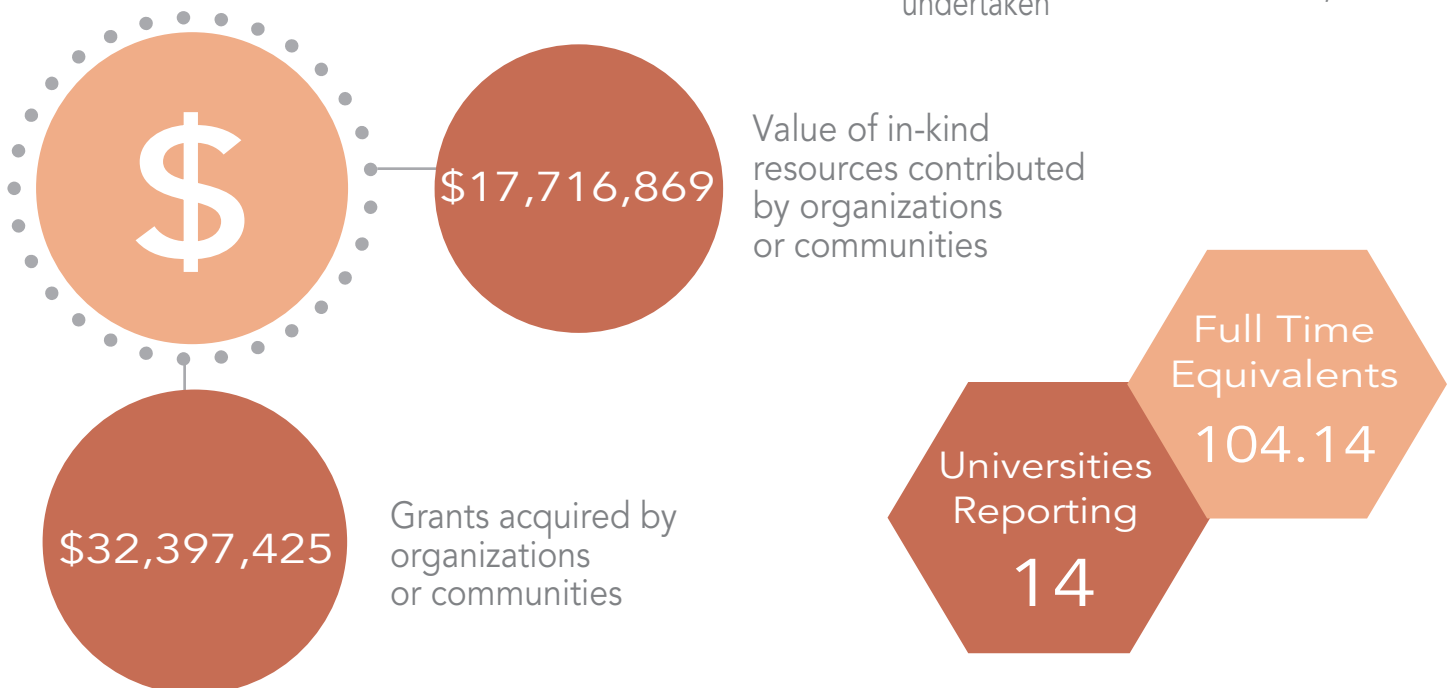
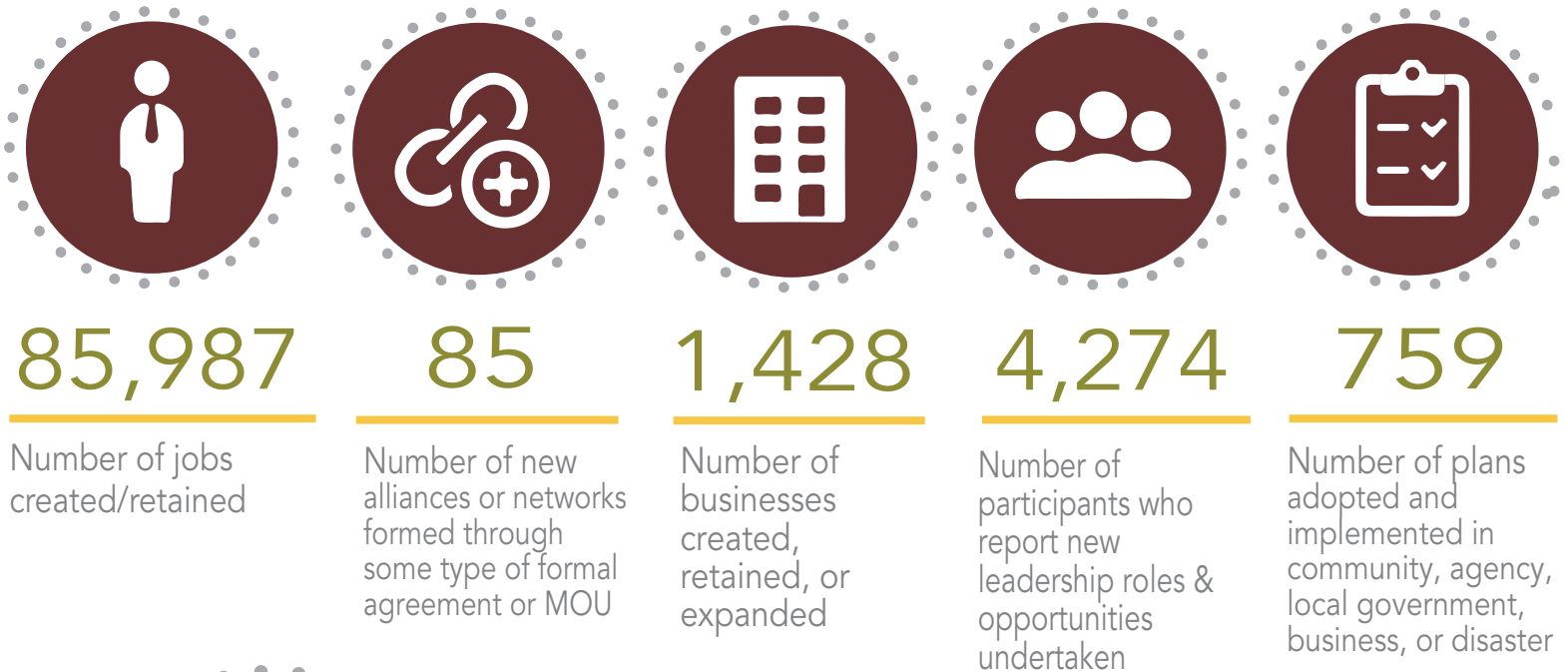


