

Delta Regional Forum: Population, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving

July 15-17, 2015

Coahoma County Higher Education Center

Clarksdale, Mississippi



Organizers and Sponsors

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Coahoma County Higher Education Center

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Delta Regional Forum: Population, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving

Coahoma County Higher Education Center
Clarksdale, MS

Sessions at a Glance

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Time		Event	Location
2:00 PM	4:30 PM	Registration and Poster Set Up	Cutrer Lobby and Ballroom
4:30 PM	6:30 PM	Welcome Reception and Poster Display	Ballroom

Thursday, July 16, 2015

Time		Event	Location
8:00 AM	9:00 AM	Registration and Continental Breakfast	Cutrer Lobby
9:00AM	9:30 AM	Introduction and Opening Remarks	Ballroom
9:30 AM	11:00 AM	Session 1: Community Development Collaboration through Applied Research	Lewis 301
		Panel 1: Early Childhood Efforts in the Delta: Breastfeeding to Pre-K	Ballroom
11:00 AM	11:10 AM	Break	
11:10 AM	12:40 PM	Session 2: Health and Health Care	Lewis 301
		Panel 2: Community Development	Ballroom
12:40 PM	2:10 PM	Networking Lunch (Provided)	Cutrer Lobby
2:10 PM	3:40 PM	Session 3: Social Development	Lewis 301
		Panel 3: Local and Regional Food Systems	Ballroom
3:40 PM	3:50 PM	Break	
3:50 PM	5:00 PM	Walking Tour of Clarksdale Farmers Market	Meet in Ballroom to start tour

Friday, July 17, 2015

Time		Event	Location
8:30 AM	12:00 PM	Field Trips to Jonestown and Sumner	Meet in Lobby
12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Boxed Lunch (Provided)	Cutrer Lobby
1:00 PM	2:30 PM	Session 5: Health and Health Care: Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative	Lewis 301
		Panel 4: Economic Development	Ballroom
2:30 PM	2:40 PM	Break	
2:40 PM	4:10 PM	Session 6: Economic Development, Revitalization, and Entrepreneurship	Lewis 301
		Panel 5: Health	Ballroom
4:10 PM	5:00 PM	Wrap-up, Closing Remarks, and Evaluation	Ballroom

Delta Regional Forum: Population, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Registration and Poster Set Up **2:00 PM – 4:30 PM**
Lobby and Ballroom

Welcome Reception and Poster Display **4:30 PM – 6:30 PM**
Ballroom

Poster Presentations

Implementing MSQII-2: An Evidence-Based Approach to Improving Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes Mellitus Patient Outcomes in Mississippi

Authors: Xavier Johnson, Augusta Bilbro, and LaTonya Lott

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health

The Association Between Educational Attainment, Adult Concentration, and Age

Author: Natya Jones

Affiliation: The University of Mississippi Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Long-Term Population Shifts within the Delta Region

Author: Clifford Holley

Affiliation: The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies

Using Agrifood System, Socioeconomic, and Demographic Data to Inform Planning for Resilience: A Pilot Study from the Southern United States

Authors: John Green, Lauren Camp, Caroline Canarios, Jim Worstell, and Lisa Johnson

Affiliations: The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies and Delta Land & Community

Thursday, July 16, 2015

Registration and Continental Breakfast	8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Lobby
Introduction and Opening Remarks	9:00 AM – 9:30 AM Ballroom
Concurrent Presentations and Panel Sessions	9:30 AM – 11:00 AM
Session 1: Community Development Collaboration through Applied Research Lewis 301	
Moderator: Anna Kleiner (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)	
Enhancing Community Capacity through a “Living Lab” in Nevada Missouri Authors: Gary Glass Jr., Bhawani Mishra, and Tracy Greever Rice Affiliation: The University of Missouri Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis	
How Does Place Affect Access to “What Works”?: Knowledge Usage in Urban and Rural NGO Intervention Design Author: Caitlin Brooking Affiliation: The University of Mississippi Department of Sociology and Anthropology	
Multi-Institutional Partnerships for Research and Development: Case Studies from UM2, Tri-County Workforce Alliance, and Visions of Hope Authors: John Green, Dana Thomas, Josephine Rhymes, and Sarah Walker Affiliations: The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies, The University of Michigan School of Public Health, Tri-County Workforce Alliance, and Visions of Hope	
Panel 1: Early Childhood Efforts in the Delta: Breastfeeding to Pre-K Ballroom	
President:	Desta Reff (Delta Directions Consortium)
Panelists:	Franziska Reff (Clarksdale Baby University) Polly Patrick (Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition) Sannie Snell (Right! from the Start Initiative) Meghan Tooke (Tallahatchie Early Learning Alliance) Janice Ford (Delta Health Partners)
Session Break	11:00 AM – 11:10AM

