



Fostering Entrepreneurship in Rural Ontario

*Exploring new and existing approaches for the enhanced
support of our rural entrepreneurs*



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Presented in partnership with:

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs *and* Ontario Ministry of Small Business and
Entrepreneurship

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FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN RURAL ONTARIO: *Exploring New and Existing Approaches for the Enhanced Support of our Rural Entrepreneurs*

About The Ontario Rural Council (TORC)

As a forum for all rural voices, The Ontario Rural Council (TORC) offers a vital venue for rural engagement in the form of dialogue, collaboration, action and advocacy. As a member-driven, multi-sector, provincial organization, TORC strives to foster communication that informs and ultimately helps shape and influence policy, programs and research development affecting today's rural Ontario.

Members share a commitment to strong, healthy, vibrant rural communities, businesses and organizations. Through Public Issue Forums and our Rural Development Conference, TORC provides the only venue dedicated to drawing together the collective rural voice, working to break down the silos between sectors and encourage effective partnerships for progress.

TORC Members represent non-profit organizations, private sector organizations, the public sector, and individuals with specialized expertise and resources in rural matters. In our role as convenor, TORC brings together these diverse interests and perspectives and offers valuable networking opportunities to link people, information and activities in support of rural community development and capacity building.

Background

The TORC Rural Entrepreneurship Forum took place June 19, 2007 in Guelph, Ontario. It was staged to coincide with a week-long study tour of rural development colleagues from the University of Kentucky.

Rural Kentucky is facing challenges similar to those currently taking place in rural Ontario. The study tour, and the TORC Forum in particular, was designed to explore in greater detail what communities and organizations are doing to aid and support rural innovation and entrepreneurship.

The overall objectives of the TORC Forum were to learn from, and share with, one another, and to develop plausible next steps for action to address issues raised in the discussion. Approximately 50 participants from Ontario and Kentucky took part in the one-day forum, presented in partnership with the Ontario Ministries of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

For more information on the Council and TORC events, visit www.torc.on.ca

Rural Kentucky and Rural Ontario: A Closer Look

David Freshwater, a professor with the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky, provided a context for the forum discussion by outlining the 'big picture' challenges / changes facing rural communities in the state, and drawing comparisons with some of rural Ontario's experiences.

This snapshot also provided background and context for the development of the Kentucky Entrepreneurial Coaches Institute, which was further outlined in Larry Jones' presentation.

RURAL KENTUCKY	RURAL ONTARIO
<p>Forty per cent of the population in Kentucky is in rural and small town environments. The total state population is 5 million. As such, the overall population is smaller, but more densely settled than Ontario. Settlement patterns in Kentucky are similar to southern Ontario.</p>	
<p>In Kentucky and Ontario many small towns are agriculture-dependent and manufacturing-based.</p>	
<p>Most farms rely on off-farm income, primarily generated from the manufacturing sector.</p>	<p>The majority of farms are searching for off-farm incomes. The trend indicates that smaller producers require more off-farm income; off-farm income is sustaining small producers.</p>
<p>Until recently, most farms in the state grew some tobacco.</p>	<p>The tobacco belt is concentrated in a small area of the province near Lake Erie.</p>
<p>The tobacco industry has been under stress. The industry shifted from one growing season to the next, providing little time for adjustment. Kentucky has the unique advantage of gaining money from the tobacco settlements, as a result of tobacco companies not wanting to go to court. In Kentucky half of this money goes back into an Agricultural Development Board, which is seeking ways to diversify agriculture and keep people on the farm.</p>	<p>The tobacco industry has been under stress. The industry had been experiencing downsizing over a 25 year period.</p>

