



# JOINT UrbanStudies CENTER

Volume 4, Issue 1

Fall 2007

**Inside this issue:**

- A Letter from the Executive Director 1
- JUSC Co-Sponsor Recent Events 2
- Two JUSC Taskforces 2
- Forge Ahead
- Joint Urban Studies Center Intern Update 3
- JUSC Set to Discuss Upcoming Costing-Out Study 3
- 2008 Indicators Report & Forum Sponsorships Information 4
- JUSC Mission Statement and Advisory Board 5

## A Letter from the Executive Director

*In the upcoming weeks, the Joint Urban Studies Center will release a study documenting Luzerne County's recent population shift.*

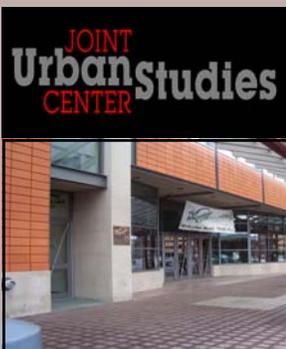
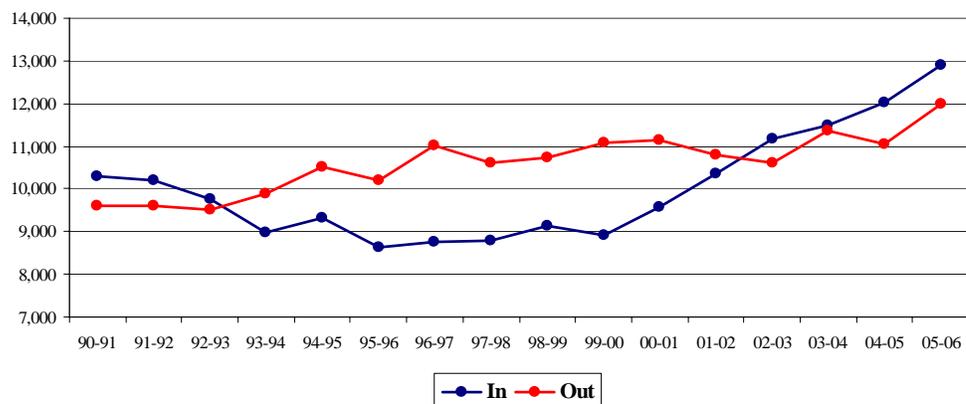
Over the last two years, Luzerne County has experienced a rare phenomenon - a rare phenomenon perceived by the region's residents, but an annual occurrence to a majority of regions throughout the United States . . . population growth. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Luzerne County experienced population growth evidenced in both the 2005 and 2006 annual estimates. While growth is minimal (30 in 2005), the important aspect is the absence of population decline - which for years has been the norm.

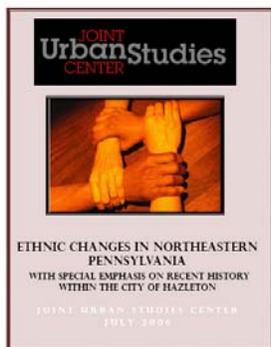
For the past several weeks, the Joint Urban Studies Center (JUSC) has conducted research in an effort to pinpoint the origin of the recent growth spurt, and understand why it is occurring. Such research has helped shape a report entitled, "The Rise of Luzerne County: *An Examination of the Origin and Future Effects of Recent Population Shifts.*" The report is scheduled to be released in late November 2007.

The report focuses on three main aspects of the recent population shift: Determining the Source, Understanding the Source, and Explaining the Source. The research is presented in a step-by-step format, leading the reader through the beginning phase of identifying the source of the growth, to the final phase of understanding how such growth will shape the region's future. The report features data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Pennsylvania Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, and Internal Revenue Service county migration data (seen below).

Once released, "The Rise of Luzerne County: *An Examination of the Origin and Future Effects of Recent Population Shifts*" may be downloaded through the "Research" section of JUSC's website at [www.urbanstudies.org](http://www.urbanstudies.org).

