at the Marriott Inn and Conference Center, University of Maryland University College, Hyattsville, MD.

Miller, M., Felmlee, D., & Sinclair, H. C. (2015, February). Don't Break the Rules: Disapproval of Violations in Same- and Cross-Gender Friendships. Poster presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology conference, Long Beach, CA.

The Mississippi Health Policy Research Center in Canton hosted the quarterly meeting of the Mississippi Association of Grantmakers September 23. The featured speaker was Dr. Carey Wright, Mississippi State Superintendent of Education.

Mississippi Tobacco Data partnered with the Mississippi State Department of Health's Office of Tobacco Control at the Mississippi Municipal Leagues Annual Conference to host a booth educating elected official about the benefits of passing smoke free ordinances.

MSU Head Football Coach Dan Mullen and student athletes Dak Prescott and Jay Hughes were the featured speakers at the Metro Jackson College Fair held on February 11 at the Jackson Convention Complex. The three emphasized the importance of setting goals, being disciplined, and being dedicated to academics. Prescott and Hughes are working on graduate degrees, and both are scholar athletes. The event was co-sponsored by Mississippi KIDS COUNT and Parents and Kids Magazine. Over 2500 high school juniors and seniors from across Mississippi attended.

Parker, J., & Cross, G.W. (2015). Be Smart, Be Active, Be a Leader: A Health Science Curriculum and Instructional Materials for Early Childhood Classrooms in Mississippi. Poster presented at the 2015 Mississippi Academy of Science Conference. Hattiesburg, MS. Feb. 26-27, 2015.

PRESENTATIONS

Parrish, D. (2014, September). Observational Surveys of Vehicle Occupant Practices. Presented at 2014 Mississippi Safety Training and Recognition Symposium, Olive Branch, MS.

Ragsdale, K. (2014, July). Securing a better future: Female students in Mississippi's community colleges. Presented at the Women's Foundation of Mississippi, MS. Ragsdale presented on results from the Community College Completion Project (K. Ragsdale, PI; A. Buffington, Co-PI) to the Women's Funding Network, Washington Area Women's Foundation, New York Women's Foundation, Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis, Women's Foundation of California, Women's Foundation of Minnesota, and the Women's Foundation of Mississippi.

Ragsdale, K., Cross, G.W., Pellegrine, S.E., & Gallman, S. (2014). Can Community-based Health Education Center's Deliver Effective Public Health Outreach to Mass Audiences?: Evaluating HealthWorks!'s 'Be A Food Groupie' Program for Resource-Limited Elementary Students in Mississippi. Oral presentation. 2014 National Conference on Health Communications, Marketing & Media, August 19-21. Atlanta, GA.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was interviewed on July 18 for a segment on "Vaccine Controversies" for the Southern Remedy television show for Mississippi Public Broadcasting. The anticipated air date for the Southern Remedy TV show is October 2014.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was featured in a news article on August 4 on the MSU website's home page. She was interviewed by the MSU Office of Public Affairs about her selected as a Featured Speaker for the 2014 SEC Symposium, "Prevention of Obesity: Overcoming a 21st Century Public Health Challenge." Ragsdale discussed results of the USDA NIFA-funded eBaby Project (K. Ragsdale, PI; L. Walton, Co-PI).

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was a Featured Speaker on August 20 at the CDC- and NPHIC-sponsored 2014 National Conference on Health Communications, Marketing & Media in Atlanta. Ragsdale's breakout session presentation was videotaped by the conference organizers and the video will be shared on the CDC and NPHIC websites. For her presentation, Ragsdale discussed a systematic evaluation to determine effectiveness of a health education program delivered to elementary students at the HealthWorks! Children's Education Center in Tupelo, MS (K. Ragsdale, PI).

Ragsdale, K. (2014). eBaby4U: Harnessing social media to optimize infant feeding among teen mothers. 2014 SEC Symposium, Prevention of Obesity: Overcoming a 21st Century Public Health Challenge. Atlanta, GA.

Ragsdale, K. (2014). Member of the Breakout Session III panel 2014 SEC Symposium, Prevention of Obesity: Overcoming a 21st Century Public Health Challenge. Atlanta, GA.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale and Dr. Lindsey Peterson presented the WEAI+ Data Entry Training Workshop at Mississippi State University on September 30, 2014.