<p>Farm income challenges are compounded because families are losing on-farm <i>and</i> off-farm income shares:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco was a major component of farm income. Farmers experienced a 20-30% decrease in income almost overnight. • The rural manufacturing sector, which provides the majority of off-farm employment opportunities, is declining. 	<p>Farmers rely on off-farm income, and are challenged because industry is in decline in rural areas.</p> <p>Manufacturing (other than food manufacturing) has declined significantly. Employment is in decline in almost every sector.</p> <p>Where is the farm sector going to access jobs and services in the future?</p>
<p>Rural areas have struggled when the urban areas have been prosperous.</p>	<p>In rural areas services are becoming increasingly important and production is declining.</p> <p>Urban has a significant proportion of employment and it grew significantly in the latest census data. There was no growth in rural employment, but there was also no decline despite a decline in production.</p>
<p>There should be a link between rural development policy and broader development policies. This link is not always obvious.</p>	<p>Agricultural policy used to be how rural issues were addressed.</p>
<p>A global development triangle links Louisville, Lexington and Cincinnati. Activity takes place on the edge of this triangle. For example, UPS has located its Global Air Hub within the triangle, and is the largest private employer in the state.</p>	<p>The central region of the province is heavily influenced by the Golden Horseshoe and the urban areas within the region that provide development opportunities for communities that fall within this catchment area.</p>
<p>The first Toyota plant in the U.S. was located in Georgetown. Japanese companies specifically target locales outside of major centres, and locate plants on the periphery.</p>	<p>The Toyota plant in Georgetown has the same impact as the Honda plant in Alliston. These large industrial operations change the community. The area that succeeds in getting a plant experiences incredible growth and opportunity, but also has to deal with growth and expansion. Many other areas do not attract these companies.</p>
<p>Industrial recruitment has failed in more remote and smaller places, where industries may only last a few years and then they are gone. This dissipates resources in the community and state.</p>	<p>Small businesses are having a significant impact in Ontario.</p>

Given the above conditions and challenges, what can communities do to boost employment and viability in their region?

In small communities, economic development has to come from within the local community; it has to be locally driven. The state can help, support, and facilitate entrepreneurship, but it cannot create entrepreneurs. This has to be embedded in the community.

The Kentucky Entrepreneurial Coaches program is a means of enabling entrepreneurs. The community has to initiate the process and find ways to build the local economy using local resources. The Coaches Institute provides support and help for communities in this process.

The Kentucky Entrepreneurial Coaches Institute

Larry Jones, Department of Ag. Economics, University of Kentucky / Program Coordinator, Philip Morris Agricultural Leadership Program

The Kentucky Entrepreneurial Coaches Institute (KECI) developed out of a recognized need to address the changing economic landscape in rural Kentucky. Through an innovative approach to nurturing entrepreneurs, KECI aims to fill the gaps in the system so that farm and non-farm rural Kentucky can benefit.

The objectives of the Institute are to:

- Establish a tightly knit network of 60 entrepreneurial coaches and leaders across the 19 county region,
- Facilitate the emergence of a strong entrepreneurial culture or support system in the targeted region, and
- Strengthen the entrepreneurial infrastructure in the region.

For the complete presentation on the Kentucky Entrepreneurial Coaches Institute, including details on the coaches, curriculum, seminars, and program evaluations and accomplishments, please visit www.torc.on.ca

Discussion

Question: Within the KECI program, how do you find people who need or want to be coached?

A variety of approaches are used to identify entrepreneurs who may benefit from coaching. These include:

- personal contacts
- local advertising

- stories in local newspapers
- employment and community contacts

Most often links are made through entrepreneurs approaching coaches directly rather than coaches recruiting entrepreneurs.

The coaches are volunteers. Their seminar and training sessions are paid for, but they give freely of their time and do not receive any direct financial benefit.

Question: What is the measure of success for the KECI program?

A series of factors illustrate the success of the program:

- The degree to which the mini-grants have taken off
- Independent evaluations (including the number of people who have initiated businesses)
- The program aims to fill an identified gap - that is the 'third leg of the development stool' - by fostering entrepreneurship as a means of development within rural communities.
- A series of new regional initiatives have developed as a result of the program.

The program is early in the process. It is too soon to identify how many jobs have been created, or other more traditional quantitative measures of success.

