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The **INSTITUTE** for
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From the Executive Director

Although it seems as if we just did so, we're again gathering data for our next (and fifth) publication of the Lackawanna & Luzerne Counties Indicators Report. The annual publication highlights the changes in our region over the past five years.

This year we are pleased to announce that we will have a keynote speaker; Brian P. McGowan, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, and Chief Operating Officer for the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). McGowan has economic development experience at all levels of government and created initiatives to support economic recovery in one of the world's largest economies – California.

When we first began this publication over five years ago, many skeptics thought a report of this magnitude would not be possible; those skeptics have been proven wrong. Never before in our region has data been collected that is accessible to the public, government officials, and stakeholders alike.

Most of the indicator categories are simple and easy to understand, thus providing for many practical applications.

As this initiative has grown and word has been spread, government officials, those in business, and the non-profit world contact The Institute regularly to inquire about data from past reports and to gain insight into future data to be presented.

In past years we have had Lackawanna & Luzerne County Commissioners as panelists; providing their insight into the initiative and how they use the document in their respective county's government agencies.

The Institute's task forces are busy restructuring and are looking for members. If you have questions about involvement in any task force or inquiries about some of the past activities of each, please contact The Institute for more details.

Mark your calendars now for the Indicators Forum, scheduled for Thursday, May 20, 2009, at the Radisson at Lackawanna Station in Scranton. It's an event you won't want to miss!

Institute Research

The Institute will release new community-based research in late fall 2009. Research topics include a rebuttal on a Brookings Institution report concerning job sprawl, the annual Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties Student Assessment Report, population migration updates, and a County Business Patterns report.

Job Sprawl in Northeast Pennsylvania counters a report released by the Brookings Institution in spring 2009. An overview of Brookings methodology is used to demonstrate how its method does a disservice to the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre metro area and many other similar metro areas throughout the U.S.

Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties Student Assessment Report detail the annual results by each distinctive school district within each county. The report reviews the prior years' results and looks at the PSSA's new science testing scores.

Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties Migration Reports review the results of migration for the year ending December 2008. As the IRS data details, migration into our region is occurring at a steady pace.

The County Business Patterns Report provides the number of establishments, employee count and revenue data by industry. The data is useful for studying business composition and analyzing our region's changes over time.

Client Based Work

Client-based research this quarter has focused on a market study of multi-family housing units in several Luzerne County communities; an assessment of workforce and economic development implications of Marcellus Shale in northeastern Pennsylvania; preparation of an economic and community development component for the City of Scranton's Act 47 Recovery Plan; and an assessment of secondary, post-secondary, and continuing education needs in Wayne & Pike Counties.

Such research is proprietary in nature and involves various methodologies for completion of studies, including surveys, interviews, and electronic research. In addition, analyses include multiple statistics and longitudinal data analysis.

On September 30th, The Institute was awarded a grant by the Appalachian Regional Commission to complete statewide research on Marcellus Shale. The research includes a comprehensive household survey to establish baseline data, and to investigate the industry in Texas and Arkansas and field study in several Pennsylvania counties. To complete this project, The Institute has subcontracted with the Pennsylvania State University.

Welcome New Advisory Board Member

The Advisory Board of The Institute is pleased to have named a new board member, Frank Joanlanne of Frontier Communications. As our region continues to grow, The Institute looks for stakeholders who have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to lead our organization forward.

On behalf of The Institute's entire team, a warm welcome to Mr. Joanlanne!

Scholarly Updates

Intern Updates

This fall semester, The Institute has enjoyed working with nine interns from our partner institutions of higher education. Our interns hail from King's College, Misericordia University, the University of Scranton, and Wilkes University.

Presentations occurred at four institutions with over 20 students completing the interview phase. As this process is competitive, those selected for the fall 2009 semester completed requirements of credential review, interview, submission of work product and letters of recommendation.



L to r-Jenn Turney, Kate Shaughnessy, Megan Harrold, Nicole Vrablic, Ken Omerza



L to r-Christina Miller, Lindsay Warburton

Students selected for the fall semester include: Kate Conte, a communications major from the University of Scranton; Megan Harrold and Ken Omerza, both psychology majors from King's College; Noelle Vrablic, an English/secondary education major from King's College; Lindsay Warburton, a history major from King's College; Christine Miller, a business administration major from Misericordia University; and Jennifer Turney and Kate Shaughnessy, both justice/sociology majors from Wilkes University. We are also very pleased to be working with Scott Newton, a Wilkes University graduate student.

Each student intern is provided with a scope of work, including project details and timelines. Interns also have the opportunity to be involved in client- and community-based research, which could place them in the public - conducting intercept surveys, focus groups, interviews and/or mapping.

Students of any major are accepted into The Institute's internship program. For more details, contact Marla Doddo, doddo@institutepa.org.



Kate Conte

**Scholarly Updates
continued**

2010 Northeast Pennsylvania Faculty Research Symposium

The 2010 Northeast Pennsylvania Faculty Research Symposium will take place on Friday, April 9th at King's College. The third annual event will run from 8:30 a.m. to noon and will be held in the Sheehy-Farmer Campus Center. In an effort to showcase our higher education partners, we alternate event locations among institutions and counties.

The Institute's Academic Advisory Council is making preparations for additional panels to be instituted at this event, with one additional panel focusing on faculty/student research. Further, a best research award will be presented.

Participation by faculty members of any of The Institute's partner higher education institutions is encouraged. Last year's event had more than 20 faculty members present research.

A call for proposals was sent to each institution in early September. For information regarding this event or the call for proposals, please contact Marla Doddo at doddo@institutepa.org.

Visiting Faculty Scholar Program

The Visiting Faculty Scholar program brings faculty from the sponsoring colleges and universities to The Institute as staff (time commitment is determined by each individual institution) to conduct research in his/her area of interest and that supports The Institute's mission. Visiting scholars are invited to participate in The Institute's applied research projects and are encouraged to begin or complete their personal research agenda. The Institute publishes several annual reports that require the compilation and analysis of local and regional social, economic and political data. The Institute also conducts contract work that requires survey research and other forms of data acquisition and analysis.

For more information on this program, please contact Teri Ooms at ooms@institutepa.org.

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.

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