
CNRED COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

APRIL 2008

The **Chippewa Valley Center for Economic Research and Development (CVCERD)** is a University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire/University of Wisconsin-Extension partnership that combines the talents of students and University of Wisconsin faculty in western Wisconsin to effectively meet the community economic development needs of the region. The CVCERD received a \$10,000 one-year grant to develop an applied local foods research project at UW-Eau Claire. The overall goals of the project are to:

1. Identify and help bridge selling opportunities between food buyers and regional producers in North/West Wisconsin by beginning to document actual and potential supply and demand.
2. Develop methods for DATCP to measure the impact of its Buy Local, Buy WI program.
3. Demonstrate how local food system development translates into economic development at the county/state level.
4. Build a collaborative of regional educational institutions who wish to support and enhance local food system development on the community and regional levels.
5. Identify partnership opportunities and/or funding needs & opportunities for implementation on a region-wide basis.

Please contact Andrew Dane at andrew.dane@ces.uwex.edu for more information

Leadership Team

Randy Stoecker and Catherine Willis, along with Dan Hill, Sarah Burgert, and Art Lersch, now have a draft report on how leadership educators define leadership program sustainability, based on 41 interviews with representatives of Wisconsin community-based leadership education programs. We will next be looking at how the programs compare to the collective definition we have developed from that research.

Spreading the Wisconsin Idea to Guyana

Greg Wise, Art Lersch, and Julie Keown-Bomar made up the second team detailed to Guyana South America to support the modernization of their Extension system.

Traditionally a technology-transfer dominated system, the Guyanese have been working with UW-Extension to learn new techniques for supporting communities of learners through community and leadership development programs. Team two spent two weeks learning from community-based educators and their clientele, developed and taught a two-day seminar for the Extension service, and modeled the community development approach in two communities. This team followed previous efforts that included John Preissing, Tom Cadwalleder, Andrew Dane and Rick Klemme. A third team, consisting of Sue Buck, Dave Berard and Arlen Albrecht will build on this work.

eXtension Entrepreneurship CoP Launches

Isn't it a shame that there are Extension specialists and local educators spread all across the state and nation, many working on similar issues, most pulling together the best and most current thinking on an issue without the benefit of the others? Having one reliable and comprehensive place to turn to for information and ideas about an important program topic is what many of us would love to have available. The eXtension national initiative is meant to address that very challenge. Harnessing the expertise of many sources within the Land Grant University system, a number of "communities of practice" or "CoPs" have formed to create web-based repositories or portals that gather together the best research and understanding on a variety of issues. One such interest group that has developed an interactive library of resources is the Entrepreneurs and Their Communities CoP. This site offers support for entrepreneurs that are hoping to take an idea through the stages of feasibility to profitability. The site also offers support for communities and those that support them to develop an environment in which entrepreneurship will flourish. More simply, the site takes a business development and a community and economic development approach to entrepreneurship. Intended to support learners directly, the site includes sections on FAQs, Information Briefs, Research Highlights, Case Studies, Data and Tools, and Policies and Strategies, and even has an Ask-the-Expert component for those questions that haven't been anticipated. The site launched just this year, and is modest at best. In fact, it is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of content. The expectation is that folks like you will not just be consumers, but also providers to the site. Like Wikipedia (except with standards!), you are encouraged to add your good work so that others can also benefit from it. You are encouraged to check out the entire eXtension initiative at <http://www.eXtension.org> or go directly to the Entrepreneurship CoP at <http://www.eXtension.org/entrepreneurship>.

Business Feasibility Assessment and Community Economic Development

The recently published Business Feasibility curriculum written by Bill Pinkovitz and Kate Stover for the Agricultural Innovation Center was most recently delivered at the Value Added Agriculture Conference in Eau Claire. While the curriculum supports entrepreneurs investigating the personal and market feasibility of an enterprise, the program is more centrally a component of a community economic development program that highlights entrepreneurship as an important strategy. Of the over 100 persons that have participated in the program in the past year, nearly half are community-based educators and economic development professionals that intend to integrate the material into a business start up program. If you would like to learn more about the curriculum and how to employ it locally as a way of broadening your communities approach to economic development, contact Bill Pinkovitz or Greg Wise.