The program also aims to change the culture of the community. Success is not in specific projects, but in building trust and changing the nature of communities. When the philosophy is embraced, people become engaged in the process.

Question: What's in it for the Coaches?

Passion for the community! Unemployment rates are the highest in the nation. Coaches want to see their children stay in eastern Kentucky and they want to see viable farms. It is a fiercely independent area; people in the community trust the coaches and work with them because they are local. Coaches are given tools, and their passion will keep the program alive.

Coaches do get implicit recognition when they are selected. They are chosen because they are seen as special with an ability to change things.

Question: When developing the program were you tempted to take an ‘off the shelf’ model? Why did you develop KECI from scratch?

The program is not developed entirely from scratch, but has worked with people in the community to adapt other models to the local example. A direct provider of information needs to be locally based. The Coaches Institute is a ‘front end’ that works in the local community, and brings together all the practice that has worked in the past 15-20 years. The theory is not new, but in the past a poor job was done of buying into locally-based development.

Question: In Ontario we are finding volunteers are burned out, or are working and volunteering outside their home community. Is this also the situation in Kentucky?

Burnout is an issue everywhere. Some aspects of the program will hopefully guard against burnout and ensure success:

- Within KECI, leadership development is built into the program.
- All coaches have some prior engagement to the community. They are visible and trusted in the community.
- The advantage of having 60 people from a relatively small area generates a support network. Bonding is part of the class. Peers are local, providing help and strengthening the network.

Question: Is there an expectation or requirement that the Coaches give back to the program?

Coaches are expected to contribute 50 hours and a two year minimum commitment following their participation in the program.

From the coaches perspective, there is a recognition that a significant amount of money has been spent on their participation in the program (approximately \$20,000), and they feel accountable to the farmers because the program is funded through the Agricultural Development Board. This sense of responsibility makes the coaches’ contributions to the program a priority volunteer function.

Eighty per cent of graduates are still actively engaged and contributing more than the minimum requirements. Many see this as a lifetime commitment.

Question: How much would it cost to get the same kind of training provided through KECI in the private sector?

A direct cost analysis has not been completed. Some program costs include \$200,000 for outside speakers for each session. The trainers for the four days of

Super Coaching cost \$40,000 per session. It is realistic to estimate that this training would cost significantly more if offered through the private sector.

The network that is built through KECI is unique and not something that a participant would gain to the same degree in a private sector program.

Question: Does the program include a youth focus? Are there plans to grow a pool of future participants for the program?

A group of nine participants pooled their mini-grants to launch a Youth Challenge. This is one of four or five youth initiatives. The Youth Challenge is based on the Scottish Highlands Youth Program. It involves young people forming teams and developing their business ideas. Youth participants do receive some coaching in the challenge. Two of the teams from the competition are moving forward with their ideas, and connections have been made with several county leaders and county governments as the organizers look to move forward with the 2007-2008 Youth Challenge. Coaches are helping to put together teams in each county to ensure more participants in the next challenge.

Question: How does the role of asking questions vary from giving direct advice?

The Kentucky coaches are trained to ask questions. They act as unbiased facilitators, challenging the entrepreneur to find information on their own from the start. They may also refer to someone who has expertise in a specific area if this is deemed necessary by the entrepreneur. It's about facilitating learning – they never tell entrepreneurs the answers, but will be sure they find them.

Funders and service providers with more risk will be more aggressive and further along the continuum of advice giving and guidance.

Question: How does the coaching system relate back to state business associations? Is there a linkage between the two?

This requires further exploration.

Rural Entrepreneurship Program Support in Ontario

A series of speakers highlighted current initiatives in support of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship within Ontario. From Federal and Provincial government support, to Enterprise Centres and community initiatives, a continuum of program offerings was outlined for forum participants.

For complete presentations on each of the following program areas, please visit www.torc.on.ca

- **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:** Diana Jedig, Ontario Association of Community Futures Development Corporations
- **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:** John Martin, Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Entrepreneurship
- **ENTERPRISE CENTRES:** Judi Riddolls, Guelph Business Enterprise Centre
- **COMMUNITY EFFORT:** Jennifer Heneberry, Ontario Co-operative Association – Community EFFORT.

