



The **INSTITUTE** for  
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## News from The Institute

The 2010 Lackawanna Luzerne Counties Indicators Forum was highly successful with 100 participants attending the event at the Lackawanna Radisson on Thursday, May 20, 2010. The forum opened with a welcome address by Tim Gilmour, Advisory Board Chairman for The Institute. Gilmour detailed the indicators initiative and provided insight in to the purpose of the annual report. One of this project's purposes includes building consensus by regional leadership on which indicators are considered high priority and useful for planning purposes. The report accomplishes this goal by providing a clear picture of the region's economic, social, and environmental health. Another way to look at the usefulness of this report is as a gauge, to tell the region where it is making good progress, or conversely as a warning light in areas where additional attention may be warranted. Indicators should identify and highlight new and ongoing trends to watch, both positive and negative, which may impact the region's future . . . an early warning system. This allows the region to actively intervene in natural market forces with new initiatives or policies to direct or redirect the two counties' future. Additionally the initiative measures the region's progress over time on key economic, education, public safety, health and human services, the environment and infrastructure, which help portray our region's quality of life.

Each task force chair presented their annual report with details about the focus of their group and the accomplishments over the past year.

### **Joint Report – Jobs & Economy and Education & Workforce Development Task Force, Chris Haran, Co-chair, Tim Gilmour, Co-chair**

The task force focuses on the link between education and economy. Specifically, that the future prosperity of our region is dependent on the development of the workforce through our Pre-K – 20 system. The task force focused on providing education and information to area Superintendents. It began with an information session to Luzerne County Superintendents hosted by the Intermediate Unit. This introduction led to a follow on meeting that allowed The Institute to provide the Superintendents with a regional economic briefing, identifying trends, opportunities, and challenges. The task force is hopeful that a similar process with take place in Lackawanna County. The task force commissioned additional community based research in education. The Institute provided an updated PSSA report focusing on reading and math, science, and writing PSSAs.

### **Housing Task Force, Charlie Kasko, Chair**

The northeastern Pennsylvania regional portal site ([www.nepahousing.org](http://www.nepahousing.org)) and two sub-websites [www.luzernehousing.org](http://www.luzernehousing.org) and [www.lackawannahousing.org](http://www.lackawannahousing.org) have now been up for one year. Each county site provides educational information and resources consumers and professionals. Each website has a “blog” and a “wiki” both of which offer interactive options education and information sharing Further, readers can also request confidential, free technical assistance from housing professionals. There is no advertising on any of the sites. In 2009, a complementary Spanish language website was introduced. Site traffic continues to increase. Combined, all three sections of the site, we are averaging over 350 visits per month. Housing newsletters have been released. Newsletters may be accessed from the websites.

The Housing Task Force is in the process of creating a policy statement to focus on regional planning with specific emphasis on housing.

(Indicators Forum continued on page 2)

Indicators Forum continued

**PLUTI (Planning, Land Use, Transportation, & Infrastructure Task Force, Tom Lawson, Chair**  
PLUTI focused on the Lackawanna-Luzerne Counties Joint Comprehensive Plan and Long-Range Transportation Plan which are being prepared as a single, precedent-setting, two-county Regional Plan, the first in Pennsylvania. The Institute served on the steering committee during the course of plan preparation. The land use element of the Plan establishes a framework to focus investment in existing urban centers while avoiding sprawl and protecting the natural, agricultural, and cultural resources of the region. The future of the two counties is structured on a framework of priority areas for targeted growth, infill areas for consolidation and stabilization, and conservation areas for non-urban uses. Opportunities to connect priority areas include corridors for light rail and/or bus rapid transit (BRT). All elements of the new Plan are designed to enhance mixed-use and infill development, redevelopment of Brownfields and other underutilized sites, energy efficiency, and economic revitalization to assure the region’s “livability” for current and future generations. The task force also support HR 1806.

**Health and Healthcare Task Force, Karen Murphy, Chair**

The Health and Healthcare Task Force is new and will be conducting its first meeting in fall 2010.

Keynote speakers for the Indicators Forum included David Crowe, Chief Economist at the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB); Kathryn Klaber, President and Executive Director, Marcellus Shale Coalition’s (MSC); and Brian McGowan, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, and Chief Operating Officer for the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). Each keynote provided insight into their respective organizations and detailed information about the current economy as it relates to housing, the Marcellus shale play in the Commonwealth, and job growth.

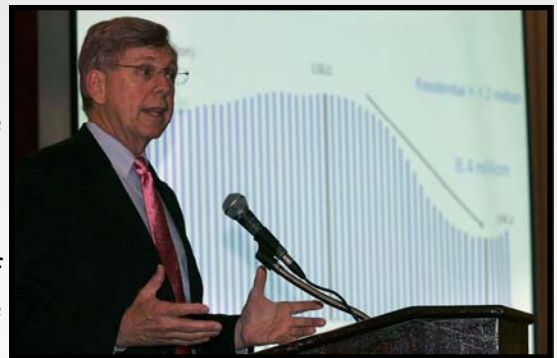
The 2010 Lackawanna Luzerne Counties Indicator Report can be found at: [www.institutepa.org](http://www.institutepa.org).

