Dear Colleagues-

In our last newsletter we shared an e-newsletter that we like from our peers at the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI). In this edition we are highlighting EntreWorks Insights, a quarterly newsletter that reports on business trends, policy developments, and other issues affecting the business of economic and workforce development. Erik Pages is the president of EntreWorks Consulting and has done considerable work at the national and state level to help policymakers understand the importance of entrepreneurship as a feature of sustainable economic development. If you wish to subscribe to this list, send an email to info@entreworks.net. Erik also encourages you to visit and comment on the EntreWorks blog at http://blog.entreworks.net/.

- Center for Community and Economic Development

**Industry Clusters: Modern Day Snake Oil?**

CCED specialists and some local economists weighed in this month on "clusters" as an economic development strategy. According to famed economist and pioneer of cluster research, Michael Porter, "Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field that are present in a nation or region." This recent article by Vivek Wadhwa from the Washington Post debunks Cluster Strategy. If your community is considering cluster analysis check out: the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development series of fact sheets on "industrial targeting" within the spirit of clusters co-authored by
Steve Deller. "The point of the edited book this effort is built off is to convey: (1) numerous ways to conduct the analysis and (2) the analysis should be as much of an educational effort as it is a technical product."

Here are some interesting quotes from the CCED email string based on this article:

"There are many components to a healthy, self-sustaining cluster...When distilled down, it's all about people, attitude and support infrastructure... It's just that it won't work everywhere or where it's just a real estate play without the other determinants in place or developed."

"It seems that one element a community should know more about and investigate the future prospects of would include the existing business and industry mix and how adding additional value up and down that supply chain might offer some opportunities. Identifying industry clusters may be one way in which we inform ourselves about this opportunity...I think going forward that same broad thinking will best serve us and the communities we work with. That will include having our communities consider how industry and business strengths (maybe clusters) can help them achieve and sustain the quality of life they strive for."

"The article also mentioned 'the Internet era'. Related to the need to network well beyond regional boundaries and the concept of global supply chains, I find the following fact very interesting: Manufacturers led all industry sectors, with e-commerce accounting for 39 percent ($2,154 billion) of total shipments-up substantially for the seventh straight year."

"...the debate over clusters as a viable economic development strategy has been going on the literature for more than a decade. I think that so many folks see clusters as "the answer" because consultants and other proponents do a good job of selling the strategy without understanding the theory or the process of examining a regional economy. However, going through a good process to understand industry clusters (or whatever you want to call them) forces people to think about their regional economy and identify potential assets. I do agree that government led, top-down cluster initiatives are doomed from the onset. Much of the research on clusters as a strategy notes that private sector champions need to be involved from the beginning and it must be more of a grassroots effort. Just because you have a concentration of seemingly related industries and suppliers does not mean you have a cluster. The social capital within these industries must be present as well."

"Clusters are the latest 'fad' in economic development. People are always looking for the "magic bullet" and clusters is the latest flavor. The point is that there are dozens of methods to identify clusters, some pretty simplistic some pretty complex. The challenge is to not let people fall into the trap of letting the analysis become a black box that spits out 'the' answer."
Check out the latest issue of the Tourism Business Journal

Updates from the Building Community Capacity through Broadband Project

Rural Community Building
Sabrina Matteson's Blog
Director of Rural Affairs for the American Farm Bureau - resources on topics like agritourism, wealth transfer and entrepreneurship

Read about the Rural Futures Laboratory

USDA Rural Development Newsletter

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Andrew Bernhardt

Entrepreneurs and Their Communities 2011 Webinar Series

Mark your calendars! The eXtension Entrepreneurship webinar series is back for our fifth season. All webinars will air monthly on the second Thursday at 1:00pm (Central Time).