Discussion

The number of organizations providing entrepreneurial support is evolving in complimentary, critical ways.

Question: Within the Community EFFORT program, what characteristics do you look for in an Enterprise Facilitator?

- Sense of empathy (has run a small business).
- Ability to be compassionate, able to listen, build relationships – it is not just about the numbers and business, individuals have their heart and soul in their business venture.
- Some financial background helps in identifying early on if an individual has a passion or is a “tourist” for owning their own business.
- Based locally – the facilitator needs to understand the community where they are based. They need to understand the challenges and know what resources are available.

Question: Does the Ontario Co-operative Association and Community Futures connect?

Yes. Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) help with financing co-operatives. CFDCs also host workshops on co-operatives at their conferences, and three CFDCs were involved in the pilot phase of Community EFFORT. It is not always financial, but there is support.

Question: Is there a cost for the Community Futures' online courses?

Community Futures courses are available to the general public for an average cost of \$50 - \$80 per course. The courses are accessible at www.cfdlearn.ca .

Lessons Learned from Presentations and Discussion

What follows is a summary of the lessons participants garnered from the presentations and discussion during the morning session:

- Passion is critical! It is the 'yeast that builds the bread' and is necessary to build an entrepreneurial culture.
- Success is community-based. "Outsiders" need to find a way to get invited into communities. They need an invitation to be involved, and even then they are really just the door openers.
- Gaps appear to exist despite numerous offerings of entrepreneurial services.
- In spite of these gaps, there are a lot of programs and services being offered. Are people aware of what is available to them? How do you market yourself better? How do you make the community aware?
- No one model fits all. Use best practices from a variety of sources to develop your own model.
- While organizations may have similar goals, they vary in how they deliver their services.
- There is potential for serious duplication of effort with limited resources.
- There is a need to develop an entrepreneurial culture. This culture needs to be nurtured as the economy shifts from people having one career to constantly changing careers. Developing such a culture takes time, and requires breaking down resistance to change.
- Entrepreneurial spirit needs community support. Often a 'driver' is needed to initiate change in the community. A champion or an issue that needs immediate action may be such a driver.
- There are many similarities between rural communities internationally.
- Networking is critical!
- Rural communities are close-knit. A culture of trust needs to be in place. People need to hear from their peers that someone can be trusted.
- Measurement indicators of success go beyond dollars and cents, and the short term.
- Volunteers are critical for leveraging services and getting results.
- Evaluation and monitoring are important to ensure programs are adapting to change and incorporating best practices.

- Many outlying urban areas are dealing with similar issues as rural areas. For example, addressing youth out migration and retaining youth.
- The sheer size of small business and entrepreneurial activity, and their importance to the economy was underlined. The impact is huge!
- When working with entrepreneurs, listen rather than advise. Don't give the answers, let the entrepreneur make decisions.
- There is a gap in getting financial resources from those who have it (upper levels of government) to those who require it at the community level.

Roundtable Discussion and Report Back

Facilitator: Chuck Bokor, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Participants explored three questions related to building support for rural entrepreneurship, including identifying issues, opportunities, and next steps. A summary of the discussion follows.

QUESTION 1: Based on what you know and what you heard this morning, is there room to improve the current approach to support for rural entrepreneurship?