# Strengthening Communities

## Southern Region Successes

July 2019 - June 2020

### Southern Region Community Development Extension Impacts



Turn over to read impact stories from around the region

Alabama

Arkansas

Florida

Georgia

Kentucky

## Alabama A&M University

Career Countdown is an educational series for youth and adults that uses interactive lessons to provide insights for linking interests, skills, and abilities to career choices and goals. Over 4,150 students participated in the program. Post-program surveys showed 85% of respondents indicated planning to complete additional research on careers of interest, 74.6% indicated intent to complete an education plan, and 83.9% indicated understanding that performance in school carries over to job performance.

## University of Arkansas

Programs focus on cultivating leaders, economic and workforce development, local government finance, civic engagement and public policy education, and building local capacity to support vibrant communities. Our Arkansas Procurement Technical Assistance Center provides training and technical assistance to businesses seeking to sell to local, state and federal government agencies. During the last fiscal year, the Center helped businesses secure over 1,100 contracts valued at nearly \$169 million and nearly 3,400 jobs created or retained.

## Florida A&M University

Community Resource Development builds capacity and promotes economic vitality in local communities, exceeding \$8 million in impact. Innovative educational programs are conducted in the areas of: Community & Urban Agriculture, Entrepreneurship/Business Development, Family Heirs Property/Estate Planning, Rural Prosperity and Resiliency (African American Legacy "Root" Communities), and Recidivism and Re-Entry.

## University of Florida

Community Voices, Informed Choices (CIVIC) is an Extension program from Florida A&M University and the University of Florida. The program is a community-based statewide effort advancing opportunities for people to come together to collectively solve community issues in real and meaningful ways. Building on existing expertise and resources across the two universities and their strategic partners, CIVIC enables communities to pursue incremental, practical solutions to challenges that disrupt community cohesion.

## University of Georgia

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs granted seven Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) communities CHIP awards in 2020 totaling \$2.4 million. Fourteen GICH communities were awarded Community Development Block Grants in 2019 which totaled \$11.4 million. Also, fifteen GICH communities were awarded 9% low-income housing tax credits equal to \$11.4 million in investment with \$2.5 million in funding to develop 200 units of safe, affordable rental housing.

## University of Kentucky

Hyden, KY partners developed a successful \$60,000 grant application in response to the First Impressions program and UK design students. The community contributed \$16,475 in in-kind as part of this effort to create two public sculptures, a community garden, outdoor classroom and develop a recently purchased downtown building into a culture house featuring local historic memorabilia and a newly developed artist in residency program to increase local foot traffic and arts engagement downtown.

## North Carolina State University

The Vacationer Supported Agriculture program is a 12-week annual online market that gives vacationers an opportunity to buy bags of local produce for their beach week. VSA currently serves eight beaches and has generated almost \$100,000 in sales. It works directly with local farms or uses aggregators such as the Columbus County Men and Women United for Youth and Families, which supports youth entrepreneurship and builds new markets for local farms.

## University of Tennessee

Extension focused on enhancing community vitality and rural competitiveness through eight funded projects (two USDA, one EPA/Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, one Appalachian Regional Commission, three University of Tennessee Seed grants and one Tennessee Department of Agriculture). These projects supported infrastructure (broadband, digital literacy, water services), rural health (preventing opioid use and diabetes prevention), value-added dairy businesses and improved farm profitability across Tennessee.

## Prairie View A&M University

The CED unit partnered with the General Land Office of Texas to assist homeowners with grants and low interest loans to those affected by disasters. We were able to assist 35 individuals and package 13 USDA repair grants. Staff around the state also assisted over 70 individuals with \$213,277 in 504 program funding used to rehab homes for families and seniors as well as \$1,537,224 in USDA low interest mortgage financing.

## Texas A&M University

Rafaela T. Barrera Elementary in Roma, TX, began cultivating a garden eight years ago through a Texas Extension "Better Living for Texans Program" with vegetables, goats, and chickens. In 2019-2020, staff worked with AgriLife Extension specialists to secure CDC Farm-to-School funding and plant a .34 acre Fruit Orchard to initiate local production of fresh fruits that will be included in student lunches. In summer 2020, USDA-NRCS awarded R.T. Barrera a GREEN grant to add a pollinator garden and hoop house to the students' farm.

## Virginia Tech and Virginia State University

In response to elevated conversations about racial justice, the Virginia Coming Together for Racial Understanding team launched a virtual racial healing dialogue series with 168 individuals. The team also delivered a three-part professional development training equipping more than 300 youth-serving professionals to engage youth voices in conversations about race. Finally, in a weekly webinar series launched in response to COVID-19, two sessions were held focusing on racial healing to an audience of 550.

North Carolina

Tennessee

Texas

Virginia