I. Unit Title: CENTER FOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Unit Administrator: Deborah Moore, Director

II. Data and information for department:

The Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University is a dynamic center of research and outreach for the Delta region. It is designed to work collaboratively with the communities and organizations of the 18-county Delta region that it serves. The Center works to engage the residents of the Delta in creating meaningful and sustainable opportunities for change. This is accomplished by creating programs and supporting existing programs that empower Deltans to identify needs and the resources to meet those needs.

The Center brings together governmental and non-governmental entities, community leaders, businesses, non-profits, DSU faculty, and students to create programs that create support structures that will ensure that the programs operating in the Center continue to build on the legacy started in 1994. This legacy is one of excellence in service.

The Mission of the Center for Community and Economic Development is

Building and Empowering Relationships that Strengthen Communities.

To accomplish this mission, the Center has created a network of partners that work in the service area and has focused on developing programs that attempt to meet this mission. The programs operating in the Center have a variety of focuses from youth development to regional leadership development. However, the Center is committed to promoting empowerment and self-sustenance. A general overview of the Center programs is provided below with accomplishments of the 2004-2005 academic year.

America Reads-Mississippi (ARM) is the largest AmeriCorps program in the state of Mississippi and addresses the AmeriCorps issue area of education. The mission is to improve the reading skills of students, encourage public awareness and support of literacy, and help improve the number of certified teachers in Mississippi. Regional partnerships include four (4) universities: Alcorn State University, Delta State University, Jackson State University, and Mississippi State University. In addition, ARM has maintained strong partnering relationships with Barksdale Reading Institute, Early Childhood Institute, Head Start, Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service, Mississippi Department of Education, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency,
Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, MS Red Cross, and 55 schools across the state. The DSU region was awarded 50 members and they serve in four school districts and eleven school sites. On July 31, 2005, America Reads-Mississippi will have successfully completed its 7th year of operation.

ARM AmeriCorps teams at school sites, tutor students full-time one-on-one and in small groups during the school day, before and after school, over school breaks, and in the summer. Annual statewide reading gain (on average) in reading has increased 1.5-2.0 reading levels for tutored students. The Economic impact of the America Reads-Mississippi Program in the Delta State University Region is approximately $884,804.98. The DSU-ARM program spends $428,274.00 for living allowances paid to 42-stipend AmeriCorps member at $849.75 per month for 12 months or $10,197.00 per year. Over 75% of these members are single parents and this living allowance serves as the only cash income within the household. Health insurance is provided to stipend members at no cost to the members. The DSU-ARM program spends $59,976.00 for health care insurance (42 members paid at $119.00 per member for 12 months). Liability insurance is included as a benefit for all AmeriCorps members at a cost of $9,682.80 per year, 42 stipend members at $18.25 per month and at $5.05 per month for 8 district teacher assistants. Lack of adequate childcare and the inability to pay for services have hindered many people from maintaining employment. Stipend members are eligible (based on household income) for childcare voucher payments through the Corporation for National and Community Service. The DSU-ARM region currently has 11 stipend members enrolled providing childcare services to small children totaling at least $44,193.50 for the program year.

Upon completion of 1700 hours per year, all AmeriCorps members earn $4,725.00 in the form of an education award voucher. The DSU Region estimates awarding 44 members education awards this program year totaling $236,250.00.

Volunteer recruitment and community involvement is a vital part of the ARM program and is strongly encouraged. During this program year, ARM members in the DSU region alone, have recruited 1,388 volunteers to assist with literacy and school related activities serving 4,014 hours. Based on the value of service from the Economic Report of the President, at $14.62 per hour, these volunteers gave $58,684.68 of their time to local schools and their communities, benefiting over 9,500 people. In addition, members recruited 1,482 volunteers to assist with the four major National Service Day projects performing 3,200 hours and accruing $47,744.00 in service, benefiting 9,000 people and involving 3,000 school students. The America Reads-Mississippi Program has been continuously awarded funding for a three-year cycle ending July 31, 2007. Each year, our program has exceeded the desired benchmarked expectations and performance.

**Delta Reads Partnership (DRP)** The Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University received a grant in the amount of $744,000.00 from the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Services for the 2004-2005 program year for the Delta Reads Partnership. This grant is a part of a three year cycle which allows us to apply for continuation through 2007.
The Delta Reads Partnership program is comprised of forty-seven members who serve in nine Delta school districts. By using the Mississippi Curriculum Test (MCT) as an evaluation tool, Delta Reads Partnership assist schools with meeting and exceeding state standards.

As of today, the members have recruited, trained and managed a total of 756 non-AmeriCorps volunteers who have provided 1,347 hours of service. In order to get parents more involved in the educational lives of their children, the Delta Reads AmeriCorps members have made 962 parental contacts with the guardians of the students tutored. These contacts were made in the form of: 52 parent teacher conferences, 182 phone calls, 408 letters, and 320 visits from parents. Also, over 3800 Recipes for Success have been issued which consist of educational activities that parents can engage in with their children.