Participants were in agreement that improvement is needed. Here are some of the key reasons why:

- Great programs exist, but the **challenge is in communication**. Clarity is needed for clients on the expectations of what programs deliver and what people can expect to get from these programs. Clarity is also needed between agencies to alleviate the confusion and disconnect on the services and roles each provides.
- **Marketing is needed**. People do not understand the services available to them when they do have an idea.
- **People don't know what they don't know**. They may not ask questions because they don't know the question. People need help to understand what steps they should be going through.
- There is duplication of services and efforts, especially in rural communities. Also, agencies work in silos, competing against each other. How do you **leverage assets** to make the best use of these volunteers and resources?
- **Think of the community as an entrepreneur** rather than just individuals as entrepreneurs. How is this promoted to increase community vitality?
- Entrepreneurship is always conceptualized as an individual, and models try to augment that individual's skill set. However, entrepreneurship could be a group of two or three with complimentary skills. **Broader, more diverse business models** are needed to explore entrepreneurship as it relates to partnerships, co-operatives, boards of directors, et cetera.
- There is a **need for a common vision** of strong rural communities. A shared focus should be developed between leadership, entrepreneurship, and development, so all contribute to a shared vision of rural.
- The **high rate of failure** may be indicative of a need to reassess what we are doing in order to improve the success rates of new business start ups. Do we know what the most basic needs are? Do current services meet current needs? Does failure indicate that we need to change the system, or is it part of the process? Is the system failing those who are failing?

- **Better mentoring processes are needed.** Consider mentors among the population of retired professionals moving out to rural areas. “Peer advocates” are a good model for the rural culture.
- There is a continued **need for youth training and awareness** of entrepreneurial opportunities.
- **An entrepreneurial culture is lacking.** How do you change culture in a community? What is the role of industry groups, organizations, Chambers of Commerce, etc. in fostering entrepreneurship?
- **Geographic ability to access programs varies;** information isn’t generally available or collected in a central way.

QUESTION 2: If the idea is to build support for rural entrepreneurship, what are the issues and opportunities we need to consider?

THE ISSUES:

Communities:

- Does entrepreneurship contribute to youth retention? Is rural entrepreneurship capable of retaining highly educated youth?
- Lack of community planning.
- Lack of entrepreneurial culture.
- Isolation of some communities and access to information/technology. Access to broadband is an issue in some areas.
- Attracting businesses to communities:
 - Companies leaving for monetary reasons (cheap labour)
 - Lack of skilled or willing labourers
 - Sparse population does not justify investment for businesses
- “Old habits die hard” – people are not open to change.
- Volunteer burnout.

Entrepreneurs:

- Access to markets.
- Need to expand networks.
- Negative perceptions and preconceived ideas about co-ops.

Government/Funders:

- The need for better cross-agency links within government that go beyond core community development.
- Long term approaches trying to work within short term government objectives.
- Quantifiable project results are not realistic in the short-term.
- A lack of political interest in rural.
- Government attitudes toward entrepreneurship. In some government agencies, the culture and policy need to change. For example, an individual needs to have exhausted a job search and have a barrier to employment *before* they are eligible for the Employment Insurance entrepreneurship program. What are the barriers to encouraging a business climate for entrepreneurship? Are these barriers systemic?

Agencies:

- The need to be invited into a community. The need to build trust.
- Farmers are entrepreneurs, but may be missing the marketing skill. How do you add this into their skill set?

- Start-up support is good, but long-term nurturing for success is lacking. Realistic goals, market research, and information to make good decisions are needed.
- Business support organizations are expected to be everything to all people.
- Lack of interest in promoting the use of the Internet by businesses.
- How to stimulate or incubate entrepreneurs.
- Competition for limited resources and justification of services.
- Focus is often on building partnerships for survival (i.e. securing finances).
- Differing definitions of entrepreneur – not all business owners are entrepreneurs.

THE OPPORTUNITIES:

Celebration:

- Share local successes with local people through community meetings, recognition programs, et cetera.

Education / Awareness:

- Educate the public on the importance of entrepreneurship; build public support and understanding for entrepreneurial efforts.
- Introduce entrepreneurship at the elementary level (grade 2 - 3). Youth grow up unafraid of entrepreneurship, and an entrepreneurial culture grows within the community.
- Educate people about co-operatives and their benefits. Change the perception about co-operatives. They are attractive options in rural areas.
- There are commonalities in issues entrepreneurs face depending on where there are in the cycle. “Frequently Asked Questions” and responses are already available. Where does a new entrepreneur start? Do people know what’s available and how to access it?
- Present entrepreneurship as a career choice.
- The Internet presents an opportunity that can be expanded enormously. Help businesses understand how to use the Internet to their advantage to tap into the world economy.

