

National Institute Unveiled To Advance Rural Community Colleges

DULUTH, MN—A major step in the national rural college movement was taken here Sept. 12 with the unveiling of The National Institute for Rural Community Colleges.

Joe Sertich, President of the Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District and Chair of the Rural Community College Alliance, announced the creation of this national institute to strengthen policy research and leader formation activities for the nation's rural colleges.

"The National Institute for Rural Community Colleges is a huge step in advancing our mission to create better opportunities for the people we serve," Sertich said during the unveiling at the RCCA annual conference here.

The National Institute for Rural Community Colleges is a collaboration of three leading rural college organizations; the RCCA, a nation-wide organization with 80 members; the MidSouth Partnership for Rural Community Colleges, an innovative model for building the community serving capacity of rural colleges; and the Rural Policy Research Institute, noted for cross-sector, multi-disciplinary public policy research and analysis.

Rural community colleges are deeply connected to the people and places they serve. With more than 900 campuses across the nation, these institutions are the face of rural America.

"RCCA members know human capital development and community development go hand-in-hand and are eager to accept the challenge of helping build healthy and sustainable communities and regions," Sertich added.

Charles Fluharty, Director of the Rural Policy Research Institute; Martin Wiseman, Director of the John C. Stennis Institute of Government, Mississippi



A nation-wide membership organization of rural serving two-year colleges with more than 80 members from coast-to-coast, RCCA is moving to become a national voice supporting colleges and communities seeking to advance their co-destinies.



An innovative leader formation, policy research and technical assistance platform created by Alcorn State University, The Stennis Institute of Government/ Mississippi State University and the community colleges of the mid south, the MSP has engaged more than 350 rural college leaders from nine southern states in professional development, degree and non-degree programs and has supported a variety of research activities guided by practitioners.



The leading rural policy research and analysis organization in our nation, the Rural Policy Research Institute operates in collaboration of the University of Missouri, Iowa State University, the University of Nebraska and other affiliates. RUPRI demonstrates a unique capacity to work across and beyond government and institutional silos.

**RURAL COMMUNITY
COLLEGE ALLIANCE**
creating opportunities in place

RCCATimes is a publication of the
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Mark Your Calendars!

RCCA 2006 Annual Conference
Sept. 10-12, 2006 • Lexington, KY

On-Campus Student Housing at Rural Community Colleges: Dispelling the Myth

Thanks to Pat Moeck, PhD, the story of student housing on rural-serving community college campuses is moving toward the spotlight. In a dissertation completed at the University of North Texas with committee chair, Steve Katsinas, last May, Pat moved "to dispel myths that there are no residence halls at community colleges."

In fact, of the 922 rural serving community colleges identified by Katsinas and Hardy in 2004, 21 percent reported to IPEDS the existence of student housing. However, Dr. Moeck's work reaches beyond the numbers as she examines the *raison d'être* for rural community college student housing and operation.

The findings:

- The 232 two-year colleges providing student housing as reported to IPEDS is an undercount of around 20 percent.
- Student housing availability at rural-serving two-year colleges is significant, especially in Southern and Midwestern states.
- Community colleges with dorms own and operate these facilities and offer a range of amenities.

The reported purposes of providing on-campus housing include: increasing student access and diversity, bolstering student development, extending instructional program diversity and addressing "gender imbalance."

"Rural-serving community colleges financially benefit by operating on-campus housing," she said.

While this study may not touch a majority of two-year colleges, it does illuminate an issue of concern to many small and medium sized, remote, rural serving colleges. In that respect, it reminds us of the diversity of two-year institutions that serve rural America. Moreover, it should encourage researchers and practitioners to push forward this and other topics of interest to small, remote colleges.

Thanks, Pat!