**In vs. Out Migration Data: Luzerne County**





## JUSC Co-Sponsors Recent Event

On Tuesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Woodlands Inn & Resort, Wilkes-Barre, JUSC co-sponsored an event entitled "HISPANICS IN THE WORKFORCE AND ECONOMY: How Demographics Are Creating a Bilingual Economy." The event was presented by Louis Nevaer, author of *The Rise of the Hispanic Market in the United States* and co-author of *HR and the New Hispanics Workforce*. In addition to JUSC, co-sponsors included the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry's Diversity Task Force, the NEPA Alliance, the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce's Diversity Task Force, and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Diversity Education Consortium. The event provided presentations and discussions focusing on the benefits of the region's growing population and economy.

## Two JUSC Taskforces Forge Ahead

In July 2007, JUSC released its follow-up report to the 2007 Lackawanna and Luzerne County Indicators Forum. The report documented the four breakout sessions held during the corresponding conference, and detailed each panel's appropriate next steps. The report also highlighted CEO and President of the Alliance for Regional Stewardship David Thornburgh's keynote remarks. The full report is available on JUSC's website at [www.urbanstudies.org](http://www.urbanstudies.org).

JUSC is now focusing on convening meetings among the four breakout session panelists and participants. Two taskforces that have recently convened include the Education & Workforce Development Taskforce and the Housing Taskforce. Both teams have begun taking the appropriate steps in achieving goals established during both the 2006 and 2007 Lackawanna and Luzerne County Indicators Forums. The following text provides an update from each of the two taskforces.

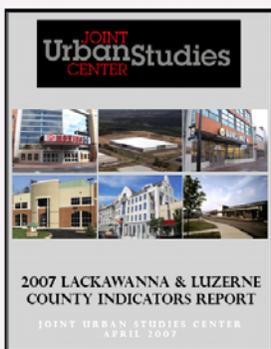
At its first meeting on September 17th, the Education & Workforce Development Taskforce identified three issues to tackle over the subsequent six to eight months, including:

- Professional development of educators for roles in economic development
- Contextual learning models
- Employer-driven training and employer participation for the emerging workforce

Along with each of these goals are specific points on which to focus, including involving superintendents, intermediate units, curriculum specialists, guidance counselors, workforce investment boards and business organizations in the Education & Workforce Development Taskforce's mission. The taskforce also requested additional research on the Commonwealth's industry clusters, as well as special initiatives focusing on work readiness certificates and pre-apprentice programs.

JUSC's Housing Taskforce convened on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Attendees included representatives from the Luzerne County Housing Partnership (LCHP), United Neighborhood Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania, the Lackawanna County Housing Coalition, and members of JUSC staff. The meeting featured discussions on an education-based housing website – a concept currently being developed by the Luzerne County Housing Partnership. JUSC pledged its assistance in making this concept a reality for both Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. JUSC staff, along with LCHP members, will attend an upcoming meeting of the Lackawanna County Housing Coalition, and, in turn, the Coalition's members will attend the next LCHP meeting. The next scheduled Housing Taskforce will focus on appropriate next steps, which will be influenced by the outcomes of both the LCHP and Lackawanna County Housing Coalition meetings.

For more information on how to join a JUSC taskforce, please contact the JUSC at: 570-408-9850



## JUSC Intern Update

During the Fall 2007 college semester, JUSC is employing the expertise of undergraduate student interns Alyson Rodgers and Drew Quinton.

Alyson is a King's College Mathematics major. This semester, she conducted research for JUSC housing research and presented her findings in meetings held with the Lackawanna County Housing Coalition and Luzerne County Partnership. In addition, she worked on the 2008 Lackawanna and Luzerne County Indicators Report – to be released in spring 2008.