Ragsdale, K., Walton, L. R., Harper, S. K., & Kirkland, C. (2014, November). eBaby4U.com: Improving Early Infant Feeding Behaviors Among Low-resource African American Teen Mothers in Mississippi and the Rural Southeast Through Social Media. Oral presentation at 2014 American Public Health Association, New Orleans, LA.

Ragsdale, K., Walton, L. R., Harper, S. K., Bardwell, J. H., & Penick, C. B. (2014, November). FactNotFiction.com: Harnessing Social Media for Comprehensive Sex Education Outreach to Mississippi Youth. Oral presentation at 2014 American Public Health Association, New Orleans, LA.

PRESENTATIONS

Ragsdale, K., Cross, G. W., Pellegrine, S. E., & Gallman, S. (2014, November). Evaluation of a Nutrition Program Delivered to Mississippi Elementary Students During Subsidized Field Trips to a Community-based Children's Health Education Center. Oral presentation at 2014 American Public Health Association, New Orleans, LA.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale attended the 2014 American Public Health Association held November 15-19 in New Orleans, LA.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale and Dr. Lindsey Peterson attended the USAID/Feed The Future Soybean Innovation Lab (SIL) meeting held December 4-5 at the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, Urbana Champaign, IL. At this meeting, Dr. Ragsdale and Dr. Peterson presented, Feed the Future Soy Innovation Lab: Socioeconomic Research Team.

Ragsdale, K., & Cross, G. W. (2015). Evaluating Be A Food Groupie's Effectiveness: Matched Comparison Results of a Health/Nutrition Education Program Delivered at a Mississippi Children's Museum. Submitted oral presentation. 2015 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, October 31-November 4, Chicago, IL.

Ragsdale, K., McDoom-Echebiri, M., & Harper, S. K. (2015). eBaby Phase II Results: Use of Online/Other Infant Care Resources among Minority Teen/Young Mothers in Rural Mississippi. Submitted oral presentation. 2015 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, October 31-November 4, Chicago, IL.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale presented eBaby4U: Improving Infant Feeding among African American Teen Moms Through Social Media to students in Elements of Persuasion (CO 4253), Section I-II, in the Department of Communication at Mississippi State University.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale and Dr. Sheena Gardner presented the WEAI+ Data Entry Training Workshop at Mississippi State University on April 24, 2015.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale served as a Judge for the Spring 2015 Undergraduate Research Symposium at Mississippi State University on Thursday April 23, 2015.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale served as a Judge for the eBaby4U Sustainability: Service-Learning Project I on Friday, May 1, 2015.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale served as a Judge for the eBaby4U Sustainability: Service-Learning Project II on Monday, May 4, 2015.

Dr. Angela Robertson and Ms. Sheena Gardner attended the State Level Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative work group meeting May 30. The meeting was held at the Attorney General's Office in Jackson.

Dr. Angela Robertson, Principal Investigator, and Ms. Alyson Karges, Research Associate I, participated in the MASEP Annual Training held in Ridgeland July 18-19.

Dr. Angela Robertson, Principal Investigator of the MS TRIALS research project, participated in the Measurement and Data Management (MDM) meeting in Fort Worth, TX, July 8-9. The MDM is a working group composed of principal investigators from the Juvenile Justice TRIALS research project tasked with recommending an integrated measurement plan.

Dr. Angela Robertson participated in a Steering Committee meeting for the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA) Juvenile Justice Translational Research on Interventions for Adolescents in the Legal System (JJ-TRIALS) August 5-6. Dr. Robertson serves on the Steering Committee in her role as Principal Investigator of the MS TRIALS Research Project.

PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Angela Robertson is actively serving on the Institutional Review Board for Mississippi State University. Dr. Robertson attended the Institutional Review Board Annual Retreat August 12 in Starkville, MS.

Robertson, A. A. (2014, October). Applied Sociology. Presented at the Loftin Lecture Series, MSU Library Auditorium, Starkville, MS.

Robertson, A. A., Leukenfeld, C., & Wasserman, G. (2014, December). Community Partner Involvement in a Juvenile Justice Behavioral Health Service Organizational Implemental Trial. Oral presentation at the 7th Annual Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation, Bethesda, MD.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse's Juvenile Justice Translational Research on Interventions for Adolescents in the Legal System (JJ-TRIALS) held Needs Assessment training on January 28, 2015 at Emory University for staff from the 6 funded Research Centers involved in the cooperative. Participating from the Social Science Research Center, MSU, were Dr. Angela Robertson, Dr. Sheena Gardner, and Dr. Connie Baird-Thomas.