—Bill Scaggs
RCCA Executive Director



New Members

Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Cynthia Lindquist, President
Fort Totton, ND

College of the Mainland
Homer Hayes, President
Texas City, TX

Cossatot Community College
University of Arkansas System
Frank G. Adams, Chancellor
DeQueen, AR

Hibbing Community College
Ken Simberg, Provost
Hibbing, MN

Itasca Community College
Michael Johnson, Provost
Grand Rapids, MN

Mesabi Range Community and Technical College
Tina Royer, Provost
Virginia, MN

Minnesota State College Southeast Technical
James J. Johnson, President
Winona, MN

New Hampshire Community Technical College-Berlin
Kathy Enteguess, President
Berlin, NH

Northland Community and Technical College
James Davis, Interim President
Thief River Falls, MN

Rainy River Community College
Wayne Merrell, Provost
International Falls, MN

Ridgewater College
Douglas Allen, President
Willmar, MN

Riverland Community College
Terrence Leas, President
Austin, MN

Sisseton Wahpeton College
William Harjo Lonefight, President
Sisseton, SD

Vermillion Community College
Sue Collins, Provost
Ely, MN

Sertich Takes Over Chair

RCCA Elects New Board

Following a year of active service as RCCA vice-chair, Joe Sertich, President, Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District, was elected Board Chair at the September Board meeting of the Alliance.

Cheryl Sparks, President, Howard College in Big Spring, TX, was elected vice-chair; Vivian Presley of Coahoma Community College in Clarksdale, MS, will serve as secretary; and Bruce Ayers, President of Southeast Kentucky Technical and Community College in Cumberland, KY, was re-elected Treasurer.

Sertich saluted the service of four Board members completing their term of service to RCCA. They are:

- Brantley Briley, President of Lenoir Community College in Kinston, NC
- Carol Spencer, President, San Juan College in Farmington, NM
- Anne McNutt, President of Technical College of the Lowcountry in Beaufort, SC
- Carlyle Ramsey, President, Danville Community College, Danville, VA

"Our work together has been significantly advanced through the leadership of these colleagues. Their work is the foundation upon which we are building and we look forward to their continuing counsel as RCCA's voice becomes stronger," Sertich said.

Newly elected Board members for three year terms, class of 2008, are:

- John Johnson, President, Alabama Southern Community College, Monroeville, AL
- Kathy Matlock, President, Southeastern Community College, Whiteville, NC
- Beth Miller, Executive-Director, University of New Mexico-Gallup, Gallup, NM
- Vivian Presley, President, Coahoma Community College Clarksdale, MS
- Jim Owen, President of Piedmont Community College in Roxbury, NC, re-elected to a three year term

RCCA Executive Director Bill Scaggs said, "These are effective leaders, not only in their colleges but in their communities. They are out there every day making a difference in rural America. We value the willingness of these committed community servants to bring their energies and vision to the Alliance."

Continuing Board Members, Class of 2006, are:

- Bruce Ayers, President, Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College, Cumberland, KY
- Cheryl T. Sparks, President, Howard College, Big Spring, TX
- Joe Sertich, President, Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District, Chisholm, MN
- Ismael Sosa, President, Southwest Texas Junior College, Uvalde, TX
- Melvin Vuk, President, New Mexico State University at Carlsbad, Carlsbad, NM

Continuing Board Members, Class of 2007, are:

- Robert Pura, President, Greenfield Community College, Greenfield, MA
- George Edwards, President, Big Sandy Community College, Prestonburg, KY
- Terrance Suarez, President, Mountain Empire Community College, Big Stone Gap, VA
- Joe McDonald, President, Salish Kootenai College, Pablo, MT
- Joe McCann, President, Williston State College, Williston, ND



Study Helps Formation of MEA

Two Studies Highlight Role of Rural Community Colleges

Two studies of the role of rural community colleges in economic and community development are now available through the MidSouth Partnership for Rural Community Colleges.

The first, a special report: *Invigorating Rural Economies: The Rural Development Mission of Mississippi's Community Colleges*, by Sarah Rubin with Brent Cejda, Charles Fluharty, Carol Lincoln and Jessica Ziembroski, was presented in January 2005 to a special convening of Mississippi's community college leaders.

A recently completed study: *How Rural*

Community Colleges Develop Their

Communities and the People Who Live in Them: A Perspective from Three MidSouth States, by Michael Miller and Courtney Tuttle, is currently at press.

The Miller-Tuttle study uses a structured case study approach to analyze mutual college-community impacts of three rural colleges located in Alabama, Arkansas and Mississippi. Mike Miller, Professor in the Higher Education Leadership Program at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, was the principal researcher in this work.

