



**2023 Bonnie Teater**

**Community Development  
Early Career Achievement  
Award Recipient**

**Dr. Matthew J. Ulmer**

**Alabama Cooperative Extension System**

The Southern Rural Development Center is proud to honor Dr. Matthew J. Ulmer as the 2023 recipient of the *Bonnie Teater Community Development Early Career Achievement Award*. Dr. Ulmer is the State Specialist and Priority Program Team Leader of Community Development with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) and Auburn University.

Dr. Ulmer's tenure in Extension community research development began in 2015 as a Family Resource Management and Workforce Development Specialist. In 2018, Dr. Ulmer's responsibilities shifted to Community Resource Development to work collaboratively with the 67 Extension Coordinators to address the most pressing challenges facing the state. As the lead for the Alabama Extension Community Development Priority Team, Dr. Ulmer develops strategies to implement new and existing Extension programs, provides training to County Extension Coordinators, and secures and manages extramural funding opportunities. Dr. Ulmer's professional contributions have generated numerous impacts at the local, regional, and state levels. His grantsmanship has yielded over \$1.5 million.

His focus areas in Extension and outreach activities are on workforce development, tourism, leadership, civic engagement, and youth career development. He works with other Extension personnel to develop curricula in agritourism, job success, and financial literacy. Some of the grant-supported projects include a successful statewide 2020 census completion, creation and implementation of a statewide COVID-19 vaccination campaign that led to significant statewide increases in vaccine uptake, and three disaster preparedness educational projects.

Outside of extramurally funded initiatives, Dr. Ulmer's applied policy research informed changes to Alabama's workforce development system and provided significant insights to many chamber and economic development authorities through needs assessment and strategic planning efforts. He has authored or co-authored eight curricula covering workforce, leadership, disaster preparedness/recovery, and hospitality. He has produced ten publications, including Extension publications (regional and national) and resources for state and local governments. Furthermore, Dr. Ulmer has achieved 15 invited presentations during his work at Auburn. Dr. Ulmer also serves as a member of the Southern Program Leaders Network's Community Resource Development committee and the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) where he currently is the Southern Region Representative.

On behalf of Dr. Matthew Ulmer's nomination, Dr. Paul W. Brown, Associate Director, Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities Extension stated, "Dr. Ulmer's body of work has made an incalculable impact on Alabama Extension and the citizens of Alabama..." Dr. Kimberly Sinclair-Holmes, Assistant Director, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, detailed her support by saying, "Dr. Ulmer has made many commendable contributions to the community development field as both a leader and change agent in the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) at Auburn University and through his regional and national contributions to the Land Grant system...Dr. Ulmer has been an exemplary partner to Alabama Extension's co-affiliate institution, Alabama A&M University".

Overall Dr. Ulmer's body of work in the field of community development demonstrates the spirit of this prestigious award. Therefore, it is most fitting that Dr. Matthew Ulmer be honored as the Southern Rural Development Center 2023 recipient of the *Bonnie Teater Community Development Early Career Achievement Award*.