



UNIVERSITY OF
CENTRAL
ARKANSAS™

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2022 - 2023 Annual Report



Mission

To have a positive impact on communities by equipping leaders with economic tools and resources, building consensus to achieve community goals and bringing UCA resources and communities together.

Vision

We envision communities with robust economies, a flourishing quality of life and diverse and engaged citizen leaders.

Values

The Center strives to develop relationships with leaders and communities that are based on:

- Trust and respect
- Local action that fosters consensus-building, community ownership and empowerment, transparency and inclusion
- An asset-based approach focusing on local strengths as the foundation for success

Message from Our Director

On behalf of the University of Central Arkansas Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED), I want to thank all of our partners across the state for supporting our team throughout 2022 - 2023. Because of these critical partnerships, we were able to continue to serve communities and their leaders through customized, high-quality training and technical assistance services.

CCED's work this year focused on continuing foundational services and initiating new programs. At the beginning of 2023, we launched the Community Development Pipeline program funded by the Walton Family Foundation. The vision of the Community Development Pipeline program is to train Washington and Benton County community leaders on foundational community and economic development principles, positively impact and uplift the economies and quality of life of communities whose leaders participate in the program, and develop new relationships that build bridges across Arkansas communities. This grant award represented the first of its kind between the Walton Family Foundation and UCA.

In partnership with the City of Durant, OK, our team piloted a Community Perception Survey tool to identify opportunities and needs based on citizen feedback. CCED continued its partnership with Entergy Arkansas on the Community Catalyst program, selecting two new communities in Entergy's service territory to participate. We also continued to offer walk audits, Strategic Doing workshops, and a multitude of simulations and leadership development workshops to support local adult and youth leadership organizations, cities, non profit organizations, and business leaders.

As our vision states, all of our work supports the development of communities with robust economies, flourishing quality of life, and the creation of diverse and engaged citizen leaders. I hope that our annual report showcases the ways in which we are supporting that vision.



Shelby Fiegel, PCED
CCED Director

Year at a Glance

1,817 ATTENDEES AT CENTER
TRAINING EVENTS

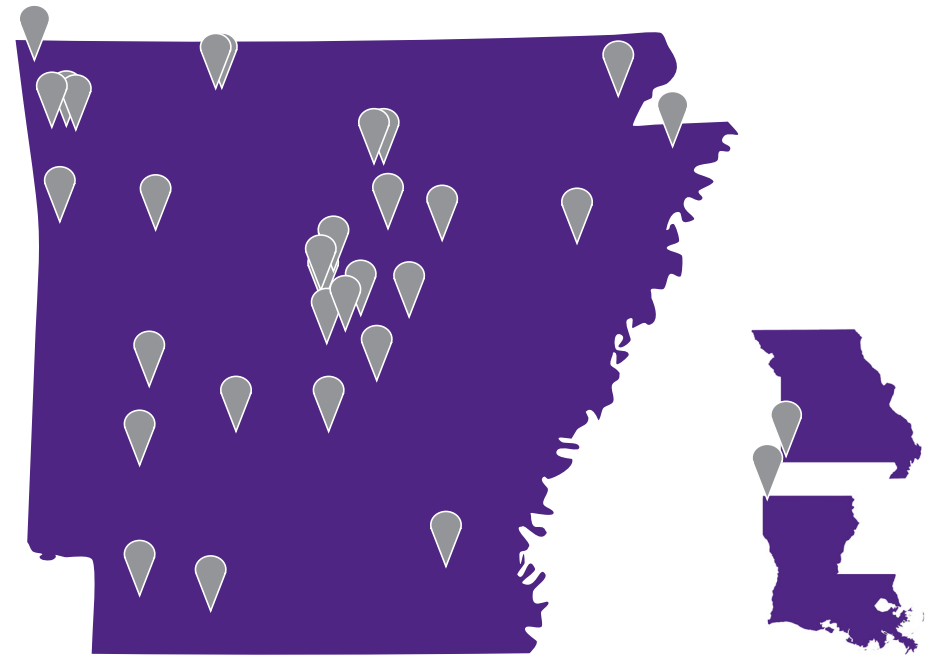
569 ATTENDEES AT TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE EVENTS

