



Breakthrough News

Volume XVI, Number 5

2019

Breakthrough Solutions is a program of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, with partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

The purpose of Breakthrough News is to equip communities and regions to prosper in the 21st century economy.

Editor: Mark Peterson, Professor - Community and Economic Development
Contributing Editor: Emily Smith, Community Development Program Associate

This Issue Includes:

- New Orleans - the Inevitable City in the Impossible Place
- Breakthrough Solutions Connects Rev. Arthur Hunt with Grant
- Kingsland Heritage Center Plans Underway
- Raft Up
- Opportunity to Help Assess the Broadband Connectivity
- Story of the Month
- Website of the Month
- Quote for the Day

New Orleans - the Inevitable City in the Impossible Place

Last week I had the privilege of traveling to New Orleans, which seemed to be thriving. If you wonder how and why New Orleans has been able to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, consider these factors from George Friedman of Stratfor Geopolitical Intelligence Report. He shared some powerful strategic observations about New Orleans as a port that are not widely publicized:

[Read the full blog article here.](#)

Breakthrough Solutions Connects Visionary Rev. Arthur Hunt with Grant to Bring Creative Economy to Dumas and Beyond

For Rev. Arthur Hunt, a passion to serve others drives every task, every conversation, and every pursuit. He can't help it, it's in his blood.

Now, a USDA technical assistance grant under the Rural Economic Development Innovation initiative is helping him achieve his desire to serve others.



A native Arkansan, Hunt grew up in Dumas where his family founded and ran the West Dumas Community Life Center — a valuable place where community members frequently gathered, met, played, and celebrated.

[Read the full blog article here.](#)

Kingsland Heritage Center Plans Underway

Two Johnny Cash cousins meet to plan for a Kingsland Heritage Center. (l to r) Rev. Mark Rivers and Wayne Cash meet with a steering committee to plan for a Kingsland Heritage Center in Kingsland AR, birthplace of Johnny Cash. With support from Kickstart Cleveland County, this initiative is a great example of how



to honor the legacy and home town of Johnny Cash and develop a significant tourism attraction in Cleveland County.

The meeting, chaired by Chairman Wayne Cash, included reports on multiple ways that the community can brand itself as Johnny Cash's hometown:

- Install a birthplace marker on Highway 79 that points visitors to his birthplace, and another at his actual birthplace,

- Painting the Kingsland water tower with an image of Johnny Cash
- Establish a marker at the Kingsland post office, which was dedicated by Johnny Cash in 1994,
- Explore renaming a street in Kingsland to be Johnny Cash Way,
- Contact the state highway department and local legislators to explore changing the name of a section of state highway 79 to become the Johnny Cash Memorial Highway.

A special thanks to Breakthrough Solutions Partners Ed Levy with Cromwell Architects Engineers, who has developed architectural renderings of what the Kingsland Heritage Center could look like, and Ken Hubbell, who used his talents to facilitate and sketch previous meetings.

Corey Boelkins of Raft Up Addresses Breakthrough Solutions Partners

On Thursday, August 22, Breakthrough Solutions Partners gathered at the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture's state office for a meeting featuring Corey Boelkins of **Raft Up**. Raft Up is an organization that builds technologies that "help connect people to places and each through simpler, safer, and more affordable ways," according to the **Raft Up website**. So, what does this look like? In an article by **Arkansas Money and Politics**, Boelkins says it looks like Facebook for the outdoor community.



For obvious reasons, Raft Up's creative and innovative model quickly gained recognition. At the Governor's Conference on Tourism, Raft Up won first place at the inaugural Shark Tank competition. In addition to \$5,000 cash prize, Boelkins and his received mentorship and advisement from **Innovate Arkansas** and the **Arkansas Tourism** research and development section. Now, a few months later, Boelkins hard work, in conjunction with the mentorship, is beginning to pay off.

Raft Up is now expanding its mobile app efforts to connect regions. Currently a lot of chambers might have resources online but are not tapping into the mobile app market. Raft Up aims to bridge this gap by offering mobile app service that offers "immediate, relevant, valuable, and engaging information for an on-demand mobile society." On these app platforms, communities and regions can feature community events, interactive maps (that include parks, trails, water ways, links to travel guides.

Interested in how your community or region might leverage these resources? Reply to this e-mail and we can connect you to **Raft Up**.

Opportunity to Help Assess the Broadband Connectivity

Access to fast and reliable internet service is important to the economic and social

well-being of all Americans.

Understanding where gaps in service exist is critical to addressing those gaps. There are multiple ongoing initiatives to help identify gaps and service issues across the country by allowing people to anonymously test their connectivity. Data is then added to a national database to more accurately depict the current state of broadband availability and speed.

You can test your speeds through two reputable efforts - <http://broadbandtest.us> and the TestIT app (visit <https://www.naco.org/testit> for download instructions). Testing in both rural and urban geographic areas is encouraged, as is testing using all of your devices.

Information gathered through these initiatives includes each device's IP address, but will not include personal identifying information about the user. Data gathered through both of these efforts is aggregated by Measurement Lab (MLab) and is available for use by researchers and planners seeking to understand and improve broadband availability.

