

Southern Region Convening



Glen Sink

Executive Director, Va Rural Center

Glen is a life-long resident and advocate of rural America. As Executive Director, he leads a virtual organization with associates located across the Commonwealth. The Rural Center is an advocate for rural policy and creates networks to be a catalyst for state and regional competitiveness and economic transformation. He has extensive experiences in leadership positions at national marketing cooperatives, educational and entertainment venues. Glen is the founder of a customer service company providing logistics, financial and preparedness solutions for business and education and has experience on both sides of the Atlantic in rural development.

A graduate of Virginia Tech and the University of Richmond, Glen, passionately promotes education and networks for organizational and community transformation. Contact - Office (804)371-7141 Cell (804)381-1999 glen.sink@cfv.org www.cfv.org



Ellen Matthews Davis

USDA Rural Development, Virginia State Director

U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Ellen travels throughout the Commonwealth promoting a stronger rural economy. Virginia abounds with promise! Virginia Rural Development's goal is to partner for the development of sustainable rural communities throughout the state and to enhance the ability of rural communities to prosper by targeting financial and technical resources to areas of greatest need. "Committed to the future of rural communities"

*Ellen serves on the Board of Directors of the Council for Rural Virginia and co-chairs the Strategic Rural Partners Leadership Team on Community Capacity. <http://www.cfv.org/partners.htm>
USDA Rural Development in Virginia <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/VA/welcome.htm>*



Oliver McBride

Executive Director, Crossroads Institute

Dr. McBride has been actively involved with the Crossroads Institute since its inception. As the former Superintendent of the Carroll County School System, he continues the Crossroads commitment to educational excellence for the entire service area.

Crossroads Institute is an Entrepreneurial educational facility that include the local governments of Carroll and Grayson Counties along with the City of Galax, VA . Wytheville Community College and K-12 education are also involved. The Institute consists of Conference Facilities, Break-out Rooms, DS3 Internet Connection, Teaching Kitchen, Light Manufacturing areas, business incubation, Idea Lab, Wet Lab and Computer Emporium.

Dr. McBride served as Chairman of the Council for Rural Virginia Board of Directors from January 2008 until January 2010 when he was appointed as the first Advisor to the Board of Directors. omcbride@crossroadsva.org Telephone: (276) 236-0391 Fax: (276) 236-0485
The Crossroads Institute - <http://www.crossroadsva.org/crossroadslocation.htm>



Cheryl Cook

Deputy Under Secretary Rural Development U.S. Department of Agriculture

Cheryl Cook was appointed by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack as Deputy Under Secretary for USDA Rural Development on April 10, 2009. In this position, Cook manages policies and programs in Rural Development's three main areas: Business and Cooperatives, Housing and Community Facilities, and Utilities.

Cook served from May 1993 until March 2000 as Rural Development's Pennsylvania State Director. She also worked in USDA's Washington, D.C. office, specializing in food, nutrition and housing program delivery.

Between Federal appointments, Cook served as Deputy Secretary for Marketing and Economic Development at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. She previously worked for the Keystone Development Center, a non-profit organization in Pennsylvania that helps new and emerging cooperatives. She was a member of the National Farmers Union's public policy staff, focusing on dairy, credit, and environmental issues. She also maintained a private law practice.

Cook received her bachelor's degree from Lebanon Valley College in Annville, Pa., and a law degree from The Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle, Pa. (*April 2009*)



Ferrel Guillory

Business or Organization

Senior Fellow - In addition to serving as senior fellow at MDC, Ferrel Guillory directs the Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he is a lecturer at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. He is a coauthor of the *State of the South* series and *The Carolinas Yesterday - Today - Tomorrow*.

Ferrel was formerly southern correspondent, government affairs editor, Washington correspondent, editorial page editor, and columnist at *The News and Observer* in Raleigh, N.C. He also has written for *The Economist*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *America*, *The New Republic*, and a variety of Southern magazines, journals, and newspapers. He is a contributor to books on public policy, tobacco in transition, and the politics of race. Educational background: Journalism (Loyola University of New Orleans; Columbia University). fguillory@mdcinc.org

Matthew Chase

Executive Director, National Association of Development Organizations

Matthew Chase has served as the Executive Director of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) and the NADO Research Foundation since October 2003. From March 1997 to August 2000, he served as the association's Director of Legislative Affairs until he was promoted to Deputy Executive Director. Prior to joining NADO, he was the Chief Operating Officer and Membership Services Director of the Professional Managers Association in Washington, DC.

