

**V(A). Planned Program (Summary)**

**Program # 8**

**1. Name of the Planned Program**

Economic and Community Development

Reporting on this Program

**V(B). Program Knowledge Area(s)**

**1. Program Knowledge Areas and Percentage**

KA Code	Knowledge Area	%1862 Extension	%1890 Extension	%1862 Research	%1890 Research
601	Economics of Agricultural Production and Farm Management	0%	20%		
605	Natural Resource and Environmental Economics	15%	10%		
608	Community Resource Planning and Development	70%	50%		
803	Sociological and Technological Change Affecting Individuals, Families, and Communities	10%	10%		
805	Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services	5%	10%		
<b>Total</b>		100%	100%		

**V(C). Planned Program (Inputs)**

**1. Actual amount of FTE/SYs expended this Program**

Year: 2014	Extension		Research	
	1862	1890	1862	1890
<b>Plan</b>	14.3	1.2	0.0	0.0
<b>Actual Paid</b>	24.0	3.4	0.0	0.0
<b>Actual Volunteer</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**2. Actual dollars expended in this Program (includes Carryover Funds from previous years)**

Extension		Research	
Smith-Lever 3b & 3c	1890 Extension	Hatch	Evans-Allen
253671	175567	0	0
1862 Matching	1890 Matching	1862 Matching	1890 Matching
482857	192296	0	0
1862 All Other	1890 All Other	1862 All Other	1890 All Other
1455966	389077	0	0

## V(D). Planned Program (Activity)

### 1. Brief description of the Activity

The primary activities in this area are individualized community, county, and regional economic and community development programs. The planned program activities and projects for these include:

#### **Education and Training**

- Conducted Impact Alabama Roundtable, an executive economic development training program for Alabama's top economic developers
- Conducted two-week Intensive Economic Development Training Course
- Conducted online entrepreneurship and business development training
- Administered AU Graduate Minor in Economic Development
- Conducted Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference
- Conducted online community development and leadership training
- Conducted social media entrepreneurship and business development support activities

#### **Connections and Partnership**

- Managed the Alabama Communities of Excellence program which focuses on communities with populations between 2,000 and 18,000
- Administered the Alabama Community Leaders Network and conducted annual conference and midyear meeting
- Partnered with Tuskegee University on the Black Belt Leadership project in providing series of leadership workshops throughout 12 target counties in west Alabama
- Participated on economic and community development advisory boards throughout the state
- Partnered with AAMU and other institutions and agencies to organize and conduct programs to support community development in urban environments

#### **Research and Communications**

- Published quarterly Extension ACTION newsletter
- Published and disseminate research on topics relevant to state economic and community development policy and practice
  - Developed economic impact/forecast models for local communities using software from EMSI (Economic Modeling Specialists)
  - Maintained online resources to support the creation of businesses and creation of entrepreneurs with a focus on small businesses and limited resource audiences

#### **Consulting, Community Support & Engagement**

- Administered Rural Alabama Initiative grant program
- Developed Elected Officials Alliance in Pickens County that brought together all mayors and county commissioners for monthly engagement and planning sessions
  - Facilitated community and regional strategic planning, assessment and asset mapping efforts throughout the state that engaged over 300 citizen leaders in deliberation and action planning
  - Coordinated a pilot Grassroots Leadership Initiative in three counties featuring civic engagement, planning and leadership development activities
  - Facilitated deliberative forums, roundtables and town meetings
  - Supported regional efforts to promote tourism
  - Continued communication and support for community organizations focused on developing Entrepreneurship programs and or initiatives
    - Supported regional efforts to promote entrepreneurship by local municipalities and chambers of commerce

#### **Virtual Entrepreneurship Center**

- Administered the VEC online network consisting of 2500 individuals - project has members tied into the VEC from: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. There were over 1200 visitors to the online video archives.
  - Increased the online video library and redesigned the website
  - Launched Entrepreneurship Basic Course and Micro-grant program

## **2. Brief description of the target audience**

The primary target audiences are current and future community leaders, decision makers, and local and state governmental officials in all communities across the state. The VEC targets individuals contemplating starting a business or preparing for future entrepreneurial endeavors. The target audience also includes existing entrepreneurs looking for additional training and support for current and future ventures. The project focuses on providing services to new and nontraditional populations that may be underserved by traditional entrepreneurship training activities.