Thursday, September 8, 2011 The Case for Supporting Entrepreneurs in a Jobless Recovery. Join Dr. Stepan Goetz, Director of the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development for an informative session on where the research points in supporting the communities we work in. More than ever before, expectations are high that entrepreneurs can serve as engines of economic growth in local economies. Yet the scientific research base documenting the local economic impacts of smaller entrepreneurs remains weak, and organizations such as The Kauffman Foundation are promoting billion-dollar businesses rather than smaller operations to rekindle economic growth. This presentation provides a user-friendly state of the art review of the most recent research on the roles of small, locally-owned businesses and the self-employed in local and regional economic growth.

Thursday, October 13 - Disaster and Small Business Survival with George Haynes, Montana State University Extension

Thursday, November 10 - The 1099 Economy with Erik Pages, Entreworks Consulting. This presentation will include a conversation regarding the increasing number of Americans who don't have a "regular job" but instead work on individual contracts with employers or customers.

No pre-registration is required and there is no fee to participate. About 10 minutes prior to the start time simply go the Adobe Connect Pro meeting room at https://connect.extension.iastate.edu/etc-cop. You will be presented with a login screen that has an "Enter as Guest" option. Enter your full name then click "Enter Room" to join the conference. You will be able to hear the audio directly from your computer's speakers. For more information contact Mary.Peabody@uvm.edu.

Update from the Building Community Capacity for Broadband Project
In order to better understand specific broadband availability, needs, uses and barriers to adoption, BCCB worked with Research First Consulting to conduct consumer surveys during the summer and fall 2010. Research First was the firm that was selected by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission to conduct the Wisconsin Consumer Broadband Study. Households were selected randomly to participate in the 10-12 minute telephone survey. Wisconsinites were also encouraged to take our online survey or submit their contact information for participation. Research First oversampled the five BCCB demonstration communities which will allow us to make comparisons between our communities and the statewide averages. Selected data are represented below with notes from BCCB staff Andy Lewis. Read more on the BCCB website.

Municipal Energy Development Workshops Being Planned

A three-part series on energy development for municipal officials, professional staff and economic development professions is being planned to increase the capacity and effectiveness of these audiences in evaluating and executing bio-energy and bio-product (e.g. bio-based chemicals or manufacturing precursors) projects within their communities.

The first offering will be an introductory program. Participants will receive an overview of bio-economy "macro" issues and emerging trends. The program will provide a summary of biomass conversion technologies, role and purpose of these project types, and suggestions on how municipalities may benefit from acting as a catalyst for project development. Content will be general information, designed to enable participants to effectively evaluate the potential of pursuing development in their community. This initial program will consist of a day’s worth of instruction and will be delivered by UW-Extension. A preliminary schedule follows:

- Madison, December 1
- Sparta, December 6
Rice Lake, December 7
Shawano, December 8
Fond du Lac, December 13

Second and third offerings will be developed after the initial programs are concluded. These programs will be designed to build the capacity of stakeholders to more fully evaluate and execute a bio-based energy or product project (and to control costs of pursuing these options). For more information contact Tim Baye at pdfllc@yahoo.com.

**Downtown Economic Development Tools and Resources**

Please share the following with business and community leaders working to strengthen economic conditions in their downtown districts. For more information, contact: bill.ryan@uwex.edu.

**Revitalizing Wisconsin's Downtowns webinar series**

The next Revitalizing Wisconsin's Downtowns webinar will be on Thursday, October 20, 2011 (time to be determined). The topic: *Bringing Small Industry to Downtowns by Kennedy Smith*. It will be broadcast from the Wisconsin Conference on Downtown Revitalization. For more information on your nearest site host/facilitator, contact Chuck Law or Bill Ryan. Also see: [http://lgc.uwex.edu/downtowns/](http://lgc.uwex.edu/downtowns/).

**Wisconsin Conference on Downtown Revitalization - Hold October 20, 2011**

The October 20, 2011 conference in Fond du Lac will focus on helping your downtown become a place of employment in your community. Wisconsin Main Street, the Wisconsin Downtown Action Council and UW-Extension are planning the educational sessions for the 2011 conference.

