

Celebrating



Black History Month

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Delta Studies Center

“A MESSAGE FROM THE CENTER”

PEGGY R. WRIGHT

On May 17, 2005, a large group of local leaders from over the eight-state Delta region will journey to Washington, DC as part of the Mississippi Delta Grassroots Caucus Initiative. The purpose of the trip is to urge the national government to take a much greater action on the region’s economic development needs.

Senators Lincoln and Pryor, Congressmen Berry and Ross of Arkansas and Congressman Davis of Alabama will join other distinguished speakers for this meeting. Many local officials from the region have confirmed their participation and will be a part of the initiative also.

The Hon. Rodney Slater, former United States Secretary of Transportation will be one of the main speakers also in Washington, DC for the three day meeting, May 17-19, 2005.

It is still not too late to join in and attend with us. A summary of the meeting will be given in your next newsletter.

**A TRIBUTE TO
 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**

“ This Is How He Lived”
 By: *Dr. George Clements*

Excerpted from Dr. Jane Gates Speech given at the Craighead County Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration on January 17, 2005.

This is how he loved, with the preacher’s power anointed from above. He trampled through the darkness and wanted to light the skies with love. Overlooking clinched fists and hate filled eyes. Though trials and tribulations lay everywhere, he found new ground to build a brighter day. This is how he loved.

He saw the rainbow of humanity and wanted to make us one. Against the darkness and new and gold sun. Blending Christians and kindred spirits. Blending black and white and brown. Blending young and old. Blending northern heart and southern soul. This is how he loved.

He heard the call of the children in second grade schools. He heard the call of the workers with second rate tools. He heard the call of those with heavy burdens scorned. He heard the call of the poor, the barren, the scorned. He heard the call of those still bound. He heard the call of those past down. He heard the call of the voiceless under a dark day sun. He heard the call of the powerless he would be their drum. He heard the call down the dark city streets. He heard the call down the poor country road. He heard the call that would not retreat.

He heard the call with this bruising load.

And he answered. He would lift them. He would lift them high. He would lift their prayers to a merciful sky. This is how he loved.

With a quiet dignity and a lovers passion. He raised a praise song only love could fashion. He would never feel a fault here. He raised the praise song up on the alter of justice. A praise song with humble majesty. He saw his own death ahead and wanted to make it a gift of hope. A gift of pride. This is how he loved. This is how he lived and this is how he died.

Inside this issue:

DR. CHERISSE JONES SPEAKS AT THE 2005 MLK JR. BRUNCH	2
ARKANSAS SOIL & WATER CONFERENCE HELD AT THE CONVOCATION CENTER	2
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. MARCH PICTURES	3
MINORITY BUSINESS EXPO	3
“THE JUDD HILL STORY: FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION” BY: SYLVESTER WORTHAM	4
DR. JANE GATES SPEAKS AT THE 2005 CRAIGHEAD COUNTY MLK DAY CELEBRATION	5
EDDIE MAE HERRON CENTER’S 3RD ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY CELEBRATION FOCUSED ON THE HOXIE INTEGRATION	6
CAMPUS SPEAKS LECTURE FEATURES MR. LEON WILLIAMS	7
DELTA BLUES SYMPOSIUM XI: IMAGING THE DELTA	7
MISSISSIPPI DELTA GRASSROOTS CAUCUS INITIATIVE	8
SCOTT CEMETERY IN LAWRENCE COUNTY RECEIVES ARKANSAS HUMANITEIS GRANT	8
SOUTHERN COMPASS NEWLY RELEASED REPORTS	8
NEWLY RELEASED REPORTS CONTINUED	9

DR. CHERISSE JONES SPEAKS AT THE 2005 MLK JR. BRUNCH



Dr. Cherrisse Jones
Photo by: Christine Perry

“We need to shake ourselves out of our complacency, because contrary to what many of us might believe you don’t make it on your own.”



Students and Faculty present at the MLK Brunch.
Photo by: Christine Perry

Dr. Cherrisse Jones newly hired history faculty member spoke at the annual Martin Luther King Brunch held on January 14th in the newly built Student Union’s Mockingbird Room.