## **3. How was eXtension used?**

eXtension was used to identify webinars that would be of interest to the 79 Alabama Cooperative Extension System professionals who make up the Economic and Community Development Program Priority Team. Each week economic and community development webinars along with small business webinars are highlighted and sent to each team member. eXtension is one of the key resources used in the identification of these webinars. Furthermore several team members participated on communities of practice within eXtension, such as the new Tourism and Recreation community of practice.

## **V(E). Planned Program (Outputs)**

### **1. Standard output measures**

2014	Direct Contacts Adults	Indirect Contacts Adults	Direct Contacts Youth	Indirect Contacts Youth
<b>Actual</b>	15338	59188	2672	20715

**2. Number of Patent Applications Submitted (Standard Research Output)**

**Patent Applications Submitted**

Year: 2014  
 Actual: 0

**Patents listed**

**3. Publications (Standard General Output Measure)**

**Number of Peer Reviewed Publications**

2014	Extension	Research	Total
<b>Actual</b>	0	0	0

**V(F). State Defined Outputs**

**Output Target**

**Output #1**

**Output Measure**

- This program area will include numerous output activities and methods as part of the Extension Team Projects (ETPs) which are described/explained in Section V(F). The success of many of these outcomes will be formally evaluated/measured by using individual activity evaluation forms designed specifically for each activity, the success of other activities and projects will be measured by the level of participation in the activity.  
 Not reporting on this Output for this Annual Report

**Output #2**

**Output Measure**

- The number of VEC activities conducted

Year	Actual
2014	26

**Output #3**

**Output Measure**

- The number of Participants in the VEC

<b>Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2014	1824

**Output #4**

**Output Measure**

- The number of training modules developed

<b>Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2014	29

**Output #5**

**Output Measure**

- Number of Rural Alabama Initiative (RAI) grants awarded to County Extension Coordinators by the Economic and Community Development Institute.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2014	9

**Output #6**

**Output Measure**

- Dollar amount of Rural Alabama Initiative (RAI) grants awarded to County Extension Coordinators by the Economic and Community Development Institute.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2014	28000

**Output #7**

**Output Measure**

- The number of programs coordinated by ECDI to improve economic and community development in counties across Alabama.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Actual</b>
2014	268

**V(G). State Defined Outcomes**

**V. State Defined Outcomes Table of Content**

O. No.	OUTCOME NAME
1	Outcomes from this program area include: a) Number of community and economic development projects conducted, b) Community and economic development training resources developed, c) Number of community and economic development programs conducted, and d) number of educational grant projects funded.
2	Each ACES employee is required to provide a success story on the program activity which they felt best demonstrates the impacts of their work. These success stories contain the following elements: a) Why - Explain the reason the program was done, or the situation or problem that the program addressed; b) What - Specifically what was done and how it was done; c) When - If this was a one-time event, the date it occurred. If it was a series of events, or an on-going program, when it began; d) Where - Specific location-- the county or counties involved; e) Who and how many - The "who" includes both who did the program and who were the clients of the program, as well as how many people were served; f) So what - This is the part that gives the real meaning to "success." The basic question to be answered in this part is "what difference did this program make." The difference may be measured in terms of dollars, or in changes in habits, lifestyles or attitudes. Whenever possible use numbers to show the effect of the program. If it is not possible to use numbers, provide a qualitative measurement like client comments or another type of testimonial about the program. Since the Economic and Community Development program area is very broad in scope and contains multiple Extension Team Projects which have different outcomes measures, the impacts for this program area are best measured in the number and quality of the success stories generated by the individuals who work on these projects. Therefore, one very significant outcome measure is the number of success stories generated.
3	Number of participants increasing leadership skills
4	The number of individuals who utilized training from the VEC to improve their business

### **Outcome #1**

#### **1. Outcome Measures**

Outcomes from this program area include: a) Number of community and economic development projects conducted, b) Community and economic development training resources developed, c) Number of community and economic development programs conducted, and d) number of educational grant projects funded.