**Housing Task Force’s  
Second Annual Housing Symposium**

The Housing Task Force held it’s Second Annual Housing Symposium on Thursday, May 20, 2010, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Radisson Scranton. This event dovetailed off the Indicators Forum which was scheduled at the same location earlier in the day.

Dr. David, Crowe, Chief Economist at the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) was keynote speaker at the symposium. Crowe’s presentation detailed national, state, and regional housing outlooks.

Elizabeth Hersh, Executive Director, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania provided a presentation. Hersch discussed the foreclosure crisis, finding homes working families can afford to rent or buy, and a discussion on how large a role the state should play in providing incentives for construction or rehabilitation properties.



Keynote speaker, Dr. David Crowe

Hersh also detailed the creation of a state Housing Trust Fund to encourage development of more working class homes. This is scheduled to be voted on in The PA House of Representatives.

## Community Based Research

**Population Trends in Lackawanna & Luzerne Counties** was released in mid May. Analysis for this report was conducted using data provided by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS uses address changes reported on tax forms to gauge migration movements to and from state counties.

Findings and IRS data sets were referenced from the 2008 final reports on Lackawanna and Luzerne counties, published by The Institute. Government statistics on birth and death rates for the two counties over the past two decades were also used. This data was produced by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Using the information, net increases and decreases in the total populations of Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties were then calculated for each year between 1990 and 2008. Results showed that overall population of each county was on the decline from the mid-90's to the early 2000's.

Since then, both counties have maintained their population levels and even demonstrated some growth. Further analysis of migration and birth rate trends indicates that the counties may begin to see future population growth.

To read the full report go to: <http://www.institutepa.org/Research/populationtrends0510.pdf>

**An Analysis of the Births & Deaths in Lackawanna & Luzerne Counties** was also released in May.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the number of births and deaths, and determine whether or not the population is increasing or decreasing in each of the counties analyzed. This study reviews the records for birth by gender and race from the years 1990-2008. The report also identifies the deaths by gender and race through the year 2008. For purposes of this study only three race categories were included: White (Caucasian), Black (African American) and Other (incorporates all other races).

Data used in this study were derived from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Pennsylvania Department of Health's, Bureau of Health Statistics and Research. The full report can be found at: <http://www.institutepa.org/Research/birhanddeath2010.pdf>

<b>Lackawanna County</b>		
<b>Birth and Death Records 1990-2008</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Births</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
1990	2,664	2,725
1991	2,585	2,822
1992	2,438	2,757
1993	2,592	2,787
1994	2,424	2,839
1995	2,295	2,727
1996	2,291	2,854
1997	2,146	2,933
1998	2,193	2,642
1999	2,116	2,946
2000	2,147	2,944
2001	2,244	2,915
2002	2,043	2,820
2003	2,149	2,898
2004	2,254	2,751
2005	2,260	2,829
2006	2,288	2,700
2007	2,360	2,613
2008	2,315	2,612

<b>Luzerne County</b>		
<b>Birth and Death Rates 1990-2008</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Birth</b>	<b>Death</b>
1990	3,793	4,211
1991	3,708	4,207
1992	3,650	4,135
1993	3,488	4,245
1994	3,503	4,406
1995	3,351	4,446
1996	3,143	4,435
1997	3,057	4,399
1998	3,119	4,373
1999	3,028	4,424
2000	3,010	4,482
2001	2,936	4,461
2002	2,995	4,322
2003	3,061	4,522
2004	3,125	4,193
2005	3,136	4,205
2006	3,188	4,058
2007	3,298	4,102
2008	3,191	4,107

## Scholarly Updates

### Student Interns Summer 2010

Summer 2010 interns hail from King's College, Wilkes University, and the University of Scranton. Our Wilkes-Barre office has Brandon Hector, a sophomore from Wilkes who is a Psychology major. From King's College is Clyde Miller, a junior who is a Political Science, Professional Writing major.

Our Scranton office has Sylvia Szerszen who is currently in the Masters in Health Administration program at the University of Scranton.

All three students were chosen through The Institute's highly competitive process which requires candidates to submit a resume, interview, and provide writing samples and letters of recommendation. Students from one of The Institute's nine higher education partners are eligible to apply. No specific major is required for consideration in this program. For more information about internships contact Marla Doddo at [doddo@institutepa.org](mailto:doddo@institutepa.org).



*L to r: Clyde Miller & Brandon Hector*

### Third Annual Northeastern Pennsylvania Faculty Symposium

Proceedings from the Third Annual Northeastern Pennsylvania Faculty Symposium can now be viewed on The Institute's website. The symposium took place on Friday, April 9, 2010. Over 25 faculty representing The Institute's nine higher education partners presented at this event. Additionally four keynote presentations by Dean's of regional graduate programs detailed their respective programs.

To view the proceedings go to [www.institutepa.org](http://www.institutepa.org).

For more information about any of the Institute's programs for students or faculty contact: Marla Doddo at:  
[doddo@institutepa.org](mailto:doddo@institutepa.org) or by telephone at: 570.408.9850.

**The Institute** provides research, technical assistance, and facilitation and convening services to:

- analyze components for regional prosperity
- create state and local government development strategies
- market studies
- feasibility studies
- impact report

Research areas include:

- demographics
- economic development projects and planning
- community development
- education
- workforce development
- health and healthcare
- best practices
- innovation indicators
- economic indicators
- tourism and arts & culture

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