The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development is pleased to announce the release of the 2011 Lackawanna/Luzerne Counties Indicators Report. This informational annual report will be released at the annual Indicators Forum on May 19th. The event will take place at Mohegan Sun Casino at Pocono Downs in Wilkes-Barre. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. The event concludes at noon. Breakfast is included.

This year marks the sixth consecutive release of the report. The report provides an analytical snapshot of key information gathered from dozens of data sources. Its purpose is to stimulate dialogue to bring about action items to move the region forward through a comprehensive understanding of where the bi-county region has been, where it currently stands and where it is heading. The report covers 120 plus critical indicators for Lackawanna and Luzerne counties.

A full copy of the 2011 Indicators Report ($30 value) is provided to each forum attendee.

The Indicators Forum will highlight key indicators. Leaders from The Institute’s five task forces will present reports on the progress made in the prior year on their respective policy agendas. A panel of County Commissioners from Lackawanna and Luzerne counties will provide further insight on the report’s findings. A question and answer session will follow.

Sponsors of this year’s event include:
Frontier Communication Corp. Mohegan Sun
Luzerne County M&T Bank
Scranton Area Foundation Willary Foundation
Sanofi Pasteur Wells Fargo
PA Dept. of Community & Economic Development

To register for the event, visit www.institutepa.org.
Wilkes University has established The Institute for Energy & Environmental Research (IEER), through a grant and partnership of NETL and URS. King’s College and the Earth Conservancy are partners in this endeavor. Its mission is to help the community achieve consensus leading to sustainable, environmental and sound public policy on energy issues pertaining to natural gas drilling. This mission is accomplished through applied research, innovative education, and public outreach. The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development has joined the consortium to provide policy and other Marcellus research.

A website has been developed as a regional clearinghouse for energy and environmental research related to Marcellus Shale. Information pertaining to surface water and subsurface water data, land leasing, ecological impacts, public opinion and impacts on municipalities and much more can be found by visiting the website at: energy.wilkes.edu.

The policy developed by The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development can be found on the site.

Additional Marcellus Shale research is available at The Institute’s website located at: www.institutepa.org.

The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development was selected to present its findings on Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling to Governor Corbett’s Marcellus Shale Advisory Committee, presided over by Lieutenant Governor Jim Cawley.

On March 25, Executive Director Teri Ooms presented The Institute’s research on natural gas drilling impacts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. More than thirteen representatives from business and industry and four representatives from environmental and conservation groups, as well as the Lieutenant Governor Jim Cawley, listened intently to the data and analysis provided by The Institute. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

Only one other research group was selected to present at the first meeting of the governor’s committee.
Dr. Crowe to Speak at the 2011 Housing Symposium

The fifth annual Luzerne County Housing Symposium is scheduled for Thursday, June 30th from 8:30 a.m. through 10:30 a.m. at the Quality Inn & Suites in Wilkes-Barre. Cost is $20 and includes a breakfast buffet.

Dr. David Crowe, Chief Economist and Sr. Vice President at the National Association of Home Builders will be a featured speaker. Dr. Crowe is an expert in housing and economic trend forecasting. Dr. Crowe is also a leader in local economic impact analysis as it relates to home building. Crowe’s research includes home ownership trends, tax issues, demographics, government mortgage insurance, and local land use ordinance impacts of housing in local economies.

The Institute is proud to sponsor this educational event along with the Pennsylvania Economy League. The event is a joint effort between The Luzerne County Housing Partnership (LCHP); The Building Industry Association (BIA) of Northeastern Pennsylvania and The Lackawanna Home Builder’s Association.

A registration form for the symposium is found on page four of this newsletter and is available at The Institute’s website at: www.institutepa.org.

Fourth Annual Northeastern Pennsylvania Faculty Research Symposium Awards

The Institute hosted its fourth annual Northeastern Pennsylvania Faculty Symposium on April 15th at the University of Scranton. More than 30 faculty and student researchers presented at the event and over 50 people were in attendance.

The event highlights the region’s gifted academia and student researchers.

