

Upstate Alliance Partners with ACOG for \$200,000 Grant from AdvanceSC

The Upstate Alliance, in partnership with the Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG), has recently received a \$200,075 grant from AdvanceSC to create a state-of-the-art web mapping tool to enhance marketing and economic development in the SC Upstate region.

The Upstate Alliance will be working with ACOG on the re-development of www.upstatealliance.com to create a website that is a cut above all other economic development sites and that features the latest in mapping and data technology for use by potential site consultants or company executives.

“Our website is one of the best economic development tools we have, and to compete in today’s economy we must put everything at the finger tips of company executives and site consultants,” says Hal Johnson, Upstate Alliance President and CEO. “Decisions on project locations are done via the web before the first visit to a potential location is made,” he continues. “Our goal is to be the last one standing through the site elimination process.”

ACOG will play a central part in project design, technical development, website and data hosting, and ongoing support through database maintenance and tool innovations. The ACOG has provided cutting edge economic development tools to the Upstate region for over 13 years through the EDIS Partnership and has been integrally involved in the regional marketing efforts of the Upstate Alliance since its inception. ACOG currently maintains the Up-



Amy Wright-Webber, GIS Programmer at ACOG, develops the prototype for the new Upstate Alliance web mapping tool.

state Explorer on-line mapping and research tool for the Alliance. Upstate economic developers use this set of tools extensively to aid regional marketing and industrial recruitment efforts. Upgrades to this system will take advantage of new technology to provide a greater variety of ways to aid the decision-making process for site selection and other economic development tasks.

Innovations to the website will include drive-time analysis, integration of aerial photography, detailed market area reports, and customized maps of available industrial properties. The new tools will be organized in the most user friendly way possible.

“Making this revision with help from the ACOG will go a long way in keeping the Upstate competitive in the economic development process,” adds Johnson. “We currently have a top-notch site but we can do better. Our task is to market the Upstate region to the world, and having a great website is part of our approach. The AdvanceSC grant will afford us the opportunity to

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Development Corporation News

In this issue, we are going to examine the **Community Reinvestment Fund (CRF)** portion of the Appalachian Loan Fund (ALF). The Community Reinvestment Fund, USA is an organization in Minneapolis, Minnesota, that partners with the ADC to help in funding projects that generally fall outside of our conventional loan sources. These conventional sources include Small Business Administration 504 loans, as well as loans from the Appalachian Regional Commission’s (ARC) Appalachian Loan Fund (ALF) and Rural Development, which are both



governmental funding sources that carry federal requirements. CRF is a private organization that does not have some of the same restrictions on its funds as do the governmental sources. It is the nation’s leader in bringing capital to public/private non-profit community development lenders, therefore availability of funds is not an issue.

The CRF loan program with which we work is called the Forward Commitment Program. CRF provides funds of up to 80 percent of the ALF loan portion, with the ADC funding 20

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ACOG Aging Services—Changes Underway!

There are changes underway in the administrative oversight of the Appalachian Council of Governments' Area Agency on Aging. Aging Services director Dr. Michael Stogner retired in December and a new director, Vickie Clark Williams, has moved into the position.



Dr. Michael Stogner, ACOG's Aging Services Director, has retired after 23 years with the Appalachian Council of Governments.

Dr. Stogner has been "at the helm" of the Area Agency on Aging for some 23 years, but has dedicated most of his professional career to the aging field. His career began in 1978 with the Area Agency on Aging for the North Florida and Mental Health Board. This path continued as he became the AAA Director for the Santee-Lynches Council of Governments, followed by his move in 1986 to the Upstate and into his position at ACOG. In 2000 the Workforce Investment Program was moved under his direction as well.

Dr. Stogner's accomplishments include:

- Authoring the 1st USA Munitions Command Affirmative Action Plan
- Two terms as President of the Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Four terms as President of the S.C. Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Five years as a board member to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- Co-founder of the S. C. Aging Network Leadership School

- Two terms as President of the S. C. Gerontological Society Board.

