

Breakthrough News
Volume X, Number 4
August 2012

Breakthrough Solutions is a program of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, with partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors

The purpose of Breakthrough News is to help communities and regions become vibrant, sustainable and resilient in the 21st century economy

Editor: Mark Peterson, Professor – Community and Economic Development

In This Issue

- **Harrison C.O.R.E. – 32 New Businesses and Counting!**
 - **The Drought Continues, and Affects Everything and Everyone**
 - **New Harrison C.O.R.E. Video Now On-line**
 - **Economic Opportunities for Montgomery, Polk, and Scott Counties**
 - **Microenterprise program coming to Izard, Sharp and Fulton Counties**
 - **Moving From Uncertainty to Hope to Sustainable Prosperity**
 - **LeadAR Application Deadline Set for Sept. 1**
 - **Gold Nuggets from “Lifting Up Small Cities”, the Third Annual Small City Economic Leadership Empower Summit**

 - **Story of the Month – Sometimes You Just Have to Cut the Roof Off**
-

Introduction

Welcome to the latest issue of Breakthrough News. In this issue, you will learn about great success in Harrison, impacts and suggestions for the drought, moving from uncertainty to hope and sustainability, gold nuggets from a conference, and a compelling story about the sustainability of two regions. You won't want to miss it!

Best regards,

Mark Peterson
Professor – Community and Economic Development

Coming Events

August 22: ACE 2012 Annual Meeting – Working Together for a Better Arkansas,
Little Rock. Go to <http://acenonprofit.org/> and click on calendar.

August 26 - August 28: Arkansas Economic Developers 2012 Annual Conference,
Embassy Suites Northwest, Rogers. Go to <http://www.aed-arkansas.org/>.

September 5: Arkansas Regional Coalition for the Ouachitas Meeting – Economic Opportunities Report, Rich Mountain Community College, Mena. **See article in this newsletter for more details.**

September 10: DTEC in Action Kickoff Meeting, Dumas. For more information, contact Shaluanda Jones, sjones@delta-tech.org, 870-382-1031.

September 16-20: Destination Downtown 2012 Conference, Rogers. Go to <http://destinationdowntown.org/>.

September 20: Hand to Hand Sales in Economic Development, UALR Institute for Economic Advancement, Little Rock. Go to <http://www.iea.ualr.edu/>

October 30: Arkansas Economic Forecast Conference, Clinton Presidential Center, Little Rock. Go to <http://www.iea.ualr.edu/>

October 17-19: Sustainability Communities Leadership Summit, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Go to <http://asc.uark.edu>.

Harrison C.O.R.E. – 32 New Businesses and Counting!



Congratulations to Harrison C.O.R.E. (Central Organization for the Revitalization and Enhancement of Harrison) for their continued progress in revitalizing downtown Harrison. Our pilot community for Breakthrough Solutions, **Harrison C.O.R.E. has played a catalytic role in attracting 32 new businesses (net) into the downtown area of Harrison.** C.O.R.E. is an all-volunteer group of area residents initiated by Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt and formed to revitalize the core district of Harrison. With widespread involvement of the citizens and leaders of Harrison and Boone County, C.O.R.E. developed a strategic plan (see<http://coreofharrison.org/>), and has now focused on implementing the plan.

When asked what contributed to attracting these businesses, Layne Ragsdale, C.O.R.E. Facilitator and local business owner, stated: **“I think part of it has been the emphasis on cleanup in downtown. The publicity and the road diet [turning 4 lane Main Street into 2 lane with a turning lane and bike lanes] have also contributed to this. People even drive down to look at it.** The attention that you are able to show in a positive manner starts people’s minds moving.”

Another factor is the work of existing downtown merchants to improve their storefronts, inventory and hours of operation to encourage shoppers and visitors to come to downtown Harrison. “Several merchants have collaborated in advertising, shopping events, offering discounts and rewards programs. All of this to promote local shopping first and it is working!!” states Kathy Hefley, owner of FrenZy “Trendy and Affordable Fashions”. **“We are really involved with the community and giving back to our customers. This attitude is infectious and has sparked a lot more interest in businesses wanting to locate downtown.”** Hefley noted that the Historic Harrison Business Association (HHBA) has played an important role in this process, promoting the Harrison City

of Lights at Christmas and other activities. For more information, see <https://www.facebook.com/HistoricHarrisonBusinessAssociation>.

Dave Fitton, a C.O.R.E. founder and city councilman, states: “In my opinion, a lot of what has been happening is psychological;**C.O.R.E. has created more of a positive atmosphere in the downtown area. While the economy hasn’t changed that much, people are thinking more positively about the downtown.** We can’t take total credit for all of the impact, but we were a catalyst for this change.”