Dr. Jones who hails from Charleston, South Carolina spoke about her parents fight for equality in Georgetown and Greensboro South Carolina and the lessons they taught her along the way.

She explained that her parents “often reflect on those years and their biggest complaint was that the Civil Rights activists opened the door for the next generation but few of them chose to walk through it. And of those who did many of them have forgotten their duty to others.”

Explaining that many people have become complacent. That is they’ve “forgotten or in many cases aren’t even aware of the sacrifices that thousands of people have made to ensure they would have at the very least, the opportunity to share in the American Dream.”

Focusing on the word “opportunity” Dr. Jones explained that even though “Many of us have taken advantage of educational, political, economical, and social opportunities. Many more have not.

So what she asks, “can we do to help such individuals?”

Her answer is simple. “We need to shake ourselves out of our complacency, because contrary to what many of us might believe you don’t make it on your own. Someone in the past paved the way for you. Someone suffered unconscionable indignities so that you and those behind you might have a chance. So in my mind and in my estimation you have a duty. You have an obligation even to give back as much as you can and then give some more.”

Dr. Jones ended her speech on Martin Luther King’s dream explaining that it just wasn’t his dream but it was also the dream of “our fore fathers and fore mothers,” who “envisioned a future where African Americans and Americans in general would have educational, social, economic, and political equality.”

She charged everyone to “not sit on our morals for we have not yet made it to the mountaintop.” We must continue to fight and to dream not only for ourselves but for future generations.

ARKANSAS SOIL & WATER EDUCATION CONFERENCE



Conference participants viewing displays during break at the annual Arkansas Soil & Water Education Conference. (Photo by Christine Perry)

The College of Agriculture held their annual Arkansas Soil & Water Education Conference on January 13, 2005 at the ASU Convocation Center.

The conference covered topics related to the ground water issues in Arkansas. Among topics discussed were water project updates, water law issues, water conservation practices, and many other issues focusing on this area of education.

The conference is held annual and funding is provided by the East Arkansas RC&D.

For more information concerning this conference or other programs associated with the College of Agriculture please contact them at:

PO Box 1080
State University, AR 72467-1080
Phone: (870) 972-2085
<http://agri.astate.edu>

MLK JR MARCH PICTURES



Martin Luther King Jr. Parade Marchers line up to begin the march .

Photo by: Peggy R. Wright



Martin Luther King Jr. March Speaker -(Center)- Ms. Robbie Lyles

Photo by: Peggy R. Wright

Marchers:
L to R
Dr. Lonnie Williams
And
Dr. Herman Strickland

Photo by:
Peggy R. Wright



Participants in the 2005 Martin Luther King Jr. March

Photo by: Peggy R. Wright



WRIGHT ATTENDS MINORITY BUSINESS EXPO

The first Minority Business Expo was held at St. Bernard's Auditorium on Friday, March 11, 2005 with over 12 local businesses and organizations participating in the event.

The half-day event was co-sponsored by Beacons and Bridges, ASU-Office of Student Affairs, Nestle Foods and the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce. Topics included how to conduct business with ASU, exploring legal structures of small businesses and alternative financing options.

Those who attended were very excited about the chance to see the many minority businesses in the Jonesboro area and look forward to the 2nd Expo.



Rev. Dr. Charles Coleman was one of the many Minority business owners at this years expo.

Photo provided by Peggy R. Wright, ASU-Delta Studies Center



Ruby Henderson, S-TAC member and ASU Graduate, was one of the many Minority business owners at this years expo.

Photo provided by Peggy R. Wright, ASU-Delta Studies Center

JUDD HILL PLANTATION THREE-PART SERIES FINAL ARTICLE

This is the final installment of a three-part series on the sharecropping life of the Judd Hill Plantation presented by the ASU-Delta Studies Center Clearinghouse. These articles are written by the former residents of the Judd Hill Plantation and are based on their standpoint of life growing up on the Plantation.