Michael lives in Easley with his wife, Judy. He is a pet lover and has several hobbies, including gardening, landscaping and cooking. He is a deacon and Sunday school teacher at the First Baptist Church of Greenville.

His parting message for Viewpoint readers includes offering his sincere thanks for the opportunity of serving as a staff member of the ACOG, "the best in the State," and his deep appreciation to the various committees and board members involved in both the Aging and Workforce programs for their unstinting support of the programs that have touched and enhanced the quality of life of so many. Good luck Michael!



Vickie Clark Williams will be replacing Michael Stogner as Aging Services Director. Vickie previously worked with the Santee-Lynches COG.

Vickie Clark Williams moved to the Upstate from Sumter in November to assume her position as the new Aging Services director. Ms. Williams, a native of New York, began her career at the local level as an aging services provider in New York, and then in Florida. She moved to South Carolina in 1992 after surviving Hurricane Andrew. She accepted a position as Director of Human Services (to include the Area Agency on Aging and all HUD HOME and CDBG programs) for the Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments in 1994, where she has worked for the past 13 years.

Ms. Williams is a nurse, holding a B. S. Degree and Certificate in

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take our current site to the next level, and it will enable the Upstate Alliance to better position the Upstate region for success in the global marketplace."

AdvanceSC was established by Duke Power to support the communities in their South Carolina service area through grants for public assistance and economic development. "The Upstate Alliance shares the goals Duke Energy used in establishing our organization," says Carol Burdette, president of AdvanceSC, "and we're privileged to partner with them in order to benefit so many people in our community." The Upstate Alliance is a public/private regional economic development organization designed to market the 10 counties in South Carolina's Upstate. The commerce-rich northwestern corner of our state includes the I-85 corridor and the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson metropolitan area.

AdvanceSC supports education, economic growth, existing manufacturing, and public assistance agencies in Duke Energy's South Carolina service area and has awarded over \$30 million since its inception. Established as a limited liability company by Duke Energy in 2004, AdvanceSC is funded with profits from the company's BPM program and is managed by a board of Upstate South Carolina leaders. The fund administrator is Wachovia Trust Nonprofit & Philanthropic Services.

Additional information is available through the Upstate Alliance website, www.upstatealliance.com. Grant applications and information about AdvanceSC are available on the Internet at www.advancesc.org. Further questions about the project may be directed to Carol Andersen at ACOG (andersen@scacog.org).



Housing Survey Reveals Diversified Growth in Anderson County's Multi-Family Market

The South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments has completed research and production of the 2007-2008 Anderson County Multi-Family Housing Survey. This unique report contains an inventory and analysis of all known conventional and "income-dependent" apartment properties with 24 or more units, and townhouse/condominium properties with 15 or more units. The report also includes a subcategory for elderly housing. Information for this publication is obtained from letters and phone calls to apartment managers, rental agencies, and real estate developers.

New construction added 216 units to the inventory of conventional units through the completion of Ashton Park in the east urban portion of the county. Construction of The Park on Market, a Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) property, added 56 new units to the inventory of income-dependent units. The LIHTC Program is designed to provide a tax incentive for property owners to develop low-income multi-family rental housing.

Construction of townhouse and condominium units is ongoing, with activity being greatest in the vicinity of Lake Hartwell. Restoration efforts have also played a role in increasing the number of condominium units, through the conversion of two historic downtown Anderson properties – The Calhoun and The Chiquola – to condominiums.

Units available for Anderson County senior citizens also increased in number through the completion of Kingston Pointe, a LIHTC development that added 48 units to the west urban portion of the county.

The 2007 occupancy rate for conventional units stood at 91.8 percent, decreasing slightly from the rate of 92.1 percent reported in 2005. Low occupancy rates, along with ongoing competition from the townhouse and condominium market, undoubtedly influenced



Construction is ongoing in the Anderson County multi-family housing market.

the amount paid for rent, which has seen little change in the past two years.

This report contains unit counts and rental rates, broken down by bedroom composition, for each multi-family property. Year of construction, amenities, and contact information are also included.