Robertson, A. (2015). Research in the Juvenile Justice System. Presented at Senior Seminar in Criminology Course, Mississippi State University, Starkville, MS.

Rico-Méndez, G. (2014, October). The Rise of Polarization? Social Media Perceptions of the Affordable Care Act. Presented at the Big Data in Political Economy Conference held at the Russell Sage Foundation. New York, NY.

Southward, L., Buttross, S., & Coleman, N. (2014, July). Overview of developmental screenings in Mississippi's Pre-K Collaborative Programs. Presented at the 2014 Mississippi Early Childhood Education Conference, Natchez, MS.

Dr. Linda Southward, Ms. Anne Buffington, and Ms. Laure Bell attended the Annual KIDS COUNT Conference in Baltimore, MD on September 29 - October 2, 2014. The conference marked the 25th anniversary of KIDS COUNT. The U.S. Attorney General, Mr. Eric Holder was among the plenary speakers.

Southward, L. (2014, November). Reflections on Current and Future Research. Plenary speaker for the 40th Anniversary of the School of School Work, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS.

On November 21, Dr. Linda Southward and Ms. Anne Buffington represented Mississippi KIDS COUNT at a legislative luncheon in Biloxi sponsored jointly by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community Foundation and the United Way of South Mississippi. The luncheon was an opportunity to highlight the importance of Pre-K developmental screenings and to distribute county fact sheets to legislators from the six counties represented.

Southward, L. H., Baird-Thomas, C., & McKee, C. (2014, December). Mississippi Grantee Data Workshops. W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Presented in Canton, MS.

Southward, L. H., Baird-Thomas, C. (2014, December). Mississippi Grantee Data Workshops. W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Presented in Cleveland, MS.

Dr. Linda Southward, Ms. Anne Buffington, Mr. Ben Walker, Ms. Laure Bell and Mr. Bradley Long participated in the annual Mississippi KIDS COUNT Capitol Day on February 19. Legislators received copies of the 2015 KIDS COUNT Fact Book along with county fact sheets. The focus of the Fact Book is on education and contains a foreword written by State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Carey Wright.

PRESENTATIONS

Stubbs-Richardson, M., Rogers, S. & Rader, N. E. (April, 2015). Sexual Assault Awareness on Twitter: The Media Framing and Public Opinion of the “Yes Means Yes” Campaign. Presented at the Southern Sociological Society in New Orleans, LA.

Swinea, J.C., Dempewolf, M., McClelland, E., Valentine, N., & McMillen, R. (2014, October). E-cigarette Use as a Risk Factor for Future Combustible Tobacco Use Among Nonsmokers. Poster presented at the Annual Conference of the Society for Southeastern Social Psychologists, Athens, GA.

Walker, B. H., McCown, J. S., & Green, J. (2015, February). Obesity and the risk-behavior-environment nexus: Exploration of factors associated with obesity among children and adults in Mississippi. Paper presented at the 46th annual meeting of the Alabama-Mississippi Sociological Association, Montgomery, AL.

Winickoff, J.P., McMillen, R., Tanski, S., Wilson, K., Gottlieb, M., & Crane, R. (2014, October). Poster presented at the 2014 American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference and Exhibition, San Diego, CA.

Wu, S. & Sinclair, H. C. (2015, February). It's Complicated: Explaining the Romeo and Juliet Effect. Poster Presented at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference, Long Beach, CA.

On March 11, Dr. Linda Southward, Ms. Anne Buffington, and Mr. Ben Walker represented Mississippi KIDS COUNT at a press conference held at the Mississippi Department of Education to release “Present and Counting: A Look at Chronic Absenteeism in Mississippi Public Schools.” State Superintendent of Education Dr. Carey Wright and Senate Education Chair, Gray Tollison also participated.

On May 19–21, 2015, Nell Valentine and Emily McClelland attended the 7th Empowering Communities for a Healthy Mississippi Conference: Lead, Connect, and Inspire, Jackson, MS.



“Attracting bright, capable, energetic and entrepreneurial individuals and then encouraging their continued intellectual and professional growth is a key element in the SSRC organizational philosophy.”

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Ty Abernathy was elected on August 27 as faculty representative to the College of Education Diversity Committee by the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology. More information about the College of Education Diversity Committee can be found at <http://www.educ.msstate.edu/about/committees/diversity.php>.

