

# Alabama Community Leadership Network (ACLN)

Spring 2019

## *Spring Greetings from the Alabama Community Leadership Network.*

The ACLN Core Group will meet this quarter to develop and structure plans for the organization throughout 2019. If you are interested in joining the Core Group, please contact Dr. Menefee to determine how you can help build the organization.

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As you continue to build your leadership programs, we hope that you will find this newsletter helpful. Please continue to update us on your community leadership events/projects. Feel free to send photos and a brief description of your leadership events that you would like us to highlight in our quarterly newsletters. Please submit this information via e-mail to: <mailto:Martha.Whitson@ua.edu>

## **FAITH-BASED ENTITIES: Valuable to the Community**



Faith-Based entities have always been an essential element in the world, providing opportunity for change and fostering social, political, and community development. These agencies play a major role in providing services to individuals in the United States. Faith-based entities are non-profit organizations (voluntary and community groups) that focus on several issues at the community level such as leadership, health, education, financial sustainability, the environment and other social issues. These entities range from small congregation-based soup kitchens to multibillion-dollar social service and economic agencies.

Notably, the Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, and Feed the Children are international and national organizations that have a ubiquitous impact throughout the world. In addition to the international and national faith-based institutions, there are some local faith-based organizations that are significant in the development of their local communities in Alabama. One example of an organization that is making a difference in Alabama is the Greater Peace Community Development Corporation (GPCDC) located in Opelika, Alabama. The mission of the Greater Peace CDC is to forge common community identity and develop shared vision among major groups and stakeholders within the community for the development of community-based leadership to economically revitalize distressed neighborhoods in the Lee County area.

The GPCDC was established on May 16, 2000 as a public non-profit organization. The GPCDC has developed and conducted a host of programs that emphasize youth, community, and economic development. The GPCDC's involvement in youth development includes the following: Pre-K Program, Child Development Center, Youth Leadership Academy, Summer Enrichment Program, STEM and Mentoring/Tutoring services. In the area of community and economic development, the GPCDC has conducted a Fatherhood Entrepreneurship Workshop (assisting non-custodial fathers in the development of small businesses to financially support their families), constructed 48 single-family homes and conducted several workshops on leadership, community development, financial empowerment and a host of other topics. Also, GPCDC is a part of the Alabama Association of Community Development Corporations (AACDC), the statewide organization that provides leadership and resources to community development corporations in Alabama.

Greater Peace and other local faith-based entities will continue to play a major role in society. Non-profits are critical in the overall success of each community. As we prepare for our upcoming leadership programs, let's always remember the significance of the faith entities in our local region. Please engage them in the discussion and note they are there as a valuable resource for the betterment of the community. Identify the faith-based entities in your area and develop a plan to work with them.

*Arturo Menefee, Ph.D.  
Director of Leadership Development  
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## Resources and Capacity Building



### STARTING STRONG

Have you ever attended a workshop or presentation and the opening comments from the speaker were somewhat lackluster? How did you feel? Were you excited and eager to hear more? Most likely not. One of the most important parts of a speech is the beginning. The start sets the stage for the remainder of the presentation. The goal of every speaker should be to motivate participants to listen

attentively throughout his/her entire presentation. To do this, a strong opening is necessary.

What makes an opening strong? According to Leadership Strategies, a strong

opening line captivates the participant's attention, interest and buy-in at the beginning. One successful method that trainers employ is the IEEI – Inform, Excite, Empower, Involve – method. Below is a brief description of how to utilize the **IEEI** method at the beginning of a presentation.

- **Inform** the audience about the session purpose.

*EXAMPLE* – “The purpose of this workshop today is to \_\_\_\_\_. When we are done, you will be able to\_\_\_\_\_.”

- **Excite** participants about the benefits of this presentation.

*EXAMPLE* – “By completing this program, you will achieve \_\_\_\_\_, and this will help you\_\_\_\_\_.”

- **Empower** attendees by discussing the significant role they have been given by completing this training session.

*EXAMPLE* - “You were selected to participate in this critical educational session because of \_\_\_\_\_.”

- **Involve** audience members by asking them their personal objectives for the workshop.

*EXAMPLE* – “Because your involvement matters, please tell me what your personal objectives are for this training session?”