“A JUDD HILL STORY: FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION ”

BY: SYLVESTER WORTHAM



L/R Albert Wortham and sons Phillip, Joe, Sylvester, and grandson Termayne Wortham
Photo provided by Sylvester Wortham



L/R Sandra, Ethel Wortham, Arthur Wortham, Albert & Addie B. Wortham, Mattie, Kim, Sylvester, & Termayne Wortham
Photo provided by Sylvester Wortham

My earliest childhood memory of Judd Hill started around the early 60's. My parents, Albert & Addie B. Wortham, moved to Judd Hill from Cotton Plant, Ark. because my father wanted to be closer to his mother and father, Arthur & Ethel Wortham, who were already living on the Judd Hill Plantation. My grandmother had told my Dad that we should move to Judd Hill because things were better there and the man that owned the plantation was letting folks sharecrop 40-acres and giving them a house to live in and land was still available because he was still clearing it. I had never seen so many woods in my life there were trees everywhere.

As I recall we moved in our house right away and Daddy started farming. We lived on a long dirt road

called “Dummy Line Road.” There were only two houses that I can remember and that was Mrs. Mattie Lee Caldwell and ours. Our house was a four-room house but not in the best of shape, we stayed cool in the summer and froze in the winter. Because we lived in the wooded area we made use of the woods by picking up sticks and cutting old tree limbs that had fallen off the larger trees to help heat our house and to cook with.

My Aunt Rosie Thompson also lived a little further down in the pasture where trees surrounded their house. The best time of the year for me was the summer when we would walk through the woods over to her house and along the way were all types of fruit trees we could always find something to eat plums, persimmons and just about any kind of berry you could think of. Although we enjoyed our free time of playing and doing the normal stuff, we also had to work.

There were nine children, I had three older brothers and 2 younger brothers, two older sisters and one younger and we all had to learn to work at a young age. My father was given two mules that we used to work our 40-acres, Cake & Queen. Daddy made sure that we knew everything about getting those animals ready for work in the fields, how to plant the crops, do the garden, feed the animals, kill hogs and chickens and how to survive, he always said that “someday we might have land of our own.”

The best day of my life on the plantation was when my Daddy woke me up early one Saturday morning and asked me to ride to town with him. I helped my Dad hitch Cake & Queen to the wagon and we rode to downtown Trumann. Daddy bought me a piece of candy and a soda pop. I did not realize that town was so big, that was the most exciting day I ever had as a child and

the first time I had been off the plantation since we moved there.

I also remember attending the Judd Hill School. My favorite part was when we did our play at the end of school year and all the kids would sing the song “Judd Hill Will Shine Tonight, I used to love that song and still do today.

The last time we sang that song at Judd Hill School was the day my teacher, Mrs. McClain told us that it was our last day at the school and we would be entering a new school at the beginning of the year and it would be Trumann School. I didn't think too much of it at the time because summer was here and all I wanted to do was have fun.

In August, when school started again I was truly scared to death to get on that school bus and to start school in Trumann but I held my head high and tried not to look back.

My Daddy sharecropped for about five more years, I remember him telling Mother once that he didn't make any money that year and he owned Mr. Chapin money and that he could not keep sharecropping, I believe he was one of the last to stop sharecropping. Later we moved up near Highway 63 closer to the Lincolns and we continued to live on Judd Hill until about 1972.

I have always admired my parents as I have many of the men and women who lived on the plantation for the determination and strength that it took to overcome many obstacles, raising large families and providing for them by any means necessary. I was the 8th child of twelve and I still carry with me the strengths that my father passed on to me that were passed on to him by my grandfather, “work hard and provide for you and your family and God will do the rest.”

DR. JANE GATES SPEAKS AT THE CRAIGHEAD COUNTY MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY CELEBRATION

Peggy R. Wright, with the ASU-Delta Studies Center, braved the cold weather on January 17, 2005 to march with hundreds of other community members to commemorate the birthday of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The march began the days events which ended with an inspirational program, "Remembering the Past, Serving the Present, United for Service" that was held at the St. Bernard's Auditorium.

