

Delta Regional Forum: Population Health, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving

July 18-19, 2019

Coahoma County Higher Education Center

Clarksdale, Mississippi



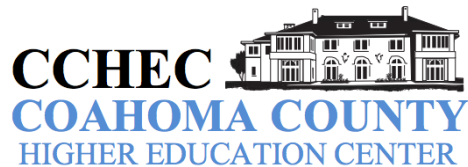
**Delta Regional Forum:
Population Health, Development, and
Entrepreneurial Problem Solving**

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Organizers and Sponsors

The Delta Regional Forum would not have been possible without the support of the following organizations.



An interdisciplinary alliance committed to collaborative and research-informed problem solving, the Delta Directions Consortium consists of individuals, academic institutions, non-profit organizations, and foundations working together to create positive social change in the Mississippi Delta Region through community development and public health.



Right! From the Start Initiative



Delta Scholars
a program of the



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
JUDY AND BOBBY SHACKOULS
HONORS COLLEGE

in collaboration with
Delta Directions Partners

Delta Regional Forum: Population Health, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving

Coahoma County Higher Education Center, Clarksdale, MS

Sessions at a Glance Thursday, July 18, 2019

| Time | | Event | Location |
|----------|----------|--|----------------------------|
| 8:00 AM | 9:00 AM | Registration and Continental Breakfast | Cutrer Lobby and Boardroom |
| 9:00 AM | 9:30 AM | Introduction and Opening Remarks | Cutrer Ballroom |
| 9:30 AM | 10:45 AM | Plenary Session 1: Delta Scholars Student Presentations | Cutrer Ballroom |
| 10:45 AM | 10:55 AM | Break | |
| 10:55 AM | 12:10 PM | Panel 1: Right! From the Start | Cutrer Ballroom |
| | | Paper Presentations 1: Southern Regional Issues | Lewis 301 |
| 12:10 PM | 1:10 PM | Lunch | Cutrer Lobby |
| 1:10 PM | 1:20 PM | Break | |
| 1:20 PM | 2:35 PM | Plenary Session 2: Delta Scholars Student Presentations | Cutrer Ballroom |
| 2:35 PM | 2:45 PM | Break | |
| 2:45 PM | 4:00 PM | Panel 2: New Pathways to Health and Opportunity | Cutrer Ballroom |
| | | Paper Presentations 2: Environment, Health, and Wellness | Lewis 301 |
| 4:00 PM | 4:10 PM | Break | |
| 4:10 PM | 5:25 PM | Plenary Session 3: Delta Scholars Student Presentations | Cutrer Ballroom |

Friday, July 19, 2019

| Time | | Event | Location |
|----------|----------|---|--------------------|
| 8:00 AM | 9:30 AM | Delta Directions Leadership Meeting | Lewis 301 |
| 9:30 AM | 10:45 AM | Paper Presentations 3: Education and Health Issues | Cutrer Ballroom |
| 10:45 AM | 10:55 AM | Break | |
| 10:55 AM | 12:10 PM | Panel 3: Community Engagement for the 2020 Census | Cutrer Ballroom |
| 12:10 PM | 1:30 PM | Lunch | Cutrer Lobby |
| 1:30 PM | 2:45 PM | data.census.gov - Introduction and Demonstration of the New Data Dissemination Site | Cutrer Ballroom |
| 2:45 PM | 3:00 PM | Closing Remarks – Looking to the Future | Cutrer Ballroom |

Delta Regional Forum: Population Health, Development, and Entrepreneurial Problem Solving

Thursday, July 18, 2019

Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM
Cutrer Lobby and Boardroom

Introduction and Opening Remarks

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM
Cutrer Ballroom

Plenary Session 1

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM *Cutrer
Ballroom*

Delta Scholars Student Presentations

Moderator: Kecia Johnson, Mississippi State University

Presenters: Selected Delta Scholars (supplemental program will be provided)

Session Break

10:45 AM – 10:55 AM

Concurrent Presentations and Panel Session

10:55 AM – 12:10 PM

Panel 1: Right! From the Start Breastfeeding and Care Coordination Initiative

Cutrer Ballroom

Panelists: Sandy Snell, Women and Children Health Initiatives, Inc.

