



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

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From the Executive Director

The Institute continues to grow, as we branch out with our new Lackawanna County location (as of January 2009). As such, we are pleased to announce several new Advisory Board members, including: Heather Acker, Gentex Corp.; Robert D'Alessandri, The Commonwealth Medical College; Patrick A. Fricchione Jr., Simplex Industries, Inc.; Brian Grove, Chesapeake Energy; Robert Luciani, Prudential Retirement Services; Mary Ellen Monacelli, Sanofi Pasteur; and Scott Weiland, Scranton Chamber of Commerce.

As you see, the new Advisory Board members largely come from business and industry, non-profits, and higher education institutions in Lackawanna County. Each new member brings to our Advisory Board a vast amount of experience and expertise. On behalf of the Institute's entire staff, we welcome all of you and appreciate your commitment to the Institute, our mission and this region.

We are also excited to announce that that The Commonwealth Medical College has become one of our higher education partners.

In other news, The Institute's fourth annual Lackawanna/Luzerne Counties Indicators Report was released at a forum conducted at Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs on May 14, 2009. Highlights included the presentation of the 2009 report to approximately 80 attendees, along with task force chair reports, and a panel discussion led by Lackawanna and Luzerne County Commissioners, Maryanne Petrilla, Corey O'Brien, and Steve Urban.

More information about the forum, including the abstracts, will be available on The Institute's website in late August. The full report will also be available online this September.

Institute Research

The Institute recently released a new white paper on commuter rail.

The Lackawanna Cut-off Rail Restoration Project includes development of a commuter rail line running from Pennsylvania's Poconos region to Hoboken, New Jersey, where a transfer line will take passengers into Manhattan. Initially envisioned to begin service in 2007, the project is moving forward with collaborative efforts by the State of New Jersey and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to secure funding for a commuter rail line.

The Institute will release additional new white papers in the early fall on home rule and population growth in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties.

Luzerne County is beginning a study process on home rule. Our white paper focuses on defining home rule and its processes.

Data for Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties indicate that, on average, outward migration has been greater than inward migration over a seventeen-year-period from 1990 to 2007. Death rates have also been consistently higher than birth rates over the period, resulting in negative population growth for both counties. Data also shows, however, that such trends may be reversing and may result in long-term population growth.

Task Forces Plan for Upcoming Year

The chairs of the Education & Workforce Development; Jobs & Economy; Land Use, Infrastructure and Transportation; and Housing Task Forces will meet in August to discuss goals for their respective committees in the upcoming year.

Each task force meets quarterly to discuss the specific goals established by each committee and progress and developments surrounding such goals. To join any of The Institute's task forces, contact Marla Doddo at: doddo@institutepa.org



Task Force Chairs (l-r) Chris Haran, Jobs & Economy & Education & Workforce Development; Tom Lawson, Land Use, Infrastructure & Transportation; Charlie Kasko, Housing; and Tim Gilmour Jobs & Economy & Education & Workforce Development

Scholarly Updates

Intern Updates

This summer semester has been an extremely busy one, with a record number of student interns (fourteen) working with The Institute. The interns came from six of The Institute's eight higher education partner institutions, and each intern brought a diverse skill set and diverse academic disciplines.

Our Lackawanna County office currently has six interns including: Jolene Crambo, University of Scranton, marketing major; Melissa Davitt, University of Scranton, accounting major; Robert Suski, Marywood University, communications major; John Walker, University of Scranton, finance & economics major; Qing Wei, Marywood University, accounting major; and Virginia Wilmarth, University of Scranton, finance major.

Our Luzerne County interns include: Jennifer Calaide, King's College, political science major; Daniel Elbich, PSU Wilkes-Barre, psychology major; Jill Juka, University of Scranton, mathematics major; Shandra Kisailus, University of Scranton, management major; Kurt Kukliwicz, Wilkes University, computer information systems/biology major; Dalia Matos, King's College, international business major; Jennifer Mines, Misericordia University, mathematics major; and Heidi Ruckno, Marywood University, communications major.

Student interns successfully conducted survey work, data entry and analysis, project coordination, research, writing and editing.

Many thanks to each of our interns and best wishes in your future endeavors!



Luzerne County Interns: (l-r) Dalia Matos, Daniel Elbich, Shandra Kisailus, Jill Juka, Jennifer Mines, Jennifer Calaide, Heidi Ruckno, Kurt Kisailus

Contact Marla Doddo for information regarding internships at:

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Scholarly Updates continued

Faculty Research Symposium abstracts will be available on The Institute's website in late August. Over 20 faculty members presented their research at this event, which was held in May. Faculty represented The Institute's eight higher education partners and presented on a variety of diverse topics.

PPL Supports Indicators Initiative



Left to right: Sherry Tracewski, Policy & Research Analyst, The Institute; Teri Ooms, Executive Director, The Institute; Rich Beasley, PPL.

Institute Featured in Pocono Business Journal

The Institute was featured in the July edition of the Pocono Business Journal. The Institute provided the Journal with a Recession Tracker on Carbon, Pike, Monroe and Wayne Counties, which detailed the region's unemployment status.

For the latest edition of the Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties Recession tracker, go to:
www.institutepa.org/tracker

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 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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