Not Reporting on this Outcome Measure

### **Outcome #2**

#### **1. Outcome Measures**

Each ACES employee is required to provide a success story on the program activity which they felt best demonstrates the impacts of their work. These success stories contain the following elements: a) Why - Explain the reason the program was done, or the situation or problem that the program addressed; b) What - Specifically what was done and how it was done; c) When - If this was a one-time event, the date it occurred. If it is was a series of events, or an on-going program, when it began; d) Where - Specific location-- the county or counties involved; e) Who and how many - The ?who? includes both who did the program and who were the clients of the program, as well as how many people were served; f) So what - This is the part that gives the real meaning to ?success.? The basic question to be answered in this part is ?what difference did this program make.? The difference may be measured in terms of dollars, or in changes in habits, lifestyles or attitudes. Whenever possible use numbers to show the effect of the program. If it is not possible to use numbers, provide a qualitative measurement like client comments or another type of testimonial about the program. Since the Economic and Community Development program area is very broad in scope and contains multiple Extension Team Projects which have different outcomes measures, the impacts for this program area are best measured in the number and quality of the success stories generated by the individuals who work on these projects. Therefore, one very significant outcome measure is the number of success stories generated.

Not Reporting on this Outcome Measure

### **Outcome #3**

#### **1. Outcome Measures**

Number of participants increasing leadership skills

#### **2. Associated Institution Types**

- 1862 Extension
- 1890 Extension

### 3a. Outcome Type:

Change in Knowledge Outcome Measure

### 3b. Quantitative Outcome

Year	Actual
2014	180

### 3c. Qualitative Outcome or Impact Statement

#### Issue (Who cares and Why)

Active engagement, connections among public, private, and education sector stakeholders, and strong local leadership are essential requirements for successful local community and economic development. The importance of working together to deal with crisis and the value of tourism to the economy are two important lessons learned from recent natural and man-made disasters. Many communities may have good community leadership with excellent ideas for projects that would enhance local community and economic development. What they may lack is a source of funding to seed those local projects.

#### What has been done

Rural Alabama Initiative (RAI) grant program was created to provide seed money for worthwhile community initiatives. Priority was given to projects featuring collaborations among organizations and jurisdictions in rural Alabama with a focus on youth and adult leadership programs. Promoted education and training in economic development through the Intensive Economic Development Training Course, in leadership development through Alabama Community Leadership Network Conference, and in tourism development through annual Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference. Leadership specialists and County Extension Coordinators have conducted conferences, workshops and roundtables

#### Results

ECDI funded 9 Rural Alabama Initiative projects for 2014 at a total of \$28,000, many focusing on community development, engagement, and youth leadership. The RAI grant application process was very competitive. The grants funded 3 youth leadership programs and 3 adult leadership programs as well as an engagement project in another county that brought together all mayors and county commissioners for monthly engagement and planning sessions. The engagement project resulted in coordinated identification and prioritization of transportation, water system projects and public safety projects. Alabama Grassroots Initiative funded 4 communities to develop critical local projects. Strategic plans were developed for Washington County Economic Development Authority, Alexander City Economic Development Authority, Elmore County, and the 5-county region in Alabama Black Belt (Perry, Marengo, Sumter, Dallas and Wilcox counties) within the "Stronger Economies Together" project.

### 4. Associated Knowledge Areas

KA Code	Knowledge Area
605	Natural Resource and Environmental Economics
608	Community Resource Planning and Development

- 803 Sociological and Technological Change Affecting Individuals, Families, and Communities
- 805 Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services

**Outcome #4**

**1. Outcome Measures**

The number of individuals who utilized training from the VEC to improve their business

**2. Associated Institution Types**

- 1862 Extension
- 1890 Extension

**3a. Outcome Type:**

Change in Action Outcome Measure

**3b. Quantitative Outcome**

Year	Actual
2014	312

**3c. Qualitative Outcome or Impact Statement**

**Issue (Who cares and Why)**

Successful local community and economic development requires active engagement, connections among public, private, and education sector stakeholders, and strong local leadership. Of course, many communities may have good community leadership with excellent ideas for projects that would enhance local community and economic development. What they may lack is a source of funding to seed those local projects and provide training to local entrepreneurs. The VEC is designed to provide services to emerging entrepreneurs. These individuals are a part of the fastest growing sector in the state's economy, small business. State and local community leaders have placed a focus on the start-up and development of new small businesses. Based on current projections they will be a key part of the Alabama economy, tax base, and future employment outlook.

