

Pickens Business Assistance Symposium Connects Small Business Owners with Services

Ray Farley, director of Alliance Pickens, often hears questions from business owners asking for help developing business plans or getting a loan.

"There are a lot of entities out there on the local, state, and federal levels that exist to assist the business owner," Farley said. "And people are just simply not aware of them."

In response, Alliance Pickens hosted a Business Assistance Symposium on March 1st at Clemson University's Madren Center. Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, Fort Hill Natural Gas and Duke Energy also sponsored the event.

"The purpose of the day is to help businesses in Pickens County to immediately become more profitable by knowing what help is out there for them and how to access that assistance," Farley said. Representatives of 31 organizations participated in the symposium, giving short presentations to explain their services and how they assist business owners. Attendees also had the opportunity to get direct and immediate assistance by meeting the speakers at information tables around the room.

Over 60 participants learned about programs dedicated to helping businesses prosper, such as the Small Business Development Center, Venture Capital Development (DoC), SC Launch, and the SC Women's Business Center.

Three representatives from the ACOG showcased the wide range of services offered by the agency to support economic development and small



business in the region. Dave Mueller, Special Projects and Loan Fund Director of ACOG and Chief Operating Officer of ADC, presented information on the types of public funds financing available through the Appalachian Development Corporation and other government programs. His remarks concentrated on small businesses and how to go about accessing the public monies that are available.

Dirk Reis, ACOG Grants Services Director, explained that, while small businesses were not generally eligible for direct federal grants, they could be the beneficiary of grants awarded to construct public facilities such as water, sewer, and roads. Dirk encouraged those business owners in attendance to contact the local economic development office if they had needs in those areas.

Carol Andersen, Information Services Director, enumerated tools that aid decisions in starting, locating and expanding a business. She highlighted publications such as the Pickens County Profile and custom services including Demographic Reports. Of particular interest were the online InfoMentum ser-

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Mayor Elaine Harris of Pacolet Honored



Mayor Harris is shown with Governor Mark Sanford and Commerce Secretary Joe Taylor after receiving the Rural Leadership Award.

Mayor Elaine Harris of Pacolet was one of six outstanding South Carolina individuals and organizations honored in March at the Department of Commerce's Rural Summit held in North Charleston. The awards were presented at an annual event at which rural community leaders, economic developers, state officials, and specialists from across the world share ideas, experiences, and practical knowledge to improve rural South Carolina.

Mayor Harris received the Rural Leadership Award, which is given to an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and addressed issues of both short and long-term significance to community growth. Noted for being a "spark plug" in the Town of Pacolet, Harris was honored for her efforts in bringing the town council and citizens together to work for a revitalized community.

ACOG staff nominated Mayor Harris for her award, and the Council of Governments is very pleased to work with an elected official of her very high caliber and limitless energy.

Development Corporation News

The demand for SBA 504 loan financing continues to be extremely high.

The Appalachian Development Corporation is a Certified Development Corporation of the Small Business Administration, with the ability to provide this financing statewide. The SBA 504 loan program provides long-term, fixed rate, subordinate financing for the acquisition or renovation of fixed assets, which would include land, building and equipment.



Sierra Custom Doors (Tewell Industries), cabinet makers in Greenville and Greer, used the ARC 504 business loan program to assist in purchasing land, a building and equipment.

The SBA portion of project financing is limited to 30% to 40% of the total project cost, with a commercial bank providing 50% and a borrower 10% to 20%, depending on the particular circumstances. Some of the ADC's recent 504 loan approvals are as follows:

A request of \$589,000 was approved for Lawrence Fabrication, LLC for funding through the ADC's SBA 504 program. The ADC loan, along with \$815,000 through First National Bank of the South, will be used for the purchase of production facilities and equipment located in Simpsonville. Lawrence Fabrication is a metal fabrication operation, involving primarily stainless steel and aluminum.

Also, recently approved was a loan for Planet Compact, Inc., for \$298,000 through the SBA 504 program. This loan will be used with \$365,000 in funding from Community-

South Bank & Trust. These loans will be used for the purchase of land, building and equipment in Boiling Springs. Planet Compact sells, rents, and services small construction equipment.

The ADC also approved \$210,000 in SBA 504 funding for Step-pin' Out Dance Studio, which will be made in conjunction with a \$250,000 loan from CommunitySouth Bank & Trust. The funds will be used for the purchase of land, building and equipment to outfit a new dance studio for the 14-year-old business located in Anderson.

If you know of a possible loan situation that may benefit from low interest, fixed rate, gap financing, please contact David Mueller or George Long at The Appalachian Development Corporation at (864) 242-9733.

Aging, Disability and Resource Center

An ADRC (Aging, Disability and Resource Center) is:

- A **visible and trusted place** in the community where people can get information and counseling on all available long term support options;
- A **single point of entry** to public long term support services that **enables** people to make informed decisions and provides **streamlined access** to services; and
- A **partnership** between agencies to assist consumers and provide follow-up to ensure access to services.