Concurrent Presentations and Panel Sessions

11:10 AM – 12:40 PM

**Session 2: Health and Health Care
Lewis 301**

Moderator: Sarah Gayden Harris (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)

All About the Data

Authors: Debbie Logan and Sheila Keller

Affiliations: Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce and The University of Mississippi Medical Center

Tallahatchie Wellness! A Community's Journey toward Optimal Wellness

Authors: Catherine Woodyard and Adole Muruako

Affiliations: Tallahatchie General Hospital and The University of Mississippi

Right! From the Start

Authors: Sannie Snell, Meghan McCullough, and John Green

Affiliations: Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi, Women and Children Health Initiatives, and The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies

**Panel 2: Community Development
Ballroom**

President: John J. Green (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)

Panelists: April Grayson (The William Winter Institute)
Josephine Rhymes (Tri-County Workforce Alliance)
Linda Stringfellow (AmeriCorps*VISTA)
Katrina Zavalney (Clarksdale Revitalization Inc.)

Networking Lunch (Provided)

12:40 PM – 2:10 PM

Lobby

Concurrent Presentations and Panel Sessions 3

2:10 PM – 3:40 PM

**Session 3: Social Development
Lewis 301**

Moderator: Meghan McCullough (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)

Data Driven Approaches to Community Education: Changing Culture, Improving Lives

Authors: Bryan Farrell and Alan Burns

Affiliation: Mississippi State University

The State of Re-entry and Mississippi's Expungement Law

Authors: Kyra McDonald and Linda Stringfellow

Affiliations: Mississippi Center for Justice and Delta State University AmeriCorps*VISTA

EverFi and the Community Digital Scholars Program: Using Digital Tools to Promote Financial Literacy

Authors: Tom Pittman and Peggy Linton

Affiliation: Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi

Baby University: Using Community Building and Support to Create Engagement

Author: Franziska Reff

Affiliation: Clarksdale Baby University

**Panel 3: Local and Regional Food Systems
Ballroom**

Presider: Emily Broad-Leib (Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic)

Panelists: Daniel Doyle (Mississippi Sustainable Agriculture Network)

Sunny Young (Good Food for Oxford Schools)

Dorothy Grady-Scarborough (Mississippi Farm to School Network, MEGA Garden)

DeMarc Hickson (Mississippi Food Policy Council and My Brother's Keeper)

Ona Balkus (Harvard Food Law and Policy Center)

Session Break

3:40 PM – 3:50PM

Walking Tour of Clarksdale Farmers Market

3:50 PM – 5:00 PM

**Meet in Ballroom to start
tour**

Friday, July 17, 2015

Field Trips: Jonestown and Sumner, MS

8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Meet in Lobby to start tour

Boxed Lunch (Provided)

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

Lobby

Concurrent Presentations and Panel Sessions

1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

**Session 5: Health and Health Care: Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative
Lewis 301**

Moderator: Lauren Camp (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)

Recruitment of Barbershops for Blood Pressure Screening and Referral in the Mississippi Delta Region

Authors: Briana Perryman, Jackie Hawkins, and Cassandra Dove

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative

Creating Policy System and Environmental Changes in the 18-County Mississippi Delta Region: Mayoral Health Council Initiative

Authors: Jackie Hawkins, Kenneth Judie, Lakita Calvin, Michelle Byrd-Webster, and Cassandra Dove

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative

The Role of Community Health Workers in Chronic Disease Prevention and Control: Findings from the Clinical Community Health Worker Initiative

Authors: Tameka Walls, Amanda Cole, Cassandra Dove, Vincent Mendy, and Augusta Bilbro

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative

Recruitment of Churches to Participate in the ABCS Community Health Screening in the Mississippi Delta Region: Delta Alliance for Congregational Health

Authors: Jackie Hawkins, Alice Griggs-Miller, and Cassandra Dove

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health, Office of Preventive Health

**Panel 4: Economic Development
Ballroom**

Presiders: Ryan Parsons (The University of Mississippi McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement)

Panelists: Emanuel Edmond (Delta Regional Authority)
John Brandon (The Entrepreneur Center, Mississippi Development Authority)
Camille Walker (Intern, Mississippi Development Authority)
Ryan Snow (Intern, Mississippi Development Authority)
Carla Ross (Southern Bancorp Community Partners)
Albert Nylander (The University of Mississippi McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement)

Session Break

2:30 PM – 2:40 PM

Concurrent Presentations and Panel Sessions

2:40 PM – 4:10 PM

**Session 6: Economic Development, Revitalization, and Entrepreneurship
Lewis 301**

Moderator: Meghan McCullough (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)

Intelligent Communities: Transitioning to the Digital Age

Author: Roberto Gallardo

Affiliation: Mississippi State University Extension Service Intelligent Community Institute

Revitalizing Manufacturing in the Delta

Author: Frank Hull

Affiliations: The University of Mississippi and the Cass Business School in London