This years keynote speaker was Dr. Jane Gates, former Chair of the Political Science Department at ASU and the current Dean of the Liberal Arts & Social Sciences College at Savannah State University in Savannah, Georgia.

The focus of her speech centered on being united for service. She reminded the audience that "Dr. King believed deeply that he was a debtor. That he was in debt to the many seen and unseen people who had come before him making it possible for him to achieve excellence in education, culture, and social development."

According to Dr. Gates, it was important to Dr. King that the United States of America become "a land of freedom where people of all races, creeds, and nationalities could live together as a beloved community."

He would focus on this in his sermon presented to his Dexter Avenue Baptist Church congregation on February 4, 1968 when he stated that "everybody can be great because everybody can serve." It is through service to one another that a community can be built with people of all races, creeds, and different nationalities.

Service is the one thing,

according to Dr. Gates, that "you don't have to have a college degree to do. You don't have to know about Plato or Aristotle. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity. You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

Another element that Dr. King was devoted to was the elimination of poverty. In fact, at the time of his death he was actively organizing a "poor people's campaign to demonstrate economic as well as the civil rights of the economically disadvantaged."

"Today, thirty-seven years after the death of Dr. King, we still face" some major challenges. These challenges range from high unemployment rates in the African American communities to deficient educational systems that graduate "students who are under prepared for college."

Dr. Gates stressed to the audience that "there is still work to do. There are still challenges." We as a community need to begin changing what is happening. This change will "require initiative or leadership." "The leadership required to make basic changes is not again the prerogative of the few. It is in fact the responsibility of the many."

She ended her speech by saying "leadership and citizenship must become synonymous. We can no longer afford to stand on the sidelines. We must become involved in community building." Always remembering in the words of the late Dr. King "that the ultimate measure of an individual is not where he or she stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."



L/R Mrs. Peggy R. Wright (ASU-Delta Studies Center), Dr. Pat Walls (Professor of Social Work), Dr. Jane Gates (Speaker), and Mrs. Ruby Henderson, (ASU Graduate and Strong-Turner Alumni Chapter Member).

Photo by Angela Austin



Marchers getting ready to walk in the Craighead County Annual Martin Luther King Jr. March held each year on his birthday.

Photo by Peggy R. Wright



Individuals from all walks of life come together on Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday to join in on the annual March and special program to honor his life's accomplishments.

Photo by Peggy R. Wright

EDDIE MAE HERRON'S 3RD ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY CELEBRATION FOCUSES ON THE HOXIE SCHOOL INTEGRATION



L/R Dr. Gloria Gibson (Dean of ASU College of Arts & Sciences), & Fayth Hill-Washington (Hoxie 21 Student) Photo by: Christine Perry



Many people attended the Eddie Mae Herron 3rd Annual Black History Celebration that highlighted the Hoxie 21 Integration story. Photo by: Christine Perry



L/R AR State Representatives J.R. Rogers, and David Cook. Photo by: Christine Perry



Former AR State Representative Don House Photo by: Christine Perry

Eddie Mae Herron Center held its 3rd annual Black History Celebration on Friday, February 25, 2005 in Pocahontas, Arkansas. The highlight of this years celebration was a panel discussion on the “Hoxie School Integration.”

Panelists included moderator Dr. Gloria Gibson, ASU Dean of the College of Humanities & Social Sciences, former students Fayth Hill-Washington and Ethel Tompkins, and Eunice Roberts wife of former Hoxie school board member Leo Roberts.

Dr. Gibson began the discussion with comments concerning American History. She reminded everyone that “American History is not what it should be.” It’s not what it should be because in many instances so many of the important stories, the important events are not there.”

That is why it’s very important to understand “that there are still lots of untold stories out there.” And it’s “incumbent upon us, all of us, in this room to tell our stories. Because each and everyone of our stories, each one, is important.”

Ethel Tompkins, who was twelve years old at the time of the integration, was the first to speak. She said it was her understanding that the reasons why Hoxie School integrated was because “they said it was the morally right thing to do and two it saved them money.”