Chase has extensive advocacy experience with federal community, economic and rural development programs, including successful campaigns to reauthorize the Economic Development Administration (EDA) in 1998 and 2004, establish the Delta Regional Authority in the early 2000s and preserve annual funding for core rural development programs under USDA. He remains at the forefront in advancing federal policies to enhance rural transportation planning and services. In addition, he is a regular presenter on the impact of federal budget and appropriations trends on small metropolitan and rural America.

Chase is the author of the NADO publication, *All Politics is Local: A Guide to Grassroots Action*, and co-author of numerous publications and research reports, including: *Regional Approaches to Homeland Security Planning and Preparedness (2005)*; *State Associations of Regional Councils of Government: Insights into Organizational Structures, Governance Models and Strategic Initiatives (2005)*; *eForum Results: The Pulse of Small Town and Rural America (2004)*; *GIS Technology: Enhancing Regional* He holds a bachelor's degree from Hartwick College in Upstate New York and a master's degree in political management from The George Washington University in Washington, DC. Phone: 202.624.5947 E-Mail:

mchase@nado.org. Learn more at <http://nado.org/aboutnado/staff1.php>



Ron Painter

Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Workforce Boards

Ron Painter is the Chief Executive Officer for the National Association of Workforce Boards located in Washington, D.C. NAWB is the leading workforce association that represents the nation's nearly 650 business-led Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and also serves other associated organizations in the workforce industry with one common goal: Helping America Work. NAWB's mission is to support its members through a comprehensive program of advocacy, training and technical assistance, communication, and the promotion of strategic partnerships for the advancement of our nation's workforce.

Mr. Painter holds an undergraduate degree in Political Science from Grove City College in Pennsylvania and a Master's in Public Administration and advanced graduate coursework for the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public & International Affairs, where he served as Adjunct Faculty. painterr@nawb.org 1133 19th Street NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036



Ted W. Abernathy, Jr.

Executive Director, Southern Growth Policies Board

Born and raised in Dallas, North Carolina, Ted received his bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His masters degree from Johns Hopkins University, and graduated from the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma.

The focus of his 29 year economic development career has been on strategic competitiveness and economic positioning. Ted spent the first 10 years of his career in Maryland and worked in the Research Triangle region of North Carolina from 1990 to 2008. Most recently, he served as Executive Vice President and COO for the Research Triangle Regional Partnership.

Ted currently serves as Executive Director of the Southern Growth Policy Board, a public policy think tank that develops economic development policies for 13 Southern states. Southern Growth specializes in the areas of technology and innovation, globalization, workforce development, community development, civic engagement, and leadership. Southern Growth Policies Board, P.O. Box 12293, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709, (919)941-5145 www.southern.org

Dr. Peter L. Stenberg

USDA-Economic Research Service



Dr. Peter Stenberg is a senior economist at the Economic Research Service (ERS), United States Department of Agriculture. Peter's research has been in the area of economic development policy. Research has included telecommunication policy, science and technology policy affecting rural-urban economic clusters, regional and international trade, comparative economics, policy toward investment in higher education research and teaching activities (such as land-grant institutions), and rural economic issues. He has written over 100 articles on telecommunications, economic impact of universities, science and technology policy, defense restructuring, high tech industry, and other economic development and policy subjects.

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<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/telecom/>



Jonathan R. Watts Hull

Senior Policy Analyst, Southern Legislative Conference

Jonathan Watts Hull is the Senior Policy Analyst for Agriculture and Rural Development for the Southern Legislative Conference, the Southern Office of The Council of State Governments, the only national state government association serving three branches of government. Jonathan has been with the SLC since 1998 and has worked with state legislators and public and private institutions across the South on a wide range of issues, including access to capital for rural communities, developing rural development institutions, integrative rural policy, and linking rural and urban community concerns.

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Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr.
Senate of Virginia

Senator Ruff has been Chairman of the Center for Rural Virginia Board of Trustees since its inception in September 2005. He has been instrumental in the Center's establishment and guides the organization's direction and strategy by working closely with staff, board members and the Center's partner Council for Rural Virginia. The chairman's primary role is to ensure that the board is effective in its tasks of facilitating programs that will have a positive impact on the economy of rural Virginia. His leadership brings a value added perspective to the Center's work plan.

