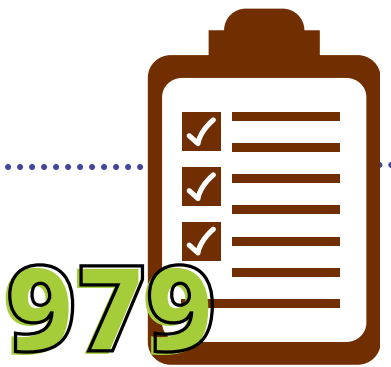
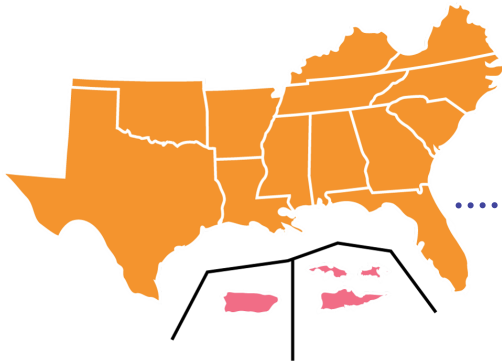


Southern Region Impacts

2023

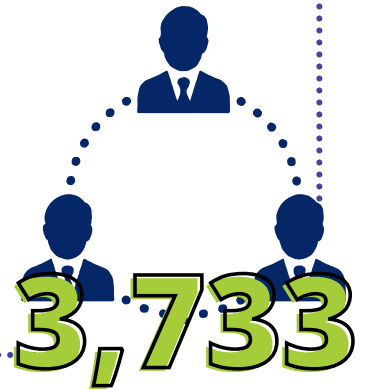
Southern Region Community Development Extension Impacts



Number of plans adopted and implemented in community, agency, local government, business, or disaster



Number of participants who reported new leadership roles & opportunities undertaken



Number of businesses created, retained, or expanded



Value of in-kind resources contributed by organizations/communities



Number of universities reporting



Grants acquired by organizations/communities



Full Time Equivalents

LeadAR employs an interdisciplinary approach to leadership development through the intersection of theory, practice, and application. Among highlights of this 2-year program is the Public Policy and Media seminar, where participants draft bills that address issues and needs in their community during a mock legislative session. Two bills proposed by Class 19 members were picked up by state representatives, successfully adopted by the Arkansas legislature, and signed into law during the 2023 legislative session.



The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) led facilitation of the first-ever, five-year Clay County Strategic Plan using a community-centered approach. A Community Resource Development Extension Agent led 16 facilitated discussions and implemented a community input survey. After an 11-month process, the strategic plan was adopted by the Clay County Board of County Commissioners. UF/IFAS Extension's role generated a \$241,500 cost savings for Clay County.



FAMU Extension Disaster Preparedness and Safety Programming is designed to reduce the vulnerability of youth, families, seniors and limited resource producers/ranchers to disasters. FAMU Extension works with FEMA, local governments and NGOs on long-term recovery efforts to identify gaps, unmet needs, economic recovery, housing and flooding impacts. Over 1K have benefited from youth programs, preparedness expos, social media campaigns, and workshops. Approximately \$350K in external funding from USDA-NIFA, Southern SARE, NASA and the USDA Rapid-Response has been secured.



University of Georgia Extension is supporting community strength and wellbeing through its Behavioral Health Team. The BHT provides research-based education on behavioral health topics and information on resources for treatment and recovery to communities across Georgia. This year the BHT provided stress management training at 15 county production meetings and held 25 training sessions on mental health. It has also provided relationship education programming for couples and led county coalitions for creating "Cultures of Health".



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY

Cooperative Extension Program

The Community Resource Development Team at KYSU wanted to aid in reducing recidivism rates. The Expungement-101 project launched in September 2023, benefiting 77 individuals in Kentucky with criminal records. Results include: 9% had charges dismissed, 33% received a timetable for future expungements, and 58% successfully cleared their records. The Kentucky Bar Foundation's \$10,000 grant covered all expungement fees. Additionally, staff from the KY Department of Public Advocacy volunteered over 75 hours, totaling in-kind contributions valued at \$18,750.



The Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK) and the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet's Brownfield Office organized Kentucky's first Brownfield Bootcamps. These workshops equipped over 50 participants with crucial brownfield redevelopment skills. Post-workshop evaluations showed 93% of attendees felt capable to apply their new knowledge, and 86% planned to share it. One rural city administrator initiated comprehensive redevelopment efforts, including youth listening sessions, underutilized building inventories, and transforming abandoned sites into opportunities.



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Southern University AgCenter's emergency preparedness program, JAGriculture, extended its reach to rural and vulnerable communities. Through targeted initiatives, education and outreach, communities recovering from Hurricanes Laura and Ida were empowered. Partnering with LaHouse, the BREAK (Building Resilience through Extension Awareness and Knowledge) program, focused on breaking the disaster cycle through preparedness and mitigation for wind hazards, allowing us to serve more diverse populations while honoring our commitment to the MOU between SUAREC and LSU AgCenter.



