

## **Building Innovative, Sustainable Communities and Regions in a Rapidly Changing World 2013 Breakthrough Solutions Conference**

**Wednesday, May 8, 2013, with pre-conference workshops and activities on Tuesday, May 7  
C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center  
Ferndale / Little Rock**

How would you like to spend a day or day and half in a gorgeous setting in which you hear great stories, insights, and solutions to the most pressing challenges facing your community or region? You will soon have this opportunity, at our 2013 Breakthrough Solutions Conference on Wednesday, May 8, 2013, with pre-conference workshops and activities on Tuesday, May 7.

With the theme: “Building Innovative, Sustainable Communities and Regions in a Rapidly Changing World”, the conference will address how communities can successfully navigate these uncertain times. Our keynote speaker, Ms. Sharon Gulick, is the Director of University of Missouri Extension’s Community Economic and Entrepreneurial Development Program and President of the Community Development Society. She will bring great stories and fresh insight that will be most helpful for community leaders, businesses, local government officials, and citizens. Her husband John will lead workshops on community resilience and funding community development projects.

In addition to Ms. Gulick’s great stories and insights, the conference will include:

- An update on current federal budget realities and impacts on local communities by Randy Zook, President/CEO, Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Don A. Zimmerman, Executive Director, Arkansas Municipal League,
- A Breakthrough Solutions Grant Competition, sponsored by the Arkansas Community Development Society, in which three Arkansas communities each will present a project they propose to implement with the potential to have a major impact on their community,
- Eight concurrent sessions on key issues and opportunities facing Arkansas, and
- Four concurrent sessions and great pre-conference activities on May 7.

Breakthrough Solutions, a program of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, is a next generation strategic planning initiative with multiple partner organizations dedicated to equipping and assisting communities and regions succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy – an era of austerity, globalization, and broadband connectivity. The Breakthrough Solutions Partners invite you to join us for a great learning experience as we learn how to create vibrant, sustainable, resilient communities and regions.

# Building Innovative, Sustainable Communities and Regions in a Rapidly Changing World

## 2013 Breakthrough Solutions Conference

Wednesday, May 8, 2013, with pre-conference workshops and events on Tuesday, May 7  
C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center  
Ferndale / Little Rock

### Conference Agenda – May 8

#### Overall Purpose of the Conference:

To provide community and regional leaders with insights, tools, and solutions that they can implement to create communities and regions that are innovative, sustainable, and resilient.

8:30 a.m. Registration and continental breakfast

9 a.m. Welcome – Dr. Tony Windham, Associate Vice President of  
Agriculture, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service  
**Keynote Presentation: Community Economic Development – Out With the  
Old, in With the New - Sharon Gulick, Director of University of Missouri  
Extension’s Community Economic and Entrepreneurial Development  
Program and President, Community Development Society**

We are in for a treat. Ms. Gulick will share insights from her rich experience with community and regional development projects across Missouri, and her involvement in national community development networks. She states: “The old approaches to community and economic development aren’t going to work in this new environment. We need new ways to think, and we may need new goals.”

10:10 a.m. Break

10:25 a.m. **Current Federal Budget Realities and Impacts on Local Communities**  
**Randy Zook, President/CEO, Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and**  
**Don A. Zimmerman, Executive Director, Arkansas Municipal League**

Are you concerned about what you hear from Washington about the federal budget, and how it may impact your community and region? Come hear a fresh perspective on the federal budget, how it is likely to impact your community, and possible action steps you can take from two of the most knowledgeable people in Arkansas.

11:10 a.m. **Navigating the Rapids During Uncertain Times - Dr. Mark Peterson,**  
**Professor of Community and Economic Development, University of**  
**Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service**

We are in a new era with fewer external resources and less certainty in the national/international arena. We will discuss how to stay the course while exploring new paths and opportunities, drawing on the experience of areas that have faced with similar issues.

11:50 a.m. Lunch

12:50 p.m. **Breakthrough Solutions SOAR Awards**  
**ACDS Breakthrough Solutions Grant Competition**

Three Arkansas communities each will present a project they propose to implement with the potential to have a major impact. Conference participants will select the winner for a \$1,000 seed money prize, sponsored by the Arkansas Community Development Society.