Senator Ruff was elected to serve in the Virginia Senate in November 2000 to fill the unexpired term of the late Richard Holland. Prior to his election, he served in the Virginia House of Delegates since first being elected in 1993. His Senate standing assignments include service on the Committee on Health, the Committee on General Laws, the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Committee on Local Government.

For the last several years his focus has been on economic development and education and workforce training in rural Virginia. From providing assistance with funding for regional industrial parks to improving our state park facilities to enhance tourism, from development of a heavy equipment training program to the creation of a much needed law enforcement hazardous driving school, He has been a leader in the fight for the small-town communities across the Fifteenth Senate District. [Senate of Virginia](http://www.senateofvirginia.gov) website. Email: sen.ruff@verizon.net



Jim Clinton
Cenla Advantage Partnership CEO

Jim Clinton is CEO for the Cenla Advantage Partnership, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating more and better economic opportunities in Central Louisiana. Prior to coming to Alexandria, Jim served as Executive Director of Southern Growth Policies Board, a thirteen-state alliance based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. During his time at Southern Growth, he was a lead author on many publications, including *Invented Here*, *The Mercedes* and *the Magnolia*, *The New Architecture of Rural Prosperity*, *Innovation with a Southern Accent*, and *Brave New South*.

He previously served as President of the Louisiana Partnership for Technology and Innovation and President of Gulf South Research Institute. In Louisiana state government, he was an Assistant Commissioner of Administration and Director of Contractual Review. He managed the Louisiana Superdome during its transition from public to private management.

Jim was a lead author of the plan that consolidated Louisiana's more than 250 agencies into 20 principal departments. He serves on the boards of directors of the Council for a Better Louisiana, the National Issues Forum, the National Policy Consensus Institute and the Southern Arts Federation. His poetry, criticism and essays have been published regionally and nationally.



Gerald A. Doeksen

Director of the National Center for Rural Health Works

Gerald Doeksen is Director of the National Center for Rural Health Works. He is also a Regents Professor and Extension Economist with Oklahoma State University. He has been a pioneer in developing tools to measure the economic impact of the health sector on a local community. His work with the National Center develops tools and conducts train-the-trainer workshops in states to train professionals on how to apply these tools at the local level. During the past three years, he has conducted workshops in over 45 states.

The workshops teach the economic impact tool, the community engagement process (including community health assessment), and the health feasibility studies. He has made over 350 regional, national and international presentations. He has published extensively in Health Journals and other publications on this topic. He has also received many awards including the 2002 RUPRI Distinguished Serve Award and the 2003 Priester Award. In 2006 he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Southern Agricultural Economics Association and the Bonnie Teater Lifetime Achievement Award from the Southern Rural Development Center gad@okstate.edu.



Carl E. Mitchell, MS, CNPM

President & CEO, Virginia Economic Bridge, Inc.

Carl Mitchell brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to his job as president of the Virginia Economic Bridge. A native of Mechanicsville, Va., Carl graduated from Virginia Tech with two Bachelor of Science Degrees and a Master's Degree. He taught high school in Hanover County, was National Program Coordinator for the FFA organization, owner of his own business in Snowville, and was a staff scientist at the American Research Corporation of Virginia. Carl initially came on-board the Virginia Economic Bridge as program developer for a regional Community Audit, a Mentor - Protégé Proposal, and an Infrastructure study. He was responsible for the management of the Linked Workforce Initiative which matches needs and skills to other regions of Virginia. Carl took over the helm as president of Virginia Economic Bridge in July of this year. Carl supports a strong Virginia economy by using his skills in program development, funding, and building relationships in the private, corporate, education and government arenas. His goal is to make the Virginia Economic Bridge a business, economic and workforce development resource tool for all of Virginia. He and his wife, Lori, are involved in many church, school, civic, and community endeavors. They have 6 lively children.



Leanna Blevins, Ph.D.

Associate Director, New College of Virginia

Dr. Leanna B. Blevins has served as Associate Director of New College Institute since it's inception in 2006 and worked as part of the planning and development team for two years prior. Prior to that time, Dr. Blevins worked at the University of Virginia in the offices of the President, State Government Relations, University Relations, and Faculty Advancement. Dr. Blevins also previously worked at UVA Wise, Virginia Tech, and the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services.

A native of Chilhowie, Virginia, Dr. Blevins earned her Ph.D. and Master's degrees from the University of Virginia, and her bachelor's degree (in Communications) from Virginia Tech. Her dissertation research focused on rural Virginia access and persistence in public colleges and universities. As a first generation college student herself, she is passionate about working with individuals to introduce them to higher education opportunities.

