

# 2000-2001 Year in Review

## Southern Rural Development Center

**Meeting the challenges of the rural South through  
land-grant research and outreach education**



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## From the Director

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This past year has brought about some dramatic shifts in many areas of the rural South. While the good economic times of the 1990s appeared to be making its presence felt in many of the region's rural places, recent downswings in the economy are translating into hardship for many rural people, families and communities in the region. At the same time, the 2000 population census information makes quite clear that the South has witnessed dramatic growth in its population, particularly among its racial and ethnic minorities. These demographic changes have challenged many communities to find solutions on how to provide services to an expanding and diversifying population. Accompanying this dramatic growth has been increased attention and concern regarding how best to manage, in a sustainable manner, the region's most precious natural resources.

These are only a handful of the many challenges that have taken center stage in a number of Southern communities during the past year. While solutions to these major challenges may be hard to come by, there is no doubt that the talents and ingenuity of local people, organizations and institutions can find the answers that best fit their unique needs. The region's land-grant institutions are a major resource that can work with communities along each step of the way. As generators of science-based information on rural people, families and communities, land-grant researchers and educators can offer communities state-of-the-art information and outreach education programs that can help communities make sound decisions about those strategies that make most sense for their localities.

The 2000-2001 SRDC annual report is symbolic of the capacity of the 29 land-grant universities in the South to respond to critical issues in the region. While it showcases the variety of activities that the SRDC has been engaged in over the past fiscal year, it really is a testimony to the large number of people within our land-grant system who have demonstrated a commitment to making a difference in the lives of rural Southerners. They have done so through their investments in research, extension and policy analysis. The annual report is also a reflection of the number of SRDC and land-grant university partners who have agreed that moving the rural South forward is a challenge that must be faced together as a team. To them, we express our thanks for believing in our mission and priority goals for the region.

As always, we welcome your thoughts about the Center's work and the research and outreach education needs that the Center may need to consider in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bo Beaulieu". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bo Beaulieu

# Mission and Goals

## Goals

The Southern Rural Development Center seeks to strengthen the capacity of the region's 29 land-grant institutions to address critical contemporary rural development issues impacting the well-being of people and communities in the rural South. SRDC goals include:

- ◆ Stimulate the formation of multi-state research teams;
- ◆ Coordinate the development and revision of educational materials and maintain a centralized repository of educational resources;
- ◆ Organize and deliver high priority e-based rural development policy reports;
- ◆ Build partnerships that link the South's land-grant university system with other key entities committed to rural development activities in the region.

## Priorities

- Priority Issue 1. Strengthen the engagement of rural people and organizations in the civic life of their communities.
- Priority Issue 2. Promote sound rural economic and workforce development strategies that improve job quality and the competitiveness of workers in the rural South.
- Priority Issue 3. Assist rural communities in developing sound strategies for addressing the challenges associated with the expansion of urban and suburban localities into rural areas.
- Priority Issue 4. Expand efforts to improve health care access in the rural South, and explore strategies for reducing the prevalence of food insecurity and hunger among the region's most vulnerable rural populations.
- Priority Issue 5. Explore the prevalence of a "digital divide" among various populations and communities in the South, and assist in the development of educational programs that advance the information technology capacity of rural people and places.

## Institutions Served

### Alabama

Alabama A&M University  
Auburn University  
Tuskegee University

### Arkansas

University of Arkansas  
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff

### Florida

Florida A&M University  
University of Florida

### Georgia

Fort Valley State University  
University of Georgia

### Kentucky

Kentucky State University  
University of Kentucky

### Louisiana

Louisiana State University  
Southern University

### Mississippi

Alcorn State University  
Mississippi State University

### North Carolina

North Carolina A&T State University  
North Carolina State University

### Oklahoma

Langston University  
Oklahoma State University

### Puerto Rico

University of Puerto Rico

### South Carolina

Clemson University  
South Carolina State University

### Tennessee

Tennessee State University  
University of Tennessee

### Texas

Prairie View A&M University  
Texas A&M University

### Virgin Islands

University of the Virgin Islands

### Virginia

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Virginia State University

## Research Investments

### Food Assistance Research Small Grants Program

The Southern Rural Development Center, in partnership with the USDA's Economic Research Service, is funding innovative, scholarly projects that explore food assistance issues among vulnerable populations in the rural South. Proposals chosen for funding emphasize rural people, families and communities in the South.

#### ◆ Grant recipients for 2001

The fourth year of the SRDC food assistance research small grants program generated the highest number of proposals ever received as part of this program. Using an excellent cadre of food assistance and nutrition research experts to review all proposals, the following represent those research initiatives that were deemed to be of high quality by the team of research scientists. Work on these activities began October 2001.

#### **The Arkansas Child and Adult Care Food Program: A Study of Factors Associated with Program Participation**

**Richard Huddleston and Yetty Shobo, Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families**

This study is examining participation rates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), one of the mainstays in federal nutrition assistance programs for low-income children. The program is unique among federal nutrition assistance because the participation of children in the program is strongly influenced by whether child care providers choose to participate in the program. To date, little research has been conducted on factors associated with provider choices about whether or not to participate in the CACFP. This study is exploring a range of factors that might be associated with nonparticipation in the CACFP program, including program and operational characteristics of child care providers (program size, staffing, participation in other federal programs, etc.); the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the counties in which providers are located; and attitudinal differences among providers (awareness of the CACFP program, provider perceptions of program reporting requirements, relationships with state agency personnel, etc.). Using the insights gleaned from this analysis, the study will identify strategies that might be used to increase participation rates among child care providers, thereby increasing the participation of low-income children in the program.

#### **Community Capacity and Food Insecurity in the Era of Welfare Reform**

**Domenico Parisi and Duane A. Gill, Mississippi State University**

This project has three objectives: (1) Determine strategies used by the state of Mississippi to implement the food stamp program; (2) Determine the extent to which the exit of clients is due to a disparity between the state's administration and the client's perceptions of the program; and (3) Determine community capacity to cope with state requirements and the needs of local low-income populations. Ethnographic interview techniques are being used to meet these objectives. Specifically, two case study communities are being selected and used to identify factors that promote or thwart community capacity as it relates to food security. Data are being collected from individuals involved with designing and implementing Mississippi's food stamp program as well as key-action informants and food stamp clients from each case study community. Analysis of the data will help to determine the extent to which changes in welfare policy impact food stamp participation and food security.

#### **Contextual Determinants of Food Security in Southern Hispanic and African-American Neighborhoods**

**Margaret E. Bentley, Soyna Jones and Janice Dodds, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

While prevalence of food insecurity and hunger is falling in the general population, a disproportionate number of African-American and Hispanic households report the experience of food insecurity with moderate to severe hunger. In the Southern U.S., African-American and Hispanic households may face greater institutional and cultural barriers to food security compared to other Southern populations. In Durham County, N.C., there is the unique opportunity to develop an ecological model of the barriers to food security in rural and urban area and in minority populations. Based on our results of a Geographic Information System (GIS) study of food accessibility in the 163 census block groups of Durham County, we are conducting a comparative case study of eight minority neighbor-

hoods in both the rural and urban areas of Durham County. This study is adapting qualitative and participatory research methods to conduct key informant interviews and 'photo novella' focus group interviews in each neighborhood. We are inviting participants to document their own household food security. By sampling the extremes of variability of food and food assistance accessibility and focusing on groups that are equally vulnerable to household food insecurity for potentially distinct reasons, we anticipate that results will provide important local and national policy and program implications. In particular, the data from this study will be useful to the Food Stamp Program, the Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children, and the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. Our methods will allow program recipients to describe, in their own words and with photographs that have meaning to them, what it means to be a minority household that is defined as 'food insecure'.