Collaboration:

- Promote business co-operation and strategic alliances when they are not competing. Networking groups are helpful.
- Convene a mechanism to bring together all the different players who support entrepreneurship. This would help to identify who is doing what and build recognition of initiatives that are available to entrepreneurs. This is a role TORC could play.
- Position co-operatives as an opportunity to share strengths – ‘risk sharing’ rather than ‘risk taking’.

Research:

- Do service-providers know what emerging entrepreneurs need? Is an inventory of today's needs required? What resources are currently available? Some of this research has already been done; examine, compile and share what is already out there to avoid a duplication of efforts.
- Identify visionaries within communities. Champions and leaders are in each community and need to be fostered.

Investment / Incentives:

- Invest in education and programs.
- Invest in technology infrastructure.
- Create more incentives (for example, co-operative associations, networking groups).
- Encourage entrepreneurship that focuses on viable niches, within the global context.
- Encourage trying; failures are good teachers.
- Entrepreneurs approach programs at a reactive stage. Resources are not enough; program providers need to be proactive.
- Communities need to make attracting small business a priority.
- Build community support.
- Accommodate opportunities.

QUESTION 3: What are the three “next steps” needed to address the issues or take advantage of the opportunities?

Research Needs:

- Complete an asset inventory related to the breadth and scope of services all organizations provide. Identify what is available and where gaps exist. Address the needs. Where are resources directed best?
- Identify how and why people tap into resources. What is the best way to build support and meet the needs of entrepreneurs?
- Identify why businesses fail.
- Identify how success is defined.
- Identify what motivates entrepreneurs.

Education:

- Develop a community education strategy led by all stakeholders involved in entrepreneurship.
- Organize a study tour of successful places in Ontario. What service delivery models work in other areas? Include communities that have transformed themselves, and become ‘destinations’ for tourists, businesses and new citizens. For example, OMAFRA has programs for downtown revitalization. Internationally, the Main Street USA program is worth exploring.

Communication / Marketing:

- Develop a forum to share ideas among stakeholders and expand the circle for dialogue (school boards, service clubs, health groups, municipal government, et cetera). Continue with this process of information sharing among service providers.
- Develop a forum on marketing entrepreneurial programs and services.
- Convene opportunities to build support for entrepreneurship.
- Develop a brochure on local and international best practices.
- Develop a brochure with all the information about services, resources, and contacts available in the community. Provide this information in one place (community web site), from an entrepreneurs perspective. Provide a user-friendly road map to access services.
- Develop a user-friendly Web site to navigate available resources – a central clearing house for programs, industry associations, educational institutions, mentors and volunteers. Some of this work is already completed, but needs to be marketed and shared with a wider audience.
- Develop opportunities for more relationship-building and face-to-face interaction.
- Share events, stories, and experiences. Draw from non-governmental agencies, youth, qualitative and quantitative examples.

Mentorship:

- Identify the full capacity of communities. For example, retirees may be an excellent source of mentors for small business. Utilize mentors to support entrepreneurs. Identify potential mentors through community groups, service clubs, newspaper advertisements, et cetera.
- Provide some training for mentors about the roles they can play.
- Provide a coaching element beyond the start-up phase. Reallocate resources to fulfill this need.
- Be an example of entrepreneurship in/with your own organization, business and community involvement.

Program Delivery:

- Expand entrepreneurial programs beyond the pilot phase and integrate them into core operational funding.
- Maintain the diversity of programs to reflect the diversity of Ontario.
- Develop entrepreneurial incubators through shared resources and expenses.

NEXT STEPS FOR TORC: Based on the discussion of next steps outlined above, TORC will work towards developing a strategy for what can be done in the near term, medium term and long term to move the agenda forward. This will include working with partners to facilitate dialogue with key organizations involved in rural entrepreneurship and identify ways in which rural stakeholders can effectively and efficiently collaborate towards successful outcomes.