The Delta Reads Partnership Corps members have provided 66,646 hours of service during the first two quarters of this program year. The members have provided classroom one-on-one tutoring to 537 students in grades K-8 at least four days per week using multiple tutoring techniques learned through Tutor Certification training provided by the Delta Reads Partnership. Each student received tutoring at least 20 minutes a day.

Each Corps member receives a $10,197.00 living allowance and a $4,725.00 post-service education award which yields approximately $479,259.00 of expendable income and $222,075.00 in educational benefits for this program. The total expendable income stated does not include the partial living allowance received by 10 AmeriCorps members who exited the program during the first two quarters.

Fifty-seven Corps members have served a total of 66,646 hours; This is an average market value per hour pay of $14.62 yielding a fair market labor value of $974,365.00 during the period of September 1, 2004 until May 31, 2005.

The Delta Reads Partnership program has received a grant for $744,000 from the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Services for the 2005-2006 service year. Sixty members will serve local school districts in tutorial programs. The 60 AmeriCorps members will receive a $10,600 living allowance and a post-educational award of $4725.00. The program year is scheduled to start September 1, 2005.

The Delta Reads partnership program is economically important to Delta State University because currently $479,259.00 of expendable income is being brought into the region alone with $222,075.00 in educational benefits that members will use to attend institutions of higher learning. During the service year of 2005-2006 it is anticipated that there will be $636,000.00 of expendable income and $283,500.00 in educational benefits brought into the region.

**Mississippi Delta Service Corps (MDSC)** AmeriCorps program is based at the Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University in Cleveland, MS.
It is part of a bi-state initiative that falls under the umbrella of the Lower Mississippi Delta Service Corps. Members of the program assist in making communities across the Mississippi Delta safer, healthier, better educated and more united.

The MDSC program received $232,000.00 in funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service for the 2004-2005 service year. Twenty members were allotted to the program to serve in the area of tutoring, adequate and affordable housing, family service, youth enrichment and community education. Seventeen of the twenty members allotted will complete the program this year. Each will have received a $10,197.00 living allowance and a post-educational award of 4,725.00.

The program is economically important to DSU because $173,349.00 of expendable income is being brought into the region as well as 80,325.00 of educational award monies that members will use to attend institutions of higher learning. A large majority of our members attend Delta State University.

Seventeen of the allotted 20 members serving 40 hours per week for 11 months at an average per hour pay of $14.62 yields a fair market labor value of $477,196.80.

Notification has been received that funding has been approved for the 2005-2006 program year.

**Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps*VISTA (VISTA)** The Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University received a grant in the amount of $433,553.00 from the Corporation for National & Community Service for the 2004 – 2005 program year to continue the Mississippi Delta Service Corps (MDSC)/AmeriCorps*VISTA Program.

The MDSC/AmeriCorps*VISTA Program is comprised of thirty VISTA members who serve with programs to create and expand opportunities for low-income individuals in the following areas: (1) financial asset development; (2) welfare to work; (3) public health; and (4) children and youth. Through their service in these four focus areas, low-income communities will achieve long-lasting antipoverty objectives, partnerships will be promoted between public and private sectors, volunteers will be recruited and trained, resources will be mobilized to support the project, and communities will have the capacity to be self-sustainable.

Each VISTA member receives a $9500.00 subsistence allowance and a $1200.00 year end stipend which yields approximately $321,000.00 of expendable income for this region. VISTA members are assigned to 11 partnering organizations in 6 counties in the Mississippi Delta.

The 30 members serving 40 hours per week for 12 months at an average market value per hour pay of $14.62 yields fair market labor value of $912,288.00 per year.

As of today, during the 2004-2005 service year, 982 community members have been recruited and trained to assist with the VISTA projects and have served a total of 9,337
VISTA members solicited over $18,058.00 dollars in in-kind and donated goods and serves and raised $29,762.00 through fundraisers, grants and donations.

**The Mid-South Delta Leaders (MSDL)** program, funded for five years in the amount of $1.2 million through the W.K. Kellogg Foundation/ Mid-South Delta Initiative, serves as a means of improving the intellectual and social capital needed to drive the economic growth in the 55-county Delta region in Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. This program is a partnership between Delta State University, serving as the lead partner and fiscal agent; Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, Arkansas; and, Grambling State University in Louisiana. Forty-four class members, 18 from Arkansas, 14 from Mississippi and 12 from Louisiana, are participating in a curriculum designed to improve the leadership, management and communication skills of its participants. This program enables these leaders to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the Delta’s socioeconomic and cultural realities and offers techniques to bring about change in their communities. The program also helps participants gain a better understanding of national and global trends in terms of how these trends influence the quality of life and economic and community development in the tri-state Delta.

Upon completion of MSDL in January 2005, Class I graduates received the opportunity to develop a living practicums that enhanced the region economically. Twenty graduates received the $2,000 to provide seed money for projects in their local communities.

MSDL is unique because of its tri-state focus of Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Many existing leadership development programs within the three states focus on a particular community or have a one-state emphasis. This program has a tri-state regional mission that brings together a diverse group of citizens to enhance the quality of life through human resource development, community development and economic development. This program is fundamentally based on shared learning, reciprocity and mutual respect.