Dr. Ronald E. Cossman was the featured presenter for the final Responsible Conduct of Research training course for the semester, sponsored by the Office of Research Compliance. Dr. Cossman's presentation covered issues in data integrity, data management and data archiving.

Dr. Ronald E. Cossman was extensively quoted in "Home is Where the Health Is - Community Network Helps Rural Seniors Age in Place," an article that appeared in the Spring 2015 issue of the National Rural Health Association's "Rural Roads." The article discussed efforts in Starkville by Cossman, Mary Atkinson Smith and Georgia Murphy to create a Community Access Network for the Elderly (CANE) so that seniors could age in place as opposed to moving to a health care facility. The CANE program is being supported by the Mississippi Rural Health Association.

Dr. Ginger Cross was selected as a reviewer for the 2015-2016 Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Program, a prestigious opportunity for K-12 STEM educators to work in a federal agency or U.S. Congressional office.

Dr. Ginger Cross received the 2015 MAFES Research Award for Grantsmanship at the CALS/MAFES Spring Luncheon on March 25, 2015. The award recognizes the MAFES scientist with the greatest total extramural awards during the calendar year.

Ms. Sheena Gardner successfully defended her dissertation entitled "Factors Affecting Identity Development and Organizational Involvement among Multiracial College Students" on June 25. She will graduate with a Ph.D. from the Department of Sociology in August.

Dr. Sheena Gardner was promoted from Research Associate II to Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the SSRC. Dr. Gardner received her Ph.D. in Sociology from Mississippi State University in August 2014. She will be working with Dr. Angela Robertson primarily on the JJ-TRIALS project (National Institutes of Health).

MASEP facilitators were presented with awards for their dedication to MASEP. Members of the 2014 Advisory Committee, Tumutual Norton-Bell, Tom Bishop, Betty Jones, Marsha Jones and William Lucy, were recognized for their contributions to the program. Facilitators were also recognized for their years of service. Kirby Allen, Gill Bailey, Trip Bayles, Greg Bedford, Tony Norris and Wyatt Waddell were presented with 5-Year Honorable Mentions Awards. Billy Chandler, Billy Brister and Bill Henderson received 10-Year Service Awards. Diane Allen received a 15-Year award while Lucian Roberson received a 20-Year Service Award. Ronnie Brown, Larry Moore, Bruce Presson and Ken Valentine received 25-Year Awards. Charlie Hardy, Rodney Rogers and Johnny Still received 30-Year Awards.

Dr. Maya McDoom was the May 2015 Member Spotlight for the Gerontological Society of America (GSA). The GSA is the most recognized, oldest and largest interdisciplinary organization devoted to research, education, and practice in the field of aging. Dr. McDoom was interviewed about her past and current research on this field. You can read the full interview at: <https://www.geron.org/membership/449>

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Maya McDoom was competitively selected to attend the Health Equity Leadership Institute (HELI) from June 14–19, in Madison, WI, sponsored by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Center of Excellence at the University of Wisconsin Madison. HELI scholars participate in a week-long “research boot camp” focused on translational research resources, working successfully on a collaborative community-academic research team, and increasing the number of junior investigators interested in health disparities/health equity research.

Dr. Robert McMillen was awarded with Best Poster of 2015 at the 14th Scientific Symposium of the Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute. McMillen, R., Whitmore Shaefer, R., Tanski, S., Gottlieb, M., & Wilson, K. (2015). Support for E-cigarette Regulations that Protect Children and Adolescents: Results from a Nationally Representative Survey. Miami, FL.

On August 14, Mississippi received the National Smokefree Indoor Air Challenge Award by the Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights (ANR). Mississippi received the 1st place award for passing nine local smokefree laws in 2013.

Mississippi won the nationwide American Nonsmokers Right's Smoke Free Air Challenge for passing the most local smoke free laws in a calendar year. The Mississippi Public Health Association, in partnership with Mississippi Tobacco Data, the American Cancer Society, the American Lung Association, the American Heart Association, The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi, and the Mississippi Department of Health, hosted a reception at the Mississippi Municipal Leagues Annual Conference for the 14 municipalities that passed a local ordinance during the past year.

In February, Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was selected to serve as a reviewer for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention, Special Emphasis Panel (SEP), PS15–1502: Comprehensive High-Impact HIV Prevention Projects for Community-Based Organizations.

In February, Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was selected to serve as a reviewer for the Public Health Education and Health Promotion Program of the 2015 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting.

In February, Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was selected to serve as a reviewer for the Maternal and Child Health Section of the 2015 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting.