ADRCs create a single, coordinated system of information and access

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CDBG Funds for Affordable Housing



The Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, administered through the S. C. Department of Commerce, has provided funds for affordable housing projects since the state began administering the program in 1982. The vast majority of these funds have been used to undertake housing rehabilitation projects in both small towns and in most counties. However, a change in this year's CDBG program will limit affordable housing projects to in-fill locations within in-town neighborhoods near business centers. The program will encourage the development of vacant land or redevelopment of blighted properties that are appropriate for revitalization.

Projects may involve, but are not limited to, multiple types of housing activities such as rehabilitation, repair, demolition, clearance, replacement of blighted structures, home ownership, or housing counseling. Construction of infrastructure may accompany housing activities where necessary to achieve the outcome.

There is **\$3,000,000 available for this program** this year, with a maximum grant amount of \$500,000. Applications are due on September 24, 2007. For more information, or to discuss a potential project, please call **Dirk Reis, Grant Services Director**, at the Appalachian COG.



Ombudsman Corner



Long Term Care Residents—A Question of Basic Rights

Every day, friends and family of nursing facility patients call ACOG's Long Term Care Ombudsman staff seeking help for loved ones. Of the many serious and heart wrenching questions received, one of the most frequent involves the "rights" of long term care residents and patients. Do residents have rights? The answer is emphatically "Yes."

In 1987 former President Ronald Reagan signed into law the *Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA)*. This was a major federal law that changed the standards for nursing home facilities and raised the level of care for long term residents. Every nursing home and long term care home receiving State and or Federal funding must now adhere to *OBRA* requirements.

Of the many titles, chapters, and subchapters in the *OBRA* requirements, Title 42, chapter 7, subchapter XIX.1396r (*Requirements for nursing facilities, Resident's Rights*) addresses patient rights. *OBRA* rights address privacy, freedom from restraint, free choices, needs and other basic issues. In addition each nursing home and each continuing long term care facility must by law have a *Notice of Rights* visible and accessible to each resident. In summary, a resident's rights include:

- Emphasis on a resident's quality of life and quality of care;
- New expectations that each resident's ability to walk, bathe, and perform other activities of daily living will be maintained or improved, absent medical reasons;
- A resident assessment process leading to the development of an individualized care plan;
- Seventy-five (75) hours of training and testing of paraprofessional staff;
- Rights to remain in the nursing home, absent non-payment, dangerous resident behaviors, or significant changes in a resident's medical condition;
- New opportunities for potential and current residents with mental retardation or mental illnesses for services inside and outside a nursing home;
- A right to safely maintain or bank personal funds with the nursing home;
- Rights to return to the nursing home after a hospital stay or an overnight visit with family and friends
- The right to choose a personal physician and to access medical records;
- The right to organize and participate in a resident or family council;
- The right to be free of unnecessary and inappropriate physical and chemical restraints;
- Uniform certification standards for Medicare and Medicaid homes;
- Prohibitions on turning to family members to pay for Medicare and Medicaid services; and
- New remedies to be applied to certified nursing homes that fail to meet minimum federal standards.

To receive a copy of a resident's/patient's rights under *OBRA*, please call Greg Taylor, Assistant Long Term Care Ombudsman at ACOG, at 864-242-9733 or e-mail at Taylor@scacog.org



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WorkLink to Host April Job Fairs—Companies Encouraged to Exhibit

WorkLink is encouraging companies from Anderson, Oconee and Pickens Counties to connect with prospective employees at two upcoming job fairs, scheduled for April 24th and 25th at Clemson University's Littlejohn Coliseum. At WorkLink's First Annual Adult and Youth Job Fairs, employers and participants may take advantage of expanded amenities not typically seen at other job fairs, including:

- Designated interview areas
- Workshops on topics such as resume writing
- Internet access
- Job application assistance
- WorkKeys portable lab
- Employer lounge
- Employer-led workshops

The job fair scheduled for April 24th is targeted at companies hiring adult employees of all skill levels. Companies will be present to hire in a number of job categories such as assembly and warehousing, nurse assistants and other healthcare positions, and service industry positions. The April 25th job fair will focus on companies hiring young people and seasonal employees. Job categories will include retail and service industry positions, summer help, and many others.

The cost to companies wishing to exhibit is only \$25 per booth. For more information, companies may complete the form available at http://www.worklinkweb.com/pdf/Worklink_jobfairs.pdf, or call Laura Bickley at the Anderson Employment Security Commission at 864-226-6273, Ext. 397.

For general information on the fairs or on WorkLink, please visit the WorkLink web site at www.worklinkweb.com.

History and Update of the Family Caregiver Support Program

Six years ago ten people across the State of South Carolina were charged with the responsibility of being Family Caregiver Advocates for the various regions of the state. In the six-county Appalachian region, one person was assigned to serve over 25 percent of the state's population age 60 and older. Since that time, growth of this population group has been tremendous.