Class members of MSDL were chosen because of their interest in creating positive change and because of their expressed commitment to the region. They represent a wide variety of employment sectors, including higher education, K-12 education, government, non-profit, for-profit businesses, self-employment, faith-based organizations and community volunteers. The participants in the program are balanced by race, gender, employment sectors and geographical location. This, in turn, increases the breadth and depth of networks, and ensures the inclusion of stakeholders; particularly those traditionally under-represented in community and economic development efforts.

MSDL is no longer under the directorship of the Center for Community and Economic Development effective July 1, 2005.

**Project YES!** Since 1999, the mission for the Delta Partners Youth Program in Leadership Development has been *Giving Youth a Voice in the Community to Serve, Learn, Lead, and Grow*. The program was based on a body of research from sociology and psychology; and, more importantly, objectives were created from action research.
outcomes conducted with 2,600 Delta youths from public and private schools. During two Delta Youth Summits (1999 and 2000), 130 Delta youths established priorities for improving education and race relations in the Delta. The first phase was seen as a program development process. Initially, it was funded by the Mid-South Delta Consortium, with cash match from the Delta Partners Initiative (DPI) and in-kind support from Coahoma Community College, Delta State University and Mississippi Delta Community College.

In July 2000, the Center for Community and Economic Development (Center) received a $50,000 Youth Engagement Strategy (Project YES!) grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Project YES!, a demonstration program on youth leadership development with the goal of combating racism and its related problems, was funded for 18 months. This project enabled the Center to begin small youth-led demonstration programs in three Delta communities -- Hollandale, Ruleville, and Shelby during 2000-2001. The intent was to empower clusters of culturally diverse youth as they implemented practical and relevant community and youth leadership development activities. For the program to succeed, strong local partnerships had to be developed between youth and a cadre of caring and civically active adult leaders in their home communities. During the fall of 2002, the Project YES! Delta Youth Program was extended through Fiscal Year 2004. Project YES! was introduced in Cleveland during the fall of 2002 to help Delta youth achieve their vision for sustained, out-of-school life enrichment programs.

Because of the strong commitment to developing a sound and creative program for youths in civic activism and leadership programs, the program objectives focused on:

Youth participation in community service involved several diverse activities. For example, they hosted the first dance in history that brought together a diverse group of students from both of the two public high schools. This was intended to bridge the gap between the youth, recruit more participants and raise funds to support a community service endeavor. Proceeds from the dance, totaling $383, were used to make 100 Easter baskets for the elderly at a local nursing home.

Funding for Project YES! ended October 31, 2004.

**The Institute for Community-Based Research (ICBR)** engages in projects aimed at informing development efforts in the Mississippi Delta and beyond. The Institute works with nonprofit organizations and cooperatives, government agencies, and educational institutions to assist in the design, implementation, and analysis of research in pursuit of livelihood security and improved quality of life. Substantive areas of focus include: 1) underemployment, persistent poverty and workforce development, 2) environment, health and food security, and 3) organizing cooperative alternatives. A collaborative partnership between the Division of Social Sciences and Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University, the Institute provides an avenue through which DSU students, especially those pursuing a Master of Science Degree in Community Development, are able to collaborate with faculty and communities to engage in timely and meaningful research.
Much of the Institute’s work involves development of service-learning research projects for graduate students to engage with local and regional nonprofit and cooperative organizations. Projects take place in the context of courses and student practicum/thesis research. In 2004-2005, such projects were carried out with the St. Gabriel Mercy Center, Tri-County Workforce Alliance, Mississippi SHINE and the AmeriCorps*VISTA program at the Center for Community and Economic Development. These efforts sometimes involve organizations providing modest amounts of funding to directly cover travel costs, purchase supplies and provide stipends for students. The economic impact of this service-learning work to the Delta region is extensive in the sense that the research and evaluation activities add value to the nonprofits and their programs, thus making them more competitive for future funding.

In addition to these collaborative efforts and projects that are beneficial because of their ability to bridge student learning and community engagement, many of the Institute’s endeavors have a direct economic impact on Delta State University in general and the Division of Social Sciences and Center for Community and Economic Development in particular.

The projects with direct economic impacts listed below took place in the 2004-2005 academic year, although some projects began before this time period and some will continue into the near future. It is important to note that most funding was provided on a sub-contractual basis, while others were direct grants. The total dollar amount for these projects in the 2004-2005 academic year was $15,180.

_Evaluation of Rural Health Network Development_
Description: Health care partners are in the process of developing a collaborative approach to improving the rural health care system in ten counties located in the Mississippi Delta. This effort includes establishment of best practices for health care delivery, organizing community-based health volunteers and development of an information network. Evaluation of this project, which is the major role of the Institute, focuses on program processes and outcomes.

Partners: Greater Delta Health and Human Services Network (GDHHSN), G.A. Carmichael Family Health Center, Delta Area Health Education Center, Delta Health Ventures and Delta State University. Funding was provided to GDHHSN through the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Rural Health Policy. The Institute’s participation was funded through a subcontract with GDHHSN.