The Appalachian Council of Governments produces this one-of-a-kind survey biennially for Anderson and Spartanburg Counties, and annually for Greenville County. This report can be purchased online by visiting www.scacog.org, then clicking on "Publications," or by contacting the Information Services Department at 864-242-9733.

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Gerontology, and she has worked in the aging field for 25 years. She is past President of the S.C. Association of Area Agencies on Aging and has served on the SE4A Board. She is a professional grants writer and has authored several teaching modules for adult children of aging parents, caregivers and local governments evaluating "aging in place" community initiatives.

Vickie is an equestrian enthusiast and owns both a registered Tennessee Walker and an Arabian, which she rides and shows. She and her husband, Andy, have located in Simpsonville with their black lab, "Raven," and her pal, "Rascal."

Kincare Needs At Christmas

In our country, nearly six million grandparents have grandchildren who reside in their homes, and at least 2.5 million of these grandparents are the children's primary caregivers. Senior family members who provide care to younger relatives are providing "kincare" on a daily basis to anywhere from one to seven children.

In South Carolina alone, there are over 51,755 seniors responsible for the rearing of younger relatives. Many of these caregivers were living

beneath the poverty level even before these children became their responsibility. The human and monetary sacrifices that they make in order to provide a home for these children are immense.

In the Upstate region, relief for some of these grandparents comes through the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP). This program recognizes that, for most kincare providers, there are certain times of the year – such as Christmas – that are more demanding than others.

One source of relief during this Christmas season came in the form of a monetary gift to over 56 kincare providers in the six-county Upstate region. This "gift" could be used to purchase a variety of items for the children in their charge, including clothes, toys, shoes and personal items. It was received with deep gratitude by those families touched by this project.

The FCSP advocates are available to offer information about related "kincare" needs in Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg Counties for seniors rearing grand relatives. For further information, call Debra Brown or Sam Wiley at (800) 925-4077 or (864) 242-9733.



Overview of Health Care Related MRSA



Hand hygiene has been cited as the single most important practice to reduce the transmission of infectious agents in the health care settings.

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a type of bacteria that is resistant to certain antibiotics, which includes methicillin, oxacillin, penicillin, and amoxicillin. A new report highlights the fact that most MRSA infections are associated with health care settings. The highest percentage of cases are found in hospitals and long term care facilities (i.e., nursing homes), where many residents live with weakened immune systems.

Antimicrobial resistance occurs when bacteria change or adapt and are able to survive in the presence of antibiotics designed to kill them. In some cases, bacteria have become so resistant that no available antibiotics are effective against them.

Currently, there are approximately 1.8 million Americans residing in the nation's 16,500 nursing homes. Within the Appalachian Council of Governments service area, ACOG Ombudsman serve about 163 facilities, which include a variety of long term care facilities. Residents in long term care facilities who have open wounds, pressure sores and skin tears are at greater risk for MRSA infections. Serious staph infections may lead to blood stream infections or pneumonia.

The most common signs of MRSA or any sort of staph infection are: Redness, swelling, tenderness at

the site, a painful rash, impetigo with fluid-filled blisters, and blisters, pus-filled boils or abscesses. Some people with MRSA will have multiple lesions (sores) that resemble spider bites.

Hand hygiene has been cited as the single most important practice to reduce the transmission of infectious agents in the health care settings. The term "hand-hygiene" includes both hand washing with either plain or antiseptic-containing soap and water, as well as the use of alcohol-based products that do not require the use of water.

Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered with a bandage until they are healed; avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages; and avoid sharing towels, razors, and clothing. Persons should note that all forms of staph, including MRSA, are spread by skin-to-skin contact.

Through education and teaching, MRSA infection has been – and can continue to be – reduced in the health care setting. Use good hygiene practices at all times, and combat the spread of this harmful bacteria!