The Quapaw Canoe Company Success Story

Author: John Ruskey

Affiliation: Quapaw Canoe Company

**Panel 5: Health
Ballroom**

Presider: Lynn Woo (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)

Panelists: Maya McDoom (Mississippi State University Social Science Research Center)

Catherine Woodyard (Tallahatchie General Hospital Wellness Center)

Molly Phillips (The Dreyfus Health Foundation of The Rogosin Institute)

Wrap-Up, Closing Remarks, and Evaluation

4:10 PM – 5:00 PM

Appendix

Delta Regional Forum: Population, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving

July 15-17, 2015

Abstracts

Poster Presentations

Implementing MSQII-2: An Evidence-Based Approach to Improving Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes Mellitus Patient Outcomes in Mississippi

Authors: Xavier Johnson, Augusta Bilbro, and LaTonya Lott

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health

Background: The Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) created the Mississippi Quality Improvement Initiative (MSQII-2) which provides a team-based care approach to address Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) and Diabetes Mellitus (DM). MSQII-2 is a systematic approach to healthcare quality improvement using the Expanded Chronic Care Model. It allows healthcare providers and staff to test and measure practice innovations, and then share their experiences in an effort to accelerate learning and facilitate widespread implementation of team-based care concepts and ideas in primary clinics. Methods: Implementation of MSQII-2 included the following: A Request-for-Proposals was publicly released via MSDH, Mississippi Rural Health Association (MSRH) and Mississippi Primary Healthcare Association websites encouraging clinics to apply. Five clinics were selected to participate: Three federally qualified health centers, one Rural Health clinic, and one private practice. These awarded clinics are expected to: 1) attend an introductory meeting; 2) participate in pre-work and preparation exercises; 3) attend four learning sessions over the course of the year. Results: MSQII-2 is currently ongoing. It envisions that quality improvement in service delivery will impact patient clinical outcomes for participating clinics. Expected patient clinical outcomes include: improved prevention and control of hypertension, increased self-monitoring of high blood pressure tied to clinical support, improved medication adherence, increased use of diabetes self-management programs and improved control of diabetes. Conclusion: Clinics participating will gain knowledge, skills, and materials that will prepare them to make immediate changes in their clinics, which will ultimately impact CVD and DM patient outcomes.

The Association Between Educational Attainment, Adult Concentration, and Age

Author: Natya Jones

Affiliation: The University of Mississippi Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Overview: This study attempts to identify an association between education, age, and difficulty concentrating or remembering. Acquiring new skills in adulthood can positively affect the quality of life. Literature suggests that age is positively associated with difficulty concentrating

or remembering, although there may be other factors that are associated with this difficulty. The current literature is inconclusive regarding educational attainment and age. Hypothesis: The researcher proposed two hypotheses: 1) Education is associated with difficulty concentration or remembering. 2) Age is associated with difficulty concentration or remembering. Methods: A cross tabulation analysis is used to identify any associations or significance among the variables. The explanatory variables are educational attainment and difficulty concentrating or remembering. The controlled variable is age. The total number of participants is 7,299 (n=7299). Results/Findings: Participants in age group 18-64 who achieved a bachelors degree or higher, reported less difficulty concentrating or remembering than participants who were 65 and older. Age group 18-64 indicated less difficulty concentrating or remembering than those who are 65 and older. There is an association between educational attainment and difficulty concentrating. The null hypothesis can be rejected for both. This analysis reveals that higher educational attainment was positively associated with low levels of difficulty concentrating.

Long-Term Population Shifts within the Delta Region

Author: Clifford Holley

Affiliation: The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies

Using data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Decennial Censuses, this poster will examine the Delta Region's long term and recent population changes. The focus will be on population growth and change since 1960. Several demographic events have occurred since the end of the Baby Boom, each leaving its own imprint on the region. Particular attention shall be paid to what extent the differing trends of urbanization and suburbanization has affected the population growth and racial balance of counties within the region. Counties from eight very different states comprise the official Delta region, counties that on some levels are similar but on others differ greatly on key economic and demographic dimensions. The poster will not only compare Delta Region, as a whole, to the rest of the United States, but it also will examine contrasts within the counties that comprise the Delta region. Finally, this poster will attempt to examine the impact of these demographic events on the region, and the age/sex structure of the people living there.

Using Agrifood System, Socioeconomic, and Demographic Data to Inform Planning for Resilience: A Pilot Study from the Southern United States

Authors: John Green, Lauren Camp, Caroline Canarios, Jim Worstell, and Lisa Johnson

Affiliations: The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies and Delta Land & Community

Data on a wide range of topics, including agrifood systems and population characteristics, are increasingly available at various levels of geography. Unfortunately, these data sources are not typically connected in ways that are readily accessible to development practitioners working to create sustainable and resilient systems. This poster reports on a project seeking to help fill this gap by operationalizing and measuring the relative resiliency of local agrifood systems in the Southern United States using publicly available, county-level data. The purpose is to construct data-driven tools to aid in practical theory building and to inform both on-the-ground programs and higher-level policy initiatives. Findings show that there are important state and regional concentrations of relative vulnerability-resiliency, with special implications for the Delta region.

