

ALLIANCE FOR
RURAL IMPACT

IMPACT REPORT

2017-2025



Sparking Solutions
FOR RURAL AMERICA

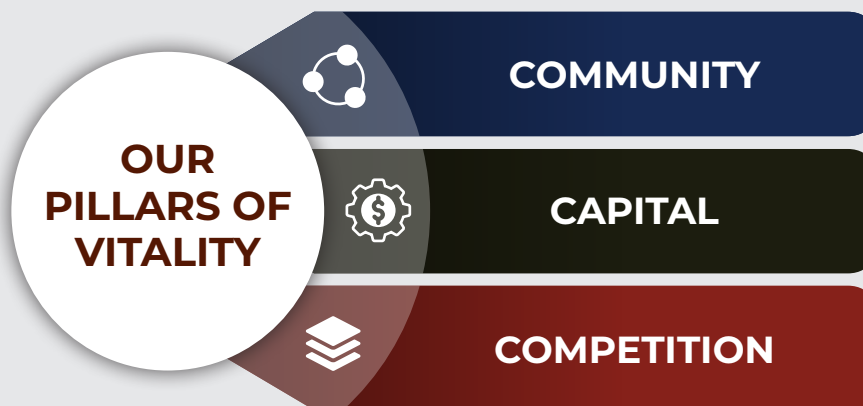
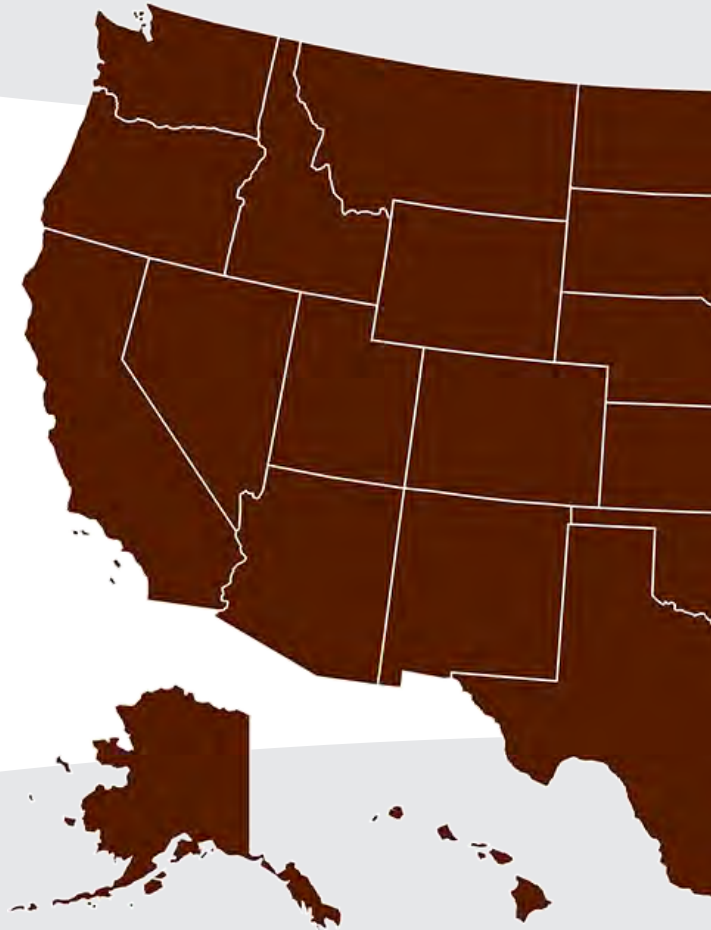
ALLIANCE FOR RURAL IMPACT

In looking over this report — its descriptions and its measurables — it would be easy to take a moment's pause to appreciate the impact of the successes.

The impacts are tangible, and immensely valuable to the impacted communities. But there is no time to pause. The need never lessens and the work never stops. Community and economic development in the Delta is a lifetime journey!

ARI is on that journey, and my sense is the organization is just beginning to stretch out its legs for a long run. Whether it's assessment, strategic planning, technical assistance or funding, ARI approaches each project with an alliance of expert partners working together to make rural America a place where all communities thrive.