John J. Green, University of Mississippi

Sydney Bush, University of Mississippi

Sushmitha Singuva, University of Mississippi

Lynn Woo, University of Mississippi

Paper Presentations 1: Southern Regional Issues

Lewis 301

Moderator: Ryan Parsons

Heirs' Property: Exploring a Southern Region Approach

Russ Garner, Mississippi State University and Southern Rural Development Center

Housing Insecurity in the Rural South

Patricia DeFelice and Annie Cafer, University of Mississippi

Depopulation as a Means of Re-segregation: Racial Patterns in Rural School Closure, 1987-2015

Ryan Parsons, Princeton University

The Economic Impact of Small Regional Commissions: Is There Any Bang After Just a Few Bucks?

Tyler Morin and Mark Partridge, The Ohio State University

Lunch

12:10 PM – 1:10 PM
Cutrer Lobby

Session Break

1:10 PM – 1:20 PM

Plenary Session 2

1:20 PM – 2:35 PM
Cutrer Ballroom

Delta Scholars Student Presentations

Moderator: Brad Jones, Mississippi State University

Presenters: Selected Delta Scholars (supplemental program will be provided)

Session Break

2:35 PM – 2:45 PM

Concurrent Presentations and Panel Session

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Panel 2: Challenges, Successes, and Innovations through New Pathways to Health and Opportunity in the Mississippi Delta

Cutrer Ballroom

Panelists: Dartenya Davis, Aaron E. Henry Community Health Services Center, Inc.
Debbie Logan, Mississippi Hospital Association
Josephine Rhymes, Tri-County Workforce Alliance
Lynn Woo, University of Mississippi

Paper Presentations 2: Environment, Health, and Wellness

Lewis 301

Moderator: Stephanie Showalter Otts

Applying the Ecosystem Services Framework to Leverage Capital Investment and Improve Stakeholder Engagement in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley and Black Belt of the Southeastern United States

Mark Dugo, Mississippi Valley State University

Green Spaces and their Ecosystem Services as a Means to Improve Public Health in Mississippi

Marlon Flowers and Mark Dugo, Mississippi Valley State University

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Community Engaged Research and Environmental Health Policy Surrounding Lead in Drinking Water in the Mississippi Delta

Stephanie Showalter Otts, Kristie Willett, and John Green, University of Mississippi

College2Youth: Design of Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research Experience

Georgianna Mann, Timmi Unger Bishop, Kimberly Kaiser, and Anne Cafer, University of Mississippi

Session Break

4:00 PM – 4:10 PM

Plenary Session 3

4:10 PM – 5:25 PM

Cutrer Ballroom

Delta Scholars Student Presentations

Moderator: Lynn Woo, University of Mississippi

Presenters: Selected Delta Scholars (a supplemental program will be provided)

Friday, July 19, 2019

Delta Directions Leadership Meeting

8:00 AM – 9:30 AM
Lewis 301

Presentations

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM
Cutrer Ballroom

Paper Presentations 3: Education and Health Issues

Moderator: Eleanor Green, Good Food for Oxford Schools

STDs, Teen Pregnancy, and Circumstances Surrounding Safe Sex in Charleston, Mississippi

Levell Williams, Tougaloo College; Kristen Alley Swain, University of Mississippi

Using Community Clinical Linkages to Combat Chronic Disease

Catherine Moring and Jennifer Taylor, Tallahatchie General Hospital

Growth and Persistence of Place-Based Mortality in the United States: Implications for the Mississippi Delta

Hasna Khandekar, University of Mississippi Medical Center; Ciarra Smith, Mississippi State University; Arthur Cosby, Mississippi State University