**NOTE: Grant applications are available at [www.arcdc.org](http://www.arcdc.org).**

**1:45 p.m. First Round of Breakout Sessions**

- 1) Developing a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce by Creating Linkages Between K-12, Higher Education, and Businesses – *Dr. Ed Franklin, Executive Director, Arkansas Association of Two Year Colleges, and Dr. David Rainey, Superintendent, Dumas Public Schools, New Tech High School, and President, Delta Technology Education Center Board (invited)***

Come hear the insights from these educational leaders who are on the forefront of workforce preparation discuss preparing our workforce for 21<sup>st</sup> century employment.

- 2) Leverage Your Home Grown Assets by Creating Regional Foods Projects – *Sharon Gulick, Director of University of Missouri Extension's Community Economic and Entrepreneurial Development Program***

Hear two great stories – how two Missouri regions leveraged their food and cuisine assets to generate economic opportunities for their citizens. These are great examples of how to strengthen local businesses through regional branding.

- 3) How Do You Deal with Divisiveness, Opposition, and General Orneriness - Involving Your Community in Times of Rapid Change - *Jerry Smith, Director, Center for Regional and Community Development, ASU Delta Center for Economic Development, second speaker not confirmed***

In times of rapid change everyone is not going to be in favor of your project. How do you engage the broader community when some parts of the community oppose your project? How do you work with difficult people? What if you are one – how can you make your voice heard?

- 4) Apps and Cool IT Things for Communities – *Timothy Lee, Technology Specialist, UALR Small Business and Technology Development Center***

What kind of apps should you be considering for your community? For what devices? Come and learn what new technologies you can use to communicate and market your community to the world.

**2:30 p.m. Break**

**2:45 p.m. Second Round of Breakout Sessions**

- 5) We Don't Have a Lack of Jobs; We Have a Drug Problem – *Jeff Pipkin, President/CEO, Russellville Area Chamber of Commerce; second speaker not confirmed***

The inability of many of our labor force to pass drug tests has become a serious issue for many communities and regions, and undermines the economic development so important in this economy. In this session, you will hear concrete steps that you can employ to take back your community from the drug dealers.

- 6) Five Strategies Toward Community Resilience – *John R. Gulick, Development / Funding Consultant with Healthy Nevada, Nevada MO***

Many communities pull together when disaster strikes, whether it is a natural disaster, loss of a major employer, or some other shock to the community. In this session, you will learn of five major strategies, including case studies that have been used in multiple communities across the nation to build resilience and a sustainable future.

**7) Creating Economic Opportunity Through the Creative Economy - *Jimmie Lee Edwards, Director of Group Sales, Ozark Folks Center and Rev. Arthur L. Hunt, D.D., President, The College of Aspiring Artists, Dumas***

For many communities, the creative economy remains an untapped economic and human asset. Come hear about a community that has a well-established creative economy infrastructure, and an emerging creative economy initiative in the Arkansas Delta.

**8) Involving Youth and Young Adult Leaders in Your Community  
*Nita Cooper, Boone County Extension Agent Staff Chair, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, and Kelly Massey, Director of Programs and Development, Crossroads Coalition***

Involving youth and young adults in your community is an essential strategy to keep them or draw them back after leaving for higher education. Come learn of two exemplary programs in Arkansas – a Youth Leadership Academy and the Delta Young Professionals Program, and how they have impacted their communities.

**3:40 p.m. Wrap-up and adjourn**

## **Pre-Conference Workshops and Events – May 7**

***C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center  
Ferndale / Little Rock***

**EARLY BIRD WORKSHOP 1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.**

**Creating Wealth Through Leveraging Assets and Strategic Marketing – *Dr. Mark Peterson, Professor of Community and Economic Development, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Jeff Jones, Manager – Market Development, CenturyLink, and Breakthrough Solutions Partners***

Many once-thriving communities and regions, directly impacted by changes in agriculture, loss of manufacturing jobs, and shifting population patterns, are struggling to remain vibrant. This workshop will provide you with tools to understand key drivers of change impacting your community, identify and capitalize on economic opportunities by leveraging assets, and employ a strategic marketing process and tools to create goods, services, and experiences valued in this economic environment. The workshop will apply these tools to the Arkansas Regional Coalition for the Ouachitas region, a community/downtown, a manufacturer, and a small business.