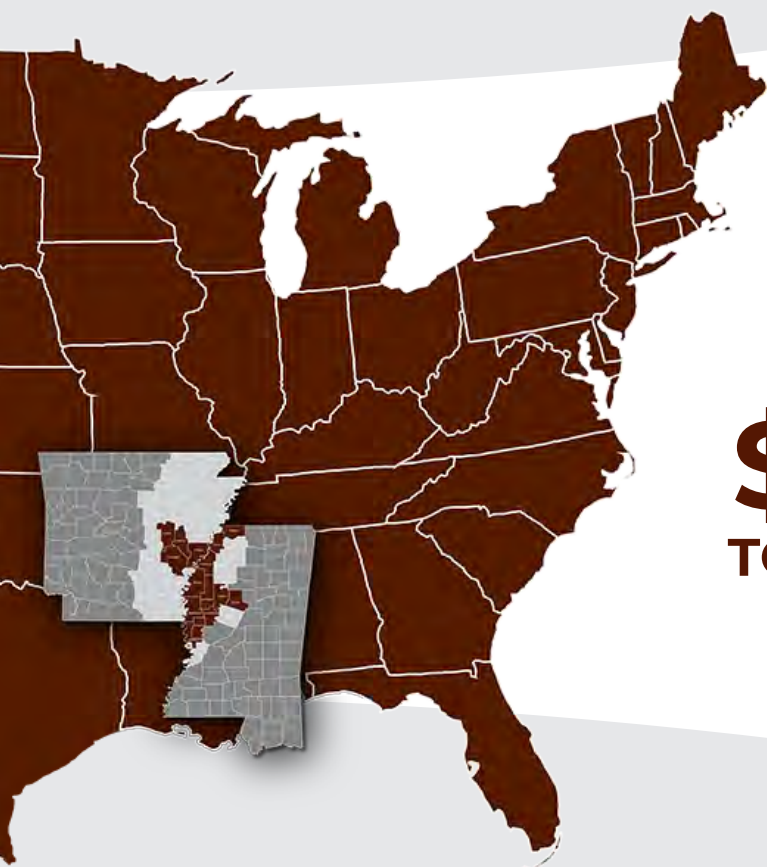
***Jordan Wimpy, President
ARI Board of Directors***



 **130**
COMMUNITIES
ASSISTED

313 
JOBS CREATED

Sparking Solutions FOR RURAL AMERICA



\$72,009,260
TOTAL DIRECT INVESTMENT

115
SMALL
BUSINESSES
ASSISTED



101 JOBS
RETAINED



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COMMUNITY




\$55,800,000
TOTAL COMMUNITY
INVESTMENT

 **99**
COMMUNITIES
IMPACTED

ARI identifies solutions to turn plans into reality in a holistic fashion.

Focusing on community equity, our model of *Assess, Implement, and Sustain* answers four questions:

What **should** we do?

Where do we find the **resources**?

How do we get it **done**?

How do we **sustain** progress?



ARI works to ensure that community and economic development achieves its true purpose, which is to create **vibrant, healthy communities for all.**

2018 ● Public engagement program in rural Alabama.

2019 ● Feasibility analysis and business plan for tribal entity.

2020 ● Community assessment in Eastern Kentucky and Tennessee.
Downtown assessment in rural Tennessee.

2021 ● Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

2022 ● Technical assistance to Arkansas Opportunity Zones.

2025 ● Strategic plans for two rural communities underway!

PROJECT:

Feasibility Analysis and Business Plan

**Years:**

2018-2019

**CERTIFICATION
RECEIVED FROM
U.S. TREASURY****\$4,400,000****NEW MARKET
TAX CREDITS****\$44,900,000****SSBCI
INVESTMENT****PROJECT:**

Downtown Assessment

**Years:**

2020-2021

**NEW FARMERS
MARKET
OPEN****\$1,500,000****INVESTED****PROJECT:**

Parks & Recreation Master Plan

**Year:**

2021

**\$5,000,000
INVESTED****MULTIPLE
PARKS
REDEVELOPED****PROJECT:**

Opportunity Zone Technical Assistance

**Years:**

2021-2022

43**PRIORITY
PROJECTS
IDENTIFIED****IN****66****ZONES****Communities Assisted: 85**

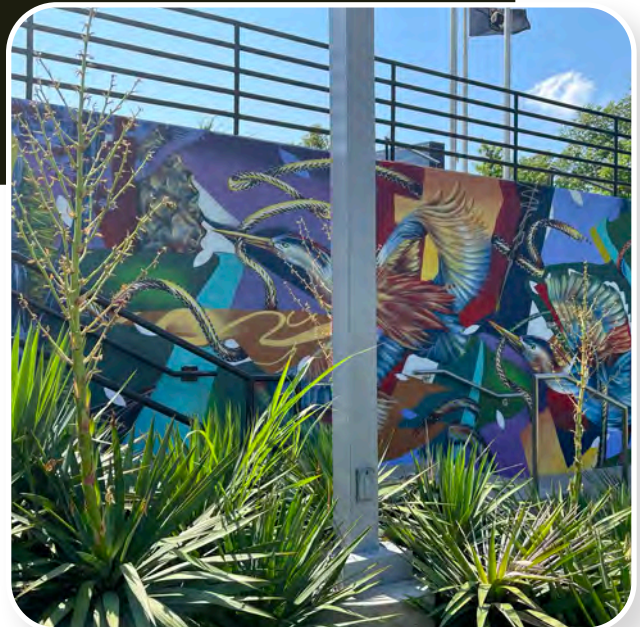


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“The Alliance for Rural Impact provided us not only with applicable strategies for our downtown, but also identified funding sources to fuel their execution. Their recommendations continue to guide the transformation of Historic Downtown Dyersburg!”