You can also review and compare results with the published results of the Federal Communications Commissions and industry using an interactive mapping feature available at <http://broadbandtest.us>.

Story of the Month: Does Your Community Pass the Popsicle Test?

“The character of cities is tied in with our sense of place,” stated John Jacob with the Texas Coastal Watershed Program. Jacob was speaking at a recent National Association of C.D. Extension Professionals Conference. “We are trying to build vibrant and interesting cities, in harmony with a healthy natural ecosystem.” Jacobs then described walkable neighborhoods as an important element of vibrant and interesting cities, and posed the following tests.

Tests for a Walkable Neighborhood:

- 1) Popsicle Test: Can you get from the corner store to your home without your Popsicle melting?
- 2) Smooch Test: Would you feel comfortable walking with your date in the evening?
- 3) Kid Test: Would kids feel comfortable walking in your neighborhood? Better yet, would they enjoy your neighborhood?
- 4) Senior Test: Can senior citizens easily get around?
- 5) Commons Test: Are there common places – civic spaces where people can gather easily? Are they built for easy walking, or do you have to drive to them?

Website of the Month: The Rural Innovation Equation

A new tool shows that innovation in rural America is associated with higher pay and growing markets. And a new **study** that develops a broader “innovation index” finds that rural firms are innovative – and that rural innovation has a large impact on firms and the regions in which they operate. This article also includes a map of Innovation

Quote of the Month

“There’s a temptation in our networked age to think that ideas can be developed by email. That’s crazy. Creativity comes from spontaneous meetings, from random discussions. You run into someone, you ask what they’re doing, you say ‘wow’ and soon you’re cooking up all sorts of ideas.” -*Steve Jobs*

Coming Events

September 5: Arkansas Development Tool Box – Access to Capital, Loans, Grants, and Resources, sponsored by the Newport Economic Development Commission, at the ASU Newport campus. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/526167731458612/> for more information.

September 10: Community Development Summit: Southwest Arkansas, sponsored by the UCA Center for Community and Economic Development, Camden AR and hosted by the Ouachita Partnership for Economic Development. For more information, go to <https://uca.edu/cced/swa-summit/>.

September 17-19: Rural RISE Summit – National Rural Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Builder Summit, Pine Bluff Convention Center, Pine Bluff AR; go to <https://www.ruralrise.org/>.

September 19-20: Paving the Way: Strengthening Creative Placemaking and Creative Economy in Communities, at the Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas, Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Go to <https://www.cvent.com/c/express/7583e6f4-4023-4c3c-83f3-514e454bdd19>.

October 2-4: Rural Workforce Development Southern Region Summit at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute and University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton. For more information, go to <http://rockefellerinstitute.org/institute-programs/rwd>

October 17: Arkansas Community Development Society’s Annual Conference, with the theme: “Episode 2020: Now Loading”, University of Central Arkansas, Conway. Go to <http://www.arcds.org/>.

More About Breakthrough Solutions:

Recipient of the Outstanding Program Award and Innovative Program Award by the international Community Development Society, Breakthrough Solutions is a program of the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, with partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors. For more information: (501) 671-2253.

To Subscribe or Unsubscribe:

Send an e-mail message to breakthroughsolutions@uaex.edu, asking to be added or removed from the Breakthrough News mailing list.

Past Issues:

To see past issues of Breakthrough News, go to

<https://www.uaex.edu/business-communities/strategic-planning/breakthrough-solutions.aspx>

Breakthrough Funding Sponsors

GOLD

Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/Associated Industries of Arkansas

AT&T Arkansas

Entergy

Mountain Home Area Chamber of Commerce

Nabholz Properties

Newport Economic Development Commission

Simmons Bank

BRONZE

Arkansas Community Development Society

Small Business Administration

UCA Center for Community and Economic Development

USDA Rural Development

Solutions Partners

We appreciate the continued support of the following:

Arkansas Community Colleges, Arkansas Community Foundation, Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, AEDC Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions, Arkansas Geographic Information Office, Arkansas Human Development Corporation, Arkansas Small Business Technology and Development Center, Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/AIA, AT&T Arkansas, Center for Community and Economic Development, UCA, Cromwell Architects Engineers, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, Entergy, Federal Reserve Bank of ST. Louis, Little Rock Branch, Ken Hubbell and Associates, Morrilton Area Chamber of Commerce / Conway County Economic Development Corp., Newport Economic Development Commission, Simmons Bank, Strategic Consultants, UA Little Rock Arkansas. Economic Development Institute, UA Little Rock School of Public Affairs



If you want to impact your community in a powerful way, forward this email newsletter to other individuals in your community or organization, so they can benefit from the resources, insights, and strategies covered in Breakthrough News.

Best regards,

Mark Peterson

Professor, Community and Economic Development

University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service

2301 South University Avenue

Little Rock, AR 72203

501-671-2253

mpeterson@uaex.edu

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs and services without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.



Community & Economic Development
Strengthening Arkansas Communities