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was awarded a pre-study grant by the MSUES Intelligent Community Institute for her eBaby4U Case Study. June 1 – September 30, 2015.

On June 16, 2015, Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale, Dr. Jill Findeis (University of Missouri) and Nina Furstenu (University of Missouri) participated in a videoconference interview with Vanessa Beeson, a technical writer for CALS/MAFES at Mississippi State University. They were interviewed for a story that Beeson is writing for Landmarks magazine about their research on the USAID-funded Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Soybean Value Chain Research—or Soybean Innovation Lab—on which Drs. Ragsdale and Findeis are Co-PIs.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Kathleen Ragsdale was selected to attend the WEAI Stakeholder Convening held on May 27, 2015, in Washington D.C., hosted by the USAID Bureau of Food Security and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Dr. Ragsdale's work was an important contribution to the meeting because her team adapted the original Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) by adding three soy-related modules to create the WEAI+, which was implemented in Ghana and Mozambique. The meeting brought together representatives from domestic and international organizations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, and Save the Children. Attendees discussed their experiences implementing the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) in developing countries and other issues related to gender, development, livelihoods, and food security. Dr. Ragsdale's travel to the meeting was supported by the SSRC and by Dr. Peter Goldsmith, PI of the USAID-funded Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Soybean Value Chain Research, or Soybean Innovation Lab, on which Dr. Ragsdale is a Co-PI of the Socio-Economic Research team.

In April-May, Dr. Ragsdale also served as a Judge for the eBaby4U Sustainability Service-Learning Project I and Project II, which were held in the Department of Communication and coordinated by Dr. Melanie Loehwing of Mississippi State University, and served as a Judge for the 2015 Undergraduate Research Symposium held at Mississippi State University and served as a Reviewer for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention, Special Emphasis Panel (SEP), PS15-1502: Comprehensive High-Impact HIV Prevention Projects for Community-Based Organizations, and served as a Reviewer for the Public Health Education and Health Promotion Program, the Adolescent and Young Adult Health section, and the International Maternal and Child Health section of

the 2015 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, and served as a Grant Writing Consultant, Mississippi State Department of Health, Office of Adolescent Health, in response to HHS OAH AH-TP 1-15-002: Replicating Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs to Scale in Communities with Greatest Need (Tier 1B).

Dr. Colleen Sinclair was invited to become a blogger for thescienceofrelationships.com, which won last year's Media Achievement Award from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Dr. Sinclair's first blog post will appear in August.

Dr. Colleen Sinclair has been invited to contribute as a blogger on Psychology Today, a nationally recognized magazine. Sinclair has also been invited to be part of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology Twitter Team. The purpose of both positions is to make science accessible by describing, with her articles and tweets, new findings related to social psychology.

Dr. Colleen Sinclair was featured in a news article on October 27 on the MSU website's home page. She was interviewed by the MSU Office of Public Affairs about her research on stalking. Dr. Sinclair discussed the misconceptions and solutions on "intimate partner violence."

On September 24, the Social Science Research Center received a 2014 Partnership Award from the Mississippi Office of Highway Safety during their annual Safety Training and Recognition Symposium (STARS) in Olive Branch. The award recognized the SSRC's work in highway safety.

The Social Science Research Center held its annual Open House on October 16. The event took place in the Courtyard of the Mississippi Technology Center in the Thad Cochran Research, Technology and Economic Development Park. The Open House was highlighted with the introduction of the new SSRC Research Fellows, Mrs. Desta Reff, Dr. Maya McDoom, Dr. Somya Mohanty and Dr. Stacey Haynes.