– Slater Barr

President and CEO Dyersburg
Dyer County Chamber of Commerce



“ARI has partnered with IEDC on several economic recovery volunteer projects, helping communities develop strategies for downtown revitalization, economic diversification, rural development, and more. Jamie and Jennifer’s expertise was an asset to the team and to our clients. We’d be glad to engage ARI with our economic recovery work in the future.”

– Delaney Luna
IEDC

”




CAPITAL

ARI's mission-driven Rural Impact Fund supports critical efforts that *foster* economic development, *spur* redevelopment and revitalization, *catalyze* community transformation, and *unlock* capital for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

 **31**
**COMMUNITIES
IMPACTED**


2017  Grant writing for Oregon nonprofit.

2019  U.S. Treasury CDFI for technical assistance applications.

Multi-year strategic plan for lending program (RIF).

2022  Rural LISC Rural Works grants.

2023  Multiple USDA Rural Business Development Grants.

2024  EDA Recompete Pilot Program approval.
JFF award for employment study.

2025  Rural LISC Mastercard BDO for technical assistance.



\$2,209,260
TOTAL FUNDING INVESTED



Years: 2018-2019

Two successful applications to U.S. Treasury CDFI Technical Assistance Program.



Years: 2018-2023

Five successful applications to USDA RBDG funding program to provide technical assistance to small businesses in Arkansas.

RURAL LISC



Years: 2022-2025

Two Rural LISC Rural Works grants to develop pathways for employee advancement opportunities.



Jobs for the Future



Years: 2023-2024

Jobs for the Future award to study barriers to employment in Southeast Arkansas, especially Black and African American workers.



Year: 2024

Successful application to EDA Recompete Pilot Program.



Year: 2025

Rural LISC Mastercard BDO to provide technical assistance to small businesses in Southeast Arkansas.

COMPETITION

ARI aims to offer better opportunities to compete and prosper in the global market through workforce development efforts that:

Ensure workers and learners have support systems in place that allow for the access to earn skills and credentials.

Partner with community stakeholders, local educational institutions and industry to provide resources and technical assistance that allow opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, and business ownership.

Spur quality-of-life initiatives for residents and workers that sustain the next generation and attract lost populations back to their roots.

Provide outreach, advocacy, and support for entrepreneurial ecosystem development and engagement.



\$14,000,000
TOTAL INVESTMENT

313 
JOBS CREATED

115 
SMALL
BUSINESSES
ASSISTED

2018

Agribusiness analysis and feasibility study.

Business plan development for rural cooperative.

2020

Technical assistance to growers in Arkansas and Texas.

2023

Process modernization and financial stability program technical assistance.

2024

Feasibility study for large scale event center.

2025

Small Business Technical Assistance (ARise and Rural LISC BDO) and Recompete/Rural Works/JFF underway!



PROJECT:

Expansion Readiness and Investment Analysis



Year:

2018


\$5,000,000
INVESTMENT
31
JOBS CREATED
45
JOBS SAVED**PROJECT:**

Business Practice Technical Assistance



Years:

2018-2020


59 SMALL
BUSINESSES
ASSISTED
90 JOBS
SAVED**PROJECT:**

Modernization Technical Assistance



Years:

2020-2023


\$5,000,000
INVESTMENT
70
JOBS CREATED
150
JOBS SAVED**PROJECT:**

Feasibility Analysis for Event Center



Year:

2024


\$2,000,000
INVESTMENT
5
JOBS CREATED

”

“The work ARI is undertaking in the Delta is of utmost importance to our region. By gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by our businesses and evaluating potential solutions, ARI will provide invaluable insights into how we can better support our local industries. We believe that ARI’s efforts will not only shed light on these challenges but also facilitate the development of strategic solutions that can empower our businesses with the tools they need to thrive.”

– Bethany Hildebrand

President and CEO Stuttgart Chamber of Commerce





“The Mississippi Delta faces unique workforce challenges, but with the support of the Alliance for Rural Impact, we are turning obstacles into opportunities. Together, we’re crafting thoughtful solutions to boost workforce participation and create a stronger foundation for business growth in Greenwood and Leflore County.”

– Thomas Gregory

Executive Director of Greenwood, Mississippi





IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS



CREATING IMPACTS



REIMAGINING RURAL

ALLIANCE FOR RURAL IMPACT

The Alliance for Rural Impact (ARI) is a nonprofit organization headquartered in the Arkansas Delta.

Founded in 2017, by Jamie R. Wright and Jennifer G. Watkins, ARI is a collective partnership of technical assistance experts focused on community equity for rural regions with a commitment to our core values of integrity, teamwork, and achievement.

The ARI team is solutions-focused and aims to bring about positive changes that ultimately result in community prosperity by providing all aspects of community and economic development.

***Our journey and our
impact continues.***

ruralimpact.org

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RURAL IMPACT

ruralimpact.org