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

MSU-Extension partnered with stakeholders to create and promote a local food trail in Northeast Mississippi to increase visibility and establish the region as a local food destination. The project created a local food trail, a website, and a social media presence. A digital marketing campaign was then used to drive traffic to the food trail website. Overall, the campaigns resulted in 1.4 million social and digital media engagements.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

The growth of outdoor recreation is important for rural places' economy and quality of life. NC State's Tourism Extension launched a program in a county with a large amount of national forest land to cultivate the current outdoor recreation user's stewardship of the region's natural amenities through education on tourism impacts and best management practices. Participants defined a set of community priorities for developing the outdoor recreation economy. This program seeks to expand across NC.



Langston University-Sherman Lewis School of Agriculture and Applied Sciences hosted the Biennial "Black Towns Summit" in Oklahoma City. The Summit brought together Black Towns and Community's Mayors, Trustees, and town residents for the informative event. One of the Historically Black Towns which was awarded a \$1.2 million dollar grant to improve the town's water waste system and repaired roads around town that have improved the lives of their communities' residents.



Universidad de Puerto Rico

In the UPR ACM Community Garden, funded by USDA NRCS, students engage with the soil, feeling its texture and absorbing its wisdom. They learn to listen to plants and decipher signals for optimal care, gaining responsibility by tending the garden, removing weeds and pests. Equipping themselves with the right tools enhances efficiency. The community experiences gratification in harvesting fruits, appreciating each growth stage. Seeds germinate, mature, and nourish families when sold, fulfilling the community.



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 \$575,895. Similarly, FCCRD received approximately \$30,000 in public and private investments for support of new entrepreneurial activities.



TRANSFORMING LIVES, INSPIRING GREATNESS

South Carolina State University Community Economic Development (CED) continues to help South Carolina communities face challenges and opportunities. The CED engages in entrepreneurial, non-profit, and leadership development technical assistance. One program highlight included piloting the Ag, Minority, Family and Small Business program for socially disadvantage minority businesses. With a special emphasis on creating and sustaining jobs, education and development services are provided through a series of workshops, peer meetings, and technical assistance.



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE

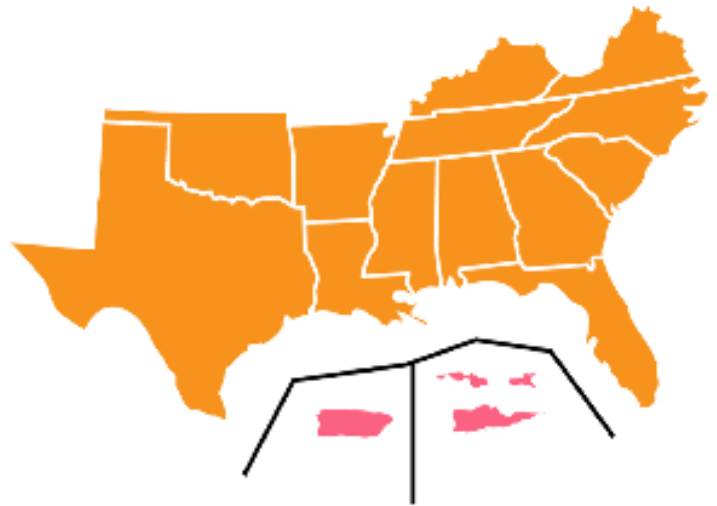
UT Extension focused on enhancing community development and economic development through three funded projects: Environmental Protection Agency's Technical, Managerial and Financial Assistance to Water Systems, National 4-H Council's Tech Changemakers Program, and AT&T Digital Literacy Program. The EPA program is focused on providing technical assistance to 54 water systems over a three-year period. The Tech Changemakers and the digital literacy training programs are focused on broadband adoption in 42 counties in Tennessee.

Over the last three years (2020-2023) The Prairie View A&M University CED Unit established The Rural Workforce Academy (TRWA) as a hands-on skills training academy funded through a partnership with the Economic Development Administration. Since the establishment of the program in 2020, Prairie View provided training and assisted 2,212 individuals in skills training (Certified Nursing Assistant, Construction, Electrical, Welding, Cyber-security), job placement, soft skills and employment preparation, wraparound services, and disaster assessments.

West Virginia State University Extension Service's Art Extension Educator works throughout the state with artists and organizations. The educator leads two programs, one is community arts based, named Ripple. This program facilitates a design team composed of artists and other community leaders to create a project that fosters meaningful partnerships with the Arts. The Creative Entrepreneur Fellowship works directly with artists to improve their business practice, gain skills and boost confidence as an entrepreneur.



Virginia's Farm to School(F2S) efforts leverage strong partnerships between Extension and the Department of Education to work as a broad-based, multi-stakeholder team. Supplementing the Virginia F2S Toolkit, Extension hosted a webinar series that expanded on best practices by featuring practitioners with on-the-ground experience and tips from the field. F2S agricultural producer curriculum training increased capacity for workshops providing necessary knowledge for producers to navigate sales to schools. These efforts reached over 200 participants.



This work is supported by the Southern Rural Development Center, funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

CONTACT US:

P.O BOX 5187 150 LLOYD-RICKS-WATSON MISSISSIPPI STATE, MS 39762

PHONE: 662-325-3207

srdc.msstate.edu



SOUTHERN RURAL
DEVELOPMENT CENTER



SOUTHERN RURAL
DEVELOPMENT CENTER



SOUTHERN RURAL
DEVELOPMENT CENTER



@SO_DEV_CENTER