I am pleased to invite you to the 24th Annual Rural Community Economic Development Conference on March 6 and 7, 2013, in Peoria, Illinois.

The Rural Community Economic Development Conference brings national experts and practitioners from around the country to Illinois to focus on the issues important to rural communities. The plenary session will feature Barbara Wyckoff, Dynamica Consulting who will speak on rural wealth creation. Gardner Carrick from the Manufacturing Institute will discuss the future of manufacturing in rural communities. The role of banks in rural development will be examined by John Anderlik of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and Jeanette Tamayo will discuss economic development from the Economic Development Administration’s perspective. The plenary speakers will present follow up sessions in the afternoon.

Conference attendees will also have the opportunity to attend presentations by local practitioners from Illinois and other states who will share successful strategies, including business innovation zones, workforce development, green business development, and community broadband. Representatives from innovative communities will also share ideas that attendees can use in their home communities right away.

Register by February 15 to take advantage of the Early Bird Rate. We look forward to seeing you in Peoria on March 6 and 7.

Christopher D. Merrett
Director, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Conference Highlights

The 24th Annual Rural Community Economic Development Conference, Meeting New Challenges with Innovative Approaches, brings together both development professionals and local practitioners who have found ways to address today’s issues.

The conference will kick off with a Welcome Reception on Tuesday evening beginning at 7:00 PM. On Wednesday, the conference will open with a presentation by Lt. Governor Sheila Simon, chair of the Governor’s Rural Affairs Council, followed by overviews of the Illinois economy and successful programs in Vermont and Washington, DC.

The afternoon will feature breakout sessions on successful community development strategies and innovative practices which will be repeated to provide attendees an opportunity to attend four sessions. A buffet dinner Wednesday evening offers another networking and socializing opportunity, followed by five workshops on community and economic development Thursday morning. Each of these workshops will also be repeated, allowing participants to attend two.

Register by February 15 to receive the Early Bird rate and guarantee your spot!

Rural Community Economic Development Conference
Meeting New Challenges with Innovative Approaches

Agenda

Tuesday, March 6, 2013

7:00-9:00 PM Conference Preregistration
Reception (Cash Bar)

Wednesday, March 6, 2013

9:00-10:15 AM I. Pursuing Rural Development in a Different Environment
Moderator: Christopher D. Merrett, Director, IIRA
“A New Agenda for Rural Illinois”
Hon. Sheila Simon, Lt. Governor, State of Illinois
Chair, Governor’s Rural Affairs Council
“Rural Wealth Creation: A New Approach”
Barbara Wyckoff, Dynamica Consulting

10:15-10:30 AM Break

10:30-Noon I. Pursuing Rural Development in a Different Environment (cont.)
Moderator: Norman Walzer, Professor Emeritus, IIRA
“Roles of Banking in Future Economic Health”
John Anderlik, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
“Rural Programming in the Future from EDA’s Perspective”
Jeanette Tamayo, Economic Development Administration
“Update on Rural Partners”
Matt Johnson, Chair, Rural Partners®

12:10 AM-12:45 PM Lunch and Networking
Wednesday, March 6, 2013 (cont.)

12:45-1:15 PM  
Annual Meeting of Rural Partners®  
Moderator: Matt Johnson, Chairperson, Rural Partners®

1:30-2:15 PM and 2:25-3:10 PM  
II. Successful Community Development Strategies  
(6 concurrent sessions, 45 min. repeated once)

“Innovative Practices in Manufacturing”  
Gardner Carrick, Manufacturing Institute

“Financing Businesses in Rural Areas”  
John Anderlik, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation  
Chris Howton, Peoples National Bank, N.A.  
Don Krager, Bank and Trust Company

“Tomorrow’s Work Force Starts Here”  
Paul Calvagna, Bank and Trust Company, N.A.

“Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO)”  
Craig Lindvahl, CEO Effingham

“LaSalle Community Partnership: Innovative Intergovernmental Cooperation”  
Donald Aleksy, Steven R. Wrobleski, and Jim Quesse

“Citizen Participation in Local Government Decisions”  
Mark Hunt, BiState Regional Planning Commission  
Ron Dickerson, MTCO Communications

3:10-3:30 PM  
Networking Break

3:30-4:10 PM and 4:20-5:00 PM  
III. Innovative Community Practices  
(6 concurrent sessions, 40 min. , repeated once)

“Charles City, Iowa: Converting Local Assets into Opportunities”  
Jim Erb, Mayor, and Tom Brownlow, City Administrator

“Teen Business Innovation Zone, Milton, Pennsylvania”  
George Venios, The Improved Milton Experience

“Creating a Green Economy: Galesburg Sustainability Center”  
Eric Dilts, Galesburg Sustainability Center  
Ryan Lilly, Entrepreneurship Center Director

“Keeping Your Hometown Competitive: Ferdinand, Indiana”  
Marc Steczyk, Town Manager

“Is a Food Business Incubator Right for Your Community”  
Mary Lou Surgi, Executive Director

“Grow Highland: Community Broadband”  
Mark Latham, City Manager, Highland, Illinois

5:30-7:00 PM  
Networking and Light Dinner
Thursday, March 7, 2013

7:00-8:15 AM  Continental Breakfast
8:30-10:00 AM  IV. Workshops on Community and Economic Development
               (5 concurrent sessions, 90 min., repeated once)
               “Update on Economic Development Program Funding”
               Robin Hanna, RETAC and Panel of Funding Agencies
               “Downtown and Business District Market Analysis Toolbox”
               Bill Ryan, University of Wisconsin-Madison
               Jennifer Russell and Kathie Brown, University of Illinois-Extension
               “Main Street Program Revitalization”
               Christina Rogers, Illinois Main Street Program
               “Wealth Works Connecting Assets for Lasting Livelihoods”
               Barbara Wyckoff, Dynamica Consulting
               “Open! How to Make and Create Jobs in Your Community”
               Sally Hanley, EDC of Central Illinois

10:00-10:30 AM  Networking Break
Noon  Conference Adjourns

Registration

Early Bird Rate
The conference fee is $165.00 per person for registrations postmarked by February 15, 2013. The registration rate after February 15, 2013, and for registration at the door is $175.00 per person. The registration fee includes lunch and a “light dinner” on Wednesday, March 6; a continental breakfast on Thursday, March 7; and breaks on both days. The registration deadline is Wednesday, March 1, 2013. Register online at www.iira.org/conference/conference.asp or use the registration form provided in this mailer.

Location
Four Points by Sheraton, 500 Hamilton Boulevard, Peoria, IL 61602, (309) 674-2500 or (800) 474-2501

Lodging
Rooms at reduced rates have been set aside for conference participants at the Four Points by Sheraton. Rates per night are $77.00 (single/double). All rooms are subject to availability; to receive this rate, reservations must be made by February 15, 2013. For reservations, phone the Four Points by Sheraton at (800) 474-2501. Be sure to ask for the Rural Community Economic Development Conference rate.

Parking
Parking is available at the Four Points by Sheraton for guests staying at the hotel. Hotel guests must have parking validated at the hotel registration desk before checking out. Conference attendees not staying at the hotel can have their parking validated at the conference registration desk. Guests driving vans should call ahead to ensure that they meet garage height restrictions. Parking is also available at several nearby garages. Call the hotel at (800) 474-2501 for more information.

Questions?
Call Sandy Wittig at (309) 298-2637 or toll free at (800) 526-9943, or send an e-mail to SK-Wittig@wiu.edu.

The announcement and program are available on our website:
www.IIRA.org