Mrs. Eunice Roberts, who was the wife of a former Hoxie School Board Member, agreed with Tompkins sentiments but added that her husbands reason for voting for integration was strictly because “it was the law.” She also went on to say that many of the school board

members had a hard time in the community due to their decision. There were even some residents “in Hoxie who moved in order not to send their children to an integrated school which was terrible.”

In a continued focus, Fayth Hill-Washington, a third grader at the time, explained that there were problems. If you look at the situation logically you will see that there had to be problems. You had African American students who “were going to an all Caucasian school. They didn’t have any black history to study to take care of us. They had no idea what our culture was. So we did have problems.”

We were going into an new environment “not because there was a big to do, we went because we were being obedient. We had no idea that we would be making history at the time.”

That is why it’s very important “to tell the story. Everybody has a story and it needs to be documented.”

In conclusion Dr. Gibson ended the program by emphasizing “it is not a black white thing and so it’s incumbent upon all of us to understand the various different kinds of diversity based on race. This is something we have to internalize and acknowledge.” We need to live “our lives in a way where we can embrace those who are different in many, many different ways.”

We need to “acknowledge what’s happening in the past, to celebrate the past.” Then with this knowledge we can begin to renew, reinvigorate, and recommit our lives to meet those challenges we face in the future.

CAMPUS SPEAK LECTURE FEATURED MR. LEON WILLIAMS



Mr. Leon Williams speaks to Arkansas State University Students during the Campus Speak Lecture.

Photo by: Peggy R. Wright



“...diversity is not about the other it is about self and what you the student can bring to the table.” To understand these two things you must step “outside of the your own circle.”

Mr. Leon Williams spoke at the “Campus Speak Lecture” on February 28, 2005 at the ASU-Student Union Auditorium.

Williams is the Director of the Intercultural Programs at Buena Vista University. His program focuses on helping other people of color transform their lives. With help from students, faculty, and staff, he has been the sparkplug in creating the foundation of a new campus culture at BVU that respects and celebrates diversity.

The focus of Williams’ speech centered around diversity issues facing students on today’s campuses.

He explained that diversity “is not about the other it is about self and what you the student can bring to the table.” To understand these two things you must step “outside of the your own circle.”

Getting outside of your circle, according to Williams, is “not trading in who you are.” It is getting yourself to a place that allows you to “cleanse your mind of the biases, misconceptions, and stereotypes that you may possess. This will in turn allow you

“to begin to have a consciousness to listen differently, to live differently, to speak differently, and to see differently.”

Williams’ also stressed that it’s important to recognize that many people also “dissect and alienate within their own cultures and they use this to excuse their own behavior.”

He believes it’s important to combat this behavior and students can do so by “educating themselves by grabbing hold to all of their people not just some of the people. Because if you discriminate against your own, you leave room for others to do what, discriminate.”

In closing, he told those in attendance to learn to speak up, speak out, and speak to. “Speak up is to educate, speak out is advocacy, and speak to is simply learning to speak to someone.” Be “self cleansing, educated, knowledgeable of other cultures and traditions.” Show by example that you have stepped outside of your circle, you do embrace all of your people, and you have something to bring to the table.

DELTA BLUES SYMPOSIUM XI: IMAGINING THE DELTA

The Department of English and Philosophy at Arkansas State University (Jonesboro campus) will be holding it’s annual Delta Blues Symposium on April 7-9, 2005.

The theme for Delta Blues Symposium XI is “Imagining the Delta.” Presentations will be presented from scholars and students from the humanities and social

sciences fields of study including anthropology, art history, economics, folklore studies, geography, history, literature, musicology, political science, and sociology.

Topics will focus on the Symposium’s theme and will examine the ways in which the seven-state Mississippi River Delta has been imagined in mass media, history, and various forms of expressive culture;

continues to be presented and represented; and is defined by those who foresee the Delta’s future.

Delta Blues Symposium XI will be a particularly important installment in this series of conferences as we begin our second decade. Featured participants on the program include novelist John Dufresne, folklorist Henry Glassie, and bluesman Little Milton.