## MOTIVATIONAL MOMENT ©



### ***“Never confuse a single defeat with a final defeat.” - - - F. Scott Fitzgerald***

One of my goals in life was to be a superstar basketball player. Unfortunately, after several knee injuries, I quickly realized that was not to be. So I decided to join the band. Joining the band was no easy task. I listened to music every day, but I had

never played a musical instrument. After trying several instruments, I decided on the tuba.

In order to join the band, you were required to play before the director. Essentially, this was a tryout. So, I went home and I practiced and practiced. And it was tryout time. I played and I did a horrible job. I let my nervousness get the best of me. The band director even suggested that I consider other options outside the band. I felt defeated. But I knew I could do better. This was not my final defeat.

I convinced the band director to give me another chance. This time, I talked with other band players, studied my music more intensely, and I practiced and worked even harder. I was determined to succeed. I played before the director again and I made the band. I eventually became one of the best tuba players in my high school. I made it to the top (symphonic) band and I was a section leader in the marching band. We won numerous awards competing with bands from all across the country.

Maybe you are experiencing some problems with your job, a friend, family members, or just dealing with some tough moments. Maybe you have failed at something. But that doesn't make you a failure. You have time. Don't let difficult people or situations get you down. Continue on and work hard like I

did. You may not get it initially. But with the right attitude and some hard work, I know you will soon be marching to your own beat of success!!!

Arturo S. Menefee, Ph.D.

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## Community Spotlight

### **Patti Presley-Fuller, County Extension Coordinator Alabama Cooperative Extension System**



University.

The ACLN is proud to highlight Ms. Patti Presley-Fuller who has worked with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System for the past 31 years serving Pickens and Greene Counties. She holds her B.S. degree in Family and Consumer Sciences and her M.S. degree in Extension Education from Mississippi State University. Patti also received her credentialing in Family Development from Auburn

Throughout her career, Patti has been involved in numerous community and economic development programs. She served as the executive director for Leadership Pickens for 21 years, directed Leadership Greene for 8 years, and helped establish other leadership programs throughout Alabama's Blackbelt region. She was a founding member of the Pickens County Tourism Association and served as the organization's president for several terms. Patti is one of the founding members of the Alabama-Mississippi-Tennessee Rural Tourism Conference and is an active member of the Pickens County Industrial Development Board as well as the Aliceville Museum and Cultural Arts Center. Mrs. Fuller was selected as the first female president of the Aliceville Rotary Club and helped establish the Greene County Rotary Club. Patti also spent 14 years serving on the Aliceville City Council.

Patti currently serves on the advisory board for the State of Alabama Department of Tourism and recently was invited to join the Board of Directors for West Alabama Bank and Trust. Additionally, Patti and local farmer Annie Dee of Dee River Ranch, represent Alabama as lead farmers on the Farm Journal Foundation, located in Washington, D.C.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**ACLN/UACED invite you to register for  
2019 Your Town Alabama Workshop  
May 15 - 17 at Camp McDowell**

**Your Town Alabama** is a two day workshop May 15 - 17, 2019 held at Camp McDowell, located north of Jasper, that inspires and educates Alabamians to use asset-based design for setting and achieving community goals. **May 6th is the deadline to register.**

Visit the Your Town Alabama website to register, pay on-line and learn more details. <https://www.yourtownalabama.com/>

The majority of time will be spent actively engaged in problem-exercises that are informed by expert presentations and conversations with other leaders from communities throughout Alabama. Participants will meet a variety of professionals who work throughout Alabama in the planning, design, economic development, and resource preservation fields.

The focus of the workshop aims specifically to introduce small town and rural technical assistance providers and decision makers to the role of design in community planning.

The ACLN encourages its members to register for the workshop as it provides leaders with a new skill set and knowledge that they can use in their efforts to improve communities.

## ASK ACLN



If you have a question regarding an article in this newsletter, or any strategies/resources/ideas pertaining to your local leadership program, please submit your question to us and we will present our response in the next quarterly newsletter. Please submit any questions to: Martha Whitson at [martha.whitson@ua.edu](mailto:martha.whitson@ua.edu).

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**Thank you for helping the ACLN chart our way to building sustainable leadership programs.**

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**Alabama Community Leadership Network (ACLN)**  
**On behalf of The University of Alabama Center for Economic Development**