

ENTERPRISE & COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
COMPRISED OF: COMMUNITY & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, FOOD & FIBER CENTER
AND CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL TRAINING & TECHNOLOGY

Contents

- Extension Named State Partner for LeadershipPlentySM**
- Claiborne County Rural Health Works**
- Webster County Implements Small Business Basic Course**
- FFC Welcomes Business Analyst**
- CGT Welcomes Governmental Training Specialist**
- Poultry Producers Receive Grant Money**
- Airline Manufacturing Looks to the Future**
- CRD Welcomes Community Development Specialist**
- Catering and Food as a Business Workshops**
- Extension E&CRD Area Agents Complete Business Skills Training**
- Economic Impact of Tourism in Claiborne County**



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Extension Named State Partner for LeadershipPlentySM

Mississippi State University Extension Service has partnered with Pew Partnership for Civic Change to provide LeadershipPlenty training to communities across the Magnolia State. In fact, Extension just kicked off a training session for Leadership82. This four-county effort included eighteen emerging leaders from Choctaw, Webster, Montgomery, and Carroll Counties.

There is no shortage of leadership in Mississippi. However, we sometimes tend to overlook local people who are committed to the places they call home. LeadershipPlenty is a program designed to seek out and train those silent leaders in the community with a desire to make positive community change by working with similarly minded citizens to make a real impact in their hometown.



Participants of the LeadershipPlenty team from Choctaw, Webster, Montgomery and Carroll Counties.

“There is no shortage of citizens wanting to volunteer and help tackle community problems in this country,” said Suzanne Morse, executive director of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, the national initiative spearheading LeadershipPlenty. “The challenge is to help those who want to make a difference more effectively direct those efforts. LeadershipPlenty gives these committed individuals the tools and skills they need.”

Currently, over thirty state partners, including Extension, have representatives that are trained facilitators ready to bring this leadership program to your community. Contact Chance McDavid at 662.325.3144, or e-mail: chancem@ext.msstate.edu for more information about this program.

Claiborne County Rural Health Works



In rural America, doctors are leaving and hospitals are closing. In these uncertain times, Rural Health Works can play a critical role in local citizens taking control of their health infrastructure. The economic well being of communities is linked to the vitality of the local health industry. When employers seek out communities to locate their businesses, the quality of health care is a major factor they consider.

The Mississippi State University Extension Service joined forces with Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service to implement Rural Health Works in Claiborne County. This process began with an economic impact analysis of the local health care industry followed by a survey of area residents to gain insight into their perception of the quality of healthcare available to them. A health resource directory was also developed to showcase the health services available in their county.

Now that this initial phase has been completed, the stage is set for the Extension Service to provide additional community development assistance programs to improve the quality of life of the residents of Claiborne County.

Webster County Implements Small Business Basics Course

Recent plant closings and high unemployment triggered the need for entrepreneurial development in Webster County, Mississippi. In an effort to address this need, Cynthia Wilson, Extension County Director, implemented a **Small Business Basics** course that consisted of a series of five workshops targeting new and existing small business owners. Each week for five weeks, a different small business topic was addressed. The workshop series began with **Basic Business Start-Up** taught by Dr. Beth Duncan, small business specialist with the FFC. The session included legal aspects of business ownership, sources of financing, advertising, insurance needs, licenses and permits, and potential problems and pitfalls to avoid. The second session covered **Marketing Products and Services**. Duane Motsenbocker, Specialist with the FFC, addressed the topics of market research, market segments, customer profiles, market strategy, pricing, and packaging. A task vital to the existence of any business, **Small Business Recordkeeping and Taxes**, was taught by Dr. Alan Barefield who is with the Southern Rural Development Center. Participants learned how to set up and maintain a simple computerized small business record keeping system. In the fourth workshop in the series, Dr. Ken Hood, Economist with the FFC, addressed the basic elements of **Writing a Business Plan**. The final session provided an overview of small business **E-Commerce**, introducing participants to ways to expand sales via the Internet. Dr. Beth Duncan assists small rural businesses throughout the state in developing strategies for entering this new market channel.



The Small Business Basics course was jointly sponsored by the MSU-ES Food & Fiber Center, Webster County Extension Service, Webster County Development Council and Wood College. To schedule a similar course in your area, contact the local Extension office.

FFC Welcomes Business Analyst

Enterprise and Community Resource Development welcomes Dr. Joe Jordan to the Food and Fiber Center. Dr. Jordan assumed the position of Business Analyst/Assistant Extension Professor in mid-August, replacing Dr. Steve Murray, who retired in January. Dr. Jordan received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in Industrial Engineering from Mississippi State, and his Ph.D. degree in Operations Management from Georgia State University. He is actually returning to the Food and Fiber Center, where he served as Industrial Engineer from 1981 to 1986. After leaving Extension in 1986, he held teaching/research positions in the School of Engineering Technology at the University of Southern Mississippi and in the Department of Management at the University of South Alabama.



Dr. Jordan will focus on assisting new and existing businesses in the areas of strategic planning, production system design, production planning and control, and quality management. Joe is married to the former Marilyn Little of Poplarville, Mississippi. You can reach him by phone at 662.325.2160, or by e-mail at jjordan@ext.msstate.edu.

