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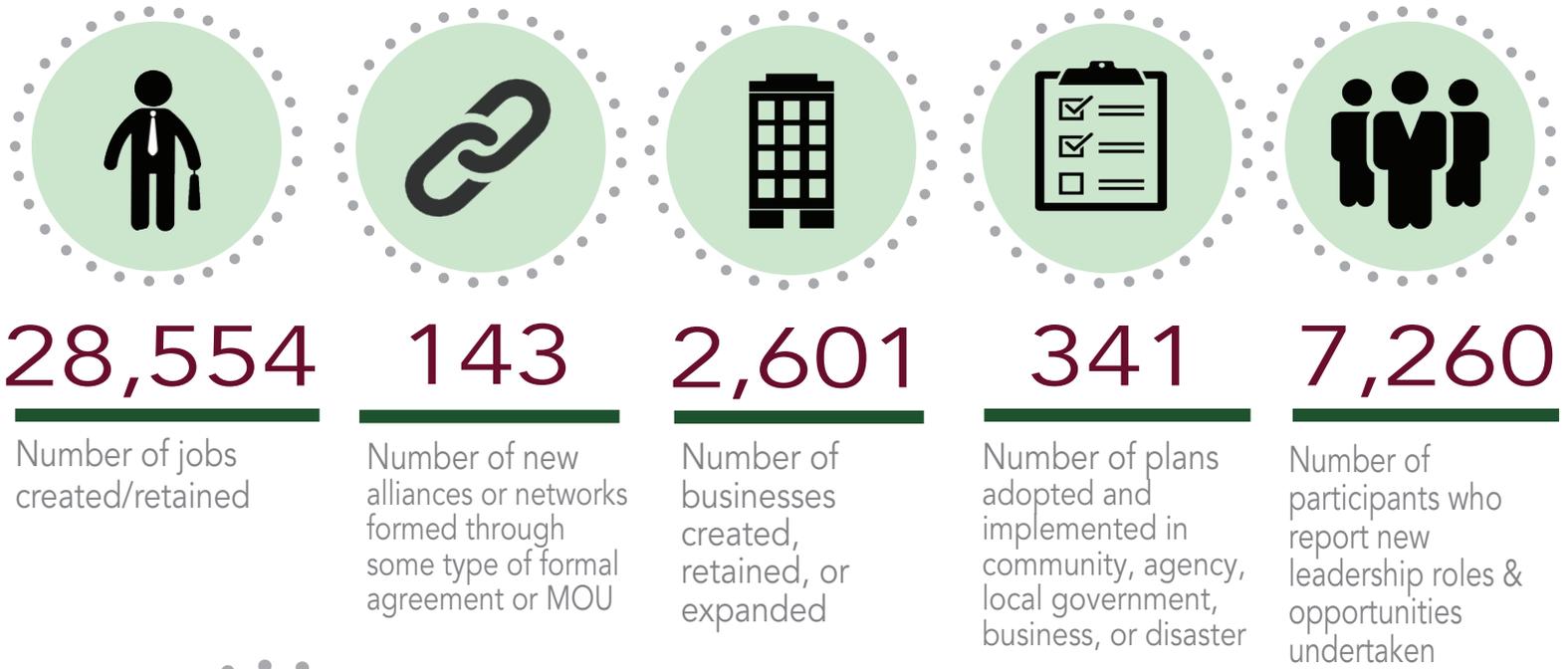
trengthening Communities

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outhern Region Successes

July 2016 - June 2017

Southern Region Community Development Extension Impacts



Impact Stories

Alabama

Alabama A&M University

Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Community Resource Development Unit is instrumental in delivering programs and tools to each of the underrepresented counties in Alabama. In particular, the entrepreneurial program has partnered with Operation HOPE in Birmingham, AL and together has successfully conducted a 12-week small business workshop to over 30 current and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Arkansas

University of Arkansas

The Public Policy Center provides education on statewide ballot initiatives. County agents reported reaching 11,775 people through educational classes, meetings, one-on-one consultations, and staffed displays for the 2016 election. They also distributed nearly 23,000 printed copies of the Ballot Issue Voter Guide and it was downloaded over 25,000 times. The website had over 303,000 views and YouTube videos were viewed nearly 49,000 times.

