EDA University Center Workshop

On March 10th, the Cornell EDA University Center hosted a workshop for project teams and partners. The purpose of the workshop was to help participants learn more about Cornell resources and the best way to connect communities, businesses, and entrepreneurs to Cornell. Participants included economic developers, regional planning board staff, and Cooperative Extension associates. The workshop included presentations from Cornell representatives on the following topics: Cornell Technology Transfer: Tech Grafting & Venture Creation; Community Development Resources; Main Street Program and Consumer Demographics; Johnson School Resources including Big Red Incubator, Legal, and Ventures; the Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise (CSGE); and wrapped up with a roundtable including representatives from the Center for Life Science Enterprise, the College of Engineering and the Center for Materials Research.

The ultimate goal of the workshop is to connect EDA project teams with the Cornell resources they will need to leverage new growth for their communities. Additionally, by having access to what is available at Cornell, project teams can develop new relationships with partners in their communities to further economic growth initiatives.

Rural Vision Project Community Listening Sessions

Cornell University serves as a resource for research and extension that benefits the citizens, communities, and economic well-being of NYS. Many rural residents have been participating in a project this past winter and spring called the Rural Visioning Project (RVP), a collaborative effort involving Cornell Cooperative Extension, the Community & Rural Development Institute, the Department of Development Sociology’s Rural New York Initiative, and the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources (NYS LCRR). The goal of the RVP is to identify issues and challenges in rural communities, and on a regional level, and to inform policies and practices to create a vibrant rural New York State. Cornell’s EDA University Center has provided support to a series of ten Listening Sessions that have been held around the state inviting discussion around rural issues, challenges, opportunities, and successes. Rural economic development has been a central theme and as a result of the structure of the listening sessions there is often renewed appreciation of its connections to workforce development, agriculture and food systems, land use and natural resources, health care, housing and transportation, and local and regional governance.

The information gathered from the listening sessions is available on the Rural New York Initiative website at http://rnyi.cornell.edu, and will be compiled into a final report later this summer. RVP seeks to inform policy and programs via the legislative process later this year, and a Symposium has been scheduled for July 19-21 in Syracuse, N.Y., where participants will be asked to use the information gathered in the initial phases of the project to develop concrete policies and offer programmatic suggestions to move rural communities and regions of the state forward.
Onondaga County: Syracuse Tech Link Project

This EDA project seeks to connect university technology research with existing businesses in economically depressed communities in Onondaga County within the hamlet of Mattydale, Town of Salina, and the Village of East Syracuse. The anticipated result will be wealth creation and quality of life improvements for those communities. The goal is to link strong local collaborators in businesses, capital, and technology development, with university research to enhance business growth and community development. The project team is a collaboration between the County’s Office of Economic Development, the NYSTAR Regional Technology Development Center, and Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE). A meeting was held in early 2006 to discuss the project with potential businesses and develop a plan. The next step is to further educate local businesses about Cornell resources and make active matches. The project team will host workshops for Cornell representatives and companies. The first workshop is scheduled for May 2006. Concurrently, Onondaga CCE is partnering with a local NYSTAR Regional Technology Development Center to provide practical training for business employees & managers. This training will lead to increases in efficiencies for the companies, as well as provide assessments for future planning that ultimately leads to new and retained jobs and investment.

Chemung County: An Entrepreneurial Friendly Community

This EDA project seeks to identify processes for three entrepreneurial technology developments within Chemung County. The project focuses on processes for entrepreneur identification, identification of businesses for technology transfer, and assessment of the entrepreneurial climate in a community. An entrepreneurial identification process in Chemung County and other locations will discover individuals and teams that can provide leadership, management, and direction for technology driven businesses. A goal of the project is to develop the process to identify firms that would be ideal partners for technology transfer through “grafting” and identify the characteristics of business, customer, and manufacturing/delivery in a given firm that fit the criteria. Those characteristics would define not only those businesses that would be technology-grafting possibilities, but also what core technology the business uses. Finally, an entrepreneurial climate assessment tool will identify characteristics for the community that support entrepreneurial outcomes with emphasis on how changes could be made to accentuate the assets and improve the weaknesses of a given community.