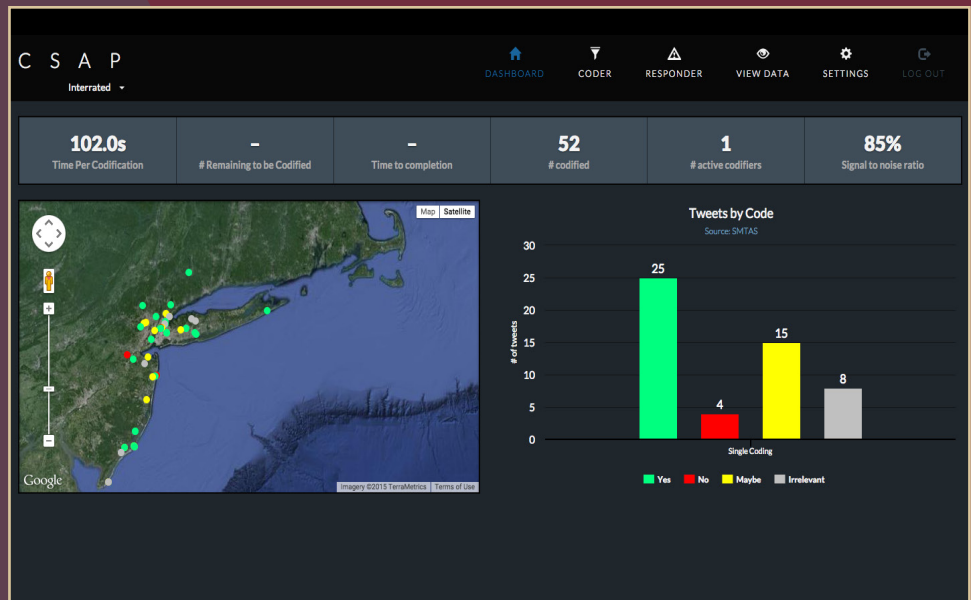
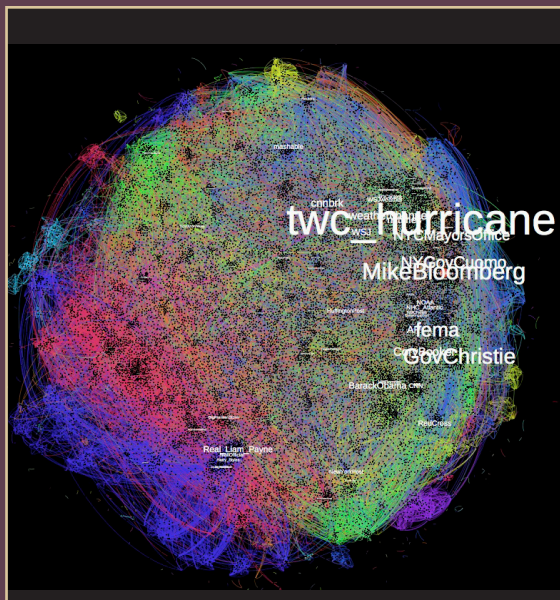
AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

In April, the Social Science Research Center awarded 11 students with Marion T. Loftin Scholarships. The Marion T. Loftin fund is an endowment provided by Dr. Loftin. Dr. Loftin was a Sociologist, Department Head, Dean of the Graduate School, and Vice President of Research at Mississippi State University. The Loftin scholarships promote social science research by supporting sociology graduate student's education and research at Mississippi State University. A total of \$21,021.46 was awarded this spring.

The Marion T. Loftin scholarships were awarded to the following recipients:

- **Elizabeth Pellegrine** - Dissertation support. For data collection in 20 public schools in Mississippi.
- **Jennifer Cheek** - Dissertation support. To collect data from Human Trafficking Shelters in Louisiana.
- **Sarah Rogers** - Methodology workshop/training to attend the seminar "Big Data for the Social and Policy Sciences: Perspectives and Examples" in Dubrovnik, Croatia.
- **Megan Stubbs-Richardson** - Methodology workshop/training to attend the seminar "Big Data for the Social and Policy Sciences: Perspectives and Examples" in Dubrovnik, Croatia.
- **Ismail Yigit** - Methodological workshop/training to attend and participate in the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), Race, Ethnicity and Quantitative Summer Program Methods in Michigan.
- **Andrew Tatch** - Methodology workshop/training to attend and participate in the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), Summer Program in Quantitative Methods, HLM training in Michigan.
- **Young Bin Lim** - Methodology workshop/training to attend and participate in the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Summer Program in Quantitative Methods, Michigan.
- **Kristen Stives** - Travel support to the American Society of Criminology conference in Washington, DC.

- **Andrew Tatch** - Travel support to the American Sociological Association Conference in Chicago.
- **Jennifer Cheek** - Travel support to the American Sociological Association Conference in Chicago.
- **Makeela Wells** - Travel support to the American Society of Criminology Conference in Washington, D.C.



THE INNOVATIVE DATA LABORATORY & THE HURRICANE SANDY PROJECT

The Innovative Data Laboratory (IDL) has developed software that will improve methods of disaster relief in emergency situations.