### **Food Insecurity and Hunger Among Homebound Older Adults in the Rural South**

**Mary Anne Salmon, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

This project is designed to study hunger and nutritional risk among a group that is vulnerable to hunger, poor nutrition and loss of food security – those who are elderly; unable, due to physical or cognitive limitations, to obtain and/or prepare meals for themselves; and on a waiting list for home-delivered meals services because of the inadequate resources of that program. The project team is conducting telephone interviews with 150 homebound older adults who are on the waiting list for home-delivered meals in any of the five North Carolina counties that constitute one Area Agency on Aging (AAA) region. The sample is being chosen randomly from the waiting list after stratifying for urban or rural residence. Half are being chosen from each stratum to facilitate comparison of rural and urban risks and strategies. A combination of open-ended questions, guided dietary recall and fixed-choice questions will allow for the application of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Analysis will examine present nutritional status as a result of obtaining food, meal preparation/consumption and strategies to maintain food security. It is expected that the nutritional intake behaviors of these individuals will, in part, depend on underlying support from the respondents' own resources (self-care); informal supports such as family, neighbors and church; and formal support other than the home-delivered meals for which they are waiting. The project also is tracking the outcomes of all the people on the waiting list at project start-up to see what proportion begins receiving services, withdraws, dies, moves in with other family members or goes into residential care.

### **Food Stamp Receipt by Families with Noncitizen Householders in Rural Texas Counties**

**Steve H. Murdock, Tami Swenson and Steve White, Texas A&M University**

The broad scope of welfare reform in 1996 severely constricted the availability of many social services, such as Food Stamps, for immigrants. Texas and several other states quickly moved to restore Food Stamp benefits to elderly immigrants while other reforms at the federal level have since restored benefits of some programs for immigrant children as well as elderly and disabled immigrants. The net result is a "patchwork" of federal and state policies with differing rules for various programs determining eligibility of immigrants for programs comprising the social safety net. Given that an estimated 10 percent of families with children in the U.S. are mixed-status families (i.e., a family in which one or more parents is a noncitizen and one or more children is a citizen), the ramifications of these restrictions do not simply affect the intended individuals but result in constraints on the family as a whole. Within the 196 nonmetropolitan counties in Texas, there has been a 59.8 percent decline in the number of families with a noncitizen householder receiving Food Stamps from September 1995 through February 2001. This research is exploring the patterns of receipt and demographic characteristics of this set of Food Stamp families during the six-year period from September 1995 through August 2001, thereby including both pre- and post-reform periods. Using a multilevel analysis framework, the extent to which the use decline of these Food Stamp cases decomposes into variance attributable to micro-level and macro-level components is examined.

### **Private Food Assistance in the Deep South: Agency Profiles and Directors' Perceptions of Needs and Opportunities under Charitable Choices**

**Suzie T. Cashwell, Patricia Duffy and Joe Molnar, Auburn University; and John P. Bartkowski, Mississippi State University**

Food Banks – centralized agencies that disburse foodstuffs to local pantries, shelters and meal programs – have emerged as key organizational actors in America's fight against food insecurity. Most existing research on food banking is comprised of localized studies that do not lend themselves to generalizable insights about this means of addressing food insecurity. Moreover, existing studies have not given sufficient attention to the way in which new opportunities brought about through the expansion of faith-based initiatives might affect food banks. Although survey research has begun to examine some aspects of charitable choice partnerships, food assistance has not been well addressed in these studies. In particular, more research is needed on the challenges of implementing such incentives in rural areas, particularly those located in the South. This study will explore how directors of food bank affiliate pantries in the Deep South evaluate their organizational challenges and assess the prospects for partnering with state agencies in their food provision efforts. The plan is to collect primary survey data from a sample of 600 randomly selected directors throughout Alabama and Mississippi. Our survey will measure resource availability, organizational linkage, and client characteristics among private food banks. Our exploration also will yield aggregate portraits of the background characteristics,



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social attitudes and practical skills of the leaders of local food banks. Our investigation will give special attention to the components and challenges of food provision in rural regions of these states. The results will be of value to policy makers in both states and throughout the South. Given the current expansion of charitable choice and the challenges of welfare reform, policymakers need to familiarize themselves with the impact of local food banks to partner with them effectively.

### **Assessing the Relationship Between Food Insecurity Events and Food Assistance Programs in Two Different Public Housing Communities**

**Mesfin Bezuneh and Zelealem Yiheyis, Clark Atlanta University**

In spite of the long period of economic growth and relatively low unemployment that characterized the U.S. economy over the previous decade, food insufficiency and hunger continue to affect certain segments of the population at the household and individual levels. As food insufficiency is recognized to pose long-lasting challenge to nutrition, health and social policy (as expressed in the Congressional Act of 1990), researchers both at public and private institutions have recently exhibited renewed and growing interest in its measurement and explanation in the context of the United States. The proposed research is part of such an effort. More specifically, the purpose is to investigate the temporal relationship between food insecurity events/timing of hunger and food stamp and other food assistance receipts. It is true that families whose major source of income is public assistance often face food stress one time or the other during the year, but how often do such events take place? When does it occur? For how long does it occur? How severe is it? And, what are the most common coping strategies? The Food Security Core Module, which is now accepted as a standard method of measuring household food insecurity and hunger in the United States, will be used to assess households residing in two different public housing communities. The result of this research project will continue to both documenting the timing and severity of hunger among food assistance recipients and validating the instrument of household food-security module. It will also serve as the first tracking step/instrument of the effects of the rapidly changing policies in food assistance programs and public housing facilities.

### **◆ Grant recipients for 2000**

The following five projects received SRDC funding in October 2000. Final reports were submitted to the Center in December 2001. Persons who may be interested in reading a detailed report on any of these studies may wish to access the SRDC website to gain access to the complete report.

### **Assessing Food Security and Related Welfare Reform Outcomes in Two Southern States**

**Pamela A. Monroe and Carol E. O'Neil, Louisiana State University; and Janet Marsh, Clemson University**

The purpose of this project was to advance our knowledge and understanding of food security issues as they relate to welfare reform in two Southern states. Findings show that the overwhelming majority of study participants in both the Louisiana and South Carolina populations have poor diets, despite the fact that few of them report food insecurity or hunger. In many cases, their diet reflects heavy emphasis on fats and dependence on fast foods, with little variety or inclusion of fresh fruits or vegetables and virtually no dairy products. Many of the women in these studies are approaching an age when early, multiple pregnancies, poor diet or drug or alcohol abuses, will begin to take a toll on their bodies and their health. Although both populations had a high prevalence of overweight and obesity, the SC due to a combination of resource cycling, poor food choices, lack of physical activity and attitude to weight or weight gain. Nutrition-related chronic diseases, like Type 2 diabetes mellitus, coronary heart disease and hypertension disproportionately effect low-income women; obesity is often a co-morbid condition. For many women, these chronic conditions are left untreated or are treated intermittently when there is some crisis. The women's lack of health care coverage will surely loom large as their health history, poor nutrition, lack of available nutrition education and other environmental stressors conspire to undermine their long-term physical well being.