Schuyler County: Creating Connections

This EDA project aims to take advantage of the unique opportunity to link research and project development resources available at universities with the ongoing economic and community development efforts of rural Schuyler County. The project focuses on four main areas of effort: Tech Grafting (with a focus on Materials Research, Computer Simulation & Sustainable Energy/Green Businesses); Tourism Development & Value-Added Agricultural Products/Experiences; Entrepreneur Development and Emerging Industries. To address each of the first three focus areas, the participating agencies (SCOPED and Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schuyler County) are working with CaRDI & CCTEC to convene local policy makers, researchers, regional development resources, entrepreneurs and other resources in focus group sessions. The project engages a student research team to assist with the fourth area of focus, and anticipates that a final product for that area would include a report detailing the specific sectors that Schuyler County’s emerging sustainable, tech-supported economy should target for future growth, as well as a plan for implementation.
Biofuel Industry Education and Development

The continuing increase in petrol-related costs borne by both the transport and housing sectors nationally and statewide offers a clear opportunity to initiate education, development, and investment in the industrial sector via analysis and siting of new biodiesel (BD) refining and distribution in/near New York City. Over the past five months, Cornell Cooperative Extension’s NYC Program has become known and increasingly visible for its role in promoting and educating professionals and building managers about B20 use, its advantages, and the options for supply within the region. A list of available suppliers is being maintained and distributed on an ongoing basis to interested building owners and managers in New York City who have become aware of the program during the course of the 2005-06 heating season. In addition, numerous public presentations, on the Cornell campus, and throughout the region have been conducted for engineers and owners in the building industry.

The project staff is also working closely with Dutchess County Extension and participates fully in the Biofuel Working Group, which meets bi-monthly in the Mid-Hudson region. These sessions provide a good link between City and nearby concerns, and provide an opportunity to share ongoing projects and initiatives. With increasing interest in biofield crop production for liquid, as well as palletized fuel use, and the project team is working with Dutchess colleagues to develop a GIS-based mapping of projects and initiatives. This work is linked to the ongoing development and innovation supported by the SUN Grant Institute for Bio development on the Cornell campus. Sun Grant Director, Dr. Larry Walker, in the Department of Biological and Environmental Engineering is strongly supportive and interested in the development of this project.

Hospitality Service Sector Training and Education

The hospitality sector is among the key industries in New York City’s economy, with the leisure and hospitality sector employing nearly 280,000 workers to attend to visitors spending over $15 billion in NYC alone. Many hotel-related jobs are low-wage opportunities, and there is an ongoing need to maintain standards and representation to allow wage income to provide for ‘living wage’ jobs at all levels. Smaller ‘boutique’ hotels along with a growing bed & breakfast (B&B) industry in the City’s neighborhoods offers real potential for a new range of training and education.

This project identifies the education and training needs beginning with the emerging bed & breakfast and small hotel sector. Given a clearer understanding of that sector’s needs, project staff will work with the School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) and industry trade associations to tailor a training and certification program for owner/operators of these facilities. A broad perspective will be entertained in this effort, and will examine direct hotel services along with issues of historic preservation, business management, and local service provision particular to this sector. Many of the newest B&B facilities in New York City are located in previously distressed communities such as Harlem, Bedford-Stuyvesant (Bed-Stuy), and Brooklyn. While real estate and development changes have altered the economic landscape for owners, speculators, and urban pioneers in a number of cases, the underlying economic opportunities available to residents of these neighborhoods remain limited. Given the broad and daily needs of B&B operators for everything from laundry to local food provision services, numerous job- and entrepreneurial opportunities can be defined and ‘linked’ to local providers, using the “Oregon Marketplace” model of promoting business-to-business trade within a given state or in this case, neighborhood.