Newsletter Layout: Christine Perry Newsletter Editor: Peggy R. Wright

MISSISSIPPI DELTA CAUCUS GRASSROOTS INITIATIVE

The Mississippi Delta Grassroots Caucus Initiative is holding a meeting in Washington DC on May 17-19, 2005. The meeting goal is to urge Congress to take much greater action for the Delta's economic development needs.

The Grassroots Caucus is a bipartisan coalition of mayors, legislators, elected state and county officials, private business leaders, nonprofit foundations, and experts in education.

Congressional supporters include U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln, Representatives Marion Berry and Mike Ross of Arkansas,

Representative Jo Ann Emerson of Missouri, Mississippi's Senator Thad Cochran, the new chair of the Appropriations Committee, and many other members of Congress from the region.

The key issues the Caucus will endorse include:

- greater support and funding for the DRA;
- support for Interstate - 69, which passes through the heart of the Delta;
- greater access to health care for people in underserved areas;

- water resources and flood control;
- tax incentives to bring businesses to low-income areas by Renewal Communities, Empowerment Zones, Opportunity Zones and other effective development strategies.

For more information on the Grassroots Caucus, please contact Lee Powell, consultant and manager for this initiative, at (202) 360-6347, or at LeePowell2@cs.com, or see www.deltaconsultingandcommunications.com.

SCOTT CEMETERY IN LAWRENCE COUNTY RECEIVES AHC GRANT

The Hill Foundation Inc. in support of the "Hoxie 21" is proud to have been awarded a grant for Scott Cemetery Documentation and Preservation. The purpose of the grant is to purchase equipment and maintain upkeep of the cemetery.

The presentation of the award was held on Sunday, February 27, 2005 at the First Baptist Church in Walnut Ridge, during the Black History program.

The Hill Foundation, Inc, in partnership with Arkansas State University - Delta Studies Center, and Dr. Julie Morrow, Archeologist, will work along with cemetery committee members: Charles White, Harold White, Rosemary Hill, Fayth Washington, and Henry Dickson on this project.

Dr. Morrow, will record the number of unmarked graves, based on vegetation differences and ground

subsidence and place identifiers on those graves. Other vital information will be gathered to use in registering and documenting historical information regarding the site. We will also conduct interviews of those who know the cemetery.

This project is supported in part by a grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council and the Arkansas Archeological Survey

SOUTHERN COMPASS - NEWLY RELEASE REPORTS

JOB SPRAWL AND THE SPATIAL MISMATCH BETWEEN BLACKS AND JOBS

Across the nation, over half of black metro residents, 44 percent of Latinos, and one-third of whites would have to relocate within their metro area in order to be geographically distributed in the same way as jobs.

Download the Report at

http://www.brookings.edu/dybdocroot/metro/pubs/20050214_jobsprawl.pdf

TODAY'S IMMIGRANT WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR

A new study from the Immigration Policy Center, summarizes the latest figures on how immigrant women are faring as business owners.

See the report at :

<http://www.aifl.org/ipc/ipf011705.asp>

**AN ECONOMIC RESURGENCE
IN THE RURAL ECONOMY
REPORT**

In the latest issue of Center for the Study of Rural America's Main Street Economist points to a boom in farm income in 2004, coupled with a higher rate of job growth in rural than in metro areas.

You can find the article at:
http://www.kansascityfed.org/RuralCenter/mainstreet/MSE_0105.pdf

**"SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY AND
DEVELOPMENT: ERASING
THE BOUNDARIES REPORT"**

Efforts to connect community-based revitalization initiatives with school reform programs in Atlanta, St. Louis, and Baltimore are highlighted in a recent report from the Enterprise Foundation. The reports suggest that both neighborhoods and schools can improve faster when efforts are coordinated.