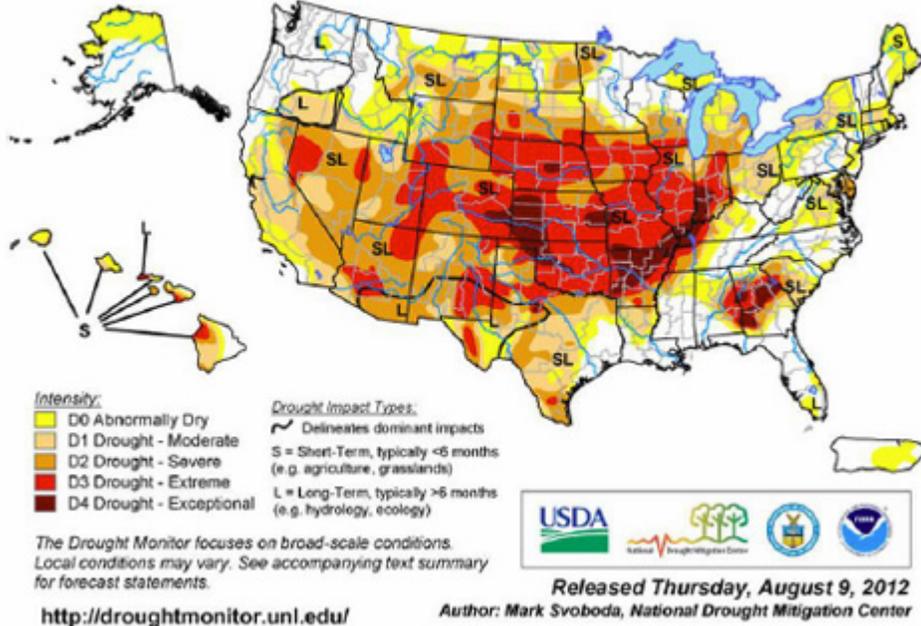
“For a community starting out, I think the number one thing is to form a small group of like-minded people who are interested in progress within their community,” states Fitton. “**You have to start with a small group that are of one mind, and then reach out to involve other people.** Another factor was John Paul [Hammerschmidt]’s idea of having everything completely transparent and opening up meetings for anyone to come and participate. The fourth element is to develop a strategic plan. The plan is done, and now we are working to get various organizations to accept ownership of parts of the plan to move forward with implementing the plan.”

To learn about the many other accomplishments of Harrison C.O.R.E., go to <http://coreofharrison.org/>.

The Drought Continues, and Affects Everything and Everyone

U.S. Drought Monitor

August 7, 2012
Valid 7 a.m. EDT



As one of the worst droughts in our nation's history continues, its impact is being felt throughout our nation and economy. See how 2012 compares with other years here: <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/07/20/us/drought-footprint.html?ref=earth>. In addition to the devastating effect on farmers and ranchers, **the drought has caused the Mississippi River to become quite low; if it continues to drop there is a real possibility that all river traffic could be stopped. This would be a strong blow to our economy, as approximately 60% of our grain, 22 percent of our oil and natural gas, and 20% of our coal travel down the Mississippi River, a less expensive means of transportation than rail or trucks. See this video clip of the Mississippi River:http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=MKHAshrZTfo.**

As farmers, communities, and states address water shortages, they have responded in many creative ways. Check out the Arkansas Drought Resource Center here: <http://arkansasdroughtresourcecenter.wordpress.com/>, created by University of Arkansas Extension faculty Dr. Deborah Tootle and Mary Hightower. In addition the following website includes several information sources and success stories on how communities have addressed water issues: <http://www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/management/drought.shtml#stories>.

New Harrison C.O.R.E. Video Now On-line

You can now hear the story of Harrison C.O.R.E. from several individuals directly involved in the process. Just go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39Uldup82No&feature=youtu.be>. Thanks to the C.O.R.E. for their participation and Extension Videographer Kerry Rodtnick for his excellent work in making it happen.

Economic Opportunities for Montgomery, Polk, and Scott Counties to be presented on September 5



**Dr. Wayne Miller, Professor – Extension Economist
University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service**

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of jobs in Arkansas increased by 2.5%. During this same period, the number of jobs in the ARCO region of Montgomery, Polk, and Scott Counties decreased by 11.1%. **This represents a loss of 2,224 jobs since 2000. If this trend continues, by 2020, the ARCO region would lose another 1,972 jobs, which would directly impact the retail sector, local government, and non-profit organizations.**

So what can be done about this downward trend? On September 5, Dr. Wayne Miller, Extension Economist with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, will present the results of an economic opportunities study for Montgomery, Polk, and Scott Counties at a meeting in Mena of the Arkansas Regional Coalition for the Ouachitas (ARCO). The study is part of the Partners for Creating a Vibrant, Sustainable Future initiative, sponsored by ARCO, Rich Mountain Community College, and the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. The purpose of the initiative is to engage the citizens and leaders of the three counties in planning for and taking action to realize a vibrant, sustainable future.