CGT Welcomes Governmental Training Specialist

Joseph N. Fratesi has recently joined the Center for Governmental Training and Technology (CGT) as a Governmental Training Specialist. At the CGT, Joe plans and delivers educational programs for local government officials—county tax assessors, appraisers, tax collectors, and county board attorneys; writes and publishes materials appropriate for local government education; assists in the coordination of computer applications and services for the Center for Governmental Technology; and provides technical assistance in computer applications and services to local governments and associations of local government officials. Joe earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a Master of Public Policy and Administration degree from Mississippi State University. Prior to his current position Joe worked as a Planner for the City of Germantown, TN and as a Graduate Assistant with the John C. Stennis Institute of Government. Joe and his wife, Sarah, reside in Starkville. You can reach Joe at 662.325.3141, or by e-mail at joef@ext.msstate.edu



Poultry Producers Receive Grant Money

Southwest Mississippi Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. (SMRCD) requested assistance of the Food and Fiber Center (FFC) in preparing grant applications for five poultry producers. The SMRCD needed help in developing three-year pro forma financial statements. Energy Efficiency Improvement grants were being offered by the USDA Rural Development Authority for growers interested in purchasing and incorporating new energy efficient equipment into their poultry production operations. Dr. Ken Hood with the FFC and Extension Poultry Science specialists worked diligently to meet a two week timetable. The five grant applications were the only grant applications received from the state of Mississippi and all five were awarded for a total of \$231,503. The new energy efficient equipment is expected to reduce energy costs by 25-35% annually after installation.

Airline Manufacturing Looks to the Future

Competition from imports and alternative materials coupled with a smaller total market has caused Airline Manufacturing to re-think its long-term business strategy. (No, the company does not make airplanes. It picked up its name from the street leading to the plant.)

Ralph Williamson started the Columbus, MS company in 1956 when he began making wood ammunition boxes for the military. The business eventually grew into wood furniture parts manufacturing, saw milling, timber ownership and management, and gravel mining. The sawmill and mining facilities have been closed for several years and manufacturing operations have focused on supplying wood components to the furniture manufacturing industry.

After Mr. Williamson passed away in 2000, the family selected his daughter, Judy Dunaway, as president. Judy has poured her high energy level and enthusiasm into making the company the best in the industry. Duane Motsenbocker, FFC Management Specialist, began working with Judy in early 2001. Motsenbocker has assisted the company in a variety of areas including strategic planning, marketing, and production improvements.

Like much of the furniture industry, the company is struggling against competition from imports and a smaller domestic market for its goods. In an effort to confront the competition head-on the company has slashed costs and increased productivity 200-300%. While new equipment has contributed to productivity improvement, most of those gains have resulted from changes in production processes implemented by the company's management team.

The Company's new strategic emphasis includes: 1) Competitive pricing that reflects the value of products and services provided; 2) Flexibility to manufacture large or small volume orders; 3) Short turn-around time on all orders; 4) Added value services such as engineering and design; 5) On-time delivery, every time.



Judy Dunaway, President of Airline, discusses new computer operated rough mill system with FFC Management Specialist, Duane Motsenbocker.

CRD Welcomes Community Development Specialist

Dr. Garen Evans, joined the CRD staff in early October as Extension Assistant Professor. He is a native of Texas and began his academic training at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas with a major in Agribusiness and a minor in Forestry. Dr. Evans received a Master of Science degree from Texas A&M University in College Station, where he studied equine reproduction. He was awarded a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M with an emphasis in economic and fiscal impact modeling and analysis. Prior to arriving in Starkville Dr. Evans worked as a private consultant, and as an extension specialist for Texas A&M University's Department of Agricultural Economics where he completed an economic and fiscal analysis of Texas' first commercial spaceport, La Escalera A Las Estrellas (the ladder to the stars) Spaceport in Fort Stockton.



At Mississippi State University, Dr. Evans provides technical expertise to help community leaders and specialists identify and evaluate socio-economic development alternatives. He designs and implements economic and fiscal impact models, and provides guidance for interpretation of potential impacts arising from economic change and policy decisions. Garen lives in Starkville and enjoys outdoor activities, including hiking and camping with his Treeing Walker hound. You can contact Garen by e-mail at gevans@ext.msstate.edu, or by dialing 662.325.3144.

Catering and Food as a Business Workshops

Extension Specialists from the Food and Fiber Center held two workshops recently. "Catering as a Business" focused on people who had an interest or were already operating a restaurant or catering business. The workshop was held in Greenwood, Mississippi with 10 people in attendance. Andy Braswell, Leflore County Extension Service and Carolyn Lott, Northwest E&CRD Area Agent assisted with the training. The second workshop, "Food as a Business" was held in Hernando, Mississippi with 14 people attending. This workshop focused on the requirements to get started in a food manufacturing or wholesale distribution business. Art Smith, DeSoto County Extension Service and Carolyn Lott assisted with the training.



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Extension E&CRD Area Agents Complete Business Skills Training

Business Skills Training



September 2-6, 2003

... unlocking your potential!

Doug Carter, Carolyn Lott, and Shelaine Wise, Extension Enterprise & Community Resource Development Area Agents, recently completed thirty hours of intensive Small Business Skills Training in San Antonio, Texas. This training boasted 72 participants from 28 states. Participants attended educational sessions to help sharpen their business skills in order to effectively assist entrepreneurs in building profitable enterprises in rural communities. Beth Duncan, small business specialist with the FFC, was part of the planning group for the training and taught the session on small business e-commerce. Proceeding from the training can be found on the Internet at www.srdc.msstate.edu/bst/proceedings.htm. This training was sponsored by the USDA, the Southern Rural Development Center and the Cooperative Extension Service Home-Based & Micro Business Design Team.

Economic Impact of Tourism in Claiborne County

The Port Gibson City Officials requested an Impact study of tourism in Claiborne County. Tourism plays a vital role in providing jobs and income in Mississippi. The tourism industry consists of four sectors; food and beverages, entertainment, lodging, and retail trade. CRD Specialist, Dr. Al Myles, and Southwest Area Agent, Doug Carter responded to this request. According to figures generated from the impact study, the total economic impact of tourism in Claiborne County was \$2.7 million last year. Tourism generated more than \$503,000 in wages for local employees in Claiborne County last year, and created four additional jobs for local residents.