ARCC Grant to Help Caregivers of Those Diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease

The Family Caregiver Support Program has received a one-time funding opportunity from the Alzheimer's Resource Coordination Center (ARCC), targeted to assist caregivers who are providing informal care to individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

The ARCC was created through state legislation in April 1994 and is currently housed in the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging (LGOA). The ARCC provides funding for a statewide service system targeted to help support families and individuals

living with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders.

Since the ARCC grant funds for fiscal year 2008 were not all allocated as planned, the ARCC Advisory Board and the LGOA made a decision to allocate the funds to the Area Agencies on Aging for use in the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP).



In order to receive services under this grant, caregivers must obtain certification from a physician stating that the care recipient has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's or a related disorder. The funds may be used to provide any services allowable under the FCSP, including respite care, incontinence supplies and access to caregiver training. The FCSP can utilize these funds through June 30, 2008.

The ARCC granted a total of \$60,250 statewide to the Area Agencies on Aging. Provided below is the breakdown of the allocations by region:

- * Region 1 (Appalachian) - \$9,923
- * Region 2 (Upper Savannah) - \$4,881
- * Region 3 (Catawba) - \$5,054
- * Region 4 (Central Mid.) - 6,729
- * Region 5 (Lower Savannah) - \$5,819
- * Region 6 (Santee-Lynches) - \$4,960
- * Region 7 (Pee Dee) - \$6,000
- * Region 8 (Waccamaw) - \$6,668
- * Region 9 (Trident) - \$6,668
- * Region 10 (Lowcountry) - \$4,732

If you or someone you know could benefit from the ARCC grant, please contact Debra Brown or Sam Wiley at the ACOG Family Caregiver Support Program at (800) 925-4077 or (864) 242-9733.

Customer Service Training

Go ahead; put your organization to a simple test. Call your receptionist, help desk or some other frequently used phone numbers and really listen. Do you hear: a) “Good morning, City/County of _____, how may I help you?” or b) “Hello,” just hello. The answer is more important than you think.



Customer service: that next phone call could cost you a lot. Our citizens deserve the very best service available.

While most of our jurisdictions do a fine job of customer service, occasionally we need to remind our busy employees how to properly answer the phone, greet the customer, and provide helpful and friendly assistance. In today’s stressed and demanding workplace, it’s particularly important that our employees exercise a little more patience, smile a little broader and work a little harder at being helpful.

Why? As government service providers, our citizens are our customers and, in many cases, they have no choice but to come to us to do business. That doesn’t mean that they will tolerate any bad behavior dished out to them, at least not for long. We must remember that our citizen-customers don’t add to our work, they *are* our work!

ACOG can help train staff to provide a high level of customer service, review the flow of paperwork, devise customer survey questionnaires, and custom design a customer program to meet specific needs and concerns. Please contact ACOG’s Donna Kazia at 864-241-4632, or email at

kazia@scacog.org for additional information.



Immigration Update—New Employer I-9 Form



As of December 26, 2007, all employers are required to begin using a new, more detailed, I-9 immigration form when hiring workers. The new form is designed to ensure that businesses hire properly documented workers. The new regulations also remove five previously accepted documents that employees could use as proof of identity and eligibility for employment.

The new US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) form can be downloaded at <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-9.pdf>. Under the new regulations, only the following documents can be accepted as proof of eligibility:

- U.S. Passport
- Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551)
- Unexpired foreign passport with a temporary I-551 stamp
- Unexpired Employment Authoriza-

tion Document that contains a photograph (Form I-766, I-688, I-688A or I-688B)

- Unexpired foreign passport with an unexpired “Arrival-Departure Record,” Form I-94, bearing the same name as the passport and containing an endorsement of the alien’s nonimmigrant status, if that status authorizes the alien to work for the employer

For questions concerning the new form, visit the U.S. Customs and Immigration website at www.uscis.gov, or call ACOG’s Donna Kazia at 864-241-4632.