Ed You Cate

Johnny D. Jones, Mississippi Valley State University

Session Break

10:45 AM – 10:55 AM

Panel Session

10:55 AM – 12:10 PM
Cutrer Ballroom

Panel 3: Community Engagement for the 2020 Census

Panelists: John J. Green, University of Mississippi

Carla Ross, U.S. Census Bureau

Jamiko Deleveaux, University of Mississippi and State Data Center of Mississippi

Heather Hanna, Mississippi State University

Steve Turner, Mississippi State University and Southern Rural Development Center

Networking Lunch

12:10 PM – 1:30 PM
Cutrer Lobby

Workshop

1:30 PM – 2:45 PM
Cutrer Ballroom

data.census.gov - Introduction and Demonstration of the New Data Dissemination Site

Presenter: KaNin Reese, U.S. Census Bureau

Closing Remarks – Looking to the Future

2:45 PM – 3:00 PM
Cutrer Ballroom

2019 Delta Scholars

Yousef Abu-Salah, Vanderbilt University

Lilia Anderson, The University of Alabama

Ainsley Ash, University of Mississippi

Tori Choate, Mississippi University for Women

Rachel Fan, Vanderbilt University

Braeden Foldenauer, Harvard College

Seth Lenoir, Mississippi State University

Yasmine Malone, University of Mississippi

Emily Shy, University of Mississippi

Harpreet Singh, Harvard College

Dustin Smith, East Mississippi Community College

Tyler Yarbrough, University of Mississippi

Delta Scholars is a program that aims to train a cohort of young leaders to think critically about issues of systemic justice affecting Mississippi and to support them in developing solutions that will produce positive social change in their communities and the state at large. The Delta Scholars have spent the past ten days in workshops on campus at Mississippi State University and then touring the Mississippi Delta. They have met with academics, community leaders, and non-profit organizers working towards positive social change in the Delta, taking inspiration from these examples to develop ideas for social change projects that they can implement in their own communities. As part of the Forum, students will present their project proposals and solicit questions, suggestions, and feedback from audience participants.

Appendix
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Abstracts

Presentations

Heirs' Property: Exploring a Southern Region Approach

Russ Garner, Southern Rural Development Center

The Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) has begun a project that explores the issue of heirs' property, a problem deeply impacting the Southern region. This presentation will offer an overview of the journey that SRDC and its partners embarked on in 2017, where the project is currently, and future developments. Heirs' property, land passed on without a will, plagues much of the South, particularly in high poverty regions (i.e. Black Belt, Delta, Appalachia, Colonias). Often tied to small/medium-sized farmlands, these informal ownerships prevent using land as collateral (home or equipment loans) and prevent participation in federal/state programs for farmers. Impacts on farms, families, and communities call for multi-disciplined approaches to help chart positive change. The SRDC and its partners seek to explore avenues in meeting this challenge for the region.

Housing Insecurity in the Rural South

Patricia DeFelice and Anne Cafer, University of Mississippi

This research explores a variety of community stakeholder perspectives on housing insecurity. Drawing on literature surrounding the history of housing policy in the United States, I will address gaps in the literature pertaining to policies created in regards to public perception. My research utilizes a community resilience framework to inform my research design and framing of perceptions and attitudes towards housing in Oxford and Marks, Mississippi. I define housing insecurity as having little to no access to stable, consistent housing, while inadequacy refers to access to only low-quality housing, often resulting in health-related issues for residents. I argue that the reasons policy is or is not created or implemented is a result of embedded attitudes that are deeper than our day to day actions. To answer my research questions, this study utilizes interviews with both residents who are housing insecure and decision makers responsible for local housing ordinances and policies.

Depopulation as a Means of Re-segregation: Racial Patterns in Rural School Closure, 1987-2015

Ryan Parsons, Princeton University

More than 20,000 public schools were permanently closed between 1987 and 2015, many in rural communities. Given the rate of urbanization in the US, the closure of rural schools is not necessarily a cause for alarm; under most models of public education, schools can only operate effectively with enough students to sustain them. However, an analysis of the racialized patterns

of school closure in rural America suggest that student numbers and efficiency are not sufficient to explain patterns of school closure. Our study finds that schools with larger non-white populations in 1987 were at increased risk of closure. In the South, schools that were relatively integrated faced higher risk of closure relative to predominantly white or predominantly black schools. Because integration rates in the US peaked in the late 1980s, these trends suggest that rural depopulation, and resulting disinvestment of public resources, created unique disadvantages for rural communities of color.