_Clarksdale Area Transportation System Assessment_
Description: This project is to inform planning efforts to address barriers to accessing transportation in Clarksdale/Coahoma County, Mississippi. Students and faculty associated with the Institute conducted research incorporating participants from diverse standpoints.
Partners: Institute for Community-Based Research, Delta Blues Museum, Delta Area Rural Transportation System and residents of Jonestown, Mississippi. Dreyfus Health Foundation funded the assessment research which was provided to the Institute as a direct grant.

*Risk Management for Small-Scale, Limited Resource and Minority Farmers*

Description: As part of an ongoing relationship with the Rural Coalition – a nonprofit organization serving eighty community-based groups across the country – the Institute works on needs assessment, asset mapping and evaluation of projects. These are focused on efforts to assist traditionally underserved farmers with managing farm business risks through financial training and program outreach.

Partners: Rural Coalition and several of its member organizations, including Homeworkers Organized for More Employment, Intertribal Agriculture Council, Minnesota Farmers Association, Operation Spring Plant, Rural Advancement Fund, Small Farmers Resource and Training Center, and United Farmers. Funding was provided to the Rural Coalition from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Risk Management Agency. The Institute’s participation was funded through a subcontract with the Rural Coalition.

*Delta in Global Context Workshop*

Description: The workshop offered an opportunity to share experiences, refine ideas, and deliberate how globalization is reshaping the Delta and potential paths for development. Participants were encouraged to contribute papers and deliver presentations that drew connections between issues in the globalization debate and experiences in the Delta. Papers are now being collected for publication in a workshop proceeding.

Partners: The workshop was hosted by the Institute in partnership with the Delta Rural Poll (Center for Community and Economic Development) at Delta State University. The Mississippi Association of Cooperatives (MAC)/Mississippi Center for Cooperative Development sponsored the event. Workshop participants also paid registration fees.

**The Mississippi Delta Technology Council (MDTC)** is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, celebrating, and leveraging technology in the traditional, 19-county Delta region. The MDTC works with a variety of businesses, educational institutions, health care organizations, and other non-profit partners to achieve our goals.

The mission of the Mississippi Delta Technology Council is to promote, celebrate, and leverage technology in the Delta. Our strategic goals obviously follow:

- To inform the citizens of the Delta and beyond that our region is utilizing technology to enhance business, the work of government, health care, education, agriculture, and economic development of the region
- To expand upon the existing technology
To debunk the myth of the Delta as a one-dimensional, backwards-leaning, agrarian society and to replace it with one of a society embracing the future while remaining loyal to tradition.

In order to achieve these strategic goals, the MDTC is implementing a number of measures:

- To annually hold the Delta Business and Technology Expo, which serves as a forum for all entities within the Delta (and some from beyond) to network and highlight their utilization of technology. This event is held in conjunction with Delta Council Day, which has given the vendors of the Delta Business and Technology Expo exposure to a large, influential audience.
- To create a comprehensive web-portal, which will map out all of the resources of the Delta.
- To implement the Certified Technology Communities initiative, which will serve as a tool for economic developers of the region.
- To build and strengthen relationships within the region and beyond to promote, celebrate, and leverage technology in the Delta.

The MDTC currently has 5 Corporate Platinum Members (Baxter, BellSouth, Entergy, InTime, and TecInfo). The MDTC currently has 1 Corporate Gold Member (Global Data Systems). The MDTC currently has 27 Corporate Silver Members.

Effective July 1, 2005 this program will be under the leadership of Dr. Myrtis Tabb and will report directly to the President's office.

The Mississippi Tri-Delta Business Development and Assistance (BD&A) Program-
The Business Development and Assistance project was based at the Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University in Cleveland, MS. It was an 18 month program developed to stimulate community and regional support, through technical assistance for private and public sector employers in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Washington Counties in the Mississippi Delta. The program began in April of 2003 and was to conclude in December 2004 but an extension was approved for an additional county (Sunflower County) allowing the program to conclude in June of 2005.

The BD&A project received $255,000 from the Delta Regional Authority to assist local chambers and industrial development foundations in developing proactive strategies that would reduce the number of jobs being lost in the local area. Activities included conducting and planning field work to develop a formal and collaborative business retention and expansion program with small businesses and manufacturing firms to increase management capacity of each collaborating organization by providing additional training programs.

In order to help community business leaders design a business retention and expansion program the BD&A project utilized the Synchronist Business Information System by Blane Canada Ltd. The system offered a standard visitation program for use in all four
counties. This visitation program collected information on issues critical to the success of firms in four counties within the project’s target area. This form allowed all Chambers of Commerce and Industrial Development Corporations in each of the four counties to compare employer characteristics, problems and levels of satisfaction with similar counties.

The long-term goal is to reduce the closure and default rates of businesses and manufacturing firms by at least 50 percent after the two years in the four targeted counties—Bolivar, Coahoma, Sunflower, and Washington. These four counties are among the largest in the Delta in population and in off-farm employment.