329 ATTENDED PRESENTATIONS
BY CCED STAFF

36 CITIES AND COUNTIES RECEIVED
DIRECT ASSISTANCE

32 ARTICLES FEATURED
CCED

\$575,000+ RAISED



2022 - 2023 Training & Technical Assistance

CDI 2023 Advanced Year Community
Murfreesboro

CED Fellowship
Fall 2022 and Spring 2023

Community Development Pipeline
Washington County
Benton County

Community Catalyst
Harrison
Magnolia
Monticello
Searcy
Wynne
Mt. Ida
Vilonia

Community Surveys
Greenbrier
Durant, OK

Engaged Cities Network
Statewide

Strategic Doing Workshops
Kick Start Sheridan
Greenbrier Arts Council

Futures Game Simulations

Boone County Leadership Institute
Arkansas Office of Skills Development
Conway Area Youth Leadership Institute
Leadership Crawford County

Hot Spring County Conversations

Kick Start Sheridan

Newtonia Go! Simulations

Cabot Youth Leadership Council
Academy Ambassador Program
Youth Leadership Paragould
TRIO (statewide)
Conway Area Leadership Institute

Regional Trainings

Northwest Arkansas
Southwest Missouri

ESRI Reports

Plain Dealing, LA

Walk Audits

Searcy
Heber Springs
Clarksville

Poverty Simulations

Mountain View School District
Timbo/Rural Special School District
UCA College of Education
UCA Norbert O. Schedler Honors College
Teen Leadership Xperience
Washington County Youth Leadership
Conway Area Leadership Institute
Leadership Crawford County
Leadership Paragould
Lafayette County
Academy Ambassador Program
Black River Technical College
Cabot Youth Leadership Council
Junior Bankers Board
Jacksonville School District

Community Development Institute

The 37th annual Community Development Institute (CDI) was held July 31 - August 4, 2023. The Institute hosted nearly 200 leaders from across the Mid-South and beyond: Arkansas, Alabama, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, and Oklahoma. 2023 marked the first time in CDI history that two Year 1 classes were held due to demand for CDI training. Over 60 scholarships were awarded.

Dr. Joyvin Benton was CDI's 2023 Keynote speaker. Dr. Benton shared her expertise on effective leadership and measuring impact. The CDI Advanced Year class traveled to Murfreesboro to conduct an in-depth assessment of the community. CDI staff will continue to follow up with Murfreesboro leaders to help them identify key opportunities and quick wins.

The Friend of CDI award was awarded to Main Street Arkansas and the Bill Miller award given to former CDI Central Director Kelly Hunt Lyon. Other award winners included: Ernest Whitelaw Award recipient Mayor Tomeka Butler of the City of Eudora, Year 2 Champion Award recipient Michael Rosenberg of Western Arkansas Planning and Development District, Year 1 (Gray Class) Champion Philip Powell of Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation, and Year 1 (Purple Class) Champion Alaina Ramsey Bradshaw of the Charleston Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development.

Visit uca.edu/cdi or our social media channels for additional updates, pictures, and videos of CDI 2023.

We hope you join us for CDI 2024 on July 29 – August 2, 2024! You can register at uca.edu/cdi



facebook.com/cdi.uca | [@cdicentral](https://twitter.com/cdicentral) | youtube.com/cdicentral

CDI Sponsors

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SPONSORS



SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORTERS

CDI 2022 Year 3 Class

Jenna Rhodes Scholarship Fund

Bill Miller Scholarship Fund

CDI Alumni Network Scholarship Fund



CDI Advisory Board

The CDI Advisory Board was established in 2002 to assist UCA with the development of CDI curriculum, marketing, resource development, and external stakeholder support. Thank you to all CDI Advisory Board members for their outstanding service!