The Economic Impact of Small Regional Commissions: Is There Any Bang After Just a Few Bucks?

Tyler Morin and Mark Partridge, The Ohio State University

Despite substantial funding going to regional economic development programs, little is known about the benefits of some of the smaller place-based programs. We extend the literature on regional commissions by analyzing the economic gains to the Delta Regional Authority (DRA). The DRA was founded in 2000 to provide enhanced development aid to 252 Lower Mississippi Valley counties. Using data over the 1997 to 2016 period, we assess the DRA's impact on employment, income, migration, and poverty. One-to-one propensity score matching is used to generate counterfactual counties. Due to the endogenous nature of the treatment, we instrument for counties being included in the DRA using a dummy for whether the county is within the Lower Mississippi Watershed. The ensuing results reflect an estimation of the intent-to-treat benefits of the DRA. We find that the DRA is associated with income gains and decreases in unemployment; however, no impact on poverty or migration.

Applying the Ecosystem Services Framework to Leverage Capital Investment and Improve Stakeholder Engagement in the Mississippi Alluvial Valley and Black Belt of the Southeastern United States

Mark Dugo, Mississippi Valley State University

Ecosystem services are benefits to society afforded by our surrounding environment. We introduce-propose a logical stepwise model for intervention that hinges on the ecosystem services framework to address persistent poverty among predominantly African American rural populations situated in the Mississippi River Alluvial Valley (i.e. the Delta) and the Black Belt of the Southeastern United States (SE US) and to improve African American stakeholder engagement in contemporary environmental issues. In ecological terms, the Alluvial Valley and Black Belt of the SE US are also situated in one of the most biologically diverse regions in the country. The model we introduce emphasizes the relationships between values, identity, and interest to foster a deeper connection to the environment (i.e. environmental stakeholder awareness and engagement). This model is proposed as a viable tool to leverage capital investment as a form of reparations for rural African American communities in the SE US.

Green Spaces and their Ecosystem Services as a Means to Improve Public Health in Mississippi

Marlon Flowers and Mark Dugo, Mississippi Valley State University

For public health to improve equally across the socioeconomic spectrum, environmental quality must be equal regardless of socioeconomic position. This study investigates the intersection of the spatial distribution of green spaces across the urban landscape in Greenwood, Mississippi (located in the Mississippi Delta) and potential environmental justice issues. Our approach includes: 1) the implementation of pre- and post-intervention surveys assessing the public's awareness of green spaces and their associated ecosystem services (i.e. provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural), known to improve the quality of life among frequent users within proximal communities; 2) a comparative assessment of parks in Greenwood using a Public Open Space Tool (POST); and 3) the implementation of the EPA's EJSCREEN tool to identify potential environmental justice issues in the immediate vicinity of parks located in Greenwood. We advocate for equity in the spatial distribution of high-quality green spaces and the ecosystem services they provide.

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Community Engaged Research and Environmental Health Policy Surrounding Lead in Drinking Water in the Mississippi Delta

Stephanie Showalter Otts, Kristie Willett, and John Green, University of Mississippi

This study entailed community-based research (CBR) to assess drinking water and empower participants to make changes to reduce lead exposure. Operating within the Mississippi Delta, partners worked with local leaders to engage their constituencies through outreach and water sampling events. Methods were evaluated using both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Sociodemographic data were correlated with Census tract data, allowing us to identify at-risk areas. Recruited through community events, 216 households had their water analyzed for pH and lead, representing a 70% return rate. Detectable lead concentrations were found in 65.7% (n = 142) of samples ranging from 0.06 to 14.3 ppb, with the highest concentrations from a well-owner event. Nine samples exceeded 5 ppb, and these residences received certified sink filters. CBR can fill data gaps around lead in drinking water, but choice of engagement strategy is critical. This project contributed to risk assessment and guided scalable research and outreach efforts.