Over the past two years the BD&A project has used the $255,000 to pay graduate students, program coordinator, consultants, purchase equipment used in developing business programs, purchase supplies for preparing reports, conducting conferences and workshops, and to support travel throughout the Delta and abroad for dissemination of results.

Funding for the project ended June 30, 2005.

The Delta Rural Poll combines a periodic telephone survey and qualitative interviews of residents of eleven counties in northwestern Mississippi (Bolivar, Coahoma, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, and Washington).

During the 2004-05 year, interviews and focus groups were conducted on the topic of education in the Delta, building on quantitative data collected in the 2003 survey. Interviews with teachers and focus groups with residents were conducted in two Delta communities. The second annual survey was conducted in February 2005. A committee of faculty in DSU’s Social Sciences Division prepared questions and the survey was administered by the Survey Research Unit in the Social Science Research Center at Mississippi State University. A total of 1,009 randomly selected individuals responded to the poll.

The data collected in the survey and interviews are available to researchers and graduate students in the Community Development program and at the Center for Community and Economic Development to use in academic papers and presentations, theses and program planning. During the 2004-05 year, one M.S. thesis, one research report, and two policy reports were completed using data collected through the Delta Rural Poll. In addition, eight papers were presented at professional conferences, and four presentations were made to various groups on campus.

Over the past two years, the Delta Rural Poll has operated with a budget of $25,000 per year. The budget has been used to contract data collection from Mississippi State University, to pay graduate students and professors involved in data collection, to purchase equipment used in preparing reports, and to support travel to conferences. The
director of the Delta Rural Poll project is currently preparing a proposal for additional funding to continue this project.

III. Personnel:

Noteworthy activities and accomplishments:

Conferences, Workshops, and Seminars Attended by Brent Hales:

- Annual meeting of the Community Development Society – Cleveland, OH, July 2004
- Annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society – Sacramento, CA, August 2004
- Annual meeting of the Alabama/Mississippi Sociological Association – Tuscaloosa, AL, February 2005
- Department of Housing and Urban Development: Community Outreach Partnership Communities Conference – Chicago, IL, April 2005

Presentations at Professional Meetings by Brent Hales:

July 2004 – Annual meeting of the Community Development Society – Cleveland, OH
- Presented a paper entitled “Forming Regional Technology Councils: A Strategy for Community and Economic Development”
- Received the New Professional Award from the Society

August 2004 – Annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society – Sacramento, CA
- Presented a paper entitled “The Methodologies of Polling in Rural Areas”
- Organized the sessions for the Rural Poverty Research Interest Group
- Served as Poster Session Chair

February 2005 – Annual meeting of the Alabama/Mississippi Sociological Association – Tuscaloosa, AL
- Presented a paper entitled “Business Retention and Expansion – An Effective Mechanism for Rural Economic Development”

April 2005 – Department of Housing and Urban Development: Community Outreach Partnership Communities Conference – Chicago, IL
- Attended the conference and accompanying grant writing workshop in preparation for proposal submission.

June 2005 – Community Development Society – Baltimore, MD
- Presented a paper entitled “Linking Research to Practice and Policy: Improving Technology Access and Use among Underserved Populations”.

Presentations to Communities and Community Groups by Brent Hales:

February and March 2005 – Leadership 82 – Mathiston, MS

May 2005 – Webster County Economic Development Foundation Board – Eupora, MS

June 2005 – Foundation for the Mid-South (Leflore County, MS and Phillips County, AR)
- Presented “Models of Effective Community Organizing”

June 2005 – Arkansas State University (Corning, AR)
- Presented “Models of Effective Community Organizing”

King’s D.R.E.A.M. (Developing Reading and Educational Achievement in the Name of Martin)

Magic School Bus Project

The Magic School Bus Project was completed in December 2004. This dream was the brainchild of Linda Stringfellow and Deborah Moore two staff members of the AmeriCorps*VISTA program at the Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University. The idea for the project was presented to Superintendent Reggie Barnes, and Principal Lester Fisher of the Cleveland School District, and they endorsed the project.

A $5000.00 grant was secured from the Corporation for National and Community Service’s Martin Luther King Jr. Day Initiative to purchase books and other supplies needed for the bus. The bus is named King’s D.R.E.A.M. in recognition of the late Dr. Martin Luther King’s dream that everyone receives a fair and equitable education.

The bus was changed into a reading resource center and made stationary at Nailor Elementary. The school board approved the donation of the bus. The school district’s maintenance shop removed the seats from the inside and the vocational technical students cleaned and painted the inside. Mr. Nathaniel Richardson and his carpentry class did the architectural design, and Ms. Shirley Smith, Ms. Vivian Chatman and their students were responsible for the curtains and the interior designs.
Ellen Griffin and Larry Webster, two staff members of the Mississippi Delta Service Corps program were instrumental in securing in-kind donations for the bus. Community members, parents, students, teachers, administrators and AmeriCorps members were involved in preparing the resource center. Through cash and in-kind donations from local business for paint, wood, carpet, the air and heating unit, and electrical supplies, over $20,000.00 was secured to make this dream a reality. The reading resource center will be used during school hours and after school hours to enhance the reading level of students across subjects and to encourage parental involvement through reading.

