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Gene Head, Senior Partner

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## Associate Director, Rural and Traditional Programs Alabama Cooperative Extension System

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### POSITION OVERVIEW

Strategic vision, initiative, collaborative, team-building experience and skills to make a decisive impact will distinguish the service-oriented leader prepared to advance to this key role. Winning candidate joins the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, the primary outreach organization for the land-grant mission of Alabama A&M and Auburn University, dedicated to delivering research-based educational programs designed to empower individuals to improve their quality of life and economic well-being. Success in program planning, implementation, and evaluation are crucial in this role. Proven supervisory and management skills, communications talent, ability to establish rapport quickly and utilize the talents of willing staff and volunteers, along with growth-oriented visionary leadership will distinguish the candidate awarded this superb career advancing opportunity to lead what has been recognized as one of the most vibrant Cooperative Extension organizations in the country.

The Associate Director for Rural and Traditional Programs (ADRTP) has a seat at the table with the System administrative team, reporting directly to the System Director who along with the Associate Director for Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs (ADUANNP), oversees innovative programs that provide university-based practical knowledge for practical living, delivered straight to individuals where they live and work through extension personnel in 67 county offices, 9 Urban Centers, and 6 Research and Extension Centers that include 40+ video conferencing sites across the state. Selected leader will be responsible for developing relevant, leading edge programs in rural affairs and will orchestrate and advance the system's base programs including Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, 4-H and Youth Development, and Urban Programs. Chosen Associate Director provides leadership for strategic visioning, development, implementation, interpretation, projections, and evaluation of the personnel and programs that address the trends, issues and needs of the people of Alabama residing in rural areas, and shares statewide responsibilities with a counterpart Associate Director who oversees and manages personnel and program offerings in Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs. The chosen candidate tapped for this key leadership role will catalyze community-based efforts and provide leadership, expertise, and resources to help grow and support one of the strongest Extension efforts in the country. Selected candidate will enjoy backing by solid financial resources, widespread community support, and a staff fully committed to the Extension's success - and yours.

The selected ADRTP will collaborate, coordinate, and build consensus on programming decisions along with the ADUANNP. This position will be located at the ACES headquarters at Auburn University, a comprehensive land-grant institution ranked as one of the top 50 public universities in *U.S. News & World Report*. The university is nationally recognized for its commitment to academic excellence, positive work environment, stimulating and engaging student life and the beauty of its campus. Auburn University's enrollment exceeds 24,000 students from 50 states and 100 countries, with more than 1,200 faculty members.

Discover an environment where professional satisfaction and career achievement are paired with optimal quality of life in a relaxed, area that is surrounded by mountains, rivers, and lakes, in a temperate climate that encourages year-round outdoor recreation within a tradition of relaxed hospitality. Nearby you will find one of the Top

Academic Medical Centers and foremost Centers of Healthcare in the world. The region is home to some of the best run, best managed, and best performing companies in America, attracting major global performers including Mercedes, Honda, and Hyundai. Residents of the region enjoy a variety of amenities including the 378-hole Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail with 100+ miles of some of the best golf in the world. Southern Business and Development named the locale “State of the Year” for economic development and job creation success, the Milken Institute ranked the region on its “Best Performing List”, and *Employment Review* ranked it # 4 in the U.S. in its annual “America’s Best Places to Live and Work”. Family members of all ages will find here the elements that contribute to a safe and enjoyable lifestyle. It's all here for the proven leader professionally prepared to grasp this superb opportunity.

## **Job Specifications**

*Specific background, experiences, accomplishments, and skills that appear to be the most important for success in this role.*