**Tourism Research for our Communities: UW-Extension and Department of Tourism Discussions**

The Center for Community and Economic Development and the Wisconsin Department of Tourism have held preliminary meetings on how we might work cooperatively on research to better serve the industry. UW-Extension has been invited to participate in a series of regional meetings that will be hosted by the Department (tentatively planned for November). We have been given the opportunity to discuss our educational outreach efforts and help to facilitate listening sessions on the research needs of communities. At this time we are seeking names of CNRED county- and tribal-based educators or specialists who might be interested in participating in these events. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Bill Ryan.
Note the Change in Location - UW-Extension Family Living, CNRED, and 4-H Youth Development Programs invite you to attend the Healthy Wisconsin Communities Conference on October 4, 2011, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., at the Ramada - Stevens Point, 1501 Northport Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

Speaking Rural Truth to Power - A Report from the National Rural Assembly

by CCED Project Assistant, Colette Hershey

The 2011 Gathering of the National Rural Assembly convened June 28-30, 2011, in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Speakers from national and local governments spoke around the theme of Building an Inclusive Nation. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack spoke via video to the Assembly about the White House's creation of a Rural Council, which aims to address challenges faced by rural America while building and improving rural economic strategy. FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn spoke about the vital importance of broadband for small towns and rural regions. Other speakers included Minnesota Commissioner of Agriculture Dave Fredrickson and Minnesota Secretary of State Mark Ritchie.
and St. Paul mayor Chris Coleman. Tuesday's keynote speech came from Captain Wayne Porter of the US Navy and Colonel Michael Mykleby of the US Marine Corps, joint writers of the National Strategic Narrative. Their paper suggests creating a national security strategy that emphasizes education and innovation over risk management as a way to develop a secure nation.

Wednesday brought the Assembly's various working groups together, as well as additional break-out sessions. While some sessions sought to educate participants about issues, others were resource-sharing sessions aimed at exchanging information and best practices. The topics ranged from broadband, rural youth, tribal policy, philanthropy, transportation, healthcare, agriculture, climate change, immigration, and federal rural policy. More materials and handouts from sessions can be found here. Follow the Rural Assembly Twitter page to remain updated on future events and to click on items and sessions you may have missed!

Two New Resources About Local Investments in Economic Development

Click the images below to download these documents

![Image](https://example.com/image1)

**Changing Public Investments in Economic Development**

*Community Indicators are intended to stimulate thoughtful dialogue about your community. They can help identify potential issues, opportunities and problems facing your community. This communication tool is also intended to increase use and understanding of readily accessible demographic data on the web.*


In Wisconsin and across the United States communities are grappling with the roles of the government and the public sector in economic development. While private corporations can be economic drivers, public policies and investments may also significantly influence economic development activities. Based on a legislative audit completed in 2006, we know that the State of Wisconsin spent $155.8 million on economic development programs for the period of 2003-2005. The Legislative Audit Bureau is scheduled to release an update of economic development expenditures (programs administered by state agencies) in Winter 2010-2011.

![Image](https://example.com/image2)

**Survey of Local Economic Development Organizations**

Roger Nacker, President, Wisconsin Economic Development Institute
Andrew Lewis, Professor, UW-Center for Community Development
Colette Hershey, Research Assistant

July 2011
Resources for Online Research

Our campus based colleague Dave Marcouiller recently shared an online research tool that I now use daily. Dig in! - Laura

1) My two new favorite academic databases for finding community development research: Web of Knowledge and Academic Search (EBSCO). You should be able to access these databases through the UW Madison libraries (or your favorite library system).

2) Take your search into 2.0 territory by saving the references in EndNote Web. No software to download. Create a free account and you can save citations from many online databases and create groups of users for specific projects and many other cool features I haven't explored yet.

New Research on Youth Voices in Community Development

This month we came across these two pieces of research on youth. - CCED
From the RUPRI Rural Entrepreneurship newsletter

Craig Schroeder, Director of Youth Engagement, will be undertaking a number of youth assessment projects with rural communities. This work will build upon assessments completed in the past seven years involving over 25,000 rural youth from around the US. Several notable findings are that although 78% of rural youth surveyed plan to attend college, 50% picture themselves living in their hometown in the future if quality career opportunities are available.