**Walk-a-Mile In My Shoes Event**- The Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps*VISTA Program at the Center for Community and Economic Development/Delta State University, Delta Area Health Education Center, and Partnership for Healthy Bolivar and Sunflower Counties sponsored “**Walk A Mile In My Shoes.**” Held on Saturday, June 11, 2005 on the campus of Delta State University/Wyatt Gymnasium from 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

The MDSC/ AmeriCorps*VISTA (Project WHOLE) mission is geared towards public health awareness and informing our communities of major health issues. This event will highlight major health issues such as HIV/AIDS, Cancer, Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Obesity from individuals living with the actual illnesses and health care professionals.

Five VISTA members started planning the community health awareness event on March 31st. Thirty-four community volunteers who served more than 260 hours; seven health care professionals who served more than 30 hours, and six community volunteers who contributed a combined 15 hours talking about their walk through life with their illness, which contributed to the success of this annual event. Sponsoring agencies, local and regional business donated more than $4,500 in materials, prizes, and goods.

“**Walk a Mile in My Shoes**” was a day of fun, entertainment, and learning for the entire family. Participants were able to spend time with the presenters in educational sessions from 9:30 am – 10:30 am and 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm and also enjoyed health and fitness activities from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm such as “sit and be fit” exercises, body mass index checks, fitness games, etc. . .

**The Community Development Student Organization** at Delta State University planned and implemented a student symposium focusing on elements of diversity in the field of community development. The goal of the symposium was to increase networking opportunities among students involved in diverse aspects of community development, provide an opportunity to share student work, and to promote the Community Development Society. Members of the Organization discussed the term diversity and defined it for the purpose of the symposium as referring to the wide array of college/university affiliations and professional positions in the field as well as diversity in gender, age, race/ethnicity and nationality.

**2005 MS Walk** –CCED sponsored the second annual Cleveland MS Walk. Approximately 100 individuals participated and 50 volunteers aided with the events of
the day. Collaboratively, $4,100 was raised to help benefit the 3,000 individuals living with multiple sclerosis in the state of Mississippi. Sixty cents of every dollar raised by the MS Walk remains in Mississippi for use in programs to help those individuals who live day to day with this disease.

**Delta Health and Wellness Day** was organized by Dr. Brent Hales. The event was held November 18, 2004 from 7:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. on the campus of Delta State University on the 2nd Floor Union and the University Quadrangle. There was an excellent turnout of students, faculty, and other Delta residents. Scheduled activities included: health walks, hearing screenings, vision screenings, youth activities, health screenings (blood pressure, cholesterol, bone density, body mass index, etc.) holiday home safety, demonstrations of CPR, self examinations, and other health related issues, car safety workshop, distribution of infant car seats, bike helmets, and gun safety locks disaster preparedness, and nutrition education.

Partners in this initiative included: DSU’s Center for Community and Economic Development, DSU School of Nursing, The Delta Health Initiative, Sta-Home Health, Delta Regional Medical Center, Bolivar Medical Center, Delta Medical Digest, DSU Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, Continue Care Home Health, Cleveland/Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce, The Bolivar Commercial, The Cleveland Police Department, and the Delta Area Health Education Center.

Linda Stringfellow attended a **Grantsmanship Workshop** in Chicago, Illinois. Designed for both the novice and the experienced grant seeker, this 4-day course combined great instruction with practical exercises to take participants step by step through all of the stages of planning programs, locating resources and writing successful grant proposals. Through this highly interactive and comprehensive program, participants were able to prepare and review sample proposals according to actual RFP announcements available at the time of the workshop. This workshop was presented to the VISTA members by Stringfellow in May 2005.

Deborah Moore, Larry Webster and Linda Stringfellow were presenters at the **Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Services Fall Conference** in Jackson, MS. Moore and Webster co-presented a workshop on Professional Etiquette in the Workplace and Stringfellow presented a workshop on Volunteer Recruitment.
Deborah Moore wrote the reapplication for the Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps*VISTA program. The program was refunded for the 2004-2005 program year in the amount of $433,553.00.

Deborah Moore and Linda Stringfellow were instrumental in establishing the first Volunteer Center in the Delta. The center is located at the Lower MS Delta Service Corps headquarters office. As of today, 40 volunteers have been recruited, trained and placed with over 20 non-profit organizations in Bolivar County.

Deborah Moore and Linda Stringfellow submitted a $74,100.00 grant proposal to the Consolidated Financial Services Incorporation to sustain the VISTA project ASSETS (Acquiring Self-Sustainable Economic Tips).

John Green, Ph.D. was named the Director of the Institute for Community Based Research effective July 1, 2005.

Deborah Moore and Larry Webster wrote the reapplication for the Mississippi Delta Service Corps Program. Funding has been approved in the amount of $232,000 for the 2005-2006 service year.

