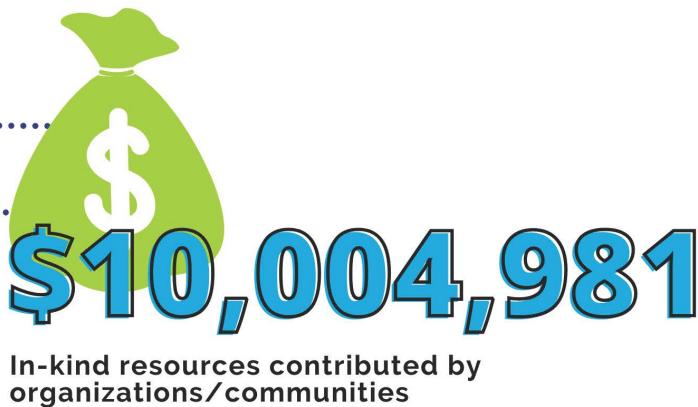
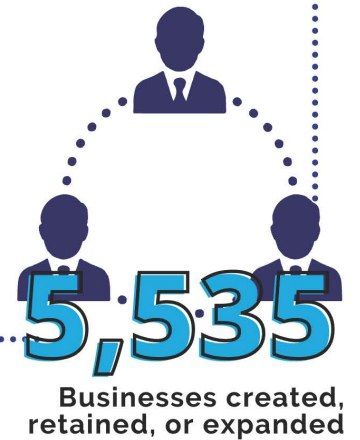
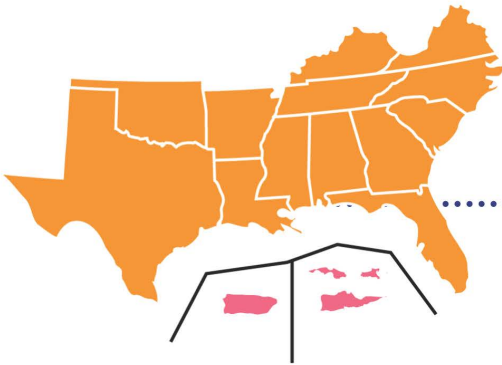


Southern Region Impacts

2022

Southern Region Community Development Extension Impacts





Alabama

The Alabama A&M University (AAMU) Extension Community Resource Development (CRD) Program Team launched the Birmingham Community Incubator (BCI) program partnering with the Salvation Army Command Center, East Lake Initiative, and the City of Birmingham. This business development program focuses on black woman-owned businesses. Thirty-two entrepreneurs have graduated, with many successfully launching their businesses and all having completed documents to launch. Additional funding was secured through a USDA Capacity Building Grant, \$249,999, supporting training in workforce development and entrepreneurship.



Turnover remains a significant issue for many Alabama businesses. Job Success is a four-part series aiming to address the issue by providing participants with an overview of the soft skills needed to meet employer expectations and success strategies to be strong, dependable employees. Of the participants, 74% increased their understanding of concepts presented and 80% plan to apply their new knowledge in the workplace. Approximately 100 individuals from three employers received job success training.



Arkansas

Community, Professional & Economic Development (CPED) supports the economy through programs such as the Arkansas APEX Accelerator, Arkansas Business Navigator Project, and Celebrating REtail, Accommodations, Tourism, and Entertainment by Building Rural Innovations and Developing Growth Economies (CREATE BRIDGES). These programs resulted in 3,788 jobs and 74 businesses created or retained across the state. These businesses provide goods and services that contribute to quality of life and place and generate tax revenue to provide needed services.



Florida

The University of Florida Community Development team recognized the need for training extension professionals and community members on how to be effective facilitators. A team of 20 extension professionals were trained by Virginia Cooperative Extension specialists to use the University of Maine's Strengthening Your Facilitation Skills curriculum. Since then, 50 community members and 20 more extension professionals have been trained to facilitate groups effectively. Surveys show that participants' knowledge and skills have increased by 97%.



Georgia

University of Georgia Extension continues its focus on farmer stress and wellbeing. Over 400 farmers from 12 counties participated in Farm Stress Production Meeting interventions, a novel strategy where content on stress and stress management is woven into local Extension production meetings. Evaluations demonstrated significant positive shift in farmer attitudes towards stress management and commitment to stress management activities (p<.001). In 75% of counties, agents reported specific examples of the impact the interventions had on farmers.



Cooperative Extension Program

Kentucky

Kentucky State University (KSU) has expanded its community development reach by opening a new Cooperative Extension Office in West Louisville. Several professional staff and state specialists were hired to produce innovative programming to empower various communities through disaster preparedness, leadership development, health and wellness education, address food insecurities, arts education, and exposure to new agriculture technology to strengthen our commonwealth.



The Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) led collaborators from the University of Kentucky campus, Cooperative Extension, Kentucky State University, and the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce Executives to host the Kentucky Community Leadership Summit. Thirty-two community programs participated to assess leadership program priorities and discuss shared solutions. The summit created a network, introduced programming tools, and promoted guided evaluation strategies for documenting program impacts to strengthen Kentucky civic leadership development.