**What has been done**

During this program year the VEC (through working with its advisory board, contacting program participants, and conducting research) has endeavored to stay abreast of changes in the business environment as well as the needs of emerging entrepreneurs. As a result of these efforts timely topics were selected for new module development and launched on the VEC platform and advertised through traditional mechanisms and via social media. As a result of these efforts 29 new training modules were introduced for program participants. These modules were grouped together to create the Entrepreneurship Basics Certificate program.

### Results

Individuals participating in the Virtual Entrepreneurship Center were contacted through social media and via email to provide feedback on the program. Of the 59 certificate program participants 14 reported that they had either started a new business or used the information to significantly expand an existing business. Of the program participants 7 were awarded micro-grants from external funders to develop their business.

### 4. Associated Knowledge Areas

KA Code	Knowledge Area
605	Natural Resource and Environmental Economics
608	Community Resource Planning and Development
803	Sociological and Technological Change Affecting Individuals, Families, and Communities
805	Community Institutions, Health, and Social Services

### V(H). Planned Program (External Factors)

#### External factors which affected outcomes

- Economy
- Appropriations changes
- Other (Attitudes towards partnerships, digital divide within the state and target population)

#### Brief Explanation

The largest single external factor for the next several years is most likely to be the nation's and state's weak economies. This has put pressures on Extension and changes in budgeting priorities within ACES have steadily and dramatically reduced funding for the Rural Alabama Initiative program. Over the past seven years the budget for this program has been reduced by over 94%, starting with \$500,000 the initial year and reduced to \$28,000 in 2014.

Outcomes were also influenced by the willingness of external groups to work collaboratively. For the most part partnerships with universities (University of Alabama, Tuskegee, etc.), governmental agencies (ADECA, USDA, etc.), non-profits (Alabama Association of Community Development Corporations, Alabama Rural Health Association, etc.) and the private sector (Alabama Power, Regions Bank, etc.) have enhanced outcomes. However, in a few instances reluctant attitudes by agencies and groups have hindered outcomes

### V(I). Planned Program (Evaluation Studies)

#### Evaluation Results

ECDI funded 9 Rural Alabama Initiative projects for 2014 at \$28,000, many focusing on community development, engagement, and youth leadership. Results included:

- Pickens Co elected officials engagement project brought city and county elected officials together on a monthly basis to discuss opportunities for cooperative problem

solving. Projects identified through these meetings included transportation, water system projects and public safety projects.

- The Lauderdale Co workforce development project brought over 100 local educators together with 5 area business and industry leaders to discuss areas of mutual concern. The project has resulted in a much stronger alignment of private business needs with the education community. School counselors, teachers and principals are much more aware of the needs of business and area employers are more aware of what local schools can offer.

- The Talladega Co economic development roundtables project involved over 100 county residents interested in starting/expanding a small business. The roundtables project has resulted in 5 individuals deciding to start their own business.

- The 3 youth leadership projects in Bullock, Conecuh and Washington counties had 65 high school juniors and seniors participating. They demonstrated enhanced leadership skills through involvement in clubs, projects, initiatives and community service projects.

- Approximately 115 adults were involved in leadership training carried out in Barbour, Cleburne, and Macon counties. They demonstrated their new skills by taking on community projects following the training program. These projects ranged from community cleanup projects to projects aimed at improving local school systems.

Alabama Grassroots Initiative funded 4 communities to develop critical local projects. Strategic plans were developed for Washington Co Economic Development Authority, Alexander City Economic Development Authority, Elmore Co, and the 5-county region in Ala Black Belt (Perry, Marengo, Sumter, Dallas and Wilcox counties) within the "Stronger Economies Together" project. Plans are being implemented **that include sustainable community facilities such as pavilions used for reunions and wedding receptions.**

Individuals participating in the Virtual Entrepreneurship Center were contacted through social media and via email to provide feedback. Of the program participants that responded to the 83 % said that they were very or extremely likely to use this info in starting or developing a business and 26% said that they had used information to start or develop their business.

## Key Items of Evaluation

ECDI funded 9 Rural Alabama Initiative projects for 2014 at \$28,000, many focusing on community development, engagement, and youth leadership. Results included:

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