Since this was a federal program being interpreted by each state, the possibilities seemed endless, and so were the number of meetings and amounts of information endowed upon those ten people. Title III E was succinctly written to allow maximum flexibility to the states in interpreting how to advocate for seniors in a variety of settings across the country. The law basically says:

State agencies will work with the area agencies on aging and community and service provider organizations to provide support services, including information and assistance to caregivers, counseling, support groups and respite and other home and community-based services to families caring for their frail older members. The National Family Caregiver Support Program also recognizes the needs of grandparents who are caregivers of grandchildren and other older individuals who are relative caregivers of children who are age 18 and under.

With those parameters, the advocates sought to hammer out ways to fulfill the wishes of those who crafted the law. We have also been fortunate to receive continued and slowly growing funding.

After six very formative years, the advocates of this state can proudly point to many accomplishments for the aging population we serve. In the Upstate there are now two full-time advocates and one part-time administrative assistant, who work to provide the best

services possible to this region. As of March 2007, we have served over 611 clients this fiscal year (July 2006 - June 2007). Of this number, 560 were adult aging clients and 51 were grand kin caregivers. There is a waiting list of approximately 210 whose needs have not yet been addressed, but are anticipated to be addressed before the fiscal year ends. Our numbers continue to grow, and as we further develop our network of referral

sources from across the region, more requests flow in. In all, we anticipate

easily serving over a thousand people with information alone during this fiscal year. In addition to serving individual clients, the two advocates continue to do presentations and participate in community outreach as opportunities present themselves in the region.

If you would like further information regarding the Family Caregiver Support Program, please feel free to contact Debra Brown or Sam Wiley, P. O. Box 6668, Greenville, SC 29606 Or 30 Century Circle, Greenville, SC 29607; phone: 864-242-9733, toll free: 800-925-4077; Fax: 864-242-6957; e-mails: brown@scacog.org or swiley@scacog.org



Pendleton's Corridor Overlay Design Guidelines



The Town of Pendleton is one step closer to having corridor overlay design guidelines in place. The Planning Commission, assisted by ACOG staff, has developed a draft set of guidelines that were submitted to town council for review. The Town of Pendleton hopes to use these guidelines to maintain the unique character of their community. The guidelines will preserve the character of downtown and the gateway corridors coming into the community. Additional benefits of design guidelines include enhancing and protecting property values while promoting development.

Development of the corridor guidelines was initiated by town council, who identified preserving the unique qualities of Pendleton as one of their top priorities. The Planning Commission, with assistance from the ACOG staff, has worked on developing the guidelines over the last six months. They provide a narrative and visual definition of the design requirements and are meant to help achieve good design that is respectful of existing neighborhoods, but not a certain stylistic result. Future development in the design overlay districts will be required to adhere to the design guidelines that will be included in the overall development application and review process. Town council will begin review of the guidelines in May and must have two readings before final approval. For more information, please contact the Town of Pendleton or Jennifer Vissage with the Council of Governments.

City of Pickens—Selected for Small Towns Assistance

The City of Pickens has been selected for participation in a technical assistance program designed to aid and improve small municipal gov-



As part of the Small Towns Assistance Program, ACOG staff recently facilitated a strategic planning retreat with the Pickens City Council.

ernments. The program, in its sixth year, is being sponsored by the Appalachian Regional Commission and is being managed by the Appalachian Council of Governments.

ACOG has already conducted a needs assessment study for the City and is developing a customized work



During the all-day planning session, the Pickens City Council developed short term and future plans for the municipality.

program to provide practical help in problem areas. In the past month, ACOG staff facilitated an all-day strategic planning retreat for the city council

to establish a set of prioritized short term and long term goals for the City.

Previous program participants have utilized ACOG services to receive utility rate studies, computer programming, business license ordinance updates, council training, land use planning, budgeting assistance and other much needed help.

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for **seniors and adults with physical disabilities** seeking long term care by minimizing confusion, enhancing individual choice, and supporting informed decision making.

ADRCs:

- **make it easier** for older individuals and adults with physical disabilities to access health and social supports;
- **help** persons stay healthy and active in their communities;
- **support** families in their efforts to care for their loved ones at home and in the community; and
- **streamline** eligibility for seniors and adults with physical disabilities by:
 - simplifying intake, eligibility screening and determination processes;
 - integrating and coordinating the process between programs and agencies;
 - targeting individuals who are at imminent risk of being institutionalized; and
 - ensuring that consumers understand their choices.

Background of ADRC Initiative

- The ADRC is an initiative grants-based program, announced in March



2003 as a **first-ever partnership** between the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Center for Medicaid/Medicare Services (CMS).

- **South Carolina was one of the first 12 successful grant applicants** nationwide. As of January 2007, 43 states have ADRCs.
- The program provides states with the means and support to effectively integrate long term support resources for consumers into a single coordinated system.

Current ADRCs and Service Areas in South Carolina:

- **Lower Savannah:** Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Orangeburg
- **Santee Lynches:** Clarendon, Lee, Kershaw, Sumter

An ADRC is being developed for the Appalachian region, serving Anderson and Oconee counties initially.



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vices of the FactFinder database and InfoMap. Ms. Andersen also previewed the newly released Plan-A-Biz small business suitability tool, available online.

Although this was the first symposium of its kind in the state, the positive response from the business owners and service providers alike indicates that it may be a recurring event.