The study will identify promising economic development

strategies for the ARCO region, based on the current assets and economic engines of the region and the comparative advantages of these engines in the context of the global economic environment. The meeting will take place at the Rich Mountain Community College, from 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. The public is invited, and lunch will be provided. For more information about this initiative, see www.arcostrong.org.

Microenterprise Program coming to Izard, Sharp & Fulton Counties

Individuals interested in starting a small business or expanding an existing business are invited to participate in the Operation JumpStart program, winner of the Small Business Administration's Model of Excellence Award for Entrepreneurial Education. The initiative is sponsored by the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, in partnership with Ozarka College, Arkansas Women's Business Center, Winrock International, U.S. Small Business Administration, and the Delta Regional Authority.

“Operation JumpStart is a practical, hands-on, microenterprise development program designed to help entrepreneurs test the feasibility of their business ideas and plan to launch new ventures,” states Stacey McCullough, Instructor, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. “Participants will also have an opportunity to compete for start-up seed capital for their small business.”

Classes will kick-off on Saturday, Oct. 6 with the final class on Thursday, November 8. The deadline to apply is September 4. For additional information, contact Stacey McCullough (smccullough@uaex.edu; 501-671-2078).

Moving From Uncertainty to Hope to Sustainable Prosperity

Don Macke, Director of Strategic Engagement with the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, Lincoln, NE and a speaker at our 2009 Breakthrough Solutions Conference, was the keynote speaker at the Community Development Society's Annual Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio last month. Highlights from his presentation:

“In every generation, there are defining events that shape that generation, and this is one of those events,” stated Macke. “The Great Recession is a profound event that is shaping how we work with communities.” Macke discussed uncertainty, hope and prosperity:

- “Uncertainty leads to the erosion of hope, and includes radicalization, polarization, an overload of information and bad news. **Out of deep pain points comes openness for dealing with things we wouldn’t deal with when times were good.**
- **Genuine hope is necessary for communities to move to prosperity** – toward genuine and lasting sustainable prosperity.

He recommended two goals – to create economic opportunity, and foster broadly held community wealth. “Unless you have broadly held community wealth, you don’t have resilience,” stated Mackey.

He contrasted two districts and their approaches toward sustainability:

- The tri-state mining district of Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, which was the largest producer of lead, zinc, and iron ore between 1900 and WWII. The focus was on extraction rather than sustainability. The community of Fence, Kansas was declared a dead zone because of lead poisoning.
- In contrast, in the iron mining district of northern Minnesota, an Iron Ore Trust was established to assist the industry with new technologies, focus on economic diversification, invest in community development, and deal with sustainability.

This is a terrific example of sustainability for future generations.

Strategic Questions for Your Community:

- Do you have a financial and planning/action mechanism in place to ensure the long-term viability of your community, county, or region?
- Does your community invest in business, social, and civic (government) entrepreneurship – people who are creative, driven, and passionate, moving toward a community and region that is entrepreneurial?

LeadAR Application Deadline Set for September 1

LeadAR, or Lead Arkansas, a program that has launched dozens of community improvement success stories and helped encourage members to seek legislative, county or municipal offices is accepting applications until September 1.

LeadAR is a two-year education program that provides Arkansans the tools and connections to help them serve their communities and state. Participants have an opportunity to attend 11 three-day seminars around the state, a 10-day national study tour to Washington, D.C., and a 12-day international study tour. After nearly 30 years, the program has proven its worth. “LeadAR alumni have

used what they've learned to establish non-profits, farmers markets and other economic development, and in some cases, provided the tools to help communities recover from natural disaster," said Joe Waldrum, professor with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, and program leader. **"The two most important things that LeadAR participants gain are increasing their network of resource contacts – a much wider network of people who can help them, and increasing their leadership skills and knowledge of the issues that affect their communities, the state of Arkansas and the nation."**

For more information, go to www.uaex.edu/leadar, contact your county extension office, or call Joe Waldrum at 501-671-2076.