Presentations

Session 1: Community Development Collaboration through Applied Research

Enhancing Community Capacity through a “Living Lab” in Nevada Missouri

Authors: Gary Glass Jr., Bhawani Mishra, and Tracy Greever Rice

Affiliation: The University of Missouri Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis

Key components of rural community development include improving the health status of local populations in addition to stimulating entrepreneurial activity and local economic growth to enhance a community's capacity to satisfy the needs of its citizens. The study compares Vernon County, which is home to the city of Nevada, with 6 other counties in Missouri. The comparison counties were selected using criteria such as geographic proximity to metropolitan areas and state boundaries, population density and distribution, population, household income and social determinants of health. All 7 counties in the study are classified as "rural" according to the USDA definition of areas with populations of less than 49,000 people and not contiguous to a metropolitan county. The analysis was conducted using data from the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFFS), US Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The purpose of the study is to determine benchmark indicators that reflect timely, local descriptions of the status and change of the health of Nevada's population, measure the impact of specific intervention strategies and evaluate potential sectors for economic development. Formative analysis and summative evaluation of the "living lab" experience will facilitate positive outcomes in Nevada and will be used to inform correction and replication of the model for use throughout the delta region.

How Does Place Affect Access to “What Works”?: Knowledge Usage in Urban and Rural NGO Intervention Design

Author: Caitlin Brooking

Affiliation: The University of Mississippi Department of Sociology and Anthropology

As a state consistently ranked last in many health rankings of note, Mississippi stands to benefit greatly from health interventions developed and implemented by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). These NGOs depend on governmental and private foundation support, and, precipitated by the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) in 2001 (Biesta 2007) and Affordable Care Act of 2010, these funding sources more commonly require “evidence-based practices” (EBPs). It remains unclear how NGOs are currently utilizing data to design interventions, and whether they are primarily utilizing empirical data derived from formal evaluation or indigenous knowledge. To investigate the ways urban and rural Mississippi NGOs are utilizing data to develop solutions to combat health and wellness disparities, I will conduct and analyze the results of interviews with 30 NGO leaders in Jackson and in the Delta region (Clarksdale, Marks, and Cleveland). To explore the differences between NGOs using indigenous knowledge and those using empirical knowledge, I will conduct 10 in-depth interviews with a subset of the first 30 who indicate high usage of data in intervention design. This study will contribute to the sociology of development and the sociology of knowledge by elaborating on theories concerning the construction and use of knowledge to inform social

change. The findings will expand understanding of the differences in use of knowledge in programmatic decision-making among rural and urban NGOs, an area fairly sparsely explored but critical for rural areas afflicted with poverty such as Mississippi.

Multi-Institutional Partnerships for Research and Development: Case Studies from UM2, Tri-County Workforce Alliance, and Visions of Hope

Authors: John Green, Dana Thomas, Josephine Rhymes, and Sarah Walker

Affiliations: The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies, The University of Michigan School of Public Health, Tri-County Workforce Alliance, and Visions of Hope

A wide range of community-university partnerships have been developed in recent decades to spur social and economic development, and scholars have analyzed these initiatives. Still, much of the extant literature is more aspirational than empirical in nature. This presentation will reflect on a decade-long partnership between the University of Michigan and two universities in Mississippi (starting with Delta State University and more recently involving the University of Mississippi) in both the Gulf Coast and Delta regions of the state. Attention will be directed at a comparative case study of two projects conducted with community organizations: the Tri-County Workforce Alliance (based in Clarksdale, MS) and Visions of Hope (based in Biloxi, MS). The presentation will end with lessons learned and recommendations for multi-institutional partnerships for community-relevant research and development.

Session 2: Health and Health Care

All About the Data

Authors: Debbie Logan and Sheila Keller

Affiliation: Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce

The purpose of this presentation is to report on opportunities to increase the retention of bedside nurses in the Delta of Mississippi through participation in innovative education models, recruitment, and retention initiatives. In response to the current nursing shortage, schools of nursing and healthcare institutions are being challenged to partner, develop and implement new and unique approaches to address the needs of nursing students as well as retain the experienced nurse at the bedside. Education and service are working together to develop new models that support the most advantageous clinical learning experiences as well as incorporate fully the contributions and expertise of an experienced nursing workforce. In 2013, Mississippi hospitals in the state reported the nurse vacancy rate at 5.3% with the vacancy rate in rural hospitals averaging greater than 7%. The 2013 data identified the RN turnover rate in Mississippi facilities at 20.6%. The healthcare careers growth rate in Mississippi is projected at three times that of the nation. With poverty and poor healthcare challenges facing the state, Mississippi must educate, recruit and retain a qualified, competent and diverse nursing workforce. This presentation will include an analysis of the healthcare workforce data for the Delta in comparison with the rest of state. An additional component of the presentation will include a descriptive analysis of job satisfaction and intent to leave, regarding nursing staff in the Delta region. In conclusion, we will present innovative models being implemented in Delta healthcare entities with an emphasis on retention of nursing staff.