This study found that people "living in communities with rural community colleges are likely to want to remain in the rural township, have a strong sense of pride in the community and the college, and are willing to invest in actions and programs that improve the quality of life in these rural communities."

The *Invigorating Rural Economies* study cast five strategic imperatives for Mississippi's community and junior colleges: build human capital; nurture social capital and strong communities; work regionally; find a competitive niche; and promote a culture of entrepreneurship.

In advancing the economic development role of two-year colleges, this study gave impetus to the creation of the Mississippi Entrepreneurial Alliance, a statewide entrepreneurship facilitation network. With leadership from Nick Walters, State Director, USDA Rural Development, and encouragement from Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour, college, state and federal resource commitments are now in place. MEA-supported enterprise facilitators, located on community college campuses, are being positioned to serve the entire state.



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About People and Place



Ron His Horse is Thunder, formerly president of Sitting Bull College, has been elected Tribal Chairman of the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota. A member of the Hunkpapa band of the Lakota Sioux Nation, Ron served as president of Sitting Bull College from 1996 until 2005.

One of the founding presidents of the Rural Community College Alliance and a long-serving board member, Ron is a champion for rural peoples. In 2002, Mr. His Horse is Thunder was appointed by

President Bush as Chairman of the President's Board of Advisors on Tribal Colleges and Universities.



AWARD WINNER—From left, John Johnson, President, Alabama Southern Community College; Carol Lincoln, Senior Staff Associate, MDC, Inc.; and Bruce Ayers, President, Southeast KY Community and Technical College, share a light moment following presentation of the George Autry Award.

Carol Lincoln Honored with George Autry Award

Carol Lincoln, Senior Staff Associate of MDC, Inc, was "completely surprised" as RCCA leaders honored her service to America's rural-serving colleges with the 2005 George Autry Award, presented in Duluth, Minn., recently.

John Johnson of Alabama Southern Community College and Bruce Ayers of Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College joined Bill Scaggs, RCCA executive director, in recognizing "Carol's exemplary commitment to advancing access to opportunity for rural people."

This accolade honors the work of the late George Autry, whose vision for rural people and places and their community colleges drives the work of the Rural Community College Alliance. Autry served as President of MDC, Inc. from 1967 until his death in 1999.

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Noted for pithy commentary, Autry once responded to the question of "and what does MDC stand for" as follows: "Hard work, hanging in there, beating the odds."

The 2005 Autry Award Recipient, Carol Lincoln, continues to encourage rural serving colleges to work hard, hang in and beat the odds.

From 1994 to 2003, Lincoln directed the Rural Community College Initiative, a national demonstration program funded through The Ford Foundation to increase access and improve economic opportunities in distressed rural communities. She currently serves as director of Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count. Funded by the Lumina Foundation, this nation-wide program is designed to increase the success of low-income and minority community college students.



Ayers

"Our college and our community have been profoundly changed by the community engagement processes advocated by RCCA. Place-building is a team activity in our part of Appalachia."

Bruce Ayers, President, Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College, Cumberland, KY & Treasurer, Rural Community College Alliance



McDonald

"We know that place and culture count in building colleges as well as in building sustainable communities. Our Alliance mission is to increase the community sustaining capacity of rural-serving two-year colleges."

Joe McDonald, President, Salish Kootenai College, Pablo, MT & Board Member, Rural Community College Alliance



The National Institute for Rural Community Colleges

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State University; Malvin Williams, Academic Vice President Emeritus of Alcorn State University and Bill Scaggs, Executive Director of the RCCA, joined Sertich in announcing the formation of The National Institute for Rural Community Colleges.

According to Wiseman, "The NIRCC must be accountable to the leadership of our nation's rural community colleges. They know their communities and their people. Our role is help them raise their capacity act as catalysts for change."

Williams added, "Our map for the development of the Institute calls for practitioner leadership and extensive dialogue with outstanding public policy researchers.

"The NIRCC offers a powerful means of linking the research capacities of our land-grant universities to the leadership energies of community college practitioners. We'll begin these practitioner-researcher conversations immediately."



Sparks

"Rural colleges and rural communities share a common destiny, a common commitment to place. We must sustain each other. We must rise together."