College2Youth: Design of Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research Experience

Georgianna Mann, Timmi Unger Bishop, Kimberly Kaiser, and Anne Cafer, University of Mississippi

This pilot research program, College2Youth, was developed to train undergraduate students in community-based participatory research through the lens of middle school student health behaviors and school programming to create a healthier environment. College2Youth is an undergraduate research training program led by sociology, criminal justice, and nutrition instructors. Researchers (n=6) enrolled in three credit hours of independent study completed literature reviews on school wellness and received relevant research training in fall of 2018. After training, researchers conducted focus groups with students in a Mississippi Delta middle school to determine perceived barriers to wellness. Researchers returned to the middle school

and proposed three feasible initiatives where researchers asked adolescents for open-ended constructive feedback in focus groups. College2Youth is a strategic interdisciplinary method to train undergraduates in research while supporting involvement in diverse surrounding communities. This is an adaptable model that can be used to create a rich community-based interdisciplinary undergraduate research experience.

STDs, Teen Pregnancy, and Circumstances Surrounding Safe Sex in Charleston, MS

Levell Williams, Tougaloo College; Kristen Alley Swain, University of Mississippi

This qualitative study utilized in-depth interviews with residents of Charleston, Mississippi, to explore social and behavioral factors that contribute to poor sexual health statistics in the Mississippi Delta. Six African American adults who had experience working with Charleston youth were interviewed about barriers, opportunities, and social factors that impact sexual health among African American adolescents. Participants ranged from ages 19-45 and included educators, a recent high school graduate, and a minister. Interview transcript analysis, using the constant comparative method, highlighted perceived issues, perceived intervention possibilities, perceived barriers against intervention, and the role of relationships between teens and adults. Practical implications of this study include the development of a culturally appropriate safe sex intervention and awareness campaign in the Mississippi Delta and other rural communities.

Using Community Clinical Linkages to Combat Chronic Disease

Catherine Moring and Jennifer Taylor, Tallahatchie General Hospital

The Tallahatchie General Hospital Community Clinical Linkage (CCL) Program was established in 2016 and has grown to include four clinics, a wellness center, and over 10 referring healthcare providers. The CCL is an excellent model for coordinated care and chronic disease management. Patients are referred to necessary services resulting in improved health status and reduced chronic disease burden. The program includes a Food RX program, a diabetes self-management (DSME) program, and the MASTER Program which provides participants with an array of options to improve health. To date, over 50 people have successfully put type 2 diabetes into remission or reversed pre-diabetes, and countless others have improved biometrics and lost significant amounts of weight. The DSME program uses a low-carbohydrate approach to address insulin resistance and inflammation. The average reduction in A1c is 2.2% which is quite substantial. This session will also cover best practices for chronic disease management programming.

Growth and Persistence of Place-Based Mortality in the United States: Implications for the Mississippi Delta

Hasna Khandekar, University of Mississippi Medical Center; Ciarra Smith, Mississippi State University; Arthur Cosby, Mississippi State University

The objective of this work was to examine 47 years of US urban and rural mortality trends at the county level, controlling for the effects of education, income, poverty, and race. Utilizing data obtained through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention WONDER (Wide-ranging ONline Data for Epidemiologic Research), the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Bureau of Economic Analysis, we found that rural-urban mortality disparities increased from the mid-1980s through

2016. Education, race, rurality and the interaction between a county's percentage of poverty and percentage of rurality were strong predictors of county-level mortality rates. These findings indicate the largest mortality penalty was in high-poverty, rural counties like those found in the Mississippi Delta. This rural-urban mortality disparity is persistent, growing, and large when compared to other place-based disparities and suggests that targeted public health programs focused on high-poverty, rural locales are promising strategies for addressing these mortality disparities.