This model can be replicated or extended to the region as well, with smaller outlying communities involved in a ‘network of learners’ including the Hudson River Valley and Long Island. As New York continues to be a top tourist destination, demand will increase for hospitality services and skills. Competition will also increase as more and more hospitality operators increase their presence in New York City in order to take advantage of the growing market. Smaller operators may have an advantage in identifying themselves as community-oriented, energy efficient, and offering personalized services at a competitive price. Identifying potential entrepreneurial opportunities will open doors to community residents that are not presently benefiting from the emergence of the bed and breakfast accommodations in their communities.
Consumer Demographics and Market Strategies

Revitalizing downtowns and main streets are an important part of building economic growth for distressed communities in New York State. The objective of this project is to profile market conditions faced by merchants in downtown shopping districts and to train downtown managers to be able to use these profiles in strategic planning. Rather than act as a consultant, the intent is to provide technical assistance to build local capacity. As word of this project spreads, there is more demand for technical assistance from private businesses, merchant associations, and municipalities. Below is a listing of the clients who are currently taking part in the project.

City of Auburn, Cayuga County—Project with team of 4 graduate students from Cornell’s Department of City and Regional Planning to explore the potential for business development in the Business Improvement District due to the opening of a Bass Pro Store on the outskirts of the city.

Village of Brockport, Monroe County- At request of Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council, work with Village of Brockport economic development committee to prepare project proposal to Preserve America, a White House initiative, to revitalize Main Street area bordering on the Erie Canal.

Village of Hamburg, Erie County- Provide assistance to Village’s Economic Development Committee to prepare a project proposal to the New York State Department of State’s Quality Communities Initiative program. Met with the committee and Village Administrator in Hamburg.

Ithaca/Tompkins County Convention and Visitors Bureau- Provide technical assistance to the Bureau’s Marketing and Strategic Planning Board for ongoing effort to increase overnight visitors to the county and increase the accommodation industry (hotels and B&Bs).

City of Oswego, Oswego County- Provide assistance to the city’s Director of Economic Development on evaluating the economic impact and market potential for the city’s annual Harborfest. Prepared an analysis and report on visitors to the festival.

Additionally, project staff is conducting workshops in response to requests from around the state which are an important part of the project. Here is a list of the programs that have been completed:

Cornell Cooperative Extension, Program Work Team on Economic Vitality - Present outline of the Consumer Demographics and Market Strategies Program to a statewide committee of Extension Educators with interests in economic vitality and Main Street revitalization.

New York State Canals Conference—Presentation on the demographics and market potential for visitors to selected canal communities.

Population Association of America, Session on Business Demography—Presented a paper on Measuring the Market in Resort and Recreation Communities to business consultants, government analysts, and academic researchers.

Ontario County: Finger Lakes Beverage Consortium

The Finger Lakes region of Upstate New York is the geographic center of diverse beverage production within the state. Known primarily for its wine, the region hosts value-added production in other fermented beverages (beer, fruit wines, mead), distilled beverages (fruit port), as well as a wide range of fruit juices. Established beverage businesses in Western New York provide the foundation for the region’s beverage bounty, including such notables as Constellation Brands, Inc, National Grape Cooperative, Cadbury Schweppes, Inc., Seneca Foods, Birds Eye, Inc., and many of the state’s 220 wineries. Some sectors of the region’s fruit enterprise have suffered due to expanding production (and overproduction) in other parts of the world.

Growers and processors are looking for new and unique uses for their products. The healthful qualities of many fruit beverages have created new opportunities for producers and processors, and have spurred the development of new enterprises for start-up and existing businesses. This process can be greatly enhanced with targeted research and outreach. In addition, the newly created Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park (The Technology Farm) provides new opportunities for potential new beverage businesses to incubate in close proximity and with considerable access to Cornell facilities and expertise. Seed funding provided by the EDA University Center is being used to create local industry alliances to help support entrepreneurial activities related to beverages including awareness by regional agricultural- and technology-based economic development specialists about the potential and resources available to emerging beverage enterprises.

The Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council is in the process of developing a strategic plan for regional project development. Projects so identified will be stronger candidates for further EDA funding. The Finger lakes Beverage Consortium will be incorporated into the plan. A new Department of Labor Workforce Innovation for Regional Economic Development (WIRED) project entitled Finger Lakes Regional Partnership has been awarded to the region (Rochester and the nine surrounding counties). The three-year project focuses on four areas of potential innovation, one of which is food and agriculture. The Finger Lakes Beverage Consortium will become a logical component of the WIRED project and thus will have many more resources (grant, regional and federal) available to assist in its development.

Student Project: Exploring the Environment and Economic Development

Jeremy Zambrowski, a Cornell student working with Professor Susan Christopherson in Cornell’s Department of City and Regional Planning, has completed work on an environmental systems cluster of firms in Central New York and prepared materials for a Spring economic development workshop on “The Environment and Economic Development.” In the workshop, several projects will be highlighted: 1) a report on the costs and benefits of independent municipal energy generators in New York state; 2) a consulting report for the Tompkins County Green Design and Alternative Energy resource hub. This organization is attempting to build a center that would help develop the market for green design and alternative energy products and services in the Finger Lakes region of New York State. The consulting report focuses on assessing the business plans and marketing strategies of similar resources hubs in other parts of the country. In conjunction with this project, Jeremy and Professor Christopherson helped plan and carry out a planning meeting at Ithaca High School on April 2006 for the firms and community organizations involved in the project. They are also helping the group construct a proposal to obtain seed funding from NYSERDA and the MDA in Syracuse. Additionally, Jeremy is engaged in helping Professor Christopherson design a presentation for The Fingerlakes Institute conference on “The Environment and Economic Development,” which will be held in June 2006 in Auburn, NY. The presentation will utilize materials developed in the student workshop this Spring. For more information on Professor Christopherson’s work visit: http://www.nyecon.cornell.edu/.
EDA Outreach to Communities in NYS

Cornell’s EDA University Center seeks to engage communities and companies in addition to those it funds directly.

On March 20th, Montgomery County Industrial Development Agency, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Fulton and Montgomery Counties, Cornell’s Office of Economic Development, and the Cornell Community and Rural Development Institute (CaRDI) held an event called "Creating Innovative Partnerships with Cornell University: Community, Technology, and Economic Development Outreach." The session held at Fulton-Montgomery Community College attracted 40 local companies and community members and focused on exploring ways to partner with Cornell in the area of economic and community development, technology transfer, and technology and industrial development. Cornell participating organizations included Community and Rural Development Institute, CCTEC, and the Cornell Center for Life Enterprise.

A similar outreach session is being planned for Buffalo in the fall of 2006.

Economic Development Clearinghouse Launched

Cornell’s Office of Economic Development (OED) launched a new web clearinghouse in October 2005 to provide information on economic development activities, programs, and contacts at Cornell to communities and companies.

To gather feedback to further develop the site, OED hosted a luncheon with participants from around Cornell working in the area of economic development, as well as nine local and regional economic developers to preview a new OED web site.

Information on Cornell programs, initiatives and research in the area of economic development is available, as well as resources, news, and events.

Based on the feedback, OED will complete a second phase to the new site in 2006. OED will be hiring a summer student intern to research and implement the new information for the site.

www.oed.cornell.edu

The purpose of the Summit was to explore the university's economic development mission through a series of keynote speakers and panel discussions. The keynote speakers provided context for macro and micro economic development practices at universities. Additionally, the Summit explored intra-campus awareness for Cornell's current economic development activities and inspiration for the role of the University in future economic development activities.