She makes her home in Martinsville with her husband, Gavin Russell, and their three children.

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Liam Leightley, (Ph.D.)

Executive Director, The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research

Leightley has held both academic and university-related administrative positions at institutions here and abroad. Before coming to IALR, he worked at Mississippi State University for five years, first as the head of the Department of Forest Products and most recently as the Interim Director of the Forest and Wildlife Center. He also spent fifteen years working for one of the world's largest global specialty chemical companies where his duties centered on global product development and brand marketing management.

Beginning in 1988, the Executive Director spent 15 years working for Rohm and Haas, one of the world's largest global specialty chemical companies. For seven of those years, he held increasingly responsible positions developing strategic research programs in the USA and in Japan. From 1993 until he went to Mississippi State in 2003, Dr. Leightley's positions at Rohm and Haas centered on global product development and brand marketing management, which ultimately led to his overseeing \$100MM in sales. Leightley currently chairs the Southern Alliance for the Utilization of Biomass Resources and co-chairs the South East Agriculture and Forestry Energy Resources Alliance. He serves on the Southern Technology Council and is a past Director of the Institute for Furniture Manufacturing and Management (now known as the Franklin Furniture Institute). 150 Slayton Avenue, Danville, VA 24540, (434) 766-6713, (434) 791-3279 (Fax)

Brent Bailey

25x'25 State Facilitator



Brent Bailey is a 1994 graduate of the Mississippi State University Department of Agriculture and Biological Engineering where he obtained a B.S. degree in Biological Engineering with Environmental Emphasis.

After graduation, Brent worked as an Environmental Consultant for two central Mississippi environmental engineering firms. In 1999, Brent went to the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation to become the organization's Environmental Programs Coordinator and served in that capacity for over seven years.

In 2006, Brent began an association with the 25x'25 Initiative and serves as the Southeast Facilitator for state alliance activities. The 25x'25 vision entails production agriculture and forestry producing 25% of total U.S. energy needs by the year 2025 while continuing to produce safe and abundant food and fiber. Brent is working with agriculture and forestry leaders to mobilize support for renewable energy solutions from agriculture and forestry and communicating to the public agriculture's potential role in a new national energy strategy.

25x'25" is a rallying cry for renewable energy and a goal for America – to get 25 percent of our energy from renewable resources like wind, solar, and biofuels by the year 2025.

Increasing America's renewable energy use will:

- * Bring new technologies to market and save consumers money.
- * Reduce our dependence on oil from the Middle East.
- * Create good new jobs in rural America.
- * Clean up the air and help reduce urban smog and greenhouse gas emissions.

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North Carolina Solar Center

The Solar Center - Much More Than Solar!

The North Carolina Solar Center began in 1981 with the creation of a solar house built to research and demonstrate the benefits of passive solar, solar water heating, and solar electricity.

Since then the Solar Center has grown and expanded. With a full-time staff approaching forty people, the NC Solar Center covers all renewable energy areas including solar, wind, and biomass. The NC Solar Center also has teams dedicated to High Performance Buildings, Clean Transportation, Economic Development, Distributed Generation, and of course we manage the DSIRE project, the national "go-to" resource for renewable energy and energy efficiency policy and incentives. 919-515-3480 (Main Line), 800-33-NCSUN (Toll-free in NC only), 919-515-5778 (Fax) Email ncsun@ncsu.edu



Hunter Goosmann

General Manager, ERC Broadband

Hunter Goosmann is a strategic planner and operational specialist with years of experience optimizing organizations from enterprise to start-up. His present role as General Manager focuses on expanding

the technical landscape of the region by way of networking (LANs, WANs, etc), data center management, and community consulting around implementing networks, municipal fiber-based networking, and applying technology to businesses. In addition, Mr. Goosmann serves on the Buncombe County Economic Development Coalition, the Board of Directors of 'Meet the Geeks', the North Carolina Technology Association, the Asheville Symphony Board, Leadership Asheville, the Health Adventure, and is an advisor to the North Carolina Research and Education Network (NCREN). hgoosmann@ercbroadband.org



Lionel J. (Bo) Beaulieu

Director, Southern Rural Development Center

Lionel J. "Bo" Beaulieu has been director of the Southern Rural Development Center since August 1997 and also is a professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Mississippi State University. Prior to joining the SRDC, he served on the faculty of the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida faculty for 20 years. Dr. Beaulieu's professional efforts have been devoted to human and social capital resource issues in the rural United States and the South; the educational success of rural youth; and the expansion of civic engagement in rural areas.