APPENDIX A: FORUM PARTICIPANTS

Suzanne Ainley, University of Waterloo (Dept. of Recreation & Leisure Sports)
Rob Black, The Centre for Rural Leadership
George Borovilos, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
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Irene Sullivan, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
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Jan Varner, United Way of Kitchener-Waterloo
Kim Wingrove, Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade

SPEAKERS:

John Martin, Ontario Ministry of Small Business & Entrepreneurship
David Freshwater, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky
Jen Heneberry, Ontario Co-operative Association - Community EFFORT
Diana Jedig, Ontario Association of Community Futures Development Corporations
Larry Jones, University of Kentucky & Philip Morris Agricultural Leadership Program
Judi Riddolls, Guelph Business Enterprise Centre

TORC STAFF:

Harold Flaming, Executive Director, The Ontario Rural Council

Michele Hill, Administrative Assistant, The Ontario Rural Council

Michele Walter, Communications and Project Coordinator, The Ontario Rural Council

Chuck Bokor, Facilitator, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Christine Dixon, Forum Recorder

APPENDIX B: FORUM AGENDA

TORC in Partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs and the Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Entrepreneurship PRESENTS

Fostering Entrepreneurship in Rural Ontario

Exploring New and Existing Approaches for the Enhanced Support of our Rural Entrepreneurs

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Springfield Golf & Country Club • Guelph • Ontario

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 8:30 a.m. | Registration |
| 9:00 a.m. | Welcome and Opening Remarks
Harold Flaming, Executive Director, TORC |
| 9:15 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. | Kentucky Rural Entrepreneurship Coaches Institute Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Larry Jones, Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky / Program Coordinator, Philip Morris Agricultural Leadership Program○ David Freshwater, Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky○ Rural Entrepreneurship Coaches Program participants |
| 10:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m. | <i>Refreshment Break</i> |
| 10:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Rural Entrepreneurship Program Support in Ontario <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Federal Government Support<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Diana Jedig, Executive Director, Ontario Association of Community Futures Development Corporations, St. Thomas (ON)○ Provincial Support<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ontario Ministry of Small Business & Entrepreneurship○ Enterprise Centres<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Judi Riddolls, Executive Director, Guelph Business Enterprise Centre, Guelph (ON)○ Community EFFORT<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jen Heneberry, Program Coordinator, Ontario Cooperative Association – Community EFFORT (Enterprise Facilitation Fusing Opportunities, Resources and Talent) Guelph (ON) |
| 12:00 – 12:30 p.m. | De-Brief - Key Learnings |
| 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. | Rural Entrepreneurship Roundtable Discussion & Report Back |
| 3:30 p.m. | Wrap Up |



APPENDIX C: SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

(Forum presentations are available online at www.torc.on.ca)

Kentucky Entrepreneurial Coaches Institute (KECI)

- **David Freshwater, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky**

David Freshwater is a professor at the University of Kentucky with appointments in the Department of Agricultural Economics and in the Martin School of Public Administration and Public Policy. His main research areas are rural and agricultural policy in North America. Current work involves: analysis of multi-functionality as a basis for agricultural policy, evaluation of the impacts of rural development policies, measuring the performance of financial institutions in rural areas, and the role of off-farm income in agriculture. David has recently conducted research work for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

From 1994 to 2001 David was Program Manager for TVA Rural Studies, a rural development research center that was created through a co-operative agreement between the Tennessee Valley Authority and the University of Kentucky. Prior to joining the University of Kentucky he was a senior economist on the Staff of the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress and, preceding that, a member of the professional staff of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. David has been a visiting scholar at USDA, a member of the faculty of the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Manitoba, and a consultant on rural finance and rural policy for various domestic and international government agencies. He holds a B.A. in Economics from Brock University, an M.A. in Economics from McMaster University and a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Michigan State University.

