

Breakthrough News
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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

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Introduction

Welcome to the latest issue of Breakthrough News. In this issue, you will learn about our 2013 Breakthrough Solutions Conference on Building Innovative, Sustainable Communities in a Rapidly Changing World, a fresh grant opportunity for a community, a terrific branding story, and incredible stories about the Internet and human pyramids. You won't want to miss it!

Best regards,

Mark Peterson
Professor – Community and Economic Development

Coming Events

March 28: Building Support for Placemaking Efforts, UCA Center for Community and Economic Development, Conway: www.uca.edu/cced.

April 1-4: Mid-South Basic Economic Development Course, Institute for Economic Advancement, UALR: www.iea.ualr.edu/msbedc.html

April 26: 2013 Entrepreneur Task Force Conference, El Dorado Conference Center: www.startupeldorado.com.

May 1-3: Placemaking and the Power of Preservation, North Little Rock: <http://preservearkansas.org>.

May 7-8: 2013 Breakthrough Solutions Conference - Building Innovative, Sustainable Communities and Regions in a Rapidly Changing World, Arkansas 4-H Center, Ferndale: <http://www.vworks.org/>.

May 14-16: Rural Development Conference, Hot Springs: www.arkansas.gov/drs

May 19-21: 15th Annual National Value-Added Agriculture Conference, Rogers: www.regonline.com/NVAAC2013

June 6: Small City Economic Leadership Empowerment Summit, Conway: <http://houseaboutit.org>

July 29-August 2: 2013 Community Development Institute: www.ueca.edu/cdi.

"Building Innovative, Sustainable Communities & Regions in a Rapidly Changing World" - May 8 Breakthrough Solutions Conference

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? We 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.



Keynote Speaker
Ms. Sharon Gulick

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 21st century economy. **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.**

To see the conference agenda and register for the conference, go here: <http://www.vworks.org/conference/default.htm>.

Pre-Conference Workshops and Concurrent Sessions - a Smorgasbord of Great Ideas, Useful Tools, and Practical Strategies



C. A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center

The 2013 Conference will offer these Pre-Conference Workshops on May 7, featuring the latest research and real-life stories and examples:

- Creating Wealth Through Leveraging Assets and Strategic Marketing
- Funding Community Revitalization and Entrepreneurship
- Creating Entrepreneur-Friendly Communities
- Build it and They Will Come – the Do's and Don'ts of Gaining Support for Building a Public Facility in Your Community

The evening of May 7 will include a steak and chicken dinner out by the lake, a collaboration and team-building exercise led by the ExCEL Leadership Team, and smores around a campfire.

At the conference on May 8, breakout sessions will feature:

- Developing a 21st Century Workforce by Creating Linkages Between K-12,

Higher Education, and Businesses,

- Leverage Your Home Grown Assets by Creating Regional Foods Projects,
- How Do You Deal with Divisiveness, Opposition, and General Orneriness -

Involving Your Community in Times of Rapid Change,

- Apps and Cool IT Things for Communities,

- We Don't Have a Lack of Jobs; We Have a Drug Problem,
- Five Strategies Toward Community Resilience,
- Creating Economic Opportunity Through the Creative Economy, and
- Involving Youth and Young Adult Leaders in Your Community.

See registration link above; you won't want to miss it!

ACDS Breakthrough Solutions Grant Opportunity Now Available



If you have a great community project that you would love to do, but could really use a jumpstart of \$1,000 seed money, you now have a fresh opportunity to make that happen. The Arkansas Community Development Society is sponsoring a 2013 Breakthrough Solutions Grant for community projects. The \$1,000 grant could be used for these kinds of activities: a retreat for community leaders to plan for the future, marketing a major event in your community or region, a series of town hall meetings, a program to curb drug use, an open-air market, a community or youth leadership development program, and a Let's Paint Downtown campaign. These are just examples – use your creativity!

The top three applicant communities will receive two free registrations to the 2013 Breakthrough Solutions Conference, and will be invited to give a 10 minute presentation at the conference on May 8. The conference participants will then choose the winner. The application form is pretty straightforward, and remember – some community (or region) is going to win! To see the application form, go to www.arcds.org.

ARCO Community and Economic Development Resource Fair Set for March 27



The Arkansas Regional Coalition of the Ouachitas, ARCO, is hosting a Community and Economic Development Resource Fair at 11:15 a.m. on Wednesday March 27th in the Historic Armory in Mena. The Resource Fair is part of the Partners for Creating a Vibrant, Sustainable Future initiative, sponsored by the Arkansas Coalition for the Ouachitas, Rich Mountain Community College, and the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service.

“This will be a great opportunity for local government, businesses, non-profits and interested citizens to talk to agencies providing information, services, and funding,” said Gar Eisele, ARCO Chairman. All three ARCO counties, Montgomery, Polk, and Scott and their citizens are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

Fifteen federal, state, agencies and non-governmental organizations will offer their advice and services to those interested. Resource participants include: AR Capital Corporation, Connect Arkansas, AR Department of Heritage, AR Department of Parks & Tourism, AR Department of Rural Services, AR Economic Development Commission, AR Highway & Transportation Department, AR Manufacturing Solutions, USDA Rural Development, and more.