Tallahatchie Wellness! A Community's Journey toward Optimal Wellness

Authors: Catherine Woodyard and Adole Muruako

Affiliations: Tallahatchie General Hospital and The University of Mississippi

Tallahatchie General Hospital (TGH) recently received funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for the Rural Healthcare Outreach Services Program. Through this funding, the TGH Wellness Center (WC) will launch Tallahatchie Wellness and associated programming as part of our efforts to reduce chronic disease and improve health, wellness and quality of life for residents in our county. Tallahatchie Wellness programming will include: (1) Four cohorts of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) annually; (2) The Tallahatchie Food Education and Expansion Program (TFEP) which will include a 1-acre garden on the wellness center campus, which will supply produce for food truck deliveries to the west side of the county, local farmers' markets, and cooking classes and demonstrations. TFEP will ultimately increase access to fresh, affordable produce throughout the county, as well as teach residents healthy cooking techniques; (3) Two annual health fairs (one on each side of the county) with follow-up care and assistance navigating Obamacare for residents without health insurance; (4) Worksite wellness programs in local worksites starting with TGH; (5) After school youth program using the Coordinated Approach to School Health Curriculum (CATCH), focused initially on third graders; and (6) An annual three-month community wellness challenge (January to March) modeled after the Biggest Loser, but more focused on all dimensions of wellness and not solely weight loss. The Tallahatchie Wellness coalition includes TGH (TGH, TGHWC, and Charleston Clinic), the Tutwiler Community Education Center, and Southern Discount Drugs.

Right! From the Start

Authors: Sannie Snell, Meghan McCullough, and John Green

Affiliations: Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi and Women and Children Health Initiatives

This is a population health/research-based project, with the goal to develop a hospital-based initiative to increase the breastfeeding rates for low and very low birth weight babies utilizing a collaborative, multi-agency approach to ensure better outcomes and affect systemic change. Collaborative Partners: Our major partners are the University of Mississippi (UM) Medical Center Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Aaron E. Henry Community Health Services Center, Delta Health Center, UM Center for Population Studies along with MS State Dept. of Health. This project is partially funded by a W.K. Kellogg grant and the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi (CFNM) is the grantee. The Project Director, Sannie Snell, is contracted with CFNM to develop, provide oversight, and coordinate all activities of the project with the collaborative partners.

Session 3: Social Development

Data Driven Approaches to Community Education: Changing Culture, Improving Lives

Authors: Bryan Farrell and Alan Burns

Affiliation: Mississippi State University

The purpose of this paper is to discover and expose meaningful insights into the abundant value of community based education. This concept paper will discuss a variety of approaches and benefits to bringing together parents and students in an educational setting. The two largest issues commonly stated when referring to problems in the state of Mississippi are health and education. Community led health initiatives have been thoroughly explored in relation to how they bring about a health conscious culture. Education is key to overcoming many of the issues facing Mississippi and if a grassroots approach can change a culture that has repeatedly failed to fully embrace education, the implications are unbound. This paper will offer examples of the various directions community based education can take and, given the particulars of the community, what can be predicted to work best. It will explain the value and expected outcomes of embarking upon a community based education path and will pave the way for an understanding of how to go about implementing and evaluating such a policy. This paper will be multidisciplinary in that it will encompass motivational theory, education, economics, community development, political philosophy, sociology and anthropology. This is the first in a series of work aimed at creating, implementing and evaluating community based educational programs in the state of Mississippi.

The State of Re-entry and Mississippi's Expungement Law

Authors: Kyra McDonald and Linda Stringfellow

Affiliations: Mississippi Center for Justice and AmeriCorps Vista

In 2012, Mississippi recorded the second-highest imprisonment rate in the country, a statistic surpassed only by Louisiana. In fact, data suggests that over the past 30 years, Mississippi's prison population more than quadrupled and, in 2013, the state's prison population exceeded 22,400 inmates. Additionally, research shows that nonviolent offenders, who made up more than two-thirds of the increase in prison admissions between 2002 and 2012 accounted for much of Mississippi's corrections growth. To address the state's prison population, advocate for the growing need for reform in Mississippi, and provide a resource for individuals re-entering society, particularly in the area of employment, the Mississippi Center for Justice's Equal Justice Works AmeriCorps Legal Fellow along with Delta State University's AmeriCorps VISTA Director held two expungement clinics in the Mississippi Delta in early 2015. The response from the community was astounding. Hundreds of individuals with prior arrest and conviction histories were provided free legal and economic assistance concerning their criminal record. By focusing on expungements, which have the effect of striking-out an arrest and/or conviction on an individual's criminal record, as a method of re-entry, individuals who participated in the clinics may now have a better opportunity to find employment, in particular, but also obtain housing, professional licenses, and other benefits that are essential to thriving in their communities.