Cheryl Sparks, President, Howard College, Big Spring, TX & Vice-Chair, Rural Community College Alliance



Sertich

"Rural community colleges are deeply connected to the people and places they serve. With over 900 campuses across our nation these institutions are the face of rural America."

Joe Sertich, President, Northeast Minnesota Higher Education District, Chisholm, MN & Chair, Rural Community College Alliance

Charting the Course of the NIRCC

The National Institute for Rural Community Colleges Developmental Team, which includes a Practitioner Panel and a Research Panel, gathered in Memphis, Tenn., in October to assist the founding partners (RCCA, RUPRI and MSP) in charting a development course for the Institute.

The emerging vision for the NIRCC is to "create a much stronger public presence for the value and role of rural community colleges as builders and sustainers of rural America." Much of the discussion centered on lifting the capacity of rural community colleges to engage in a variety of economic and educational challenges.

The Developmental Team was then convened by Joe Sertich of RCCA and welcomed by Chuck Fluharty of RUPRI and Malvin Williams of the MSP. Following a joint briefing the Team divided into "panels" to independently explore and chart researcher and practitioner perspectives. These conversations provided a basis for mutual exchange that led to formulation of research priority recommendations and leadership development recommendations.

These recommendations, which were forwarded to the founding partners steering committee, will serve as a basis for building the workplan for the National Institute. The Developmental Team will reconvene to review and revise the initial reports.

The preliminary recommendations of the Developmental Team point toward the NIRCC's initial program of work focusing on scanning of regional and national leader formation programs appropriate to a rural context and creation of accountability measures linking rural post-secondary education, economic and community development.

Community college presidents were especially interested in the development of on-going "dashboard measures" linking college and community.

NIRCC Policy Research Panel Roster—Co-chairs: **Charles W. Fluharty**, Director, Rural Policy Research Institute, Columbia, MO; and **Malvin Williams**, Vice President Emeritus for Academic Affairs, Alcorn State University. Panel Members: **John Allen**, Director, Western Rural

Development Center, Professor, Dept. of Sociology, Social Work and Anthropology, Utah State University; **Lionel J. "Bo" Beaulieu**, Director, Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi State, MS; **David Dodson**, President, MDC, Inc., Chapel Hill, NC; **James Jacobs**, Director, Center for Work force Development and Policy, Macomb Community College, Warren, MI; **Tom Johnson**, The Harry S. Truman School of Public Affairs, University of Missouri-Columbia, Director, Community Policy Analysis Center, Columbia, MO; **Steve Katsinas**, Director, Education Policy Center, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL; **Delores A. Parker**, Vice President for Academic & Student Services; North Carolina Community Colleges System, Raleigh, NC; **Wayne Myers**, Past Director, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy/HHS, Waldoboro, ME; **Stuart Rosenfeld**, Principal, Regional Technology Strategies, Carrboro, NC; **Sarah Rubin**, Senior Associate, MDC Inc., Chapel Hill, NC; and **Martin Wiseman**, Director, The John C. Stennis Institute of Government, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS.

NIRCC Practitioner Panel Roster—Co-chairs: **Joe Sertich**, President, Northeast Higher Education District, Chisholm, MN; and **Kathy Eneguess**, CEO, New Hampshire Community and Technical College-Berlin, Berlin, NH. Panel members: **Bruce Ayers**, President, Southeast Community and Technical College, Cumberland, KY; **Mike Chipps**, President, Mid-Plains Community College, North Platte, NE; **David Cole**, President, Itawamba Community College, Fulton, MS; **Tony Kinkel**, Chancellor, University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville, Batesville, AR; **Joe McCann**, President, Williston State College, Williston, ND; **Joe McDonald**, President, Salish Kootenai College, Pablo, MT; **Beth Miller**, Executive Director, University of New Mexico at Gallup, Gallup, NM; **Vivian Presley**, President, Coahoma Community College, Clarksdale, MS; **B. Carlyle Ramsey**, President, Danville Community College, Danville, VA; **Cheryl Sparks**, President, Howard College, Big Spring, TX; **Ismael Sosa**, President, Southwest Texas Junior College, Uvalde, TX; and **Terry Suarez**, President, Mountain Empire Community College, Big Stone Gap, VA.