### **A Structural Model of the Relationships of Food Insufficiency to Disease Risk and Outcomes Among Adults from NHANES III**

**Carol Lawson Connell and Kathy Yadrick, The University of Southern Mississippi; and L. Joseph Su, Louisiana State University**

The purpose of this study was to develop and test a model for relationships among food insufficiency, diet quality, cardiovascular disease risks, and outcomes among adults residing in the southern region and participating in the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III). The model was derived from Campbell's conceptual framework of the risk factors for and consequences of food insufficiency. The study design was descriptive correlational. Subjects were nonpregnant, nonlactating adults aged 18 and older who participated in NHANES III, had complete data for all study variables, and resided in the southern region of the U.S. Three sets of latent constructs were identified for this study that would most closely correspond to Campbell's conceptual framework.

These latent constructs were (1) health behaviors, (2) CVD risks and (3) CVD outcomes. Independent variables for food insufficiency and diet quality were included in the structural model as well as socio-demographic variables known to be associated with food insufficiency and diet quality. Results indicated those with low income, those with low education level, nonwhite and female would be more likely to report food insufficiency than those of opposite demographic and economic characteristics. Future research should focus on assessing correlations among the indicator variables to better define future structural models of relationships of food insufficiency to cardiovascular disease risks and outcomes. In addition, we suggest that future research should assess the direct and indirect effects of the indicators on the end outcome of CVD. Assessment of these effects may suggest areas of future investigation in cardiovascular disease prevention and/or management.

### **Food Stamp Dynamics Across Rural and Urban Landscapes in the Era of Welfare Reform**

**Domenico Parisi and Duane A. Gill, Mississippi State University**

This project went beyond prior theory by integrating the influence of individual, place and geographic setting characteristics on food stamp dynamics into a single model. The cumulative probability of exiting food stamps shows that the period between the first month and the thirteenth month, following the passage of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act, was the most critical time for recipients to exit. Such effect continued throughout the second year, at the end of which the probability leveled out, though white recipients and recipients situated in metro areas experienced a higher probability of exit than their rural counterparts. Results of a logistic regression analysis showed that, in Mississippi, middle-aged, African-American mothers were less likely to exit food stamps than their counterparts. The results also indicated that the context in which the recipients are situated determines the extent to which individuals can leverage their personal attributes to exit food stamps. Specifically, poor labor market characteristics, low local civic capacity and communities with low activeness reduced the likelihood of recipients exiting the food stamp program. Most importantly, recipients situated in rural settings were always less likely to exit than those in metropolitan settings.

### **A County-level Analysis of Food Stamp Caseload Changes in Tennessee**

**Fisseha Tegegne, Tennessee State University**

This study is based on county-level administrative data on food stamp case load and unemployment obtained from the Tennessee Departments of Human Services and Employment Security respectively. In addition, data from the Regional Economic Information System on some county characteristics was used. A regression model, in which case load change was the dependent variable, was estimated. Results show that unemployment rate, and growth in retail jobs were important determinants of caseload changes. As expected, high unemployment rates had a negative impact on caseload decline indicating that in times of economic difficulty people would stay in the program rather than leave and vice versa. This finding is consistent with the general trend of caseload change for the country over the years. Growth in retail jobs was found to have the effect of reducing caseload. This was explained by the fact that given their education and skill levels, the vast majority of recipients found jobs in the secondary labor market. In contrast, growth in wage and salary jobs, found in the primary labor markets, did not lead to decline in case load due to lack of qualifications by recipients for such jobs. The above results, which are expected to be useful for researchers and policy makers, underscore the importance of focusing on the local labor market and the segment in which recipients find jobs. They also indicate the need to promote job creation in areas where opportunities have been limited. In addition, education and training programs should be expanded to enhance the skills of recipients. This is critical to enable them have access to jobs in the primary labor market that pay better, provide benefits and have the potential for stability as well as vertical mobility.

### **Measuring Food Insecurity and Hunger and Its Affect on Health**

#### **Among Participants in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program in Tennessee**

**Betty Greer, University of Tennessee**

Healthful diets are essential for optimal growth, productivity, well-being and a reduction in the risk for certain chronic diseases. In keeping with the national commitment to increase self-reliance of low-income individuals, it is important to assist food-insecure individuals manage their food budgets economically and effectively to ensure the welfare of the entire family. Findings associated with this research reveal that participation in nutrition education programs (such as basic nutrition, food resource management and basic cooking skills) help reduce food insecurity. Furthermore, subjects who are food insecure have poorer health status than food secure subjects. Subjects who had completed one or fewer lessons in the EFNEP program were almost two times more likely to be food insecure compared to subjects who had completed two or more lessons. This evidence supports the achievement of the EFNEP behavioral objective of the participant's running out of food less often. In the Tennessee EFNEP report for November 11, 2000, 40 percent of program participants at entry compared to 23 percent of participants at graduation from the EFNEP program, said they sometimes or often ran out of food before the end of the month. The EFNEP families at graduation also had increased intakes of protein, iron, calcium, vitamin A, vitamin C and vitamin B6 and a reduction in total caloric intake. In sum, the study's findings support the need for multi-session nutrition education for low-income households, focusing on teaching basic nutrition, food shopping and cooking skills. The impacts of such programs can be increased food security for participants, better health and more efficient use of food resources.



### ◆ New Policy Series on “The Food Assistance Needs of the South’s Vulnerable Populations”

The SRDC has initiated a new policy series, in partnership with the Farm Foundation and the Economic Research Service, that highlights significant findings associated with projects funded by the Center since 1999 as part of its food assistance research small grants program. These briefs present in nontechnical language, research results that could be useful to people and organizations outside the academic community. Each report offers insight on the programmatic and policy implications associated with each SRDC funded project. The series is being distributed in hard-copy to land-grant and non-land-grant administrators and faculty, federal and state agency personnel, Congressional representatives and staffers from the 13 states served by the SRDC and other interested individuals. Electronic versions of each report are available on the SRDC website as well. One report has been released to date, with four more scheduled to be completed early in FY2002.

### Sustainable Communities Innovation Grants Program

The South is rapidly becoming a showcase of economic, technological and demographic change. While these shifts have allowed advances to be made in quality education, economic diversification and worker wages, they also have taxed the capacity of many communities to design strategies that can effectively ensure their long-term economic, social and environmental vitality. In order to promote community-based sustainable activities, the SSARE and the SRDC initiated the Sustainable Communities Innovation Grants Program. This effort is intended to invest seed funds in creative programs that build strong partnerships among local citizens, institutions and organizations. Such partnerships can be mobilized to pursue local strategies that promote sound farm and nonfarm economic development pursuits, that enhance the stewardship of the area’s environmental and natural resources, that provide avenues for expanding civic dialogue, that promote the nutritional well-being of individuals and families and that facilitate the development of viable local public policy activities. A call for proposals was announced September 2001 with final proposals due November 1, 2001. Selection of awardees will be completed in early 2002.