EverFi and the Community Digital Scholars Program: Using Digital Tools to Promote Financial Literacy

Presenters: Tom Pittman and Peggy Linton

Affiliation: Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi

Since 2011, the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi (CFNM) has partnered with EverFi, a leading education technology company, to bring web-based learning courses in areas of

financial literacy, digital literacy and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education to Mississippi youth. The CFNM initiative, called the *Community Digital Scholars Program*, brings these interactive resources to local students at no cost to the schools or taxpayers. *Community Digital Scholars Program* has reached 13,166 students with 132 on-line courses during the 2014-2015 school year. Learning gains in personal finance average 41 percent. EverFi's platform uses simulation and gamification to teach important lessons that have a lasting impact on students' lives, but can be put to use immediately.

Baby University: Using Community Building and Support to Create Family Engagement

Presenter: Franziska Reff

Affiliation: Clarksdale Baby University

By age three, a baby's brain is nearly 85% developed. These first years provide an unmatched window of emotional, physical, and intellectual development. Modeled after the successful Harlem Children's Zone Program, Baby University works with parents of children prenatal to age three, to capitalize on this unique time of opportunity, teaching them the skills and knowledge necessary to raise happy, healthy children. Classes run for nine weeks with each week exploring a new, important aspect of child development, including nutrition, discipline, and emotional development. In its first year, the program had 27 graduates with high attendance rates and a 60% retention of continued parental participation post-graduation. Parental engagement is key in these early years, and strong participation is necessary to the success and impact of the course. Through tried and tailored strategies, Baby University's program has seen significant successes in increasing and influencing this engagement. This presentation will examine strategies undertaken by the program to increase family engagement, such as utilizing a joint didactic/therapeutic class model, facilitated group discussion, community building activities and others, as well as discuss lessons learned through the program that can be transposed to build engagement in other contexts.

Session 5: Health and Health Care: Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative

Recruitment of Barbershops for Blood Pressure Screening and Referral in the Mississippi Delta Region

Authors: Briana Perryman, Jackie Hawkins, and Cassandra Dove

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative

Background: Barbers Reaching Out to Help Educate on Routine Screenings (B.R.O.T.H.E.R.S.) was initiated to address high blood pressure awareness and prevention, one of the leading causes of premature death and disability among African-American (AA) men. Past studies have shown that AA men regularly gather at barber shops, which can be an ideal location to conduct health outreach and education. Methods: The Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative devoted a year to recruiting and training barbers through a request-for-proposal and trained barbers as Community Health Advocates through University of Mississippi Medical Center. Barbers were trained on how to measure blood pressure accurately, and received training on the screening protocol, blood pressure readings, education and the referral process. Clients who are screened are provided resources on identifying local health care providers and educational materials for promoting

lifestyle changes and are encouraged to schedule routine checkups with a health care provider to monitor their overall health. Results: Since the inception, 26 barbershops in 16 counties have been engaged; 1,232 participants were screened from September 2012 – January 2015. Mean age of participants was 35.6 years; 96.8% African Americans; 82.6 % male; mean systolic 131.7 mm; mean diastolic 84.5 mm; and 36.7 % had hypertension. Conclusion: Barbershops can serve as an avenue for reaching AA males with elevated blood pressure. Trained barbers as community health advocates can play a crucial role in educating their clients on blood pressure awareness and prevention and link them to local healthcare providers.

Creating Policy System and Environmental Changes in the 18-County Mississippi Delta Region: Mayoral Health Council Initiative

Authors: Jackie Hawkins, Kenneth Judie, Lakita Calvin, Michelle Byrd-Webster, and Cassandra Dove

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative

To facilitate the promotion and implementation of policy system and environmental change strategies, Delta Health Collaborative/Mississippi State Department of Health has implemented a health initiative through mayoral health council. The purpose is to prevent and control risk factors for heart disease and stroke. At the municipal level, strategies support a culture of wellness that address chronic disease prevention in cities and towns located in the MS Delta. Methods: There is a total of 38 active mayoral health councils in the Mississippi Delta that are implementing policy systems environmental change strategies at the local level. To assist with the implementation of these environmental system change strategies, Delta Health Collaborative awards funding to municipalities to create healthy environments which supports increased access to physical activity, healthy foods, reduced exposure to tobacco smoke for the purpose of reducing the prevalence of heart disease and stroke. Results: Since inception a total of 57 of 82 municipalities have been reached in the MS Delta Region. Mayors Health Councils represents 103 health and wellness policies community-wide. These strategies include smoke-free air ordinances, access to physical activity through shared-use agreements and access to healthier food choices through farmers markets.