- Career track of progressive, documentable accomplishments in increasingly complex administrative/executive leadership roles is required. Experience earned within an academic setting and Cooperative Extension is preferred, with requisite knowledge of the history and philosophy of the Land-Grant University and Cooperative Extension and awareness of the contemporary issues facing higher education. Experience in a not-for-profit, community service, foundation and/or similar environment considered a plus.
- Record of demonstrated successes in program planning, implementation, evaluation and assessment.
- Demonstrated effective organizational and supervisory skills and ability to work effectively with people from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. Record of advancing diversity initiatives and evolving opportunities for individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Possesses fundamental understanding and appreciation for the outreach mission of a land grant university and demonstrated success in a leadership capacity within an academic and/or business environment, especially related to Cooperative Extension programs. Knowledge of the economic environment and regulatory issues that impact a Cooperative Extension System is preferred.
- Demonstrated record to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan for fundraising, in collaboration with and approval of key constituents. Skills to organize, catalyze and mobilize financial support from individuals and corporate entities.
- Track record of developing rapport and working relationships with federal, state, and local governmental officials and any related agencies, boards, committees, and commissions involved in Cooperative Extension activities.
- Capacity to organize and streamline operations to achieve financial and service objectives. Skills and experience in developing and managing complex budgets with fiscal responsibility. (moved from bullet 4)
- Proven team-building expertise, collaborative leadership and supervision. Attitude and success in providing customer service leadership with direct experience and proven ability to orchestrate day-to-day operations of a team to ensure continuous operational advancement. Track record of successfully facilitating and nurturing effective communications in keeping all key stakeholders apprised of organizational endeavors. Background and skills to work collaboratively with community leaders to effectively align and leverage the resources of Extension in such a way as to maximize the desired impact for success for the community residents at large.
- Experience in leadership roles. Evidence of civic involvement is desired. Skills to develop and deliver presentations to audiences in formal and informal settings, to interview well on camera and through other media.
- Working knowledge of current communications and information systems technologies utilized in advancing Outreach and Extension programs.

- Track record for being politically aware and astute, yet remain apolitical. Able to build coalitions, facilitate and blend the interests and resources of disparate groups to advance the mission and purpose of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.
- Earned terminal degree in a discipline or combination of disciplines that provides adequate background in developing, implementing, and evaluating educational programs specifically for rural audiences.

## People Specifications

*Those human traits and abilities that appear to be most important for the success of this role.*

- Initiative and self-discipline, with confidence and charisma to lead, encourage and enable a team and work collaboratively with an engaged executive board, community leaders, and governmental agencies. Skill to bring about positive outcomes via working through others.
- Ability to influence people positively, be a catalyst for progress, and make a decisive impact. Enjoyment in identifying problems and opportunities, using creativity to map and bring about innovative solutions and advance the organization to the next level.
- A mature, well-grounded, innovative, success-oriented personality bringing a sense of humor and a record of setting and surpassing objectives. Energy, adaptability, exceptional facilitating skills.
- Leadership stature to assume a central strategic role to refine, enhance, strengthen and advance the mission and purpose of the Extension. Brings a "big picture" vision of how the organization's operations and opportunities enhance the community's resources for education, economic development, civic, and cultural programs.
- The will to advance a genuine "service" attitude and the capacity to incorporate this philosophy to advance positive impact upon the rural community.
- Organizational, management, delegation, and follow through skills to successfully manage multiple competing priorities and achieve organizational objectives.
- Proficiency in orchestrating the cooperative efforts of individuals and groups. An excellent facilitator with the interpersonal skills to sell, affect, lead, and manage change and growth.
- Effective verbal and written and presentation skills. Comfortable interacting with boards, media, volunteers, social groups, governing bodies, community groups, and other interested parties.
- Adroitness to interact with diverse groups, fostering collaboration and collegiality. Presence to engender confidence and trust readily. Ability to sell a point in a non-polarizing manner, gaining consensus and "buy in." Instinct to be politically astute, not political.

## Key Attractors to This Role

*Key points Administration believes are strong attractors to top candidates.*

- Career opportunity to serve as a key strategic leader on the administrative team of one of the nation's leading Cooperative Extension Systems. A unique chance to link your skills and personality with a committed group of visionary leaders to make a decisive impact and leave a lasting legacy for the community today and well into the future.
- Lead a well-funded, highly regarded and supported Extension System initiative that rivals any across the country, where every element for your success awaits. Outstanding opportunity to work in a collaborative, collegial and supportive environment within a receptive, informed, and involved community.
- Discover a collegial, open work environment with no hidden agendas and where success is measured by your ability to collaborate and make joint decisions with the ADUANNP in organizing and leading the

programmatic efforts of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

- Reside in a truly exquisite environment, where geography, climate, demographics, and ambiance combine to offer you and family members an attractive array of activities, amenities, and opportunities—whether you are looking for top-notch education, meaningful employment, or simply a safe and comfortable place to live.
- Successful candidate will have opportunity to pursue academic rank in a tenure track position if so desired.

To advance your interest, forward your resume or cv to:

[Extension@WhelessAssociates.com](mailto:Extension@WhelessAssociates.com)

For more information or to discuss this position, contact:

Kathy Sabio, Senior Consultant, 239-348-1574

[Ksabio@WhelessAssociates.com](mailto:Ksabio@WhelessAssociates.com)

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