Join ARCO for lunch and the chance to talk with the resource participants who can help your community, county, or business. The Resource Fair is sponsored by the Duke Frederick Fund for Public Understanding of Civic, Community, and Economic Issues, and is free to the public. If you have questions contact Gar Eisele (479) 394-4332 washinc@sbcglobal.net

DTEC in Action Answers Strategic Questions

The Delta Technology Education Center (DTEC) is a workforce education and training center that provides a local venue for education and training for students and adults in the DTEC service area (parts of Desha, Lincoln, Arkansas, and Drew Counties). A great example of visionary leadership and a lot of hard work on the part of the DTEC board, DTEC brings education and training to the people in the area, connecting them with four institutions of higher education. With

funding from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority, we are assisting the DTEC move forward.



Delta Technology and Education Center Board of Directors

As part of the development process, the DTEC in Action Steering Committee has addressed five strategic questions. Here are their responses:

1) What is working well in the area that you value and would like to preserve?

The DTEC Center,
Faith in God - God is in the community
Support for education, medical, governmental, finance
The community values oneness and generosity and helpfulness when tragedy strikes
Youth activities we have for the community
Great churches, community involvement
The focus on education and developing needed skills
Very strong community spirit, community pride
Increased public school enrollment
Focus on education, excellent teachers
More health consciousness
Outsiders are in awe of Dumas
Everyone is involved
Best crop and prices in a long time

2) What do you see as our greatest assets and opportunities for this area?

People in our communities - friendly, eager to learn, kind
DTEC, growing educated workforce, mfg., factory space
Creative talents, enterprises, and systems in the community with innovative leadership

Shift the focus on how instruction is delivered to students.

Take advantage of a major river just 13 miles from Dumas with one of the greatest

fishing spots in Arkansas.

Find ways to attract new families because of our schools and hospital
Agriculture and ag-related industry, Delta heritage, good transportation
infrastructure

3) What would you like our community and this area to be in 10 years?

A growing area where young people get their education locally, raise their families and live a good life.

Community openness, awareness, and involvement in neighborhoods, churches, schools, and the workforce

A large student enrollment increase for the Dumas School District, leading to new facilities

I would love to see the city CLEANED UP, and for passersby to say: "Wow, what a beautiful little town this is."

4) If the loss of jobs and people continues, how would impact families, businesses, non-profits, and local governments?

We are already seeing the impact as local businesses have reduced labor.

Many families have moved in order to find jobs... non-profits struggle to make ends meet.

The local governments are forced to make "hard" decisions and funding cuts in crucial areas.

There would be less income for families, less opportunities for better jobs, higher divorce rates/crime, increased drop out rates, etc.

5) What do you see as our greatest challenges?

Helping this community to grow

Workers with workplace skills

Keeping businesses within the area

Attracting businesses

A city/people divided, lack of motivation in our community leaders to go out and make it happen.

The economy – need both educated work force and jobs

Lack of VOLUNTEERISM and community commitment

Convincing young people that Dumas is a good place to live.

Lack of funds, fear of failure, commitment from the younger generation

This then became the basis for forming action groups in the DTEC in Action, around education and workforce preparation, and creative economy/youth involvement. We look for good things to come from this development process.

Branding Eureka Springs – the Extraordinary Escape



Here is another report from our Vibrant Communities Road Trip late last year, featuring Eureka Springs.

Bring everybody together: “When I came to the chamber of commerce, we had several groups going in different directions,” stated Mike Bishop, President and CEO of the Eureka Springs Chamber of Commerce. “So we brought everyone together to go through a branding exercise. We didn’t have money to hire a consultant, so we did it ourselves. We pulled 33 people together from 33 different walks of life in the community, and met for an hour every week for several weeks. “ **The brand “Eureka Springs – the Extraordinary Escape” came out of this process.**

A few more highlights of Mike’s talk:

Responding to market segments: Eureka Springs published several hard copy guides to meet the needs of particular market segments: a wedding guide, a visitors’ guide, a group travel guide, an art guide, and a yearbook.

Responding to change: Eureka Springs is impacted by events in the region, including Crystal Bridges Museum in Bentonville, casinos in Missouri.

Develop a welcoming attitude toward visitors and tourists: “People go where they are invited and they stay where they are wanted.”

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:

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We appreciate the continued support of our Breakthrough Solutions Partners:

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- Arkansas Geographic Information Office
- AR Science and Technology Authority
- Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce
- 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
- Arkansas Community Foundation
- AR Human Development Corporation
- AT&T Arkansas
- Center for Community & Econ. Dev., UCA
- Cromwell Architects 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 – Another Incredible Story About Using the Internet

Twenty-year-old Cain Bond named his store Peddlers Bicycle Shop, but most of his business occurs on eBay. Cain sells large quantities of strollers and bicycle parts all over the world, grossing more than \$1 million and leading to meeting with eBay's CEO. When a Hungarian needs a rear derailer for her bike, when a Swedish mother wants a jogging stroller, when an American is looking for vintage ride, they can browse Cain's 200 to 800 items up for auction on any given day.

This busy online business and warehouse sits in rural Indiana, where road signs warn drivers to watch for Amish buggies. **Not bad for a dyslexic 20-year-old who started this enterprise out of his bedroom two years ago with \$400 dollars in savings while still enrolled in high school!** For more information, go to www.renewingthecountryside.org.

Website of the Month: Building Community by Castells – if it Doesn't Kill You, You Will be Stronger for it

If you are looking for a fresh way to build community, take a look at the Castells – human pyramids of Catalonia, Spain. Castells –a Catalanian word that means castles– are a cultural phenomenon particular to Catalonia and consist of erecting human towers. This tradition **originated** at the end of the 18th century in **Valls**, Tarragona, when rival groups of people called colles, began to compete in constructing the different kinds of human towers that we recognise nowadays. You have to see it to believe it - go to http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=K1HWyUIZ5kk&feature=player_embedded.

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.

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