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# Research Initiated

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The SRDC staff was directly engaged in a variety of research activities over the course of the year. This section showcases some of these efforts.

## Rural School Initiatives

The SRDC, along with its sister regional rural development centers, worked in partnership with the Rural Schools and Community Trust Fund in organizing a meeting of researchers who were interested in rural education issues. The meeting was held March 12-13, 2001, in Kansas City, Mo. The meeting served to initiate a dialogue and promote research activities devoted to rural education. As an outgrowth of this meeting, the SRDC has joined forces with the Economic Research Service in planning a national conference that will highlight important advances being made in rural education research in the U.S.

## Assessing the Implementation of the Food Stamp Programs in the U.S.

The SRDC has received funding from the Rockefeller Foundation to initiate two case studies in Mississippi. This project is part of a multi-state, multi-site research effort being coordinated by the Institute. In partnership with colleagues in Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center (SSRC), the SRDC/SSRC team is examining the implementation of Mississippi's welfare reform and food stamp programs at the state and county levels. The intent is to better understand what low income populations are being served as a result of changes that were introduced into the state's public assistance programs in 1996. A second related study is designed to examine the extent to which the family formation goals that were incorporated in the landmark 1996 welfare reform legislation in the nation are being effectively carried out in Mississippi. Family formation goals are designed to promote the idea that children should be born and cared for by married couples. Both studies are to be completed in Spring 2002.

## Rural Labor Markets

Lionel J. Beaulieu and David Freshwater served as guest editors of two volumes of the "Southern Rural Sociology" journal. The twin issues of the journal focused on "Southern Rural Labor Markets." In particular, the 14 articles gave attention to the changing complexion of the rural South's economy. Together, the two volumes delved more deeply into the workforce demands of employers, particularly with respect to the education, training and skills required of workers. Moreover, they sought to assess the human resource capabilities of the region's current and emerging workforce. In so doing, the articles provided an important basis for determining the extent to which rural workers in the South are positioned to become active players in the new economy of the world, or whether they are destined to a life of economic insecurity.

## The Role of Social Capital in Promoting the Educational Success of Youth

The SRDC director has continued to devote attention to research designed to explore the role that social capital has on promoting educational aspirations and attainment of rural youth. Over the past year, two articles have been published in refereed journals that showcased some of the findings of this research.

It is increasingly recognized that families and communities are important in helping youth develop the knowledge and skills needed to secure good jobs. In an article published in the March 2001 issue of "Rural Sociology," Glenn D. Israel, Lionel J. Beaulieu and Glen Hartless explored more fully the role of community social capital in influencing educational performance beyond that attributed to family social capital. Using data from the National Education Longitudinal Survey (NELS), the researchers found that attributes of the community are important in helping youth excel, although their impacts are less sizable than those provided by the family. The findings suggest that policies designed to promote educational achievement must extend beyond the school and must seek to strengthen social capital in the family and the community.

In a 2001 issue of the "Journal of Socio-Economics," the SRDC director, along with colleagues Glenn D. Israel, Glen Hartless and Patricia Dyk, examined the set of factors within the home, school and community that serve to promote or impede academic progress among U.S. students. The major focus was on the nature, presence and strength of social capital available to students within these three social environments. Results indicated that the factor that plays the most significant role in affecting academic achievement is what happens in the home. Ironically, family policy is rarely considered in any meaningful discussion, debate or legislative activity related to student performance. With regard to schools and communities, both contributed modestly to academic success. Findings do suggest, however, that the presence of a caring community and nurturing teachers are important ingredients in promoting the successful development of young individuals.

### **Educated Workforce, Quality Jobs: Still Elusive Goals in the Rural South**

Appearing in the February 2001 issue of "Rural America," this research article noted that adult rural Southerners have made remarkable progress in improving their educational status during the past decade. But, quality jobs requiring college-educated workers remains more a dream than a reality in the rural South. The most rapidly growing segments of the economy of the rural South are paying wages and salaries that are well below those paid to metro-based Southerners. As a consequence, the gap in average earnings has widened between metro and nonmetro workers of the region over the course of the 1990s. Projected job expansion over the 1996-2005 period offers little hope for improvement. The majority of such jobs will demand persons with no more than a terminal high school education and some on-the-job training.

The article concluded that a significant effort must be made to build the human capital resources of the rural South. This will involve: (1) improving the educational status of rural residents, especially among the expanding group of minorities who have had the least success in securing decent educations; (2) embracing the high road in terms of economic development activities, one that is far less interested in capturing any jobs and more concerned about securing quality jobs for rural workers; (3) equipping families and communities with tools to positively influence educational and occupational dreams of their children; and (4) reawakening citizens' engagement in shaping the future of their communities. Each of these elements will be challenging in its own right. But, it is critical that we have the resolve to move ahead on these efforts if we hope to truly ensure the economic and social vitality of the rural South over the long term.

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## Educational Workshops & Conferences

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### **Sustainable Development: Building Communities**

**October 10-12, 2000, Nashville, Tennessee**

This regional conference was held October 10-12 in Nashville, Tennessee, with nearly 110 participants. All states of the region were represented, plus two states from other regions. Participants were from various aspects of Extension including county, area, and state personnel from all program areas. The conference was very much a working session to share successful program ideas and discuss future program directions. Evaluations were very positive and plans are being made for state by state activities follow-up. A list serve of participants has been set up with the group being provided many of the PowerPoint presentations, roundtable discussions, and more. Curtis Absher, ANR Leader from Kentucky, and Ed Jones, CRD Leader from North Carolina, served as co-chairs with support from the Southern Rural Development Center.

Many states have had follow-up activities to incorporate lessons learned from their conference in their individual state activities. Oklahoma has initiated a thrust entitled, "Healthy Communities." The effort includes staff in-service training, web presence, and a weekly television presence.

### **Strengthening Our Community: Building Our Future**

**October 26-27, 2000, Tunica, Mississippi**

The Southern Rural Development Center convened a second workshop involving five counties in the northwest Delta region of Mississippi. The conference was held October 26-27, in Tunica, Miss. The workshop focused on the topics of business retention and expansion, workforce preparation, home-based and micro business development, tourism development, youth entrepreneurship and youth engagement in local community improvement activities. Local leaders from the five-county area took part in this effort with partial support from the Community Development Society.

### **Strengthening the Rural-Urban Connection**

**November 9-11, 2000, Eufala, Alabama**

The Southern Rural Development Center worked in partnership with the Heartland Center to host a meeting addressing youth issues across rural and urban areas. Three states were engaged in this process (Alabama, Florida and Georgia). Three background research pieces were prepared, and the Heartland Center and the SRDC will jointly publish these materials. The intent of the meeting was to bring key leaders working with youth together to discuss differences and similarities of issues affecting young people within rural and urban settings. Mini-grants were provided to the three state teams in hopes of further enhancing the rural and urban dialogue.