The complete list of board members can be found at uca.edu/cdi/advisory-board/



Project Highlights

Community Catalyst 2.0

The Community Catalyst program is made possible through a partnership between CCED, Entergy Arkansas (Entergy), and the John C. Stennis Institute of Government at Mississippi State University (MSU). Two additional Arkansas communities in Entergy's service territory, Vilonia and Mt. Ida, were selected to participate in the program. The program focuses on grassroots citizen engagement and technical assistance training to develop small, actionable community and economic development goals and to serve as a catalyst for longer-term economic development engagements and priorities. The Catalyst program utilizes a process called Strategic Doing. Strategic Doing is an innovative community development tool that focuses on immediate, impactful small wins and goals to create transformation in communities. Learn more at uca.edu/cced/community-catalyst/

UCA and Entergy also worked with former Community Catalyst communities Harrison, Magnolia, Monticello, Searcy, and Wynne to create an impact video that can be found here: uca.edu/go/CatalystImpact

Arkansas Leaders Consortium

2023 celebrated the second convening of leaders across the state for the Arkansas Leaders Consortium. The consortium is hosted by the CDI Alumni Network in partnership with LeadAR, Leadership Arkansas, Arkansas Economic Developers and Chamber Executives, and the Arkansas State University Delta Center for Economic Development (representing the Delta Leadership Institute). The event serves as a unique opportunity for alumni and members of these organizations (and friends) to gather in one place to learn from one another and connect. Sessions during the consortium were led by alumni of each program, including: Dr. Moses Goldman, Dr. Suzette Goldman, Jamie Rayford (PCED), Jennifer Douglas, Grace Raines, Courtney Fisher, Judy Riley, and Terrie James.

Arkansas Racial Equity Summit

CCED recognizes that striving for equity in our communities is a crucial part of community and economic development. To support that vision, we hosted the third annual Arkansas Racial Equity Summit on November 10, 2022. The 2022 Summit showcased DEI experts, including: Dr. Candice Maxwell of UCA, William M. Rogers III of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Tanya Odom of the Walton Family Foundation, and author of "*Markham Street: The Haunting Truth Behind the Murder of My Brother*" Ronnie Williams. The Summit was sponsored by the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame Foundation.

Community Surveys - Murfreesboro and Durant, OK

Community surveys provide crucial data community leaders can utilize to make informed decisions, serve as a basis for future planning efforts, and provide an understanding of citizen needs and perceptions. CCED worked with the leaders of Murfreesboro and Durant, OK to develop customized community surveys. 248 residents participated in the Murfreesboro community survey, representing 15% of Murfreesboro's population. The survey identified top priorities and focus areas for the city.

CCED partnered with leadership in Durant to develop and implement a community perception survey. The objective of the survey was to identify resident perceptions in various areas (education, economic growth, health, safety, city government, etc.) and provide assessments of how resident perception compared to current data and statistics. The perception survey allowed for deep-focused conversations at the local-level about what was working well in the community and areas of need. 2,146 residents participated in the survey.

Engaged Cities Network

In partnership with EngageAR, CCED developed the new Engaged Cities Network program. The program is focused on providing a process for Mayors and other community leaders to create and implement volunteer and service plans at the local-level. The program includes the following steps: 1) sign the Declaration of Service and Support, 2) gather signed letters of support/buy-in, 3) develop and identify a local leadership team, 4) develop a mission and vision statement, 5) gather community stories, 6) complete a community survey, 7) develop a volunteer and service action plan, and 8) complete a community-based collaborative project. The Engaged Cities Network program was launched during a summit held at UCA in summer 2023.

Walk Audits - Clarksville, Heber Springs, and Searcy

CCED partnered with Crafton Tull to complete walk audits in the cities of Clarksville, Heber Springs, and Searcy. The goal of walk audits is to help develop placemaking concepts and solutions for circulation (vehicular, pedestrian and bike), parking, universal access, low-impact development concepts, wayfinding, beautification and community character improvement. The walk audits included one-on-one interaction and assessment of a three-by-three-block area of each community's downtown or other selected area. Crafton Tull provided each community with a brief summary of the audit that outlined potential opportunities.



Community Development Pipeline Program

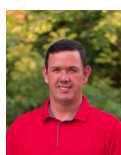
CCED received a three-year grant from the Walton Family Foundation to support the development and implementation of the Community Development Pipeline program. The program will support leaders and communities in Washington and Benton counties through training and technical assistance services. Twenty-five (25) community leaders from Benton and Washington counties were selected to participate.