The Role of Community Health Workers in Chronic Disease Prevention and Control: Findings from the Clinical Community Health Worker Initiative

Authors: Tameka Walls, Amanda Cole, Cassandra Dove, Vincent Mendy, and Augusta Bilbro

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health and the Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative

The Mississippi State Department of Health implemented the Clinical Community Health Worker Initiative (CCHWI) for cardiovascular risk reduction through the use of community health workers (CHW) as integral members of health systems. Although the CHW model has been used in public health over decades, there is limited data on the use and impact of CHWs in rural clinical settings. We report on the influence of our CCHWI in the Mississippi Delta region. Patients from eight participating healthcare systems, including Federally Qualified Health Centers, Rural Health Centers, and private providers, were selected based on diagnosis of uncontrolled hypertension, diabetes, or dyslipidemia. The CHWs visited consenting patients

within 7 days of referral, quarterly and as needed. CHWs conducted Chronic Disease Self-Management workshops, taught proper techniques for measuring blood pressure and hemoglobin A1C, encouraged compliance, collected body mass index and waist circumference measurements. Information was documented and shared with clinical providers. Abnormal or elevated measures were immediately reported. We observed statistically significant improvements (baseline vs most recent value) for diastolic blood pressure ($p=0.0045$), total cholesterol ($p=0.0014$), low density lipoprotein cholesterol ($p=0.0117$), and triglycerides ($p=0.0255$) between 2012 and 2014. CHWs may be useful in underserved areas to improve cardiovascular clinical outcomes. Patient participation and retention in the program was higher when clinic providers played an active role in program recruitment. Clinical community health workers can foster a relationship between health care systems and patients, facilitate access to services and may help influence positive health outcomes in rural areas.

Recruitment of Churches to Participate in the ABCS Community Health Screening in the Mississippi Delta Region: Delta Alliance for Congregational Health

Authors: Jackie Hawkins, Alice Griggs-Miller, and Cassandra Dove

Affiliations: Mississippi State Department of Health, Office of Preventive Health

Background: Delta Alliance for Congregational Health (DACH) is based on a social-ecological model for faith-based institutions to consider the health of individual congregants, the congregation as a whole, and the broader community. Participants will gain an understanding of the DACH model, including best practices and lessons learned, how the DACH model can be implemented in their church/community, and understand the role of the church, community, and the healthcare setting in cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk prevention. Methods: A Request-for-Proposal is publically released throughout the 18-county Mississippi Delta region where faith-based institutions apply for a mini-grant to implement a Congregational Health Ministry. Benchmarked activities are outlined based on quarterly reporting periods. Applications are reviewed and selected based on submitted information. Selected faith-based institutions receive technical assistance through trained Congregational Health Nurses or Congregational Health Advocates in the beginning and until the end of the grant year ensuring that benchmarks such as ABCS (Aspirin therapy, blood pressure control, cholesterol management, and smoking cessation) screenings, conducting Chronic Disease and Diabetes Self-Management Classes and Quarterly Health Team Meetings are met. Results: Since the inception of the project, 50 faith-based institutions have adopted the DACH model, 85 trained Congregational Health Nurses and Advocates and over 4,000 participants have been reached through the ABCS community health screening events in 18 counties. Conclusion: The DACH model can be used to reach at-risk populations and awareness of ABCS of heart disease and stroke prevention in rural settings.

Session 6: Economic Development, Revitalization, and Entrepreneurship

Intelligent Communities: Transitioning to the Digital Age

Author: Roberto Gallardo

Affiliation: Mississippi State University Extension Service Intelligent Community Institute

With the digital age in full-swing and the digital divide becoming a real threat to community and economic development, the ability of communities to understand the challenges of the digital age

is critical. A four module outreach program piloted by the Mississippi State University Extension Service helps rural communities transition to, plan for, and prosper in the digital age. The ultimate objective is to build inclusive and sustainable communities. A six-indicator framework developed by the worldwide Intelligent Community Forum is used to guide communities through this transition.

Revitalizing Manufacturing in the Delta

Author: Frank Hull

This paper profiles opportunities for growing jobs in the Delta by the propagation of principles for manufacturing excellence. Two decades ago, a survey of manufacturers in the MS Delta sponsored by MSU documented many excellent enterprises. Six of these manufacturers joined a forum to share and disseminate best practices in the region. This paper codifies best practices for manufacturing excellence and recommends strategies and tactics for expanding existing manufacturers and attracting new ones. The principles employed by these leading manufacturers are consistent with established sociological theories that are confirmed by case studies of each of the establishments. Each of the organizations built collaboration among diverse employees to achieve high levels of performance. The resulting solidarity blurred status distinctions based on race, gender, and ethnicity resulting in relatively high levels of social solidarity. This solidarity helped these manufacturers achieve high levels of productivity in specific measurable ways and innovate in ways large and small. Success stories are highlighted to illustrate winning practices that can help the Delta attract manufacturing jobs as the US economy continues to re-shore work that was sometimes recklessly outsourced to external nations. The Delta has succeeded in the past and can do so again.

