



The **INSTITUTE** for
Public Policy & Economic Development

Volume 5 Issue 2

Winter 2009

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From the Executive Director:

Two Important Changes Announced

Since its inception, Joint Urban Studies Center (JUSC) has been called upon to provide research on public policy and issues that stretch beyond a community's urban core. As such, there was consensus that a name and identity that better reflects the expansion of JUSC's mission was warranted. In December 2008, the organization officially changed its name to **The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development** (the "Institute").

The Institute will continue to conduct its research on regional priorities and collaborative solutions. It will also continue to prepare the annual Indicators Report, conduct its corresponding forum, and coordinate regional task forces. While the Institute's work has expanded beyond the boundaries of northeastern Pennsylvania, Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties will continue to be at the heart of its research priorities.

In an effort to further its regional presence, on January 12th, the Institute hosted the grand opening of its Lackawanna County office. Located at 120 Wyoming Avenue in downtown Scranton, the office will house the Institute's staff and student interns from Lackawanna County-based partner institutions of higher education.



Save the Date: 2009 Indicators Report & Forum

The 2009 Lackawanna/Luzerne Counties Indicators Report will be released at the Institute's annual forum on Thursday, May 14th. The event will take place at Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs from 8 a.m. until noon. Breakfast will be served.

Institute Updates

Marcellus Shale Symposium Recap

The Marcellus Shale Symposium was held on November 19, 2008 at Wilkes-Barre's Woodlands Inn & Resort. Over 150 participants attended the morning session. Speakers included Dr. John Baen, Ph.D., University of North Texas; Matthew Sheppard, Chesapeake Energy; and Will Bracket, Managing Editor, Powell Barnett Shale Newsletter. Speaker presentations are available on the Institute's website at www.institutepa.org/marcellus.

Prior to the event, the Institute published two white papers on the Marcellus Shale Play. Entitled *The Impact of Marcellus Shale in Northeastern Pennsylvania with Emphasis on Charities, Crime, and Poverty* and *The Economic Impact of Marcellus Shale in Northeastern Pennsylvania*, the studies provide insight into the possible impacts of the Marcellus Shale Plan on the region. Both studies are available on the Institute's website at www.institutepa.org/marcellus.

Housing Task Force Update

The Institute's Housing Task Force recently rolled out an educational website to inform the public on Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties' housing initiatives. The website serves as a portal to access county-specific information, including: tips on buying and selling a home, avoiding predatory lenders, demographic and municipal data, and county, state, and federal programs. The site gives users the opportunity to submit questions pertaining to the housing industry, which are fielded by professionals from each county organization. To access the site, visit www.nepahousing.com.

The Housing Task Force is a direct result of the Institute's annual Indicator's Report & Forum. The report focuses on over 100 indicators based on data from the two-county region. Formed in 2006, the Housing Task Force is one of four established to address: jobs, economy, and economic development; education and workforce development; and land use, transportation, planning and infrastructure.

Development of the website was made possible by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and is a collaborative effort of the Luzerne County Housing Partnership, the Lackawanna County Housing Coalition and the Luzerne County Municipal Cooperation Commission.

The Housing Task Force is also conducting a **Housing Symposium on Wednesday, March 11 at Quality Inn, Rt. 315, Pittston.** The event will be open to professionals in the housing industry including: builders, developers, real estate professionals, and local government officials of Luzerne and Lackawanna counties. For registration information go to www.nepahousing.org or contact Marla Doddo at doddo@institutepa.org.

Keynote speaker for the event is Dr. David Crowe, Chief Economist at the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB). As chief economist, Dr. Crowe is responsible for NAHB's forecasts of housing and economic trends, survey research and analysis of the home building industry and consumer preferences as well as microeconomic analysis of government policies that affect housing.

Scholarly News

Faculty Research Symposium

The Institute's Second Annual Faculty Research Symposium is scheduled for Friday, April 3rd at Marywood University, in Scranton. The event is conducted by the Institute's Academic Advisory Council. Faculty at member institutions are encouraged to participate in this event; submission of an abstract and a statement of the mode of presentation (poster, oral presentation, performance, exhibit, etc.) is sufficient. For more information, visit www.institutepa.org, or email Marla Doddo, administrative and outreach coordinator, at doddo@institutepa.org.

Former Academic Advisory Council Chair Promoted to Dean of Humanities

Thomas Baldino, Ph.D. was recently named Wilkes University's Dean of Humanities. Baldino served as Chairman of the Academic Advisory Council since its inception in 2004. Congratulations Dr. Baldino, and thank you for all your past work for and in support of the Council. Best wishes to you in this new endeavor!

Intern Update

The Institute has hired ten student interns for the spring 2009 semester. Eight of the interns are based in our Wilkes-Barre office and two in our Scranton office.

Emily Elms, a Marketing major from the University of Scranton, and Justin Winters, a graduate student at Marywood University, are stationed in Scranton.

Nick Ebert, a Marketing major from Wilkes University, will work with the following King's College students in the Wilkes-Barre office: James Flaherty, an International Business major, Pilar Lizasoain, a Professional Writing major, Jonathan McDonough, a Business Administration major, Christine Parcher, an International Business major, Sarah Rabeau, a Psychology major, and Kimberly Verruggio, a Sociology major. In addition, Javier Diaz, a Marywood University graduate student, is working with the Institute's Housing Task Force to translate Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties' websites into Spanish.

Many thanks and best wishes to all of these exceptional students!

Institute Research

Migration Studies Released

In December 2008, the Institute issued two migration studies; updates will be issued in February 2009. The studies track population movement into and out of Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. The research findings show that from 2003 through 2008, the populations of both counties have grown through in-migration. Largely, former residents of New York, New Jersey, and other parts Pennsylvania counties account for this growth. To view the research, visit www.institutepa.org/research.

Our Mission

The mission of the Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development (the "Institute") is to assist in the revitalization of small to mid-sized cities and counties through the utilization of the our expertise and resources, including member universities, colleges, and their respective faculties and students.

The Institute serves as a resource and consultant for communities to develop more effective and efficient government, best practices, preparation of applied research, strategy development, and processes for their implementation. Based on these efforts, the Institute develops models for replication by other municipalities confronting similar challenges

Lackawanna Luzerne County Fact Book

The Education & Work Force Development and Jobs & Economy task forces recently released the 2008 Lackawanna & Luzerne County Regional Fact Book. The publication provides details about the many attributes and opportunities that exist in Lackawanna and Luzerne County. The reader will learn about living, working, playing, and learning in northeastern Pennsylvania.

The book is located at: <http://www.institutepa.org/research>.

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7 South Main Street,
Suite 201
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701
t: 570.408.9850
f: 570.408.9854

120 Wyoming Avenue,
Third Floor
Scranton, PA 18503
t: 570.207.0340
info@institutepa.org
info@institutepa..org

www.institutepa.org

Teri Ooms
Executive Director
ooms@institutepa..org

Sherry Murray
Research & Policy Analyst
murray@institutepa.org

Marla Doddo
Administrative & Outreach
Coordinator
doddo@institutepa.org

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