Learn more: uca.edu/cced/cd-pipeline-program

The leaders selected for the program include:



Amy Drummonds
Downtown
Springdale Alliance



Mayor Chris Moore
City of Lowell



Daisy Bonilla
The Valle Pino
Foundation



Mayor David Fualk
City of Prairie Grove



Dustin Phy
City of Pea Ridge



Ezequiel Tovar
Elkins Community
Network



Hannah Lee
University of
Arkansas



James Bell
Greater Bentonville
Area Chamber of
Commerce



Jamie Smith
Elkins Community
Network



Judith Yanez
RootED Northwest
Arkansas



Kayla Knight
City of Centerton



Keegan Stanton
City of Bentonville



Kelly Rich
Experience
Fayetteville



Lydia Alston
CDC of Bentonville
+ Bella Vista, Inc.



Mallory Barker
Walton Arts Center



Michelle Viney
Communities
Unlimited



Mayor Nathan See
City of Pea Ridge



**Judge Patrick
Deakins**
Washington County



Ross Phillips
Rogers Lowell
Chamber



Stacy Morris
Main Street Siloam
Springs



Taryn Golden
Prairie Grove
Chamber of
Commerce



Trace Henley
Health Partners



Trish Ouei
Beaver Water District



Mayor Troy Reed
City of Elkins



Veronica Alzaga
Madres in Accion

Training

Community and Economic Development Summit: Northwest Arkansas

CCED staff hosted the Community and Economic Development Summit: Northwest Arkansas in partnership with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, University of Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center, Communities Unlimited, Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., Northwest Arkansas Council, Startup Junkie, and the University of Arkansas Office of Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Leaders from across Northwest Arkansas attended the event to network, participate in the Futures Game simulation, and engage with resources across the state.

Community and Economic Development Regional Training: Neosho, MO

In partnership with Dr. Chett Daniel of Crowder College, CCED convened leaders in southwest Missouri. In addition to participating in the Futures Game simulation and learning about CDI and CED best practices, participants also heard a keynote presentation from Corey Parks, PCED of the Conway Area Chamber of Commerce. Arvest Bank sponsored the event.

Strategic Doing Workshops

Strategic Doing workshops are tools for teaching people how to form collaborations quickly, move them toward measurable outcomes and make adjustments along the way. These workshops focused on identifying impactful, attainable goals for organizations and businesses to move forward. Kick Start Sheridan and the Greenbrier Arts Council participated in Strategic Doing workshops in partnership with CCED.

Newtonia Go!

CCED continued to host Newtonia Go! simulations, based off of the Newtonia simulation CDI Year 1 participants experience. Newtonia Go! is a community and economic development simulation that allows participants to experience the development of a community from the ground up and some of the real-life challenges that community leaders and citizens face. CCED facilitated Newtonia Go! for the Cabot Youth Leadership Council, Academy Ambassador Program (Pulaski County Special School District), Youth Leadership Paragould, TRIO (statewide), and the Conway Area Leadership Institute.

Poverty Simulations

CCED facilitated 15 Poverty Simulations in partnership with UCA Director of Service-Learning and Volunteerism Dr. Lesley Graybeal. The simulation is intended to move participants to think about the harsh realities of poverty and to talk about how communities can address the problem. It is a unique, interactive experience that helps people begin to understand what life is like with a shortage of money and an abundance of stress. We held Poverty Simulations in partnership with: the Mountain View School District, Timbo/Rural Special School District, UCA College of Education, UCA Norbert O. Schedler Honors College, Teen Leadership Xperience, Washington County Youth Leadership, Conway Area Leadership Institute, Leadership Crawford County, Leadership Paragould, Lafayette County, Academy Ambassador Program (Pulaski County Special School District), Black River Technical College, Cabot Youth Leadership Council, Junior Bankers Board, and Jacksonville School District.