The Quapaw Canoe Company Success Story

Author: John Ruskey

Affiliation: Quapaw Canoe Company

This is an introduction to starting an outdoor recreation mission-oriented business in the Mississippi Delta. The presentation features a slide show focusing on real life lessons learned at Quapaw Canoe Company, est 1998, in Clarksdale, MS, with outpost bases in Helena, AR and Natchez, MS. Topics include dreaming your business, vision, mission statement, objectives, strategy, business models, and others appropriate to subject.

Panel Sessions

Panel 1: Early Childhood Efforts in the Delta: Breastfeeding to Pre-K

President: Desta Reff (Delta Directions Consortium)
Panelists: Franziska Reff (Clarksdale Baby University)
Polly Patrick (Mississippi Breastfeeding Coalition)
Sannie Snell, (Right! from the Start Initiative)
Meghan Tooke (Tallahatchie Early Learning Alliance)
Janice Ford (Delta Health Partners)

The first five years in a child's life is crucial in terms of emotional, physical, and cognitive development. This panel will examine the importance of early childhood and early childhood efforts in the Mississippi Delta. Panelists will discuss the importance of this time in terms of intervention as well as their ongoing efforts, including programs to increase breastfeeding, parent education programs, and Pre-K programs.

Panel 2: Community Development

President: John J. Green (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies & Editorial Office of *Community Development*)
Panelists: April Grayson (The William Winter Institute)
Josephine Rhymes (Tri-County Workforce Alliance)
Linda Stringfellow (AmeriCorps*VISTA)
Katrina Zavalney (Clarksdale Revitalization Inc.)

The field of intentional change at the community level entails a range of frameworks, strategies, and techniques with the goal of improving quality of life and wellbeing. The Mississippi Delta has a rich tradition of community development initiatives, and there is much to be learned from these experiences. This panel will focus on several such initiatives and what can be done to advance this work for the future.

Panel 3: Local and Regional Food Systems

President: Emily Broad-Leib (Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic)
Panelists: Daniel Doyle (Mississippi Sustainable Agriculture Network)
Sunny Young (Good Food for Oxford Schools)
Dorothy Grady-Scarborough (Mississippi Farm to School Network, MEGA Garden)
Ona Balkus (Harvard Food Law and Policy Center)

The Mississippi Delta resides on some of the most fertile soil in the country, yet most of its residents live in food desert areas without routine access to healthy foods. Supporting and growing our local food system is necessary to address this need and combat our region's expansive health and economic concerns. Panelists will discuss the state of local food systems in the Mississippi Delta as well as both programmatic and policy efforts being undertaken to

support them. This includes local procurement policies, supply/capacity concerns in our food systems and efforts to address them, and the farm-to-school movement in Mississippi.

Panel 4: Economic Development

Presiders: Ryan Parsons (The University of Mississippi McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement)

Panelists: John Brandon (The Entrepreneur Center, Mississippi Development Authority)
Camille Walker (Intern, Mississippi Development Authority)
Ryan Snow (Intern, Mississippi Development Authority)
Carla Ross (Southern Bancorp Community Partners)
Albert Nylander (The University of Mississippi McLean Institute for Public Service and Community Engagement)

Economic development continues to be a challenge for the counties in the Delta region, which have historically relied on agriculture for economic growth. This panel will explore innovations in economic development and implications for Delta communities, particularly in rural areas. Panelists will discuss strategies to nurture individual talent, connect economic development to poverty alleviation, and build bridges between communities and institutions such as colleges and universities.

Panel 5: Health

President: Lynn Woo (The University of Mississippi Center for Population Studies)

Panelists: Maya McDoom (Mississippi State University Social Science Research Center)
Catherine Woodyard (Tallahatchie General Hospital Wellness Center)
Molly Phillips (The Dreyfus Health Foundation of The Rogosin Institute)

The Mississippi Delta is widely known for suffering from persistent problems related to poor health outcomes, such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, and infant mortality. However, these challenges have given rise to innovative approaches to improve health care and population health using community-based models. These include the once famous black-led Taborian Hospital, the Delta Health Center - the nation's first rural federal community health center, and wrap around services, such as those provided through Aaron E. Henry's Community Health Services Center. Additionally, unique partnerships have been developed, such as the Tallahatchie General Hospital Wellness Center which evolved through a community-based participatory research initiative. The panelists for this session have been deeply involved in building, evaluating, and advancing these alternative models, and they will reflect on their organizations, lessons learned, and their thoughts on what the future holds.