The Academic Advisory Council bestowed the Best Paper Award to Dr. Kingsley Banya of Misericordia University, whose paper was entitled Where are the Minority Faculty? The Hidden Curricula as an Impediment to Faculty Position.

Winners of the Best Student Faculty Research award where Dr. Alexander Dawoody and student Bo Hoban of Marywood University, whose research highlighted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of drug and alcohol treatment services in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Papers were judged on clarity of expression and organization; depth of rigorous thought and research; and recommendations for significant improvements to quality of life.
The Building Industry Association of Northeastern PA in Conjunction with The Lackawanna Home Builders Association Presents: The 2011 Northeastern Pennsylvania Housing Symposium Featuring Guest Speaker Dr. David Crowe, National Association of Home Builders Chief Economist

When: June 30 from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
at the Joint General Membership Meeting

Where: Quality Inn & Suites
880 Kidder Street
Wilkes-Barre 18702

Costs: $20 per person; includes breakfast buffet

RSVP: Shelly Harlander
Harlander@institutepa.org
(570) 408-9850

Make checks payable to:
The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development
7 South Main St., Suite 201
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701

Person(s) attending:__________________________________________________________

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Telephone:__________________________ Email address:_____________________________

Method of payment (circle one) check Master Card Visa Discover American Express

Card Number:__________________________________________ Exp. Date___________________

Signature__________________________________________________________  *RSVP by June 25, 2011
The Institute is currently recruiting interns from its nine partner institutions for the Fall 2011 semester.

During the spring semester, the Institute attended several employment/ internship fairs to recruit students for the summer and fall 2011 semesters.

Spring 2011 interns from Kings College and Wilkes University assisted with composing policy statements and positions on behalf of The Institute. Interns also worked on Marcellus Shale database updates, research for the annual Indicators Report and literature reviews for community-based projects.

Students of any major are considered for these positions. Positions are available in both the Lackawanna County office located in Scranton, or the Luzerne County office located in Wilkes-Barre.

For information on internship opportunities contact Shelly Harlander at Harlander@institutepa.org.

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Source: Tourism Economics

Tourism visitor spending figures for Northeastern Pennsylvania are available in the 2011 Northeastern Pennsylvania Indicators report to be released by The Institute May 19th.

Tourism is a significant regional economic asset and is increasingly cited in regional economic strategies. Recreational activities and leisure are one source of visitor spending. Conventions and business travel also contribute to visitor spending.

According to the data, Lackawanna County has seen an increase in visitor spending since 2005. The county experienced its highest revenue from tourism and visitor spending in 2008.

Luzerne County has also seen an increase in visitor spending since 2005. Luzerne County’s highest revenue years from tourism and visitor spending were 2007 and 2008.

Further details and comprehensive information on regional demographics, jobs and industry, education, social services, civic engagement, housing, local government and healthcare will be available at the 2011 Indicators Forum on May 19th at the Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs in Wilkes-Barre.
Task Force Policy Analyses

The Institute’s five task forces have completed their yearly review and analysis of public policy as it relates to Northeastern Pennsylvania. The policy statements in their entirety will be provided at The Institute’s Indicators Report and Forum on May 19th at the Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs in Wilkes-Barre. It will also be published on The Institutes website at www.institutepa.org proceeding the event.

Policy positions are used to deepen understanding of regional issues, develop goals and document benchmarks by which to measure progress toward stated goals.

Public policies examined include:

- The Bi-county Comprehensive Plan
- Regional Health Care Delivery Systems
- Regional Housing Planning
- Regional Planning and Career Preparedness
- Regional Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Curricula

The significance of The Institute’s task forces and policy analyses are manifold. Task forces are pivotal in priority-setting processes. They provide recommendations for decision-making. Further, they are instrumental in obtaining views of community leaders, raising the level of understanding in the community and identifying potential for economic diversification which may positively impact the region’s future economy. Task force policy analyses also examine and disseminate information on regional quality of life and educational conditions.

Each year taskforce policy positions are presented at the Indicators Forum where regional planners and policy makers convene.

For further information on The Institute’s five task forces visit www.institutepa.org or contact Shelly Harlander at Harlander@institutepa.org.

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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 reports

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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