**New position(s) requested, with justification:**

The Delta Reads Partnership created two new positions effective September 1, 2004. The program was an 18 member program but with additional funding from the Corporation for National and Community Services, became a 60 member program. With this addition in program size a Program Associate for Member Services/Fiscal Manager and a Program Associate for Field Services were hired.

Two new positions have been requested and approved for the Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps*VISTA program. Since this program is fairly new and a lot of the implementation is still taking place, the workload that was originally distributed for two people, Project Director and Program Associate has now been redistributed to three positions: Project Director, Program Associate for Field Services and Program Associate for Member Services.

**Recommended change of status**
*(such as promotion/change in title/change in responsibilities):*

Deborah Moore was promoted to the Director of the Center for Community and Economic Development effective July 1, 2005. Moore has been employed at the University since May 1998. She first came to the University as the Program Coordinator of the Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps program, and in 2000 was promoted to State Director of MDSC. In 2003, Moore started a new program at the Center, Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps*VISTA and served as the new program’s Project Director. She has over 22 years of experience working with youth, families and communities in the Mississippi Delta.
Linda Stringfellow was promoted to the Project Director of Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps*VISTA effective July 1, 2005. Stringfellow joined the staff at the Center in 2000 as a Program Associate for Field Services with the Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps Program and in 2002 she was named MDSC’s Program Associate for Public Relations and Recruiting. In 2003 Stringfellow and Deborah Moore started a new AmeriCorps program at the Center, Mississippi Delta Service Corps/AmeriCorps*VISTA.

Larry Webster was named State Director of the Mississippi Delta Service Corps program effective September 1, 2004. Webster joined the staff at the Center in 2000 as a Program Associate for Field Services.

Meg Jones was named the Assistant to the Center Director in February 2005. Showen Herring and Deborah Moore wrote and submitted the reapplication for the Delta Reads Partnership Program. Funding has been approved in the amount of $744,000 for the 2005-2006 program year.

V. Department Goals for 2004 or 2004-05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal #</th>
<th>Institutional Goal which was supported by this goal</th>
<th>Expected Results</th>
<th>Evaluation Procedure</th>
<th>Actual Results of Evaluation</th>
<th>Use of Evaluation Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To work collaboratively with the communities in the 18-county Delta region it serves.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Programs will be developed that meet needs of communities in the delta.</td>
<td>By the number of new programs established</td>
<td>One new program was established during the 2004-2005 year and four refunded.</td>
<td>Research is being conducted to determine future needs of new and existing programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage residents of the Delta in creating meaningful and sustainable opportunities for change.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>An increase in community and economic development activities in grass root communities</td>
<td>By the number of new development activities</td>
<td>Communities report through progress reports of a 15% growth in activities.</td>
<td>More technical assistance will be offered by staff to assist communities in their growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring together entities, community leaders, businesses, non-profits, DSU faculty and students to create programs that create support structures.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Create partnerships and collaborations to assist communities in becoming self-sustainable.</td>
<td>By the number of communities reporting sustainable efforts in their communities</td>
<td>The BD &amp; A project partners reported achieving sustainability with this project during 2004-2005.</td>
<td>Information gathered from this project has been given to counties who will use community leaders to continue to project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI. Learning Outcome Assessment Plan

A. Learning Outcome #: 1

What should a learner know, value, or be able to do as a result of this outcome?

Students tutored in grades kindergarten through first will improve their reading at least one performance level based on the performance levels set by their school. Students tutored in grades second through sixth will improve at least one level on their Mississippi Curriculum Test Scores.

B. Assessment Tools and Methods

What assessment tools and/or methods will you use to determine achievement of the learning outcome?

Limit measures to three.

Measure One: Mississippi Curriculum Test

Measure Two:

Measure Three:

C. Data Collection and Analysis

Describe how the data from the assessment tools and methods will be collected. Explain the procedure to analyze the data.

Data Collection Procedure: Data will be collected yearly from MCT scores.

Analysis Procedure: Data collected will be analyzed by a research class and the AmeriCorps staff.

D. Results of Evaluation

What were the findings of the Analysis Team? List any specific recommendations.

Findings:

Recommendation 1: Scores will be collected and analyzed in September 2005.

Recommendation 2:

Recommendation 3:

E. Use of Evaluation Results
What changes in curriculum, courses, or procedures were made as a result of the program learning outcome assessment process?

Response:

F. Assessment Team Members

List members of the Assessment Team.

Members: Showen Herring, Sandra Thomas

VI. Learning Outcome Assessment Plan

A. Learning Outcome #: 2
What should a learner know, value, or be able to do as a result of this outcome?

AmeriCorps members participating in monthly trainings conducted in collaboration with state agencies, partnering universities, and community and faith-based organizations will have an increase in knowledge gained as a result of the training.

B. Assessment Tools and Methods
What assessment tools and/or methods will you use to determine achievement of the learning outcome?
Limit measures to three.