### **E-Commerce (SERA-16-Rural Infrastructure)**

**January 27-28, 2001, Fort Worth, Texas**

The SRDC supported the Southern Extension Research Activity-16 (SERA-16) by convening a one-day session during the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists (SAAS) meetings. About 20 people from across the South participated in a discussion that focused on electronic commerce and the challenges and opportunities for Extension and Research. Many of the papers and discussion moved the e-Commerce agenda forward in the South.

### **1890 Food Assistance Research Team**

**February 12-13, 2001, Atlanta**

For the past two years, the SRDC has provided resources to a team of researchers from six 1890 land-grant institutions for the purpose of advancing their applied research activities associated with food assistance issues in the South. In order to promote the development of a common research protocol to be employed in the six-state study, the SRDC hosted a workshop of the 1890 multi-state research team to facilitate the completion of the research instrumentation, data collection timelines and data management procedures. The 1890 research team's study is intended to shed some light on the use of food banks by low-income populations located in rural and urban areas of the South.

### **Building Tomorrow's Workforce: A Focus on Southern Youth**

**February 21-23, 2001, Gulfport, Mississippi**

The diversity of youth in the South presents opportunities and challenges for parents, community leaders and professionals in the youth development field. To equip today's youth for success in tomorrow's workplace requires unified, innovative cooperation among businesses, educators, community leaders, parents and youth. Extension professionals and volunteers have an important role in the development of youth "assets" in the South. The conference was designed to help communities make the leap forward in preparing their communities and their youth for economic and workforce development by having a team from participating communities come and learn together. As a team, participants were provided with a variety of ideas and resources to start new strategies to identify and develop assets in their community. The National 4-H Council, the SRDC, and the Appalachian Regional Commission worked in partnership to host this conference. The UPS Foundation provided financial support for the conference.

### **Maximizing Organizational Effectiveness Through Middle Managers**

**April 2-5, 2001, Gainesville, Florida**

About 90 middle managers from throughout the Southern region participated in a biannual in-service training in Gainesville, Fla., in April 2001. Because of the work the Southern Rural Development Center does with the Southern PLC, the SRDC staff provided logistical support for this meeting.

### **Exploring Food Assistance Research Issues**

**April 26-27, 2001, Mississippi State University**

The long-term vitality of the SRDC's food assistance research program is dependent upon the Center's ability to engage a new pool of social scientists in investigating critical food assistance issues impacting the South. In order to do so, the SRDC teamed up with Economic Research Service staff to organize a food assistance research workshop in the South. The workshop was attended by past recipients of the Center's small grants program, coupled with faculty having potential interest in pursuing research on food assistance-related topics. The intent of the workshop was to showcase major national food assistance data that are available for use by university researchers, to discuss the major food assistance research priorities of the Economic Research Service, to describe the small grants food assistance research program of the Southern Rural Development Center, and to highlight past small grant projects funded by the SRDC. Nearly 30 researchers took part in this workshop and many did submit a formal proposal in response to the SRDC's 2001 food assistance research request for proposals.

### **Southern Region Community Development Institute**

**May 14-18, 2001, New Braunfels, Texas**

The 2001 Institute attracted 47 participants, the largest group ever in attendance for the weeklong program. Drawing upon the expertise of 13 land-grant faculty from across the Southern region, participants were introduced to a number of key community development-related topics, including community planning, exploring the social infrastructure of a community, sustainable development principles, dealing with local conflict, community asset mapping, engaging new audiences to take part in community improvement activities, economic development options (i.e., home-based businesses, retention and expansion efforts, e-business options) and the economic feasibility of providing key local services. The Institute remains one of the most important vehicles for expanding the interest of state, district and county Extension educators in undertaking community development programming in their states.

### **Building Quality Communities of Tomorrow... Today, Southern PLC**

**August 25-28, 2001, Savannah, Georgia**

The objectives of this annual conference of Southern region program leaders is to increase communication and planning among Extension program leaders in the South, to develop a common understanding among these leaders of program planning in the South, to improve Extension programs through the sharing of ideas and resources and the planning of regional action, and to identify new issues of importance to the South and implications for current and future programs. Each year the planning committee focuses on a specific topic of importance to the Extension system in the Southern region. The 2001 meeting focused on efforts to build quality communities. All general sessions provided keynote speakers who illustrated specific ways to build quality communities.

## E-Commerce: Impacting the Way We Do Business

October 1-2, 2001, Nashville, Tennessee

A two-day workshop was planned by the SRDC, with leadership provided by Beth Duncan from Mississippi State University Extension Service. The conference, co-sponsored by the Farm Foundation, will provide participants with an awareness and overview of e-Commerce issues relating to communities, agribusiness and small businesses through three concurrent educational tracks – e-Community, e-Agriculture and e-Business. The conference will bring together Extension professionals from the Southern region and beyond to learn about resources, curriculum, information and experiences related to e-commerce. These resources will be drawn from Extension programs across the country and from the private sector.

## Southern Extension Health Institute

October 15-19, 2001, Lancaster, Kentucky

The inaugural Institute held in 2000 proved so successful that the SRDC and the conference advisory committee were asked to repeat this important workshop in 2001. This training conference, slated to take place in the next SRDC fiscal year, will provide Extension educators with a unique opportunity to participate in an intensive state-of-the-art health training program. The workshop will provide participants with an increased understanding of health systems, Extension's role in health, and tools and strategies for working with individual, family and community health issues.

## Southern Institute of Rural Development (SIRD)

November 5-8, 2001, Athens, Georgia

The SRDC is joining forces with the University of Georgia's Office of Economic Development Assistance, the USDA Forest Service (Southern Region) and USDA Rural Development in the development and delivery of an in-depth workshop on rural development for professionals who are actively involved in rural development work at the local, multi-county, state and regional levels in the Southern region. The upcoming conference will focus on two key topics – expansion of economic development opportunities and the broadening of citizen involvement in shaping the future of rural communities.

## Mississippi Leaders: Building Tomorrow ... Today

November 19, 2001—Hattiesburg, Mississippi

November 28, 2001—Greenville, Mississippi

November 29, 2001—Meridian, Mississippi

Working in partnership with MDC, Inc., located in Chapel Hill, N.C., SRDC and MDC have secured funding from three foundations to support a series of regional dialogues that will involve community leaders from across the state of Mississippi. With financial support being provided by the Lower Pearl River Foundation, the Hardin Foundation and the Maddox Foundation, the SRDC/MDC team will be organizing a one-day workshop at three sites in Mississippi. The intent is to give attention to the highly regarded "State of the South" report produced by MDC, and to examine the opportunities and challenges that this regional report poses for Mississippi, particularly with regard to current and projected shifts in the global economy, the increasing diversity of the region's population, the increasing call for skilled workers, and major advances being made in information technologies.

## From the Mail box

"You all did an excellent job organizing and running this meeting... Thumbs up! I would recommend this to everyone involved in community development."

**Orlando Flores**  
Texas Agricultural  
Extension Service,  
CDI Participant

"This year's CDI gets an A in my book."

