



# THE DELTA IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

*A Workshop on How Globalization is  
Reshaping the Mississippi Delta,  
Informed by Community-Based  
Research, Practice and Development*

**MAY 27–28, 2005**

The Delta in Global Context Workshop is held on the campus of Delta State University, in the heart of the Mississippi Delta



Delta State University

# THE DELTA IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

## *A Workshop on Community-Based Research, Practice and Development*

**G**lobalization is reshaping our world. Corporate-driven capitalism is shifting production and consumption on a global scale and diffusing an economic rationality to the most remote corners of the planet. In its wake, organizational structures and cultural worldviews and practices are changing. Some believe these shifts are producing social transformations equal in scope to the industrial revolution. Globalization has generated substantial benefits; however, these benefits have been unevenly distributed. Increasing inequality has been experienced not only across nations; discontinuities can be observed within both core and peripheral countries as well.

The Mississippi Delta is a region molded by persistent poverty and staggering wealth. While the area's rich alluvial soils have supported agricultural systems ranging from plantations to sharecropping to agribusiness, a persistent legacy of underdevelopment has left Delta counties with some of the highest poverty rates in the U.S. On average, over 30% of the population in the Delta's core counties lives in poverty, compared to the national average of 12.4%. The area has also experienced the benefits and the drawbacks of industrial restructuring, as manufacturing plants relocated from northern industrial areas to take advantage of the Delta's relaxed business environment and non-unionized labor force, but later began leaving the Delta in search of even more favorable economic circumstances overseas. If globalization's effects are experienced unevenly in the U.S., it is likely that the Delta is an area that will be slow to see globalization's benefits. Reasoned consideration of these issues is of great importance for community and regional development efforts.

This workshop brings together researchers and practitioners interested in examining the dynamics of globalization in the Mississippi Delta region. The workshop is organized around the themes of underdevelopment, education and workforce improvement; health status and access to services; agriculture, natural resources and sustainable development; culture and heritage preservation; and collaboration and cooperative alternatives. The workshop offers an opportunity to share experiences, refine ideas, and deliberate how globalization is reshaping the Delta and potential paths for development. The mix of researchers and practitioners facilitates a community-based research approach, which combines participatory and action-oriented strategies of research to inform the development process. This framework offers the potential to add a deeper, grounded and applied understanding of the complex relationship between globalization and the Delta.

## *Keynote Address:*

### **The Wealth and Health of the Delta**



Dr. Arthur G. Cosby

*Arthur G. Cosby, Ph.D., is Director and Research Fellow at the Social Science Research Center, founding Director of the Mississippi Health Policy Research Center and Professor of Sociology at Mississippi State University. Dr. Cosby has authored numerous articles, chapters, reports and books on applied social science topics. His most recent publication with co-editors Robert Greenberg, Linda Southward and Michael Weitzman, entitled *About Children: An Authoritative Resource on the State of Childhood Today*, was released in October 2004 by the American Academy of Pediatrics on the occasion of their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Dr. Cosby's current research interests include healthy and unhealthy places in America, the social and cultural dimensions of pain, and the concept of health and wealth in regional analysis. His current research is supported by The Bower Foundation, the Phil Hardin Foundation, the American Cancer Society, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Office of Rural Health Policy.*

## *Plenary Address:*

### **The Communities of Opportunity Program for Achieving Social Change**



M. Lynn J. McGee

*For eight years Lynn McGee has worked as a program officer for the Foundation for the Mid South. The focus of her work has been Delta (Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas) community capacity building through leadership and nonprofit development. Currently Lynn is the Director of Human Resources and the Assistant Director of the Communities of Opportunity initiative. Prior to returning to Mississippi she worked in Arkansas for ten years; she spent the first six years directing human resources and designing/coordinating training initiatives for a multi-site plastics automotive manufacturing and assembly company, and the last four years providing human resource, community and leadership development consulting services to state agencies, community development corporations, and national and state foundations. Earlier in her career Lynn worked as a college instructor, career counselor, and job developer at Historically Black Colleges in Texas and Mississippi, and directed multi-county alternative education, pre-employment, and mental health programs. Although rich in diversity, Lynn's career maintains one common thread - the development of human capacity.*

# THE DELTA IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

All sessions will be held in the Charlie Capps Archives Building at Fifth Avenue between Quitman and Coahoma Streets on the Delta State University campus

## AGENDA

### FRIDAY, MAY 27TH

7:30 am  
**Continental  
Breakfast and  
Registration**

*Registration and Breakfast are in the Lobby of the Charlie Capps Archives Building*

8:00 am  
**Open Meeting  
Time**

Time for Individuals and Groups to Meet, Plan and Discuss

### MORNING WORKSHOPS

9:00 am  
**Welcome and  
Introductions**

Welcome Remarks from the Organizers  
John Green &  
Alan Barton (*Delta State University*)  
Welcome Remarks from the Sponsors  
Ben Burkett (*Mississippi Association of Cooperatives*)  
Jaeda Harmen (*Oxfam America*)  
Introduction of Workshop Participants

