



RURAL DEVELOPMENTS

NEWSLETTER TO FOCUS ON RURAL ISSUES

BY WALTER HARRIS

This newsletter is a new publication of the South Carolina Rural Development Council and the SC Community Development Collaborative. It will be electronically published quarterly and is intended to keep the leadership of South Carolina informed about important issues facing the rural areas. If you are not interested in receiving this publication, please e-mail me at wharris@sc.rr.com and I will see that you are removed from our list. If you know of others who would benefit from this publication, please send along their contact information.

The SC Rural Development Council has been around since 1990 as a federally inspired initiative whose mission is to maximize the effectiveness of federal and state resources through collaboration. Members of the Council represent State and Federal Agencies, private companies, non-profits, associations and for profit companies which have an interest in rural South Carolina. The Council is a part of a national organization called the National Rural Development Partnership (NRPD) and is certified as a Council by USDA Rural Development. The Council is housed at the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development.

The SC Community Development Collaborative is made up of agencies which have direct ties to rural areas. The collaborative meets monthly to discuss specific problems in rural areas and organizes member agencies to address specific problems as they are identified.

Both the Collaborative and the Council are open to new members and participants.

This publication's content will be made up of information which is judged to be of importance to state and rural leaders. If you would like to submit possible articles or have subjects which you believe should be covered, please let us know.

SANTEE-LYNCHES REGION LOOKS TO ADDRESS FUTURE WORK FORCE ISSUES

STORY BY BRUCE MILLS

Much like the rest of the state, the Santee-Lynches Region -- composed of Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee and Sumter counties -- faces the challenge of an aging population due in part to advances in health care and a decline in birth rates. Census projections indicate within 10 years there will be more residents in the region that are 55 and older than 18 and under. Having a sufficient pool of young workers to replace the aging work force is a major regional concern.

A key area of focus for educators, business leaders and others will be

preparing youth -- particularly African-American youth -- for the future. Census figures show African-American youth currently account for 55 percent of Santee-Lynches' 18-and-under population, and therefore the group will potentially compose a larger share of future labor force available to fill jobs vacated by retiring workers. Other census projections reveal the working-age population (ages 18-64) in the state and region will have only slight growth through the year 2030 compared to seniors (65 and older), who will by then represent nearly 25 percent of the state's population.

Given these indicators and the fact

that recruiting industry to rural counties of the state is already difficult, many in the Santee-Lynches Region agree that improving high school graduation rates across all races is paramount to future economic development. If not, the region will face the prospect of an under-educated, unskilled work force competing for a reduced number of lower-skilled jobs.

To enhance its work force, the region is making inroads in partnering business with education in training. Under a new system in Sumter County, the two school districts are working to link area businesses with the county

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PO BOX 23205
 COLUMBIA SC 29224-2305
 PHONE (803)788-5700EXT.43
 FAX (803)736-4418



CLEMSON SELECTED BY U.S. COMMERCE DEPARTMENT

STORY BY DR. DAVE LAMIE

CLEMSON — The Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce has selected Clemson University as its South Carolina EDA University Center. The three-year designation culminated a selective application process.

As the state EDA University Center, Clemson will work with state and local governments to enhance state and community capacities to attract and nurture high-skilled, high-wage employment opportunities. Research and technical assistance efforts will be concentrated on the development of industry clusters in the state, leveraging of university technical expertise to promote business development and the assistance of workforce development organizations in preparing workers for the knowledge-based economy.

Examples of likely projects

for the center are:

- Targeting industry to identify industry clusters and business prospects with high potential for locating in a community.
- Conducting community economic and fiscal impact analyses to help communities assess the impacts of development activities and programs.
- Providing education and technical assistance programs to better prepare communities and small businesses to take advantage of e-commerce opportunities.
- Collaborating with workforce development organizations to support efforts to prepare local workforces for jobs in the knowledge economy.