Created by Arthur G. Cosby, Ph.D., John F. Edwards, Ph.D., and Josh Richardson, B.S. in July 2011, the IDL's mission is to explore emerging sources of data and develop methods for storing and analyzing datasets too large for standard statistical software packages such as SPSS or SAS. Under the direction of Dr. Somya Mohanty, the IDL is proving to be a successful new data laboratory at the SSRC. The IDL has also developed a system for utilizing social media as a research tool, expanding the knowledge of human behavior.

The IDL's Social Media Tracking and Analysis System (SMTAS) collects Twitter data for analyzing

different trends during a specific time period. The researchers applied SMTAS to tweets during Hurricane Sandy to observe the trends during a natural disaster.

Using the preliminary analysis of approximately 4.8 million tweets collected from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, the researchers secured a grant from the Connecticut Sea Grant Coastal Storm Awareness Program funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Mississippi State University was the only southern university selected, alongside Yale, Cornell, and Columbia.

Dr. John Edwards, Principle Investigator of the project, said that one of the main goals of the research was to better understand the flow of communication during the storm and determine what led

people to either evacuate or to stay in place.

"All the conditions were right for Twitter to serve as a strong communication medium by which people could send out messages and images," Edwards said. "We realized there may be some utility in these images that we were capturing."

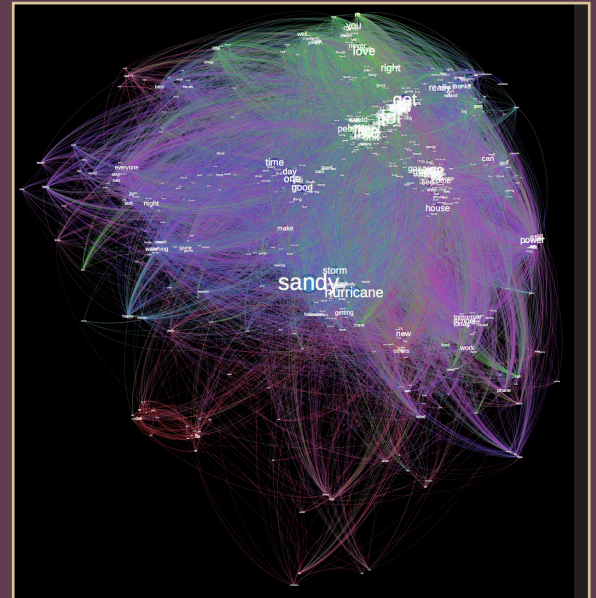
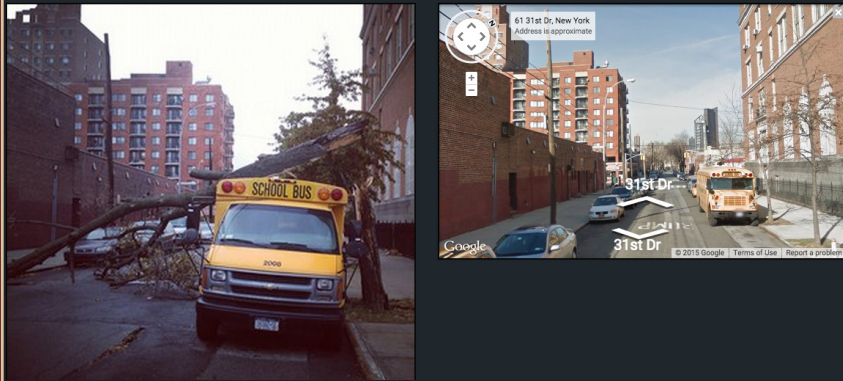
With the grant, the IDL developed a 3-part program. Researchers conducted a telephone-based survey to determine the main motivators for evacuation and the primary sources of weather-related information for residents living in the path of Hurricane Sandy. Researchers also collected approximately 13 million additional tweets sent during the hurricane to identify the key influencers on social media and learn how information spread

Code the following Tweet

INSTRUCTIONS

Post: pFj667ZzsL5GwMw9s - 2012-10-30 20:55:13+00:00

Haven't seen much damage in Astoria, but saw this down the street #sandy @ I.S. 126 <http://t.co/NYPzJK0f>



across the network.

With help from programmer David Martin, B.S., the researchers developed real-time software for use in future emergency situations. The web-based application tracks pictures on Twitter using specific key words such as “flooding” and “damage.” Those images come through the software along with a Google image of the location, and lab workers verify the location and the severity of the damage. If there is significant damage or a person in need, the picture can be sent to an emergency manager with the verified geo-coordinates.