Georgia

University of Georgia

UGA Extension is increasing access to healthy food and physical activity in two counties with above 40% obesity. Funded by the Center for Disease Control, Extension has built two community coalitions to address obesity prevention. The project, Healthier Together, is starting community gardens, creating walking trails, addressing healthy food retail, increasing youth development, and improving school nutrition.

Fort Valley State University

FVSU Cooperative Extension and the Rebuilding Together Fort Valley chapter collaborated to complete several community and outreach initiatives. Because of this partnership, six homes were rehabilitated, 11 residents saved approximately \$22,786 in home rehabilitation services. Participants also saved a total of \$9,798 by using volunteer labor, providing an average cost savings of 33% per home.

Kentucky

University of Kentucky

The CEDIK First Impressions program helps community groups gain outsider feedback and serves as a catalyst for local action. As a result, in Pulaski County, the golf courses have rebranded and launched new marketing campaigns, the local realtor's association has refocused their marketing strategy, and a local committee is working to understand how to communicate the communities' identity through public art.

Louisiana

Louisiana State University

The LSU AgCenter offered two series of agritourism workshops on legal and financial liabilities, emergency planning, and safety management, which were attended by 100 people. After completion, respondents indicated they had a better understanding of how to identify safety issues in their operations and how to prepare and respond to an emergency. Participants required more information in the areas of insurance and legal liability management.

Mississippi

Mississippi State University

Through a partnership with the economic development division of Entergy Mississippi and the Washington County Economic Alliance, a workshop was held for the five municipalities within the county. Projects were identified that could be completed within 6 months, but still have high impact. To date, funding was secured, a library roof replaced, a major thoroughfare repaved, blighted properties were addressed, and a downtown cleanup campaign was initiated.

North Carolina State University

Stronger Economies Together has been a dynamic catalyst for regional economic development in North Carolina. To date, four regions have participated in this initiative, which has resulted in over \$8 million in grant funding in 2016 alone. In addition to strengthening such industry clusters as manufacturing, advanced materials, and tourism, these regions are experiencing a renewed focus on the value of agriculture, launching a food hub in one region and a food commercialization center in another.

Oklahoma State University

OSU is addressing issues of rural Internet access by partnering with four rural libraries across the state. This pilot project allows library patrons to check out hotspot devices for one week, which they then use to connect their own devices to the Internet. So far, the libraries are averaging 16 checkouts per month (four devices per library) and waitlists range from eight people to 20 people.

Clemson University

The Freshwater Coast Center for Rural Development was created by a partnership among several organizations. A new economic development model was implemented by establishing structured mentorship opportunities for undergraduate students; by bringing prospective entrepreneurs for lectures and creating and expanding strategic relationships with municipalities for rural and workforce development.

University of Tennessee

Efforts to increase community and farm economic viability included exploration of a possible milk condensing plant with input from 125+ producers Extension personnel, industry and government leaders. Also, a Tennessee wine industry analysis helped generate three USDA value-added producer grants (\$310,000) and support development of an area wine trail and American Viticulture Area application. A feasibility study of East Tennessee's food hub resulted in \$200,000 of savings.

Prairie View A&M University

Community Development Agents worked with USDA Area Director to increase its outreach in rural and low-income communities through the promotion of its USDA 504 Housing Repair Program. Staff coordinated efforts with a local non-profit to facilitate community workshops on 504 eligibility requirements. As a result 75 repair grants have been awarded to low-income families at \$7,500 each for a total of \$562,500 with a line of credit for additional repairs.

Texas A&M University

Texas A&M's CHARM platform supported sim-city style resiliency and hazard mitigation workshop in nine Texas counties for nearly 30 communities. These half-day events convened in total nearly 300 key stakeholders to prepare what-if scenarios about future development, with real-time analytic feedback about housing, critical facilities, and resources.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Cooperative Extension built the capacity of more than 700 locally-elected, community-based and emerging leaders in 2016. Educational programs addressed emergency preparedness, public issues, team building, organizational leadership, partnership development, leading as an elected official, community service, and more. In addition, more than 240 participants adapted new leadership behaviors, and took on new leadership roles.

North Carolina

Oklahoma

South Carolina

Tennessee

Texas

Virginia