Yet, only 36% of rural youth say that an adult has asked for their input on how to make their community a more attractive option for young people.

These data indicate that there are significant opportunities for rural community leaders who engage with their youth in revitalizing the community. The next question is how? To respond to this question, the Center recently hosted a webinar with leaders in three rural communities who shared how they are involving young people and inviting them to return home. You are invited to watch the webinar at http://heartlandcenter.adobeconnect.com/p9qm3rxq4na and contact Craig Schroeder at craig@e2mail.org, for more information.

From the Center on Wisconsin Strategy

Report Looks at Green Careers for Disconnected Youth

The report, published in partnership with the Corps Network, explores the extent to which the emerging green economy can offer a pathway out of poverty for low-income young people, many of whom have disengaged from school and are struggling to find a way into the economic mainstream. These disconnected youth -- some six million strong -- represent an untapped resource. Given the right supports, these young people can be valuable assets for new green industries seeking to grow a skilled workforce and to the communities in which they reside. Read More.

Benchmarking and Measuring Impact

Interested in learning new ways to measure the impact of community or economic development work? Check out these resources.

Annual Wisconsin Economic Development Association Conference

Strategic Benchmarks: Adding Value to Your Organization & Community

September 28 - 29, 2011, Radisson Hotel, La Crosse

The 2011 WEDA Fall Conference will focus on benchmarking techniques used in business, communities and regions. The practice of measurements and benchmarking is certainly not new but instead
speakers will address the need to continually adjust or change altogether their benchmarks in the rapidly changing business, economic and policy climate of today. Company and community managers are making "big bets" inside of business and strategic plans so the tools they will use to measure success have to be relevant as well.

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From the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis:

Measuring the Impact of Community Development Work

Community Dividend speaks with Paul Mattessich, executive director of Wilder Research, about how to effectively and affordably measure the impact of community development work

Rural Arts Management Institute 2011-2012

Read more online!

Rural Arts Management Institute
a training program for rural arts managers in the Upper Midwest
October 2011-April 2012

presented in partnership by
Arts Wisconsin and Northern Lakes Center for the Arts at the Northern Lakes Center for the Arts, Amery, WI

What is it? The Rural Arts Management (RAM) Institute is a training and educational program specifically for artists, organizational representatives, and creative people in rural communities throughout the Upper Midwest.

Why should you participate? If you are a rural arts manager, administrator or entrepreneur, the Institute will help you increase your personal and organizational effectiveness and sustainability, understand the complexities involved, and develop comprehensive leadership skills to succeed now and in the future!

How does it work? Six monthly sessions will provide participants with the necessary background information, skills, information, and connections needed to develop and manage entrepreneurial, successful, and sustainable arts, cultural and creative programs in rural communities. The Institute provides training in thoughtful management theory and practical, applicable leadership experience, and helps them learn to manage entrepreneurial, successful, and sustainable arts, cultural and creative organizations in rural communities.

The Institute is directed by LaMoine MacLaughlin, Director of the Northern Lakes Center for the Arts in rural Amery, WI, and will feature distinguished guest lecturers from Wisconsin and neighboring states. Participants will receive a certificate from Arts Wisconsin recognizing successful participation.

Ag Enterprise Area Forum September 27
Preparing for Wisconsin's Agricultural and Economic Future

DATCP will host the first Agricultural Enterprise Area Forum, "Preparing for Wisconsin's Agricultural and Economic Future," on September 27, 2011, at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells.

Keynote presentations by UW-Extension Specialists Steven Deller, PhD and Bruce Jones, PhD, faculty of University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics will address the economics of agriculture and the industry's future in Wisconsin. In the afternoon, communities interested in pursuing AEA designation can receive training on developing an application and the selection process in one breakout session. Registration is $25 which
includes lunch and refreshments. Visit http://datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/confreg/agforum.jsp or call (608) 224-4625. Registration deadline is Sept. 22.

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