Drew is a King's College Sociology major. This fall, he spent time researching several sections of the upcoming 2008 Lackawanna and Luzerne County Indicators Report. His research largely focused on the report's Education and Social Services segments.

Many thanks to Alyson and Drew for their contributions. The JUSC team wishes them the best in their future studies and career development pursuits.

For additional information on JUSC internship opportunities,  
contact Marla Doddo at:  
[doddo@urbanstudies.org](mailto:doddo@urbanstudies.org) or 570-408-9850



**Pictured above:**  
Drew Quinton, King's College



**Pictured above:**  
Alyson Rodgers, King's College

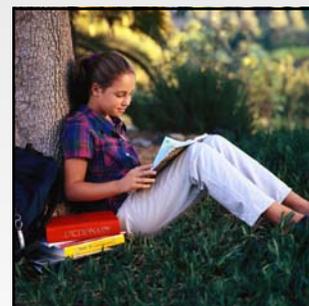
## Costing-Out Study

We have all been working diligently to address many of the concerns that affect the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton/Hazleton region, including high property and business taxes, crime, loss of jobs and the hollowing out of the region's older communities. While progress has been made, we have not been able to address a critical issue that underlies all of such efforts – quality public schools with adequate resources. There is, however, an upcoming opportunity for change.

The costing-out study – commissioned by General Assembly – released last week, provides us accurate and comprehensive information about what it takes to provide all students with the quality education they need to succeed in today's economy and our region. In addition, the General Assembly may consider legislation to reform the Commonwealth's education funding system.

Good Schools Pennsylvania and the Education Law Center is providing JUSC with briefing materials on the study and opportunities for reform. Those interested can contact the JUSC for an electronic copy. The focus is on how we can ensure that our region acts upon opportunities to secure more school funding support from Harrisburg, improve our schools, and strengthen our region.

On Tuesday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, the State Board of Education and costing-out study consultants Augenblick, Palaich and Associates will discuss the study's findings and local implications. The event, which is open to the public, will take place at 7 p.m. at the Wyoming Valley West High School, Plymouth. All are encouraged to attend and participate in the discussion.



## 2008 Indicators Report & Forum Sponsorship Information

JUSC has also begun preparing for the release and planning of its 2008 Lackawanna and Luzerne County Indicators Report and Forum. To enhance the third annual event, JUSC is seeking sponsorships. Information and sponsorship details are included below. Please contact JUSC at 570.408.9850 or at [info@urbanstudies.org](mailto:info@urbanstudies.org) with questions or to become a sponsor.

### Lackawanna & Luzerne County Indicators Report and Forum Sponsorship Packages

#### Platinum - \$5,000

- Full-page color ad on the inside front cover of the 2008 Indicators Report
- Display banner at event
- Information table at forum
- Materials inside attendee forum packets
- Welcoming remarks
- Introduction of Keynote Speaker
- 30 second PowerPoint commercial on your company (supplied by sponsor)
- Listing on sponsor page in 2008 Indicators Report
- 8 complimentary forum registrations (\$400 value)
- 10 copies of the 2008 Indicators Report (\$300 value)

#### Gold - \$3,500

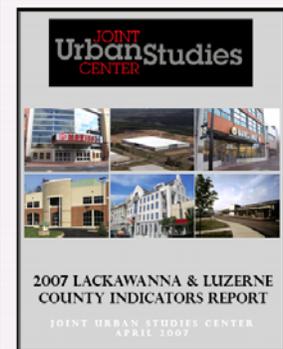
- Full-page color ad on the inside back cover of the 2008 Indicators Report
- Display banner at event
- Information table at forum
- Materials inside attendee forum packets
- Company logo included on JUSC PowerPoint presentation
- Listing on sponsor page in 2008 Indicators Report
- 5 complimentary forum registrations (\$250 value)
- 7 copies of 2008 Indicators Report (\$210 value)