Futures Game Simulation

CCED hosted four Futures Game simulations for the Boone County Leadership Institute, Arkansas Office of Skills Development, Conway Area Youth Leadership Institute, and Leadership Crawford County.

The Futures Game is a “choose your own adventure” style simulation where participants act as the leaders of Sweet Tea County, Arkansas and develop the area over a simulated 20-year period. The goal of the simulation is to encourage community leaders to develop a future-focused mindset when thinking about planning for their communities.



Community and Economic Development Fellowship

The Community and Economic Development (CED) Fellowship program aims to prepare UCA students for careers in the field of community and economic development. The program exposes UCA students to a variety of community or economic development careers and provides networking, coaching and mentoring to enhance career preparedness. During the program, fellows participate in three site visits that showcase community and economic development activities at the local and state levels of government and in the nonprofit sector. Activities include organization site visits, mock interviews and mentorship from CCED staff. Fellows have the opportunity to join the Arkansas Community Development Society and attend the Community Development Institute.

Three students were selected for the Fellowship in fall 2022 and three students were selected for spring 2023. The students attended site visits with the Office of Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, City of Hope Outreach, United Way of Central Arkansas, the Creative Institute of Central Arkansas, and the City of Conway.



Emma Kaye Daniel
Texarkana, AR
Fall 2022 Fellow



Angelica Thomas
Grady, AR
Fall 2022 Fellow



Makenna Goss
Mena, AR
Fall 2022 Fellow



Venisha Hancock
Little Rock, AR
Spring 2023 Fellow



Tatum Castaneda
Fort Smith, AR
Spring 2023 Fellow



Jeremy Privitera
Jacksonville, AR
Spring 2023 Fellow

Other Activities

Arkansas Municipal League City & Town Magazine

CCED continued its partnership with Arkansas Municipal League's City & Town magazine to contribute articles for the Community Development section. Articles in 2022 - 2023 covered stories such as: ACT Work Ready Communities, Newport's wifi park, adaptive reuse, MLK Day of Service, community events, flood mitigation, childcare access, and much more.

You can read current and previous issues of City & Town magazine at

arml.org/services/publications/city-town

UCA Alliance for Economic Impact

UCA is a driver of economic impact in central Arkansas and state-wide. In fact, the university's economic impact is over \$1.01 billion annually. We understand the responsibility we have to the state and its economy, our students, and our community. That's why we are committed to being an active driver of economic growth and opportunity.

The UCA Alliance for Economic Impact is composed of key programs across the university that have a shared commitment to meeting the economic and workforce needs of the state. We bring together the fields of community development, talent and innovation, workforce development, and entrepreneurship to find new and better ways to support the state and its people. Alliance members include:

- Center for Community and Economic Development
- UCA College of Business (Applied Data Analytics and Computer Information Systems)
- UCA College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics (Cyber Range and Computer Science)
- Arkansas Coding Academy
- Conductor
- UCA Makerspace

Learn more at: uca.edu/economicimpact



**UCA ALLIANCE FOR
ECONOMIC IMPACT**



Staff Highlights



**Shelby Fiegel, PCED
CCED Director**

- Graduated from LeadAR Class 19
- Accepted to Leadership Arkansas Class 18
- Elected as Chair of the Community Development Council (CDC)
- Served as the Arkansas Community Development Society Ex-Officio
- Served as a co-chair of the Delta Population Health Institute Advisory Board
- Served as a Conway Historic District Commissioner



**Michael Hudson
CCED Project Coordinator**

- Completed CDI Year 2 at CDI Texas
- Graduated from CDI (completed Year 3 at CDI Central)
- Completed Mid South Basic Economic Development Course
- Pursuing his Masters of Business Administration with a concentration in Data Analytics



**Abayi Ibro Ayoubu
CCED Assistant Director**

- Started position in January 2023
- Completed CDI Central Year 1
- Started Dissertation for PhD in Change Leadership for Equity and Inclusion

CCED Graduate Assistants:



Layne Turner
PhD in Counseling
Psychology



Zadie St. Louis
Masters of Science in
Data Analytics

Former CCED Assistant Director Dylan Edgell, PCED transitioned to a new position with Jobs for the Future.



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