

Memorandum of Understanding

for

A Collaboration to Build Community Capacity Across Alabama

This Memorandum of Understanding (“the Memorandum”) by and between University Outreach and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES), both of Auburn University, for the purpose of achieving the various aims and objectives related to building community capacity across Alabama. The parties may hereinafter also be referred to collectively as “the Partners” and individually as “Partner”.

WITNESSETH:

Whereas, ACES is a county-based model committed to a close connection with citizens in each of the state’s 67 counties; and

Whereas, County Extension Offices and the importance of the County Extension Coordinator position are vital to fostering this fundamental connection; and

Whereas, ACES annually invests \$14 million to maintain a County Extension Office in each of the state’s 67 counties; and

Whereas, ACES delivers research-based educational programs that enable people to improve their quality of life and economic well-being; and

Whereas, the mission of University Outreach is partnering with communities, businesses, schools and government to help people meet their educational goals and to improve the quality of life all across our state; and

Whereas, University Outreach provides educational opportunities for all ages, including summer academic camps, professional and job training courses for working adults, and lifelong learning programs for seniors; and

Whereas, University Outreach provides technical and strategic assistance to public and private entities, businesses, schools, governments, and civic organizations, to solve problems, improve systems, and encourage innovation; and

Whereas, University Outreach also assists citizens through programs that promote health, well-being and community sustainability; and

Whereas, Alabama communities across the state are experiencing declining growth, which includes an out-migration of young people, leaving a concentration of senior citizens; and

Whereas, these communities are marked by declining business, food and health care options, and the consequences of a declining tax base; and

Whereas, these communities are struggling to maintain schools and community infrastructure;
and

Whereas, as a land-grant institution the Mission of Auburn University is to improve the lives of the people of Alabama, the nation and the world through forward-thinking education, life-enhancing research and scholarship, and selfless service, and

Whereas the Partners agree that working together, University Outreach and ACES can more efficiently and effectively build community capacity, address these critical deficits across Alabama, and improve the quality of life for people across Alabama; and

Whereas, University Outreach and ACES are desirous to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between them, setting out the working arrangements that each of the partners agree are necessary to complete the project;

NOW THEREFORE, the Partners agree to collaborate in the following manner as opportunities present themselves:

Services to be rendered by Outreach include:

1. training and resourcing of County Extension Coordinators to build capacity, confidence, and credibility in carrying out community resource development roles and responsibilities (i.e., catalytic leadership and group facilitation).
2. training County Extension Coordinators on the use of the Government and Economic Development Institute's "Know Your Community Data" tool to assess Alabama community's changing demographics.
3. Including Extension program fieldtrips into the Government and Economic Development Institute's training itineraries.
4. identifying other local, campus-based, regional, and statewide community resource development partners.

Services to be rendered by ACES include:

1. promoting and connecting Government and Economic Development Institute and Office of Professional and Continuing Education and other University Outreach programming through County Extension Offices across the state.
2. providing meeting space at County Extension Offices for the Government and Economic Development Institute's County Commissioner Training and other Outreach units upon request and dependent upon availability.
3. Supporting the distribution of Auburn University Office of Outreach's *Beyond Auburn* magazine through County Extension Offices and proactively planning article submissions from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.
4. Identifying other local, campus-based, regional, and statewide community resource development partners.

Obligations of the Partners

The Partners acknowledge that no contractual relationship is created between them by this Memorandum but agree to work together in the true spirit of partnership to ensure that there is a united visible and responsive leadership of building community capacity across Alabama and to demonstrate financial, administrative and managerial commitment to Community Capacity Building.

Financial Agreements

The partners will endeavor to secure any financial agreements outside the scope of this Memorandum of Understanding (i.e., tuition and course fees, meeting space costs) as those needs arise. This Memorandum does not guarantee a waiver of the need for fees to be exchanged between the Partners.

Communication Strategy

Marketing of this partnership and any media or other public relations contact should always be consistent with the aims of the partnership and only undertaken with the express agreement of both parties. Where it does not breach any confidentiality protocols, a spirit of open and transparent communication should be adhered to. Coordinated communications should be made with external organizations to elicit their support and further the aims of the partnership.

Liability

No liability will arise or be assumed between the partners as a result of this Memorandum.

Term

The arrangements made by the Partners by this Memorandum shall remain in place until one party requests that the Memorandum be amended or dissolved. The agreement only remains in effect with both parties' full consent.

Amendment

This Memorandum may be amended or supplemented in writing, if the writing is signed by the parties obligated under this Memorandum.

Severability

If any provision of this Memorandum is found to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason the remaining provisions will continue to be valid and enforceable.

Understanding

It is mutually agreed upon and understood by and among the Partners of this Memorandum that:

- a. Each Partner will work together in a coordinated fashion for the purpose of community resource development.

- b. In no way does this agreement restrict involved Partners from participating in similar agreements with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.
- c. To the extent possible, each Partner will participate in the development of the collaboration.
- d. Nothing in this memorandum shall obligate any partner to the transfer of funds. Any endeavor involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the partners of this memorandum will be handled in accordance with applicable University regulations. Such endeavors will be outlined in separate agreements as authorized or required by Auburn University.
- e. This memorandum will be effective upon the signature of both Partners.
- f. Any partner may terminate its participation in this Memorandum by providing written notice to the other partner.

The following Partners support the terms of the Community Development Capacity Building Memorandum of Understanding.

Signatories

This Agreement shall be signed on behalf of University Outreach by Dr. Royrickers Cook and on behalf of ACES by Dr. J. Mike Phillips. This Agreement shall be effective as of the date first written above.

By:  Date: 11-18-2021
Dr. Royrickers Cook, VP Auburn University Outreach

By:  Date: 11/18/2021
Dr. J. Mike Phillips, ACES Extension Director