**Curtis Absher**  
University of Kentucky  
Cooperative Extension Service,  
CDI Participant



# Educational Workshops & Conferences

14

Year in Review

**Figure 1: Education Conferences, Workshops and Seminars Attendance by State**

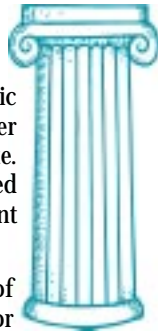
Conference	Date	Location	AL	AR	FL	GA	KY	LA	MS	NC	OK	PR	SC	TN	TX	VA	VI	Other	Total
1890 Food Assistance Research	Feb. 12-13	Atlanta, GA	2	1					3					2					8
Building Tomorrow's Work Force	Feb. 21-23	Gulfport, MS	5	2		4	9	7	19		1			7	9	6			69
SERA-19	Mar. 7-9	Nashville, TN	3				2		4	1	2			1					13
Maximizing Organizational Effectiveness	Apr. 2-5	Gainesville, FL	1	9	16	6	15	3	14	10	5		6	5	7	3		2	102
Exploring Food Assistance Research Issues	Apr. 26-27	Mississippi State, MS	5				2	2	10	2			2	1			1	3	28
Community Development Institute	May 14-18	New Braunfels, TX			3		9	5	3	2	3			7	9	6			47
Building Quality Communities of Tomorrow...Today	Aug. 25-28	Savannah, GA	14	9	18	18	22	9	19	16	10	2	15	9	14	10			185
Sustainable Development	Oct. 10-12	Nashville, TN	3	1	4	4	14	5	13	6	6		4	26	3	5		3	106
Strengthening Our Community	Oct. 26-27	Tunica, MS					1		63		1								65
Strengthening the Rural-Urban Connection	Nov. 9-11	Eufala, AL	10		4	12	1		3									6	36
Total Participants			43	22	45	44	75	31	151	37	28	2	37	58	42	30	1	13	659

# Training Curriculum a

## Community Choices: Public Policy Education Program

A complete revision of the Community Choices curricula was undertaken in FY2001. More recent socioeconomic data were incorporated into many of the modules, and new “hands on” activities were provided for a select number of modules. To date, six of the seven modules that are part of this curricula have been placed on the SRDC website. Included on the website is an instructor’s guide for each module, a background document that presents a detailed discussion of the topic, small group exercises that build on the information presented in the background document and a PowerPoint presentation that highlights key information contained in the background document.

The purpose of the Community Choices program is to strengthen residents’ understanding of the complex set of policy issues associated with human-capital resources and economic-development options, to provide a forum for exploring alternative strategies for dealing with these issues, and to clarify potential impacts associated with these various policy alternatives. The guiding principle of this educational initiative is that better policy decisions are likely to be realized at the local level when an active and informed citizenry is involved in the process.



## Ca\$hing in on Business Opportunities



The Ca\$hing in on Business Opportunities Curriculum is designed to be used by educators who work with home-based and micro businesses. The curriculum is comprehensive, covering a wide array of topics of interest to current or potential business owners. Each chapter follows a basic format consisting of a leader’s guide, (with goals and objectives, a narrative, handouts and transparency masters). The curriculum is intended to be used in a variety of educational ways, including: as a reference tool for educators and entrepreneurs; as a single topic short course (covering only one chapter); as a multi-topic workshop (covering several chapters); as a comprehensive course (covering all 23 chapters) or whatever is the most effective way to meet specific educational needs.

Extension educators are encouraged to adapt the information to meet the need of the clientele. Furthermore, the 23-chapter curricula is now available on CD-ROM.

## Public Conflict Resolution: Turning Lemons into Lemonade

A train-the-trainer tool for dealing with public conflicts was prepared by Ron Hustedde (University of Kentucky), Steve Smutko (North Carolina State University), and Jarad Kapsa (University of Kentucky). This effort, funded by the SRDC, was published as a web-based curricula this past year. It is designed to be taught and used primarily by Extension educators, community officials and citizen leaders. The basic goal of the manual is to give workshop participants the applicable knowledge and skills to help teach others how to identify, understand, manage, and when possible and desirable, to resolve conflicts within their own communities. The materials and the training sessions themselves are resources and guides. The curriculum is not to be taken as a map on how to educate people to deal with conflict. The concepts and skills are ones that training participants can adapt to meet the needs of their constituency. Training participants are encouraged to learn different ways for understanding the sources and forms of conflict and concrete skills for addressing it.

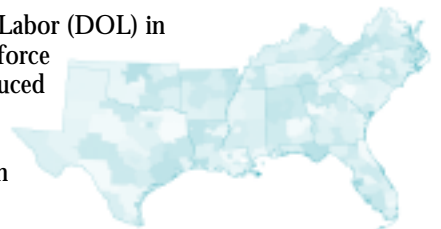


## Understanding the Local Health Care System (a video)

The Center, in cooperation with Mississippi State University Extension Service, has developed a video to be used by community groups in their efforts to better understand the health care system within the context of the community. The video is about 15 minutes and can be used at civic clubs to encourage dialogue around the health system needs of communities. The video was premiered at the Priester Conference, in Dallas. Copies of the video have been distributed widely throughout the South to all directors and administrators as well as FCS and CRD program leaders.

## Database on the South’s Workforce Investment Areas (WIAs)

The SRDC has worked in partnership with the Farm Foundation and the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) in creating a comprehensive database that provides valuable information on the 203 local workforce investment boards that have been created in the South. Over the past year, the SRDC has produced color-coded maps that outline the geographic boundaries of all the workforce investment areas (WIAs) in each of the region’s 13 states. In addition, key demographic and socioeconomic data for each the WIAs has been assembled. Both the maps and the databases have been



placed on the SRDC website. Brochures announcing the availability of these resources have been prepared and distributed to all state and local workforce investment boards in the South and to land-grant faculty involved in workforce development activities in their states. With support provided by the Mississippi Development Authority, additional data specific to the state of Mississippi have been added by each of the six WIAs in the state. These data include information on job layoffs and closures, projected growth and decline by occupations, and average earnings associated with various occupations. Availability of this important information resource was highlighted at the summer 2001 meeting of the Mississippi State Workforce Investment Board.

### **Building Civic-Minded Communities in the Rural South**

With financial assistance provided by the Farm Foundation, the SRDC has embarked on a new effort that is designed to strengthen the engagement of rural people and organizations in the civic life of their communities. A team of Extension specialists in the South has been assembled for the purpose of developing a comprehensive curriculum that will build on the products produced by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, namely the Take Charge resource materials. The team will be undertaking a major effort to update, refine and supplement the original Take Charge materials produced more than 10 years ago. When completed, these resources will be used by community development Extension educators to stimulate broader citizen involvement in local issues. This educational curriculum will be completed and released in FY2002.

### **Economic Development: Strategies and Options for Local Communities**

The SRDC has provided funding to Michael Woods, Oklahoma State University, to develop a new set of curricula that will examine economic development options that make sense for rural communities. This important effort, funded as part of the SRDC Senior Fellows program, will offer a holistic approach to economic development, addressing creation, attraction, retention and expansion efforts. It will include teacher's guides, background materials, handouts and PowerPoint presentations. The intended audience for using these materials will include Extension professionals and local leaders interested in community economic development. These materials are scheduled to be published summer 2002.