Dr. Somya Mohanty and Dr. Patrick Fitzpatrick were co-Principle Investigators of the project. Mohanty noted several examples that show the system’s benefits.

“If a person is needing help and the

pictures in that area show a lot of flooding, the emergency managers can see they should probably send a boat instead of a car over there,” Mohanty said.

Edwards also indicated several advantages that the software offers. During Hurricane Sandy, there wasn’t anything in place to capture twitter messages and put them in the hands of an emergency manager who could send help.

“That was really the marvel of being able to go through this data—to identify people who were stuck and calling for help using Twitter,” Edwards said.

The IDL has since taken on numerous other projects, but the researchers agree that the program could be implemented in the future for any weather-related or synthetic disaster.

They will present the software at the 94th Annual Meeting of the American Meteorological Society in January to gain interest from FEMA and other federal agencies.

“Hurricane Sandy provided us with an excellent test case, but different natural disasters have different implications,” Mohanty said. “We want to follow that route and see what happens.”

With the success of the Hurricane Sandy project, the Innovative Data Laboratory will continue to develop beneficial tools for researchers.

by Kelly Ford

SPECIAL COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The productivity of SSRC Scientists remains high and the support from extramural organizations is quite varied. Our research benefits from awards and partnerships from the following:

American Academy of Pediatrics
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Dreyfus Health Foundation
E Q Health Solutions
Federal Motor Carriers
Flight Attendant Medical Research Institute
Harvard Law School
Harvard School of Public Health
National Center for Intermodal Transportation
National Institute of Corrections
National Institutes of Health
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Science Foundation
New York Sea Grant
New York University
Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Southeastern Universities Research Association
Tec de Monterrey, Mexico
Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine
U.S. Agency for International Development
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Department of Transportation
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
University of Catania, Italy
University of Zagreb, Croatia
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Washington University

Within Mississippi, the SSRC has partnerships with and/or funding from the following:

Blue Cross & Blue Shield Foundation of Mississippi
The Bower Foundation
Center for Mississippi Health Policy
Delta State University
Department of Transportation/Public Safety
Health Care Foundation of North Mississippi
Healthy Mississippi
Mississippi Alcohol Safety Education Program
Mississippi Area Health Education Center
Mississippi Attorney General's Office
Mississippi Association of Grant Makers
Mississippi Case Management Consortium
Mississippi Center for Education
Mississippi Center for Justice
Mississippi Department of Education
Mississippi Department of Health
Mississippi Department of Human Services
Mississippi Department of Medicaid
Mississippi Department of Mental Health

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
Mississippi Division of Public Safety Planning
Mississippi Education Innovation
Mississippi Health and Advocacy Program
Mississippi Health Care Association
Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning
Mississippi Non-profits
Mississippi Office of Highway Safety
North Mississippi Medical Center
Office of Research and Economic Development
Mississippi State Department of Health, Office of Tobacco Control
Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi
Preusser Research Group, Inc.
Southern Research Group
University of Mississippi Medical Center

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An annual report is a document that reflects accomplishments, efforts, and achievements of its people over the previous year. After 65 years, the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) is still carving pathways and setting trends by conducting word-class research that is relevant to current issues. Congratulations to the colleagues whose work and accomplishments appear in the pages of the 2015 Annual Report.

The 2015 Annual Report is unique in that it is almost completely written and produced by undergraduate students. This report is a direct reflection of the quality of education that students receive at Mississippi State University, as well as of their individual talents and motivations.

A very special thank you to **Ms. Amber Stewart**, a senior Communication major, who was the lead designer and editor for the 2015 Annual Report. She spent countless hours developing the concept and layout, as well as coordinating the input of all information and writing her own feature story. This report wouldn't be possible without her efforts.

Each student in the MCL made significant contributions to this report, including conducting interviews, writing feature stories, photography, and spending hours proofreading. Thanks to **Mr. Devin Dedeaux**, **Ms. Kelly Ford**, **Mr. Adam Sullivan**, and **Ms. Elizabeth Tewolde**, all Communication majors, for their contributions.

Finally, a special thank you to **Dr. Arthur Cosby** and **Dr. Laura Walton**, both of whom helped create this great environment that is the Media Collaboration Laboratory (MCL). Their ability to visualize how this lab could contribute to the SSRC's world-class research has created an important resource that both educates and provides practical experience to undergraduate and graduate students.

Alan Burns, MPPA
Interim Coordinator, Media Collaboration Laboratory



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