Gold Nuggets from "Lifting Up Small Cities", the Third Annual SmallCity Economic Leadership Empower Summit

Congratulations to Susan Forte, Executive Director, Houseaboutit, and USDA Rural Development for their successful summit, held July 27 in Little Rock. Some highlights:

"We are really interested in building the capacity of the people to sustain the development process – having the capacity to develop it and sustain it. **Where the rubber meets the road is when local communities build that capacity.**"
Cory S. Anderson, Vice President, Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation

"The announcement was made that I was going to Hot Springs. Within 4 hours, 2 movers called and wanted to move me there, and 3 realtors offered to sell me a house. **I thought it was my opportunity, but these individuals saw it as their opportunity. To be successful in small towns, you have to be aggressive.**" *Dr. David Rainey, Superintendent of Schools, Dumas*

"Small towns have something to offer. You have a quality of life many people like, and you have a workforce. It is time for you to decide what you want to be. Are you growing leaders in your community? You will need them. **Do not depend on anybody else to do what needs to be done in your community.**" *Denisa Pennington, C. D. Division Director, Arkansas Economic Development Commission*

"Stephens is a small town with a great big heart. If someone dies, we all fry chicken and take it over to them. That's the kind of place you want to live in. The gossip is great, but the workers are few. You need to get in there and work with them. If you are ever in southern Arkansas, stop by Stephens, where

everybody is somebody, and for me, and I am a servant of you all.” *Mayor Harry H. Brown, Stephens*

“Connection to the Internet is the next civil right, and we need to get everyone connected.” *Senator Linda Chesterfield*

Thanks to Connect Arkansas, the conference was livestreamed, including my presentation “Creating Vibrant, Sustainable Communities”. You can see these presentations

here: http://www.livestream.com/connectartv/video?clipId=pla_6dd12d9f-a2de-49aa-b92a-c3bd9abdb59e

Breakthrough Solutions Funding Sponsors

Just a note to thank our funding sponsors for their support of the Breakthrough Solutions Conference and Program. We appreciate their investment in the future of Arkansas:

Platinum Sponsors – Connect Arkansas

Gold Sponsors – AT&T Arkansas, CenturyLink

Silver Sponsors – AEP Swepeco, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, Entergy Teamwork Arkansas

Bronze Sponsors – Arkansas Cable Telecommunications Association, Arkansas Community Development Society, Bank of the Ozarks, Flake and Kelley City Solutions

Breakthrough Solutions Partners

We appreciate the continued support of our Breakthrough Solutions Partners:

- Arkansas Assoc. of Two-Year Colleges
- Arkansas Geographic Information Office
- AR Science and Technology Authority
- Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce
- Arkansas Community Foundation
- AR Human Development Corporation
- AT&T Arkansas
- Center for Community & Econ. Dev., UCA
- Cromwell Architects

- CenturyLink
- Delta Center for Econ. Dev., ASU
- Entergy Teamwork Arkansas
- Federal Reserve Bank, Little Rock Branch
- UALR Institute for Econ. Advancement
- UALR Small Business Development Technology and Development Center
- Engineers
- Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas
- Ken Hubbell and Associates
- U of A Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service
- UALR Institute of Government

Story of the Month – Sometimes You Just Have to Cut the Roof Off – Lee Iacocca and his Bias for Action

When Lee Iacocca took over Chrysler, the company was basically bankrupt and the government wanted to take over the business. He was walking around the shop floor one day when two young, blue-collar men approached him and said something to the effect of “Mr. Iacocca, we have an idea. We think you should consider making a convertible.” After thinking about it for a few minutes, Iacocca said, **“Before you go home today, get a blow torch, cut the roof off of that car, and drive it around town. If girls look at you while you are driving it, we’re going to make it.”** Within six months, they had the first convertible rolling off the production line. It was a smash hit. Iacocca did not convene a focus group or study consumer buying behavior. He lives and breathes extreme bias for action.

Source: www.mta.ms

Strategic Questions for Your Community:

1. Does your community have a bias for action?
2. Are you seeking breakthroughs that will become catalysts for community and economic development in your community?

Visit Our Community and Economic Development Unit at:

<http://www.arcommunities.org/>

<http://www.facebook.com/UACommunityDevelopment>

How to Strategically Impact Your Community:

If you want to impact your community in a powerful way, forward this e-mail newsletter to other individuals in your community or organization, so they can benefit from the resources, insights, and strategies covered in Breakthrough News.

More About Breakthrough Solutions:

Recipient of the Outstanding Program Award and Innovative Program Award by the international Community Development Society, Breakthrough Solutions is a program of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service, with partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors. For more information: www.vworks.org, vworks@uaex.edu, 501-671-2253.

To Subscribe or Unsubscribe:

Send an email message to vworks@uaex.edu, asking to be added or removed from the Breakthrough News mailing list.

Past Issues:

To see past issues of Breakthrough News, go to www.vworks.org/News/default.htm.