9:30 am  
**Setting the Stage**

Achieving Social Change Through Participation and Action: An Analysis of Community-Based Research and Related Theoretical Perspectives  
Anna Kleiner (*Southeastern Louisiana University*)

10:00 am  
**Education and  
Workforce  
Development**

Brain Drain Distressing the Delta Dollar  
Catherine Cannatella (*Delta State University*)  
Employer Perceptions of the Workforce in a Mississippi Delta County  
Todd Holt (*Delta State University*)  
Collaborative Partnerships as a Model for Workforce Development in the Mississippi Delta  
Josephine Rhymes (*Tri-County Workforce Alliance*)

11:15 am  
**Break**

*Refreshments in the Lobby of the Capps Archive*

11:30 am  
**Underemployment  
and Poverty**

Changing Opportunities for the Poor in the Rural Mississippi Delta  
Judy L Maynard (*University of Tennessee, Martin*) &  
Michael Timberlake (*University of Utah*)  
St. Gabriel Reaches Out: A Community Center Attempting to Address Poverty  
Sister Donald Mary Lynch &  
Carla Ross (*St. Gabriel Mercy Center*)

## FRIDAY, MAY 27TH

12:30 pm  
**Lunch and  
Plenary Speaker**

*Lunch is in the **State Room**, located in the H.L. Nowell Student Union, one block west of the Capps Archives*

*Plenary Address:  
The Communities of Opportunity Program  
for Achieving Social Change*

*Featured Speaker:  
Lynn McGee  
Foundation for the Mid South*

## AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

1:30 pm  
**Agriculture and  
Rural Development**

Heifer International's Delta Initiative  
Jesse Strassburg (*Heifer International – South Central Program & Delta State University*)  
Black Farmer Cooperative Development  
Ben Burkett (*Mississippi Association of Cooperatives*)  
Globalization of Agriculture: Effects on Social and Natural Systems in Rural Communities in Jamaica  
Paulette Meikle-Yaw (*Mississippi State University*)

2:45 pm  
**Culture and  
Development**

Heritage Tourism in the Local and Global Context  
Alan Barton (*Delta State University*)

3:15 pm  
**Break**

*Refreshments in the Lobby of the Capps Archive*

3:30 pm  
**Health/Health Care**

Mississippi and the Global Obesity Epidemic  
Mitch Morris (*MS SHINE, Aaron E. Henry Community Health Center*)  
This presentation will be followed with a multi-media presentation

4:00 pm  
**World Café**

Using the “World Café” strategy for reflection and generation of new ideas, this session will focus on what we have learned and where we want to go next

5:15 pm  
**Free Time  
Until Dinner**

Participants are invited to use this time to take a walk around the lovely Delta State campus or to rest up for the evening activities

## **FRIDAY, MAY 27, EVENING**

6:30 pm  
**Dinner and  
Keynote Speaker**

*Dinner is in the State Room, located in the H.L. Nowell  
Student Union*

*Keynote Address:  
The Wealth and Health of the Delta*

*Featured Speaker:  
Arthur G. Cosby  
Director of the Social Science Research Center &  
Professor of Sociology at Mississippi State University*

## **SATURDAY, MAY 28**

7:30 am  
**Breakfast**

*Breakfast is in the Lobby of the Charlie Capps  
Archives Building*

### **MORNING WORKSHOPS**

8:30 am  
**Leadership and  
Development**

Stability and Differences in Black and White Leadership Structures Over  
Time in Two Rural Mississippi Delta Towns  
Josh Stovall (*Delta State University*)  
Leadership Development, Social Networks and Community Involvement:  
An Evaluation of a Mississippi Delta Leadership Program  
Donielle Lovell (*University of Missouri-Columbia*)

9:15 am  
**Community-Based  
Initiatives in an Era  
of Globalization: A  
Roundtable**

Introduction to Fetterman's Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation  
Jesse Strassburg (*Delta State University*)  
Collaborative Partnerships and Block Parties as Community  
Empowerment  
Alkie Edwards (*Delta State University*)  
Civic Engagement as Youth Empowerment  
Sarah Leonard (*Delta State University*)  
Communication Network Development to Address Health and Human  
Service Gaps  
Starr Parker (*Delta State University*)

10:15 am  
**Break**

*Refreshments in the Lobby of the Capps Archive*

10:30 am  
**Alternative  
Frameworks**

Promoting Worker-Owned Businesses through Community-Based  
Research and Education  
Ajamu Nangwaya (*Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF*)  
Community Development as Collective Action: An Alternative Approach  
to Conceptualizing Our Work  
John Green (*Delta State University*)

11:15 am  
**Conclusion**

Concluding Remarks and Next Steps



**The Delta in Global Context workshop is hosted by the Institute for Community-Based Research, a collaborative effort of the Division of Social Sciences and the Center for Community and Economic Development at Delta State University.**

**The Mississippi Association of Cooperatives/Mississippi Center for Cooperative Development is cosponsor and co-organizer of this event, and additional funding has been provided by Oxfam America.**

**We thank the Cleveland, MS Chamber of Commerce and the Delta Center for Culture and Learning for contributing the informational and cultural items distributed to workshop participants.**