- **Larry Jones, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, University of Kentucky Program Coordinator, Philip Morris Agricultural Leadership Program**

Larry Jones is a professor of Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky - College of Agriculture. He is Director of the Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program and Co-Director of the Kentucky Entrepreneurial Coaches Institute. Other responsibilities include teaching international agriculture and conducting applied research on the importance of agriculture and agribusiness to communities.

Larry served as Chairman of the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky from 1985-95. Prior to that, he was Senior Economist at a subsidiary of Chase Manhattan Bank in Philadelphia where he was responsible for fertilizer and chemical consulting. He received his B.S. from Ohio State University and he completed his M.S. and Ph.D. at Purdue University.

Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs)

- **Diana Jedig, Executive Director, Ontario Association of Community Futures Development Corporations**

Since 1994, Diana Jedig has been the Executive Director for the Ontario Association of Community Futures Development Corporations (OACFDC). Her direct experience with the Community Futures Program has been a key strength in ensuring the Association responds to the needs of its members. Diana volunteers her time with the Pan Canadian Community Futures Group, as a founding member of The Ontario Rural Council (TORC), and as a Board member with the Canadian CED Network, as Chair of the Practitioner and Sector Strengthening Committee.

Diana was recognized in 2003 for her contributions to rural CED as the co-winner of the Mary Robertson Rural Distinction Award. She has an Honours Bachelor of Commerce Degree ('82) from McMaster University, a Masters in Business Administration ('84) from the University of Western Ontario, Richard Ivey School of Business and is a Certified Association Executive ('04), through the Canadian Society of Association Executives.

Province of Ontario

- **John Martin, Ministry of Small Business and Entrepreneurship**

John Martin is Manager, Entrepreneurship and Youth Partnerships for the Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Entrepreneurship. Key responsibilities include managing the provincial network of 44 Small Business Enterprise Centres as well as the delivery of Ministry small business/entrepreneurship and youth programs across the province (primarily through the Enterprise Centres). Programs include the Enterprise Centres, Bridges to Better Business, Salute to Small Business, Summer Company, Future Entrepreneurs, Global Edge and the Ontario Secondary School Business Plan Competition, as well as the Youth Entrepreneurship Partnerships initiative that is currently funding 20 projects delivered through not-for-profit organizations in Ontario.

Enterprise Centres

- **Judi Riddolls, Executive Director, Guelph Business Enterprise Centre**

As Executive Director for the Guelph Business Enterprise Centre, Judi is recognized for her dedication, work and training related to small business development. She has served as Executive Director of the Downtown Guelph Board of Management, National Director of Public Relations and Promotions, Management Trainer, General Manager and Consultant. Judi has developed and operated five businesses of her own, earning the

1998 Woman of Distinction Business Professional Award as well as “Mach Warrior” in 1997. Judi is a recognized motivational speaker and workshop facilitator.

Community EFFORT

- **Jennifer Heneberry, Program Coordinator, Ontario Co-operative Association – Community EFFORT**

Jen Heneberry is the Co-operative Development Co-ordinator with the Ontario Co-operative Association (On Co-op). Her primary areas of responsibility include assisting in the development of co-operatives by matching them with the technical assistance and required coaching, and by connecting them with other co-ops offering support and resources.

Jen has been involved with a number of community initiatives in the Hamilton area since 1999, including the City of Hamilton’s VISION 2020 and Air Quality initiatives, as well as the myHamilton project (formerly Connect Hamilton). She also spent more than two years working with the Positive Power Co-operative as General Manager, helping to develop both community-owned renewable energy projects in the Bay Area and the renewable energy co-op sector.

Jen has degrees in Chemistry and Environmental Sciences from McMaster University, and a Volunteer Management Certificate from Mohawk College. She is also a graduate of the Hamilton-Burlington Bay Area Leadership program and a member of the Bay Area Leadership Curriculum Committee. Jen is the 2007-08 Chair of the Board of Directors of the Conserver Society of Hamilton and District, and a member of Hamilton’s Eco-Network Steering Committee.