Ed You Cate

Johnny D. Jones, Mississippi Valley State University

This presentation is about focusing on the “you” in the title as a new acronym for education. I believe that framing the word metaphorically in this way will conceptualize the self-reflection process by internalizing our responsible purpose as educators and applying action-driven research to make systemic differences in the schools that surround our institutions of higher learning in the US and perhaps the Mississippi Delta. All of us are “you,” and our children will grow up to be us – if we make collaborative differences in their education in K-20. This proposed research will investigate the extent to which translational (action) research is applied in two separate settings in the Deep South of Mississippi – a state that continues to be challenged, troubled, and plagued by educational inequity and social justice.

Panel Sessions

Right! From the Start Breastfeeding and Care Coordination Initiative

Sandy Snell, Women and Children Health Initiatives, Inc.; John J. Green, Sydney Bush, Sushmitha Singuva, and Lynn Woo, University of Mississippi

Poor birth outcomes are an important indicator of broader population health and wellbeing. Mississippi has high rates of preterm births (<37 weeks gestation: 13.3 per 100 births), low birth weights (<2,500 grams: 11.5 per 100 births), very low birth weights (<1,500 grams: 2.1 per 100 births), and infant mortality (death in first year: 8.9 per 1,000 live births). Breastfeeding has been shown to improve outcomes for preterm and low/very low birth weight babies. Demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic factors associated with poor birth outcomes also serve as barriers for women attempting to breastfeed. This pilot study collected primary data through community interviews, focus groups, and a study with NICU patients. Mothers were tracked by community health workers, social workers, and lactation specialists supervised under an IBLC through weekly check-ins and home visits. This panel will highlight insights gained by the study.

Challenges, Successes, and Innovations through New Pathways to Health and Opportunity in the Mississippi Delta

Dartanya Davis, Aaron E. Henry Community Health Services Center, Inc.; Debbie Logan, Mississippi Hospital Association; Josephine Rhymes, Tri-County Workforce Alliance; Lynn Woo, University of Mississippi

New Pathways to Health and Opportunity is a partnership that was formed when a number of separate and individual initiatives that were all working on similar issues toward compatible outcomes joined forces to work on the interrelated challenges and opportunities of health, healthcare, and economic development in the Mississippi Delta region. After many years of collaboration, the New Pathways partnership remains robust, and its combined programs and efforts continue to evolve to both address community needs and to make use of new resources and opportunities that emerge. Leaders from each of the organizations that comprise the partnership will provide background data, tell the stories of their collective efforts, share lessons learned, and offer recommendations for using community building and organizing strategies to help young people and their families work together to promote health and overall wellbeing in their communities.

Community Engagement for the 2020 Census

John J. Green, University of Mississippi

Carla Ross, U.S. Census Bureau

Jamiko Deleveaux, University of Mississippi and State Data Center of Mississippi

Heather Hanna, Mississippi State University

Steve Turner, Mississippi State University and Southern Rural Development Center

The 2020 Census is right around the corner. Even though participation in the Census is mandated, there is wide variation in actual participation rates. Many of the lowest participation counties in the 2010 Census were in rural regions and those with high poverty rates. Forecasts are similar for 2020. This is unfortunate for regions like the Delta, because there is so much at stake. Census data are critical for political apportionment, funding allocations, policy/program planning, and serving as the basis for demographic, education, health, and economic indicators. Recognizing the importance of the Census along with the challenges faced by some people and places, numerous technical, outreach, and education efforts are underway to pursue an accurate count for the Delta region. Panelists for this session will discuss the initiatives they are involved in, and then attendees will discuss and provide input on strategies for engaging their communities for the 2020 Census.

Workshop Session

data.census.gov - Introduction and Demonstration of the New Data Dissemination Site

KaNin Reese, U.S. Census Bureau

The U.S. Census Bureau has developed a new website for data dissemination known as data.census.gov. Now operational, it will serve as the replacement for American FactFinder. This session will introduce attendees to the site and its many functions for accessing data from the American Community Survey, Economic Census, and 2020 Census, among many others.