To read this report download it at:
<http://www.enterprisefoundation.org/majorinitiatives/cdl/downloads/Schools12.17.041.pdf>

**"IMPROVING STUDENT
ATTAINMENT IN COMMUNITY
COLLEGES"**

This report provides demographic information on community college students, discusses the importance of college completion, identifies student outcome measures, and offers a community college performance evaluation system.

To view this report visit:
www.tc.columbia.edu/ccrc/PAPERS/LuminaReport10_04.pdf

**"THE EXPECTATIONS GAP: A
50-STATE REVIEW OF HIGH
SCHOOL GRADUATION
REQUIREMENTS."**

This report evaluates state-level math and English graduation requirements. Only five states, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, South Carolina, and West Virginia require a 4-course math sequence for a high school diploma. No state require math courses beyond Algebra II for a general diploma.

To learn more go to:
[http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/coursetaking/\\$file/coursetaking.pdf](http://www.achieve.org/dstore.nsf/Lookup/coursetaking/$file/coursetaking.pdf)

**RACE, PLACE, AND HOUSING:
HOUSING CONDITIONS IN
RURAL MINORITY COUNTIES**

This study focuses on housing conditions for minorities living in rural areas. Explaining that while homeownership rates are often high in rural areas with significant concentrations of minorities, housing values are considerably lower for minorities than for whites in these areas.

This study is available at:
<http://216.92.48.246/pubs/RacePlaceandHousing/index.htm>

**"BUILDING SKILLS, INCREASING ECONOMIC VITALITY: A
HANDBOOK OF INNOVATIVE STATE POLICIES"**

In order to achieve economic prosperity, states must provide a workforce with the skills demanded in America's high-wage, high-growth industries.

To obtain a copy of this report visit:
<http://www.jff.org/jff/PDFDocuments/buildingskills.pdf>

**"THE 21ST CENTURY AT
WORK: FORCES SHAPING
THE FUTURE WORKFORCE
AND WORKPLACE IN THE
UNITED STATES."**

This report addresses the three key labor market features likely to emerge within the next 10 to 15 years such as rapid technological changes, the declining workforce growth rate, and increased global competition which point to the need for a highly skilled workforce in the 21st century.

For more information go to:
http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographhs/2004/RAND_MG164.pdf

**INTERNATIONAL MATH &
SCIENCE STUDY SHOWS U.S.
STUDENTS IMPROVING**

The National Center for Education Statistics has released its assessment of fourth and eighth-graders in mathematics and science from its Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.

The data collected every four years from 1995 until 2003 suggest that the performance of U.S. eight-graders in both mathematics and science was higher in 2003 than 1995 relative to 21 other countries that participated in the studies.

See the report at:
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005005>

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Lower Mississippi Delta Region



We're on the web
www.clt.astate.edu/dsc

TECHSOUTH CONFERENCE * APRIL 19-20, 2005 * FAYETTE, LOUISIANA

This conference offers speakers from the world's largest technology companies and seminars about new technologies and their impact on business. For more information see: <http://www.techsouth.org/site.php>

THE SUMMIT: 30TH STATE CONFERENCE * APRIL 28-29, 2005 * FORT SMITH, AR

For more information concerning this conference contact: Ramona Moon at (800) 637-1477 or rmoon@fsark.com

MISSISSIPPI DELTA CAUCUS GRASSROOTS INITIATIVE MEETING
MAY 17-19, 2005 * WASHINGTON D.C.

For more information contact: Lee Powell, Email: Leepowell2@cs.com, Phone: (202) 360-6347

ARKANSAS RURAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE * MAY 24-26, 2005 * HOT SPRINGS, AR

Learn about issues affecting rural Arkansas, network and enjoy good food and entertainment.

For more information call 1-888-787-2527.

RIISING TOGETHER: THE SUMMIT ON THE RURAL SOUTH * JUNE 12-14, 2005
GRAND HOTEL POINT CLEAR RESORT * POINT CLEAR, ALABAMA

The Southern Growth Policies Board's 2005 conference will explore new rural strategies and success stories from all over the south. The Summit will include national and regional speakers and a town hall meeting featuring

Southern. For more information on this conference go to: www.southern.org/conf.asp