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SUAREC), Community and Economic Development (CED) Program expanded its 18th Annual Business Development and Procurement Conference to include farmers and growers. Historically, the conference has served thousands of rural and small businesses throughout the state and region, covering topics from procurement to government contracts. This year's conference expanded to include sessions for agricultural workers. Sessions covered included: International Trade for Farmers, Cover Crops, and Maximizing Farming Profit.



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Mississippi State University Extension Service recently assisted a County Board of supervisors with creating strategies to prioritize and address some rural development challenges. The board chose to address fire safety, improving roads, and education. Results were the creation of a firefighter training program, 5 road and bridge projects, the development of a career training initiatives with local high schools, and the modernization of a community college training facility in the downtown.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Nationally, efforts have been made to bring broadband to all communities. However, improved access alone is not sufficient for success in work, health, and life. Building upon Dr. Kenneth Sherin's previous work with National Digital Education Extension Team (NDEET) and as the Broadband Fellow, engagement with the NC Office of Digital Equity and Literacy (NC ODEL) was established. NC State Extension was granted \$1.33M by NC ODEL to hire digital skills educators in 15 county offices.



Langston University Cooperative Extension and Outreach program links the University to communities. In Fall 2022, Langston University Extension team became a resource hub for the Historical Black Towns and Communities. The team has gathered all available funding opportunities from Federal and State entities and has and will continue to share these funding opportunities with each community. This funding will provide the assistance the communities need to start and complete each towns infrastructure and economic development projects.



Universidad de Puerto Rico

The Wellbeing Association of Mariás Sector in Aguada, Puerto Rico is headed by a blind couple. With the assistance of CRD Extension Specialists, they submitted a proposal to the Puerto Rico's Food Bank obtaining a grant of \$164,000 for their community. This allowed them to expand their kitchen and buy a cargo van. So far, they have distributed 17,000 dinners and 3,600 boxes with local agricultural products to families in need, strengthening their food security.



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

Clemson Extension promotes entrepreneurial development via business planning, feasibility studies, and related assistance for rural entrepreneurs. The SC Center for Cooperative and Enterprise Development (SCCED) and the Freshwater Coast Center for Rural Development (FCCRD) assisted entrepreneurs and communities receive grant funds and awards. SCCED alone helped secure grants totaling \$4,821,883. Similarly, FCCRD received approximately \$33,000 in public and private investments for support of new entrepreneurial activities.



TRANSFORMING LIVES, INSPIRING GREATNESS

South Carolina State University launched the Community Economic Development (CED) program engaging in entrepreneurial, non-profit, and leadership development technical assistance. CDE is underway to hire five agents for strategic placement by December 2024. Funding sources include \$190K from South Carolina Rural Development, \$200K from State Legislature, and is establishing a Memorandum of Agreement to safeguard sustainability. Constituent feedback indicates hope, excitement, and improved capacity to identify, develop, navigate, negotiate, and leverage wealth generating opportunities for historically marginalized populations.



Tennessee

University of Tennessee Extension focused on enhancing community development and rural development through three funded projects: National 4-H Council's Tech Changemakers, Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Technical, Managerial and Financial Assistance to Water Systems, and Digital Literacy Training. The Tech Changemakers and the digital literacy training program focused on broadband adoption in 42 counties in Tennessee. The EPA program is focused on providing technical assistance to 54 water systems over a three-year period.



Texas

The Working on Wellness Environments program facilitates policy, system, and environment (PSE) work to build upon and empower local efforts to increase the adoption of nutrition policies and sales of healthy foods as well as planning and implementation of active transportation and parks. The program supported four communities on projects for two healthy concession stands, two bike lanes, five connectivity plans, one placemaking plan, two play streets, and two StoryWalks™ at local parks.



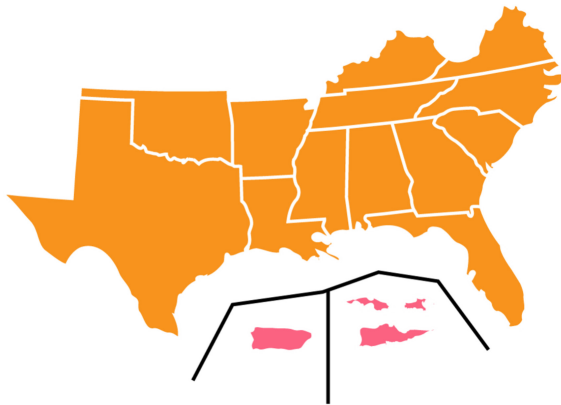
Virginia

Virginia Cooperative Extension is promoting community development through The George Washington Carver Food Enterprise Center (GWC FEC), a fully equipped facility that will provide food-related job training and education. As a food business incubator (GWC FEC) will provide space and equipment for new and existing food business entrepreneurs. A food system security program will also be established providing space and expertise for processing and preparing meals that can be distributed to local food banks and food pantries.



West Virginia

The West Virginia State University Extension, Opening Soon Inc. Entrepreneurial Program, is intended to build the capacity of entrepreneurs, micro-enterprises, and small business start-ups in West Virginia, with a special emphasis on creating and sustaining jobs for low-wealth and minority individuals. The 10-week program provides education and guidance in launching business ideas into viable products or services through a series of workshops, peer meetings, and technical assistance.



CONTACT US:



SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



SOUTHERN RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER



@SO_DEV_CENTER



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