**"The insights you have provided [from Breakthrough Solutions] for marketing the UAF Genesis Technology Incubator are awesome."**

*Bootsie Ackerman, Former Executive Director, Downtown/  
Dickson Enhancement Project and Chairperson, Genesis  
Technology Incubator Marketing Committee*

**THREE CONCURRENT WORKSHOPS (3:00 p.m.- 4:45 p.m.)**

**1) Funding Community Revitalization and Entrepreneurship – *John R. Gulick, Development / Funding Consultant with Healthy Nevada, Nevada MO, and***

***Terre McLendon, Director, Community and Industrial Studies, UALR Institute for Economic Advancement***

Funding community revitalization and entrepreneurship remains a real barrier for many community development initiatives. In this workshop, you will learn fresh approaches to funding and financing community revitalization and entrepreneurship. John Gulick coordinated a virtual Missouri Rural Funding Team, and will show us how community funding teams can support community and regional revitalization. Terre McLendon will share current trends in funding new business development, including social entrepreneurship and Kiva crowdsourcing. This is a way the Millennial Generation is changing the world, one business at a time. Local governments and nonprofit organizations can benefit from some of these financial strategies as well.

**2) *Creating Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities – Dr. Stacey McCullough, Assistant Professor of Community and Economic Development, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service***

What are your entrepreneurial assets? What type of entrepreneurial development are you trying to cultivate? What strategies are most likely to work well in your community or region? Attend this interactive workshop and begin the process of exploring what you can do to strengthen your local economy through entrepreneurial development. Dr. McCullough will help you get started using tools developed by experts from around the country to help create entrepreneur-friendly communities. She will also share results of her recent research identifying 11 types of strategies local governments and communities can employ to leverage their assets and support entrepreneurship as an economic driver.

**3) *Build it and They Will Come – the Do's and Don'ts of Gaining Support for Building a Public Facility in Your Community – Jim Dailey, Flake and Kelley City Solutions and Former Little Rock Mayor; Charles Nickerson, Vice President of Economic Development, Texarkana Chamber of Commerce; Ron Goss, President, RPM Management Company; and Ed Levy, Partner, Cromwell Architects Engineers***

Public facilities can become real catalysts for community and economic development. The Little Rock River Market, which has generated over \$2 billion in investment from the public, private, and non-profit sectors, is a great example. If your community wants to move forward with a public facility (an arena, convention center, community center, new county fairgrounds, water park, or other project), how do you do it? How can you most effectively engage the citizens and leaders of your community in this process? In this workshop, you will learn about projects in Little Rock, North Little Rock, Lonoke, and Texarkana, how the community was (or was not) engaged, how they were funded, and what are their funding streams for ongoing operations.

**4:45 p.m.      *Adjourn – time to relax, try out the many walking trails around the 4-H Center, go canoeing on Lake Laverne, and even go fishing (bring your own equipment)***

**6:00 p.m.      *Steak and Chicken Dinner at the pavilion, next to Lake Laverne***

**7:00 p.m.      *Collaboration and Team Building Exercise***

Two key elements of successful community and economic development are collaboration and effective team work. Communities and regions in which organizations and groups operate as silos are not able to create the synergy and critical mass of resources necessary to move forward on critical issues. This

interactive exercise, led by the professional facilitators of the highly-regarded ExCEL Program at the Arkansas 4-H Center ([www.arkansas4hcenter.org/excel](http://www.arkansas4hcenter.org/excel)) is designed to demonstrate the power of working together to accomplish your shared goals in your community. ExCEL has been offering the best in experiential leadership training since 1986 to youth-, college-, adult-focused non-profit and corporate groups, providing more than 60,000 participants with opportunities to learn new ways to deal with old problems. You won't want to miss it!

**"The team building exercises promoted unity and communication within our entire group. The [ExCEL] experience was more than I could have imagined. Your staff is to be commended for the work you do for the leaders in Arkansas and beyond."**

*Janet Wray, Leadership Magnolia*

**8:30 p.m. Smores out at the camp fire next to Lake Laverne**

**Conference Costs (Early bird registration – before April 25):**

- **Pre-Conference Workshops, Steak/Chicken Dinner & Collaboration Exercise: \$35**
- **Single Room Occupancy at Arkansas 4-H Center: \$31**
- **Breakthrough Solutions Conference: \$50**

**Total: \$116**

**This is a very reasonable price for a terrific learning experience – register now!**

**To register for the conference and reserve lodging accommodations, go to:**

**[www.vworks.org](http://www.vworks.org).**

University of Arkansas, United States Department of Agriculture and County Governments Cooperating. The Division of Agriculture offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.