Dr. Robert Richardson, Senior Vice Provost for Research at Cornell welcomed more than 100 Cornell and community participants who attended the Summit on November 10th.

**Summit Keynote Speakers**

- Robert D. Atkinson, Vice President of the Progressive Policy Institute (PPI) and Director of PPI's Technology and New Economy Project—"Universities as Engines of Regional Growth in the New Knowledge Economy."

- Wayne Hodges, Vice Provost for Economic Development and Technology Ventures at Georgia Tech—"A University Perspective: Georgia Tech's Economic Development and Technology Ventures Program."

**Panel Discussions**

During the morning session of the Summit, two panel discussions were held. The first panel was focused on community development, research & outreach and the second discussion centered around university and community partnerships for technology-led economic development. Panelists cited a variety of programs with Cornell participation centered around those theme areas and lively audience discussion followed both sessions.

In the afternoon, Cornell sessions explored the current momentum of university programs including a highlight of best practices. The sessions included: Winning Strategies for Downtown Revitalization; Finding the Value Bridge between Small Business and Basic Materials Research; Labor-Business-Community Alliances for High Road Economic Development; Social Infrastructure for Economic Development: The Case of Child Care; Economic Development and Weill Medical College, and Stimulating Innovation in Agriculture: Ag Innovation Center Outreach.

**Sponsoring Organizations**

The Summit would not have been possible without the support of the following organizations: EDA University Center, CaRDI, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Associate Provost for Outreach, Cornell Agriculture & Food Technology Park, Cornell Center for Sustainable Global Enterprise (CSGE), Cornell Center for Materials Research (CCMR), Cornell Center for Life Science Enterprise, Rural New York Initiative, NY Ag Innovation Center (AIC), NYSEG, and Cayuga Venture Fund II LLC.

Summit attendees, which included Cornell faculty and staff, as well as a variety of business, economic development and community partners, considered the event a very successful first step in beginning the economic development dialogue at Cornell.

For more information, visit www.oed.cornell.edu/EDSummit2005.
Cornell: Building economic capacity through infrastructure and technology transfer

Building Regional Capacity:
The Cornell Agriculture & Food Technology Park received $2.8 million in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Commerce in 2003. The grant helped fund the cost of site preparation and construction of the first building in the 74-acre research park, located adjacent to the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station (NYSAES) in Geneva, NY.

Today, the park is home to several tenants and a new food technology incubator.

For more information visit: www.thetechnologyfarm.com

Technology Transfer that Benefits the Community:

Cornell’s Center for Technology, Enterprise, and Commercialization (CCTEC) has fostered technology transfer that benefits the community by assisting with a partnership between CEA Systems, Cornell inventor Lou Albright and Challenge Industries. CEA Systems uses elegant control of light to allow crops to be more productively grown hydroponically. Challenge Industries provides vocations for developmentally challenged individuals within the Ithaca pilot plant. The partnership continues to prosper and the facility was recently turned over to Challenge Industries to produce and market under the brand name “FingerLakesFresh.” Finger Lakes Fresh generates income from the sale of Boston bib lettuce and a mix of salad greens grown in the tightly controlled greenhouse. Locally, Wegmans, P&C, Dryden’s Ludgate Farms and the Shur Save in Ulysses all buy greens produced at the site.

For more information visit: www.fingerlakesfresh.com.

About Cornell’s EDA University Center

Cornell’s Center is an innovative partnership between Cornell’s Community and Rural Development Institute (CaRDI), which supports community and economic development programs for the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) system, and the Cornell Center for Technology, Enterprise and Commercialization (CCTEC), which directs the University’s technology-based venture creation. This partnership links technical innovation and business creation with entrepreneurs and businesses in economically distressed areas of New York State to launch new companies, help existing companies to become more competitive, and create new investment.

For more info, visit www.oed.cornell.edu/EDA.htm

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