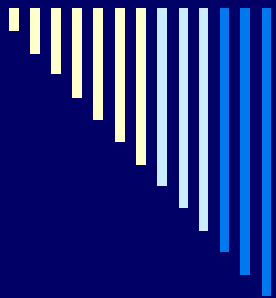


# Historically Black Colleges and Universities National Conference

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Miami, Florida

## Economic and Community Development: “A Rural Perspective”

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The purpose of this presentation is to provide information on ways that Economic and Community Development may be carried out in rural communities as apposed to more densely populated settings. It will also discuss some of the challenges that one may encounter working in rural communities.

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# Community Snapshot:

Service area: 40 square miles

Population: Total 4,500; Incorporated area 960

Government: Part-time Mayor w/some full-time staff

County Boards of Supervisors

Schools: Pre-K thru 2-year Community College

Shopping: 30 – 45 minute commute

Places of Worship: 53

Transportation: Very limited

Largest Employer: Hinds Community College

Nearest Major Urban City: Jackson (40 minute commute)

Other: Nuclear Power Plant (within 40 miles)

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# Potential External Partners

- Government:
    - State
    - County
    - Local
  - Faith Based Organization
    - Churches
    - Synagogues
    - Temples, etc
  - Community Based Organizations
  - Businesses
  - Volunteer Groups
  - Schools
  - Families
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# Internal Partnerships

- Organization Faculty and Staff
  - Institutional Leadership
  - The Student Body
  - \*Alumni of the Institution
  - CDC's (where applicable)
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# Economic Development

- Economic Development in a rural setting doesn't always consist of those massive projects where the impacts is immediately apparent. Smaller communities are so spread out that one may have to live in the community in order to realize the total impact of such activities. However, there are some things that can be done to emphasize the importance of economic development. The most important of which is to *effectively* tell the story. It has been my experience that many HBCUs struggle with this simple but most important task.
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# Economic Development Cont.

- We have to attend and conduct community meetings, visit our schools and involve the community in the research, planning, implementation and evaluation phases of our projects.
  - Economic Development activities that garner community buy-in early on tend to be more successful.
  - Communities tend not to appreciate things planned for them as much as those things planned with them. Some times this makes all the difference.
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# Economic Development Cont.

- Sometimes go or no-go decisions are made as a result of effective communication with and involvement of target area beneficiaries.
  - This process will assist in developing needs assessments.
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# Community Development

- Community Development much like Rural Development doesn't always consist of major projects when they are conducted in rural areas. We have large areas that and not as many people.
  - Example: Single-family owner-occupied housing rehabilitation may consist of one or two homes in a neighborhood as apposed to block development. This process that is sometimes referred to as scattered-site development will not have the same appeal. When we undertake these types of projects we really have to concern ourselves with community perception.
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# Community Development Cont.

- In both Economic and Community Development situations, our results may not be measured in the number of participants served as much as it is concerned with the impact and quality of the services provided. The creation and/or the retention of ten jobs for rural communities may have a significant impact on the overall employment concerns of the community.
  - We may not be able to provide the same number of services within our smaller communities but we can all provide the same quality of services. When we do this right we must, *tell the story*.
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# Challenges

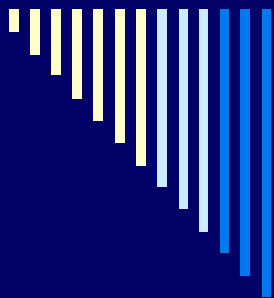
- ❑ Rural communities do not have as many resources as larger communities,
  - ❑ Many times the workforce is not as skilled and may sometimes be illiterate,
  - ❑ Transportation is a problem both for service delivery and availability,
  - ❑ The acceptance of services from outsiders is met with skepticism, apathy and sometimes rejection,
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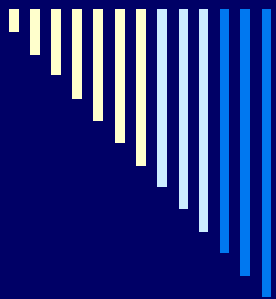
# Challenges Continued

- ❑ Part-time governmental officials are not always accessible,
  - ❑ Partnerships are a little difficult to establish,
  - ❑ Everyone knows everybody and,
  - ❑ Contractors and consultants are not always attracted to your area.
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# Assets

- ❑ Everyone knows everybody,
- ❑ The community knows how to and will work together,
- ❑ The cost of goods and services is normally lower than in other area (when available),
- ❑ The *rumor mill* is an actual medium of communication,
- ❑ Quality of life issues is of little concern, and
- ❑ There is an abundance of *Natural Resources*. (Many times they go un-tapped)



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This Concludes this Presentation

Questions ????????

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