Economic Impact of Hospitals

Matt Kures, Steve Deller and Andy Lewis will be collaborating with the Wisconsin Hospital Association on a study of the economic impact of health care in Wisconsin with an emphasis on hospital. We will be estimating the state and regional economic impact of health care as well as developing an "IMPLAN Lite" version of software that can be used to calculate the rough impact of health care at the County level. This study should be completed by November of this year.

IEDC Application Submitted

The CCED in partnership with WEDA has submitted an application to teach the Basic Economic Development course certified by the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). The curriculum would be co-taught by faculty/staff of the CCED and the 21 certified economic developers in the state of Wisconsin. This has been a lengthy process, but if approved, the tentative course dates would be November 2nd - 7th or November 9th - 14th. The Center owes Mary Cole Laub a big thank you for her leadership on the application. Mary is a member of the Center's advisory committee and will be serving as the course administrator. More information will be coming after the application is reviewed by the IEDC.

A Home for Everyone 2008: Today's Housing, Tomorrow's Vision

If housing issues are growing in your community, mark your calendars for July 23-24, 2008. The 12th annual conference sponsored by the Wisconsin Collaborative for Affordable Housing will be held at the Radisson paper Valley Hotel in Appleton, Wisconsin. UWEX is a member of the collaborative and Andy Lewis has been serving on the planning committee due to the absence of housing specialist Mark Smith who is on leave of absence. To receive more information on the conference, complete the form at: http://www.wiscap.org/ec_conference_ahfe_information_main_page.asp

WEDA Spring Conference

It's not too late to register for the spring WEDA Conference, "Developing the Developer: Sharpening the Professional & Organizational Skills", being held on April 30 – May 1, in Wausau, Wisconsin. For more information see: <http://www.weda.org/calendar/conferences/2008-spring/index.html>

Thrive Quality of Life Survey

The CCED has distributed and collected surveys aimed at measuring the public's perception of quality of life in the eight county Thrive region. Survey results are now being tabulated and will be summarized in a report supplemented with objective data on a number of quality of life issues. This work is being done on a contract basis but will undoubtedly provide a model that could be replicated in other regions.

Downtown Economics e-Newsletter

Four recent issues of Downtown Economics (previously Let's Talk Business) provide ideas for increasing downtown economic activity:

- Capturing Sales from Recreational Homeowners (April 2008, No 140)
- Year-Round Marketing in Tourism Communities (March 2008, No 139)
- The Downtown Coffee House Business (February 2008, No 138)
- Ten Global Trends Affecting Downtowns (January 2008, No 137)

Downtown Economics is available on-line at:
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/publicat/letstalk.html>

Please forward link to downtown and business district revitalization and planning professionals in your county. If your communities have information needs related to a downtown economic development topic, contact Bill Ryan at CCED.

Local Foods

Laura Brown and Gary Green are currently conducting surveys in Vernon and Crawford Counties to evaluate the potential demand for and supply of local foods in that region. They are especially interested in evaluating the obstacles and opportunities for increasing the supply of local food purchase in the region. The study will involve surveys of farmers and restaurants/retailers. A similar study was recently completed in Door County with restaurants and producers involved in the “Kingdom So Delicious” program.

Economic Data

In an effort to introduce more online data tools to county educators, Bill Pinkovitz has initiated a promotional campaign/online educational program to introduce county educators to new powerful online data tools, stimulate interest in to the tools, and train educators online in their use. To date two sessions have been conducted with twenty county educators. Typically, the training takes less than fifteen minutes per session. Initial evaluations have been very positive.

The initial session focused on “On the Map” a worker flow mapping tool created by the U.S. Census. “On the Map” enables users to quickly and easily map local labor sheds (where residents work and where workers live). One of the best features is the fact that 2004 data is available at the county and community level. The second session was on the Census’ “Industry Focus” tool – another easy, yet powerful tool that enables users to obtain a variety of local employment data (2007) at the four-digit NAICS level.

To participate in future training simply email Bill at bill.pinkovitz@uwex.edu or respond to the emails from Bill entitled “New Local Data”. If you would still like to participate in the first two sessions, simply email Bill.

SHARE YOUR WORK!

Please share with us your community and economic development work that would benefit other Extension educators elsewhere in the state. Email your contributions to the CNRED Community & Economic Development Update to Gary Green (gpgreen@wisc.edu).

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