During his tenure at the SRDC, Dr. Beaulieu has introduced a number of innovative activities to the region and beyond. They include the: (1) launching of rural development policy briefs that have helped bring focus to the host of challenges facing rural areas of the South; (2) establishment of strong work partnerships between land-grant universities and rural community colleges that have resulted in joint efforts to address educational and economic development needs of local people and places in targeted sites; (3) launching of the Extension E-Commerce National Demonstration Project that has facilitated the adoption of important e-commerce strategies by small businesses in rural America; (4) spearheading a national effort to strengthen the quality of web-based resources available to rural people via the eXtension rural entrepreneurship initiative; and (5) creation of the Food Assistance Small Grants Program in partnership with the Economic Research Service -- an effort that has resulted in over a million dollars being invested in approximately 100 social science researchers located in nearly 30 institutions of higher learning. Since joining the SRDC in 1997, Dr. Beaulieu has garnered extramural funds in excess of \$5.1 million.

He is the author of numerous publications, including edited book volumes, book chapters and articles, that address rural development, education and labor force issues in America. Dr. Beaulieu received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Sociology from Purdue University. He completed his term as president of the Rural Sociological Society (RSS) in August 2004. He currently serves as Editor of the newly launched *Rural Realities* policy/information series sponsored by the RSS. 410 Bost Extension Building, Mississippi State, MS 39762 Phone: (662) 325-3207 Fax: (662) 325-8915 ljb@srcd.msstate.edu



John A. Dillman III

Executive Director, Upper Shore Regional Council

The Upper Shore Regional Council was created in October 2003 (Chapter 100, Acts of 2003). The Council is a regional planning and development agency for Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's counties. It exists to foster the physical, economic and social development of the region. For the development of the area's human and economic resources, the Council initiates and coordinates plans and projects.

The Council is comprised of seventeen voting members. These include three commissioners, appointed by their county governing bodies; one municipal elected official, appointed by their municipal corporations, from each of Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's counties; and those members of the General Assembly who have the major portion of their legislative election district in the region. In addition, the county administrators and remaining county commissioners from each of the three member counties, as well as the remaining legislators who represent the region serve as nonvoting ex officio members (Code Economic Development Article, secs. 13-1001 through 13-1011). 122 North Cross St., Chestertown, MD 21620 (410) 810-1375; fax: (410) 810-1748 e-mail: jdillman@kentgov.org web: www.uppershoreregionalcouncil.org



Rene' F. True

Executive Director, ConnectKentucky

As Executive Director for ConnectKentucky, Rene' provides primary leadership and vision to accelerate technology growth in the Commonwealth. Rene' is also responsible for selected Connected Nation projects.

Previously, Rene' served as Executive Director of the Office of Research and Information Technology in the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development. He has also led strategic planning efforts, assisted with recruitment and oversaw IT functions.

René served as Deputy Secretary of the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet, and was twice elected Fayette County Property Valuation Administrator.

René received a Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Business Administration degrees from the University of Kentucky.

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Larry Mathiot

Government Relations Manager

Larry Mathiot is a 25-year veteran of the telecommunications industry, holding management positions with CenturyLink and its predecessor companies. Larry's career has focused primarily on the Governmental Affairs and Public Affairs disciplines.

Larry earned his Bachelor's degree in Journalism from Bowling Green State University and his M.B.A. from James Madison University. He is an Ohio native but has been fortunate to spend most of his adult life in the sunny South.

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Ward W. Stevens

Council for Rural Virginia - Board of Directors



Council Chairman of the Board of Directors

Ward is Assistant Vice President for Development and Executive Director for Academic Practices at the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM). He came to VCOM in October 2006 with 20 years of progressive management experience in for-profit and non-profit healthcare facilities. He is experienced in managing multiple projects; improving operational efficiency; implementing corporate initiatives; maintaining strong physician relationships; developing staff; and meeting regulatory requirements. **VCOM Administration**

Ward has been an active member of the Council Board of Directors since 2008 and assumed the Board Chairmanship in 2010. During that time, he has taken a proactive role in collaborative initiatives in health education and in community improvement to encourage advancement of Virginia's rural economy. He serves as co-chair of the Rural Center's Healthcare Economic Essential Group and is part of the Partnership Network that leads the Rural Virginia Strategic Action initiative. wstevens@vcom.vt.edu