#### **Curricula in development**

- ✓ Economic Development: Options for Local Communities
  - ✓ Working with Nonprofit Organizations
- ✓ Building Civic Engagement: From Issues to Action

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# Policy Briefs, Newsletters & Media Releases

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## SRDC Publication Series

- ◆ Year in Review, 2000. SRDC Annual Report.
- ◆ Current Issues Associated with Land Values and Land Use Planning: Proceedings of a Regional Workshop. SERA-IEG-30, June 2001.

## Grant Connections

The SRDC staff compiles Grant Connections primarily for the faculty of land-grant colleges and universities in the South to provide funding information in support of activities in agricultural economics, education, human sciences, rural sociology, youth development and other related disciplines. During the past year, the Center published three issues of Grant Connections which contained a total of 33 grant opportunities.

## Southern Perspectives

This quarterly newsletter features a theme of regional interest in each issue. The newsletter is distributed to nearly 3,400 individuals in hard copy and to more than 600 electronically. The newsletter is also made available on the SRDC website in PDF format. Newsletter themes published during the past year included:

- ◆ **Risk Management, Volume 4, Number 4, Winter 2001.**  
Highlighted some key elements associated with risk management as it pertains to the opportunities and challenges of our nation's agricultural system.
- ◆ **Rural-Urban Interface, Volume 5, Number 1, Summer 2001.**  
Discussed issues that have emerged at the rural-urban fringe with the increase in the South's population.
- ◆ **Civic Engagement, Volume 5, Number 2, Fall 2001.**  
Related strategies for building successful communities based on greater levels of community involvement among individuals, businesses and other organizations.

## Food Assistance Needs of the South's Vulnerable Populations

The SRDC developed a new policy series to address issues surrounding the food assistance needs in the South. This special series is funded in part by the Economic Research Service and the Farm Foundation, in partnership with the Southern Rural Development Center.

- ◆ "Food Insufficiency and the Use of Food Assistance Programs in the South," Carol L. Connell, Kathy Yadrack and Agnes Hinton, University of Southern Mississippi, and Joseph Su, Louisiana State University Medical Center, No. 1, July 2001.

## The Rural South: Preparing for the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

The SRDC, along with its partnering sponsors, has continued to discuss the opportunities and challenges to the South's rural areas in the new century. The Economic Research Service, the Farm Foundation, the TVA Rural Studies Program at the University of Kentucky and the Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Directors helped provide financial support for this policy series. Policy briefs published during the last fiscal year include:

- ◆ The potential impact of e-commerce on the rural South: Will it equalize or deepen the digital divide? Beth Duncan and Virgil Culver, Mississippi State University, No. 14, November 2000.
- ◆ Animal waste management in the rural South, Saqib Mukhtar, Sam Feagley and B.L. Harris, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas A&M University, No. 15, December 2000.
- ◆ Home-based businesses: Implications for the rural economy of the South, Pamela J. Brown, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, and Glenn Muske, Oklahoma State University, No. 16, January 2001.
- ◆ Distance education: Taking classes to the students, Timothy Collins, private consultant, and Sarah Dewees, Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies, No. 17, February 2001.

## Year in Review

- ◆ Challenge and promise: Technology in the classroom, Timothy Collins, private consultant, and Sarah Dewees, Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies, No. 18, March 2001.
- ◆ Strengthening civic engagement in community decision-making, Betty S. King and Ron Hustedde, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, No. 19, May 2001.
- ◆ Forest-based economic development opportunities in the South, Bill Hubbard, Southern Regional Extension Forester, No. 20, July 2001.
- ◆ Household food security in the rural South: Assuring access to enough food for healthy lives, Mark Nord, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, No. 21, August 2001.
- ◆ The importance of manufacturing in the rural South, David A. McGranahan, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, No. 22, September 2001.

## News Releases

The Center released several news and feature articles about SRDC activities and land-grant research throughout the year to media outlets.

- ◆ “Managing urban growth can challenge rural areas,” October 2000  
The South is the nation’s fastest growing area, which means Southerners face urban growth issues more often than do communities elsewhere.
- ◆ “Former welfare recipients flood state job markets,” October 2000  
In a new study exploring the state’s future employment opportunities for people leaving welfare, a Mississippi State research scientist finds good and not-so-good news.
- ◆ “Home businesses are important to the South,” February 2001  
Economic development is high on the priority list across the South, but some experts believe a contributor to this success is being overlooked.
- ◆ “Distance ed brings classes to students,” June 2001  
Students typically come to teachers for education, but technology is enabling education to come to students, especially in rural areas.
- ◆ “Southern director receives national sociological award,” August 2001  
The director of the Southern Rural Development Center, a community-focused organization housed at Mississippi State University, is being honored for his leadership in Extension and public service by a national society.
- ◆ “Study finds activities help students finish high school,” September 2001  
Kids involved with extracurricular activities are more likely to complete high school than students who spend time alone between the end of their school day and the end of their parents’ workday.

## Websites

The Center maintains a presence on the Internet to make information about the SRDC and its related activities available.

- ◆ SRDC Website – <http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/>
- ◆ E-Team Website – <http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/e-team/>
- ◆ CRED Website – <http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/cred/index.htm>
- ◆ Southern PLC Website – <http://ext.msstate.edu/srdc/plcsite/index.html>

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# Presentations

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- ◆ Bridging the Digital Divide in the Rural South: The Role of the Region's Land-Grant Institutions, Southern Growth Policies Board, October 2000
- ◆ Mapping the Assets of Your Community
  - Sustainable Development Conference, October 2000
  - Southern Health Institute, October 2000
  - Strengthening our Community: Building our Future, October 2000
  - University of Mississippi Guest Lecture, January 2001
  - Community Development Institute, May 2001
  - Southern Health Institute, October 2001
  - University of Mississippi Guest Lecture, November 2001
  - Southern Institute for Community Development, November 2001
  - Rural Summit in the City, Rural Pennsylvania, November 2001
- ◆ Overview of E-Commerce and the Digital Infrastructure, SERA-IEG 16, February 2001
- ◆ Educated Workforce, Quality Jobs: Still Elusive Goals in the Rural South, Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, February 2001
- ◆ Labor Force Experiences of Southerners Over a 10-Year Perspective, Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists, February 2001
- ◆ Exploring Economic Development in the Delta: Challenges in a Time of Change, Mid-South Delta Consortium, March 2001
- ◆ Supply and Demand of Contemporary Workforce in the Southern Region, Southern Region Middle Managers Conference, April 2001
- ◆ Some Facts and Figures ... on the South and the Mid-South Mississippi Delta Region, Mid-South Delta Initiative, May 2001
- ◆ Educated Workforce, Quality Jobs...Still Elusive Goals in the Rural South, Southern Legislative Conference, July 2001
- ◆ The Influence of Social Capital on Staying in School: How Much Do Schools Matter?, Rural Sociological Society, August 2001
- ◆ Educated Workforce, Quality Jobs: Still Elusive Goals in the Rural South, Rural Sociological Society, August 2001
- ◆ Southern Rural Development Center Updates
  - Association of Southern Region Extension Directors
  - 1890 Extension Administrators
  - 1890 Research Directors
  - Southern Association of Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
  - Southern Regional Committees
    - Agriculture and Natural Resources
    - Community Development
    - Family and Consumer Sciences
    - 4-H Youth Development
  - Southern Extension Research Activity (SERA-19) on Rural Health