The center will be administered by the Regional Economic Development Research Laboratory in the Department of Applied Economics and Statistics and the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development. Center co-directors are

David Barkley and Mark Henry of the Department of Applied Economics and Statistics. David Hughes, Dave Lamie, and Ken Robinson --- who are affiliated with both the Department of Applied Economics and Statistics and the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development are also part of the EDA Center.

Through a combination of research, outreach and application, technical innovation and venture creation, Clemson will catalyze community economic development in South Carolina. The desire to positively affect the economic vitality of communities in the state is central to Clemson's Land-Grant mission.

For more information contact Dr. David Barkley at 864/656-5797. A website is currently under development.

PEE DEE INDIAN INITIATIVE

STORY BY BEN BOOZER

Located near Little Rock, South Carolina in Dillon County, the Pee Dee Indian Tribe is currently recognized by the state through the SC Commission on Minority Affairs, but is not recognized by the federal government. The lack of recognition by the US Government inhibits the tribe from gaining access to federal funds set aside

for Indian tribes. Because of this lack of resources and the isolated location of the area, the tribe has significant problems with poverty, medical care and housing. At the request of the Tribe and Chief Carolyn Bolton, the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development recognized these challenges and organized several SC Community Development Collaborative member organizations to address the issues.

The first initiative was a health fair which was organized by Marga McKee of the SC Primary Health Care Association. The Health Fair was held at the home of Chief Bolton and brought tribal members together with health care providers in nearby Dillon. This allowed Tribal members to sign up with various health care related service organizations for...

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TRIBAL MEMBERS SIGN UP FOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE

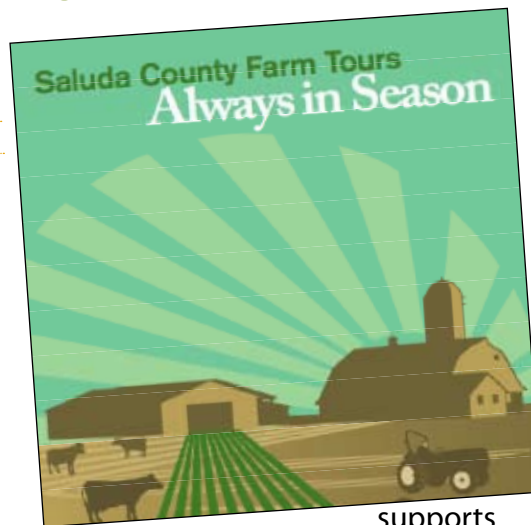
STORY BY WALTER HARRIS

Ms. Almeeker Womble is a native of the Pee Dee area, but spent most of her life in New York in the health care industry. She has returned to the area and has a small organic vegetable farm where she raises collard greens, turnips, corn, potatoes and cabbage. She is pictured here awaiting an opportunity to apply for housing assistance through the SC State Housing Finance Development Authority. Sixty one tribal members attended the event on September 29 and met with staff of the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development and an intern from the School of Social Work at the University of South Carolina who assisted them with the necessary paperwork.

SALUDA CONDUCTS CHARRETTE TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

STORY BY RANDY WILSON

The Town of Saluda, SC contacted The Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development (CIECD) to conduct a charrette to address the fact that their community is in the midst of significant transition, both physically and culturally. Physically, the town is in the growth corridor of Lake Murray which is spawning both residential and commercial development. The town desires to take advantage of that growth while retaining its small town quality of life and "culture of agriculture." Culturally, the town is host to a burgeoning Latino population that



supports the agricultural industry that thrives in Saluda County. How the local community enfold this cultural group will be a key indicator toward its future success. Additionally, a market study was requested and conducted. A branding and

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SANTEE LYNCHES WORKFORCE ISSUES- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

by Butch Mills

technical education center and the adult education program in Sumter and Lee counties. The system has been designed to provide local employers with potential employees that have the skills they need to succeed in the workplace.

Strategically transitioning the region's educational system to enable it to be more effective for both students and businesses is critical to achieving a competitive advantage in the 21st century economy, according to Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments Executive Director Jim Darby.