Measure One: Member’s Self evaluation

Measure Two: Training Evaluation

Measure Three:

C. Data Collection and Analysis
Describe how the data from the assessment tools and methods will be collected. Explain the procedure to analyze the data.

Data Collection Procedure: Data will be collected after each workshop held and a mid-year and end of year evaluation will be done.

Analysis Procedure: The data will be aggregated by AmeriCorps staff and/or graduate assistants after each workshop.

D. Results of Evaluation
What were the findings of the Analysis Team? List any specific recommendations.

**Findings**: 95% of the Corps members receiving training reported an increase in knowledge gained as a result of the training they attended.

**Recommendation 1**: Since the overall objective of the learning outcomes is being achieved, we will work toward making sure all Corps members have an increase in knowledge as a result of the training experience.

**Recommendation 2**: 

**Recommendation 3**: 

**E. Use of Evaluation Results**

What changes in curriculum, courses, or procedures were made as a result of the program learning outcome assessment process?

**Response**: 

**F. Assessment Team Members**

List members of the Assessment Team.

**Members**: Showen Herring, Larry Webster, Linda Stringfellow, Sandra Thomas

**VI. Learning Outcome Assessment Plan**

**A. Learning Outcome #: 3**

What should a learner know, value, or be able to do as a result of this outcome?

Volunteers recruited, supervised and trained by AmeriCorps members will show an increase in volunteerism.

**B. Assessment Tools and Methods**

What assessment tools and/or methods will you use to determine achievement of the learning outcome?

*Limit measures to three.*

**Measure One**: Evaluation Form

**Measure Two**: Sign-in Sheet

**Measure Three**: 
C. Data Collection and Analysis
Describe how the data from the assessment tools and methods will be collected. Explain the procedure to analyze the data.

**Data Collection Procedure:** Data will be collected at each service project. (quarterly)

**Analysis Procedure:** Data collected from the sign-in sheets and evaluation forms will be aggregated by AmeriCorps staff and/or graduate assistants.

D. Results of Evaluation
What were the findings of the Analysis Team? List any specific recommendations.

**Findings:**

**Recommendation 1:** At least 95% of the volunteers serving are showing an increase in volunteerism by the number of times they return to volunteer and through self-report.

**Recommendation 2:**

**Recommendation 3:**

E. Use of Evaluation Results
What changes in curriculum, courses, or procedures were made as a result of the program learning outcome assessment process?

**Response:**

F. Assessment Team Members
List members of the Assessment Team.

**Members:** Showen Herring, Sandra Thomas, Linda Stringfellow, Larry Webster

VI. Learning Outcome Assessment Plan

A. **Learning Outcome #: 4**
What should a learner know, value, or be able to do as a result of this outcome?

Participants in the Mississippi Delta Technology Council will participate in technology workshops/seminars and will gain knowledge of opportunities available through technology based development.

B. **Assessment Tools and Methods**
What assessment tools and/or methods will you use to determine achievement of the learning outcome? Limit measures to three.

Measure One: Evaluation Forms after workshops/seminars

Measure Two: Mid-Year Evaluation/Post Year Evaluation

Measure Three:

C. Data Collection and Analysis
Describe how the data from the assessment tools and methods will be collected. Explain the procedure to analyze the data.

Data Collection Procedure:

Analysis Procedure:

D. Results of Evaluation
What were the findings of the Analysis Team? List any specific recommendations.

Findings:

Recommendation 1:

Recommendation 2:

Recommendation 3:

E. Use of Evaluation Results
What changes in curriculum, courses, or procedures were made as a result of the program learning outcome assessment process?

Response:

F. Assessment Team Members
List members of the Assessment Team.

Members:

*This program will no longer operate out of the Center for Community and Economic Development.
VI. Learning Outcome Assessment Plan

A. Learning Outcome #: 5
What should a learner know, value, or be able to do as a result of this outcome?

Business people with a business considered “at risk” will receive training services in the area of technology, marketing, management, tax abatement, utility reduction and workforce development.

B. Assessment Tools and Methods
What assessment tools and/or methods will you use to determine achievement of the learning outcome?
Limit measures to three.

Measure One:  Pre-Assessment Survey

Measure Two:  On-Site Survey (Synchronist Business System)

Measure Three:  Post Evaluation

C. Data Collection and Analysis
Describe how the data from the assessment tools and methods will be collected. Explain the procedure to analyze the data.

Data Collection Procedure:  20 volunteer leaders, economic development professionals and staff members

Analysis Procedure:  Two DSU graduate students entered the data into a SPSS computer systems.

D. Results of Evaluation
What were the findings of the Analysis Team? List any specific recommendations.

Findings:

Recommendation 1:  Professionals and volunteers in each county are using the data collected from the surveys to develop customized and proactive strategies that will help existing forms prosper.

Recommendation 2:

Recommendation 3:
E. Use of Evaluation Results
What changes in curriculum, courses, or procedures were made as a result of the program learning outcome assessment process?

Response:

F. Assessment Team Members
List members of the Assessment Team.

Members:

* Funding for this program ended June 30, 2005. This will no longer be a program in the Center for Community and Economic Development.