Activity	PI- 1	PI- 2	PI-3	PI- 4	PI-5
<b>Research Investments</b>					
Food Assistance Research Small Grants Program				✓	
Sustainable Communities Innovation Grants Programs	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Research Initiated</b>					
Rural School Initiatives		✓			
Assessing the Implementation of the Food Stamp Programs in the U.S.		✓		✓	
Rural Labor Markets		✓			
The Role of Social Capital in Promoting the Educational Success of Youth		✓			
Educated Workforce, Quality Jobs: Still Elusive Goals in the Rural South		✓			
<b>Educational Workshops &amp; Conferences</b>					
Sustainable Developments: Building Quality Communities	✓	✓	✓		
Strengthening Our Communities: Building Our Future	✓	✓			
Strengthening the Rural-Urban Connection			✓		
E-Commerce (SERA-16-Rural Infrastructure)		✓			✓
1890 Food Assistance Research Team			✓		
Building Tomorrow's Workforce: A Focus on Southern Youth		✓			
Maximizing Organizational Effectiveness Through Middle Managers			✓		
Exploring Food Assistance Research Issues				✓	
Southern Region Community Development Institute	✓	✓	✓		✓
Building Quality Communities of Tomorrow...Today, Southern PLC	✓				
E-Commerce: Impacting the Way We Do Business		✓			✓

Activity	PI- 1	PI- 2	PI-3	PI- 4	PI-5
Southern Extension Health Institute	✓			✓	
Southern Institute of Rural Development	✓	✓			
Mississippi Leaders: Building Tomorrow...Today	✓	✓			
<b>Training Curricula</b>					
Community Choices: Public Policy Education Program	✓	✓			
Ca\$hing in on Business Opportunities		✓			
Public Conflict Resolution: Turning Lemons into Lemonade	✓				
Understanding the Local Health System (a video)				✓	
Database on the South's Workforce Investment Areas		✓			
<b>Policy Briefs, Newsletters &amp; Media Releases</b>					
SRDC Publications Series			✓		
Southern Perspectives	✓	✓	✓		
Food Assistance Needs of the South's Vulnerable Populations				✓	
The Rural South: Preparing for the Challenges of the 21st Century	✓	✓	✓		

## PRIORITY ISSUES

- Priority Issue 1. Strengthen the engagement of rural people and organizations in the civic life of their communities.
- Priority Issue 2. Promote sound rural economic and workforce development strategies that improve job quality and the competitiveness of workers in the rural South.
- Priority Issue 3. Assist rural communities in developing sound strategies for addressing the challenges associated with the expansion of urban and suburban localities into rural areas.
- Priority Issue 4. Expand efforts to improve health care access in the rural South, and explore strategies for reducing the prevalence of food insecurity and hunger among the region's most vulnerable rural populations.
- Priority Issue 5. Explore the prevalence of a "digital divide" among various populations and communities in the South, and assist in the development of educational programs that advance the information technology capacity of rural people and places.

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## Board of Directors

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The Board of Directors of the Southern Rural Development Center is the governing body of the Center. The Board provides guidance as well as review and approval of the Center's program direction and budget. The ten-member Board of Directors is composed of four representatives from extension (three from 1862 institutions and one from an 1890 institution) and four representatives from research (three from 1862 institutions and one from an 1890 institution). One representative is from the Farm Foundation, and one is selected from the private sector. Each Board member serves for a term of three years. Current members are as follows:

Walter Armbruster  
Farm Foundation

William H. Brown, SRDC Chair  
Louisiana State University

Joe H. McGilberry  
Mississippi State University

Lawrence Carter  
Florida A&M University

Carter Catlin, Jr.  
Tennessee State University

Margaret Hale  
Texas A&M University

Paul Warner, SRDC Chair-Elect  
University of Kentucky

Susan Jenkins  
The Hitachi Foundation

Thomas Klindt  
University of Tennessee

Vance Watson  
Mississippi State University

*Ex Officio:*  
Sally Ward Maggard  
USDA-CSREES

David McGranahan  
USDA-ERS

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# Technical Advisory Committee

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The Technical Advisory Committee of the Board advises the SRDC Director and staff in the development of priority goals and strategies for the Center. The committee seeks suggestions and support from the directors and administrators of the various state extension and research units in the region, from land-grant faculty, and from rural development stakeholders. The committee reviews the proposed direction and activities of the Center and makes recommendations to the Board of Directors. The committee meets annually. Current members and their terms of membership are as follows:

## 1862 EXTENSION

**Leon Danielson** *1999-2002*  
North Carolina State University

**Beth Duncan** *2001-2004*  
Mississippi State University

**Gregory Taylor** *2000-2003*  
Texas A & M University

## 1890 EXTENSION

**Charles Q. Artis** *1999-2002*  
South Carolina State University

**M. Diane Edlow** *2000-2003*  
Florida A&M University

## NON LAND-GRANT

**Kenneth Fern, Jr.** *1999-2002*  
Southern Legislative Conference

**Frank Garcia** *2000-2003*  
South Carolina State Rural Development

**Sarah Rubin** *2001-2004*  
MDC, Inc.

## 1862 RESEARCH

**Arthur G. Cosby** *2000-2003*  
Mississippi State University

**Bradford Mills** *2001-2004*  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
and State University

**Lori Garkovich**, Chair *1999-2002*  
University of Kentucky

## 1890 RESEARCH

**Yvonne Oliver** *2001-2004*  
Fort Valley State University

**Alfred L. Parks**, Vice Chair *2000-2003*  
Prairie View A&M University

**Alton Thompson** *1999-2002*  
North Carolina A&T State University

## ADVISOR

**Paul Warner**  
University of Kentucky

## Extramural Funding

### Research

Economic Research Service  
Food Assistance Research Small  
Grant Program  
Tennessee Valley Authority Rural Studies  
Families First: Nutrition Education and Wellness  
System  
Kellogg Foundation  
Southern Legislative Conference  
USDA/CSREES

### Extension

Auburn University  
Heartland Center  
National 4-H Council  
Farm Foundation  
KRA  
North Carolina State University  
Louisiana State University  
Mississippi Development Authority  
Ford Foundation  
MDC, Inc.

**Total: \$ 297,366**

## SRDC Partners

**In addition to the 29 land-grant universities that the SRDC works with on an on-going basis, the following represents the host of organizations the SRDC has worked closely with during the past year.**

Appalachian Regional Commission  
Community Development Society  
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension  
Service/USDA  
Economic Research Service/USDA  
Emory University  
Farm Foundation  
Ford Foundation  
Heartland Center  
MDC, Inc.  
Mid-South Delta Consortium  
Mid-South Center for Rural Community Colleges  
Mississippi Department of Human Services  
Mississippi Development Authority  
National Center for Small Communities

National Rural Development Partnership  
Offices of Rural Health  
(Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Oklahoma)  
Rural Development/USDA  
Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI)  
Rural Schools and Community Trust  
Southern Growth Policies Board  
Southern Legislative Conference  
State Rural Development Councils  
(Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina,  
Oklahoma, South Carolina)  
University of Alabama  
University of Mississippi  
USDA Forest Service  
U.S. Department of Labor  
W. K. Kellogg Foundation

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