"The challenge will be how to engage the at-large community, helping them to understand and to respond successfully to new options developed specifically to meet workplace needs," Darby said.

For more information on related studies, contact Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments at (803) 775-7381.

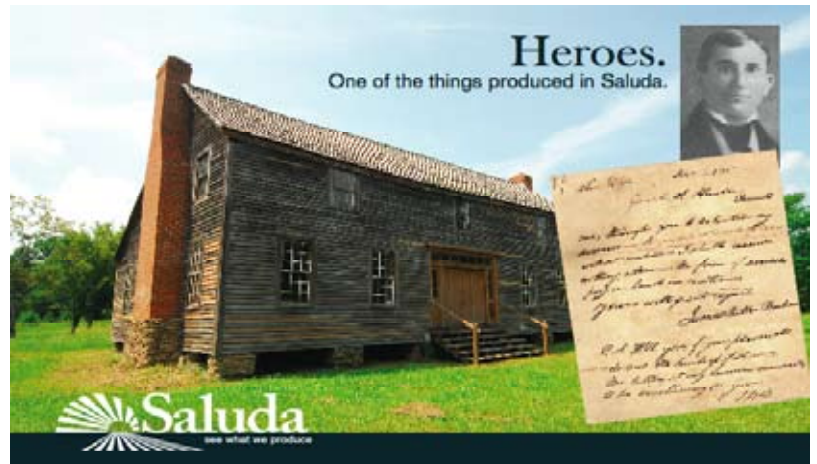


UPCOMING EVENTS

- The South Carolina Rural Summit will be held March 5 & 6, at the Embassy Suites Hotel and Convention Center, N. Charleston. The event is sponsored by the SC Department of Commerce. For more information contact Beth Pierce (803) 737-0400.

- The Introduction to Economic Development session of the SC Economic Developers' School will be held at the College of Charleston, Tate Center on February 1-2. Please contact Cantrece White (843) 953-6596 at the College of Charleston for registration information.

Saluda Charrette continued from page 3
 ...advertising program was designed to foster sustainability in their local economy based on the promotion of their unique assets. Finally, an implementation strategy was developed to guide follow-through on the recommendations of the charrette. CIECD is currently working with the town to facilitate strategic planning initiatives to address the cultural identity issues facing their region.



Pee Dee Indian Tribe continued from page 2
 services. Some of the Tribal members had not seen medical professionals for many years.

The second phase of the project involved the important subject of housing. Many of the tribal members currently live in substandard housing with several generations of families living under one roof. Working with the SC Housing Finance Development Authority and the Eastern Carolina Community Development Corporation headquartered in Florence, the Community Development Collaborative organized a series of tribal meetings designed to identify members living in substandard housing who were eligible for assistance and to find them help for rehabilitation to their homes. At the October meeting at Chief Bolton's house, 61 tribal members brought documentation certifying home ownership and their income to start the certification process.



TALAE TUIELE, AN INTERN FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA, ASSISTS A PEE DEE TRIBAL MEMBER TO SIGN UP FOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE



CHIEF CAROLYN BOLTON ADDRESSES TRIBAL MEMBERS AS THEY SIGN UP FOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE

RURAL DEVELOPMENTS is a publication of the SC Rural Development Council and the SC Community Development Collaborative. It is designed to promote awareness of the issues confronting rural South Carolina. Rural Developments is supported by the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development and a grant from USDA-Rural Development.

The South Carolina Rural Development Council is a federally recognized organization made up of federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations and other organizations which have interests or responsibilities in rural areas.

The SC Community Development Collaborative is made up of organizations interested in effective community development practices in South Carolina. It is facilitated by Clemson's Institute for Economic and Community Development.

Editor: Walter E. Harris
 Telephone: (803) 788-5700 ext 43
 E-Mail: walterh@clemson.edu
 PO Box 23205, Columbia SC 29224-3205