#### Silver - \$2,500

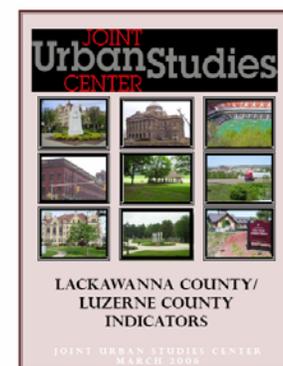
- Full-page color ad in the back section of the 2008 Indicators Report
- Materials inside attendee forum packets
- Company logo included on JUSC PowerPoint presentation
- Listing on sponsor page in 2008 Indicators Report
- 3 complimentary forum registrations (\$150 value)
- 5 copies of 2008 Indicators Report (\$150 value)

#### Bronze - \$1,000

- Half-page black & white ad in the back section of the 2008 Indicators Report
- Materials inside attendee forum packets
- Company logo included on JUSC PowerPoint presentation
- Listing on sponsor page in 2008 Indicators Report
- 2 complimentary forum registrations (\$100 value)
- 3 copies of 2008 Indicators Report (\$90 value)



For additional information on the 2008 Indicator Report & Forum, please contact the JUSC at: 570-408-9850



## URBAN INSIGHTS



7 South Main Street,  
Suite 201  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701

t: 570.408.9850

f: 570.408.9854

[info@urbanstudies.org](mailto:info@urbanstudies.org)

[www.urbanstudies.org](http://www.urbanstudies.org)

Teri Ooms  
Executive Director  
[ooms@urbanstudies.org](mailto:ooms@urbanstudies.org)

Marla Doddo  
Development Coordinator  
[doddo@urbanstudies.org](mailto:doddo@urbanstudies.org)

Joseph Boylan  
Research Analyst  
[boylan@urbanstudies.org](mailto:boylan@urbanstudies.org)

JOINT  
**UrbanStudies**  
CENTER

## JUSC Mission Statement

JUSC's mission is to assist in the revitalization of small to mid-sized cities and counties through the utilization of the center's expertise and resources. These include its member universities, colleges, and their respective faculties and students. JUSC serves as a resource and consultant for communities to develop more effective and efficient government, best practices, preparation of applied research, strategy development, and the process for its implementation. Based upon these efforts, JUSC will develop a model for replication by other small and mid-size cities confronting similar challenges.



## JUSC Advisory Board and Founder

William P. Montague  
Founder  
*Mark IV Industries*

Tim Gilmour, Ph.D.  
Chairman  
*Wilkes University*

William B. Sordoni  
Vice-Chairman  
*Sordoni Construction Company*

Thomas Baldino, Ph.D.  
Chairman Academic Council  
*Wilkes University*

Edward Boehm, Ph.D.  
*Keystone College*

John Cefaly  
*Cushman & Wakefield*

Scott Dagenais  
*M&T Bank*

Charles Davis, Ph.D.  
*Penn State Wilkes-Barre*

Jim DePolo  
*Covington Forge, Ltd.*

Jeffrey Folk, M.D.  
*Geisinger*

William Host, M.D.  
*Wyoming Valley Health Care  
Systems*

Thomas E. Lawson  
*Borton Lawson*

Thomas Leary, Ph.D.  
*Luzerne County Community College*

David Lee  
*United Way of Wyoming Valley*

Michael MacDowell, Ph.D.  
*College Misericordia*

Mike Lombardo  
*Office of Governor Ed Rendell*

Melanie Maslow Lumia  
*Maslow Lumia Bartorillo  
Advertising*

Thomas J. O'Hara, C.S.C., Ph.D.  
*King's College*

Scott Pilarz, S.J.  
*University of Scranton*

Russell Roberts  
*Bohlin Cywinski Jackson*

Thomas Romanowski  
*MELRO Corp*

Eugene Roth  
*Rosenn, Jenkins, and Greenwald*

Susan W. Shoval  
*GUARD Insurance Group*

Todd Vonderheid  
*Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of  
Business & Industry*