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percent from its other loan pools. If you will remember from the first article in this series, the ALF loan program is able to provide up to 40 percent of the project cost, with a commercial bank contributing 50 percent, and a borrower injection of at least 10 percent equity. The ALF loan is a fixed-rate loan with a term of up to 15 years on real estate, less on working capital and equipment loans, and it requires job creation at the rate of one job per each \$25,000 borrowed from the ADC. The CRF loan must work within these confines and is primarily a funding option that does allow for some flexibility not available through our other programs. Generally, loans will be not less than \$200,000, nor in excess of \$1,000,000. Loans considered under this program will require the approval of both the ADC and CRF and, as a result, will require a longer approval time frame.

The CRF loan program is another option available to the ADC in its continuing efforts to bring economic development funds to the region and to serve the small business community of the Upstate. If you have questions, **contact Dave Mueller or George Long at (864) 242-9733, or visit our website at www.scacog.org/acog/rif.**

2008 Planning Officials Training

The Appalachian Council of Governments, recognizing the importance of training local government officials, provides training sessions to ensure local government commission members and staffs meet their planning training requirements as set forth by the SC Legislature in [Article 9 of the SC](#)



ACOG will offer both mandatory planning instruction and continuing education in 2008.

Code of Laws. The Code establishes that the training is mandatory for local government planning commissions, boards of zoning appeals and architectural review boards, as well as staff who directly or indirectly work with planning officials. New members must complete a six-hour curriculum their first year to be eligible to serve on boards or as staff for planning officials. In subsequent years, members and staff must complete three hours of continuing education each year to remain certified.

The COG is preparing to provide the orientation and continuing education training again in 2008. A notice will be mailed to each county and municipality announcing the schedule of classes and instructions for signing up. The schedule will also be posted on the ACOG website at www.scacog.org, along with registration instructions. In 2008 a wider range of times and topics will be offered, so each municipality may choose a training video that better fits the needs of their town. There is a \$25 fee per person or up to a maximum of \$450 for each local government. **For**

more information, please contact Jennifer Vissage at 864-242-9733.



WorkLink Video Resume



Video resumes are becoming common tools for job recruitment. Resume coach Deb Sofield is shown with a prospective job candidate.

Worklink is hosting the area's first video resume service for job seekers. WorkLink recently offered a group of five job seekers from Oconee, Anderson and Pickens Counties the chance to stand apart from the competition for jobs they are seeking. WorkLink was the first public agency in South Carolina to provide the coaching and videotaping service. The result is a professional-looking video resume to send to area employers.

Video resumes are becoming more common as tools for job seekers in search of service and professional jobs. Many human resource managers and employers see video resumes as a good way to review applicants.

The five job seekers came from the WorkLink area **OneStop, Gateway to College, and Palmetto Youth Connections** programs. Aardvark Interactive Studios worked with

10-x Group, WorkLink's marketing company, to produce the videos.

WorkLink sponsored this video resume production as a trial run, with coaching by Deb Sofield – nationally-known executive speech coach – to test the program. “This process will serve as a trial run to gauge the demand for video resumes in our market,” said WorkLink Director Julia Hoyle. If there is sufficient demand for video resumes, they will be implemented as a regular service at Worklink OneStop centers. **The videos will soon be posted on WorkLink's web site at www.worklinkweb.com**



ARC Hosting Conference on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficient Technologies

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is sponsoring a **conference in Rome, Georgia, on January 23-25** entitled Renewable Energy and Energy Efficient Technologies. This conference will enhance the knowledge of regional and community leaders on how to play a part in our nation becoming energy independent while, at the same time, becoming better stewards of the environment in which we all live. The opening session on Wednesday, January 23, includes remarks by ARC Federal Co-Chair Anne Pope and Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue, who will speak on the importance of renewable energy relative to the nation's economic, environmental and homeland security priorities. Other sessions include: Developing the Workforce for the Energy Production and Conservation Industries; Green

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VIEWPOINT

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Power and Energy Conservation Alternatives; Solar and Wind Technologies; Building and Financing a Renewable Energy Business; and Energy Revenue Enhancements for Local Governments. Also planned is a tour of U.S. Biofuels, Inc., Rome facility. **For more information, or to register for the conference, go to www.cvrdc.org/arcc.**