

**State of Arkansas**  
**Arkansas Child Care Facilities Guarantee Loan Fund**

The Arkansas Child Care Facilities Guarantee Loan Fund (Fund) is designed to support the development and expansion of child-care facilities in Arkansas. One of only three such statewide funds in the United States and unique in its focus on family day care and small child-care centers, the Fund is administered by the Arkansas Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Department of Human Services. Flexibility allows access to both nonprofit and for-profit facilities.

The Fund gives priority funding to the following:

- areas in need of child care to promote economic development and create a stable workforce for potential industry or industrial expansion;
- facilities that will offer infant and toddler care--a service in great demand and short supply in Arkansas;
- areas in which 25 percent of the potential market for the facility is below the state's median income;
- minority participation.

Qualified expenditures include purchases of equipment, short-term real estate purchases and working capital. Applicants must demonstrate that without the guarantee they cannot obtain the loan. The Fund is designed to act as a "credit bridge" for qualified applicants and will guarantee 80 percent of the outstanding principal balance on a loan, when the guarantee does not exceed \$25,000. Guarantees are issued for an initial term of three years with an option to renew for an extended period, and are backed by the full faith and credit of the state of Arkansas. Rates and terms of the loan are negotiated between the financial institution and the borrower.

A small grants program is available to childcare providers to obtain equipment necessary for the operation of the facility. Individual applicants can receive up to \$15,000 in grants per year provided all qualifications are met.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education  
101 East Capitol, Suite 106  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201  
(501) 682-4891

## **State of Arkansas**

### **Arkansas Development Finance Authority**

The Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA) can issue tax-exempt bonds and other debt instruments for housing developments, industrial manufacturing facilities, agricultural business enterprises, educational facilities, health care facilities, municipalities and infrastructure projects. ADFA is governed by a Board of Directors composed of the State Treasurer, the Director of the Department of Finance and Administration and 10 public members appointed by the governor.

#### **Housing Program**

##### *Single-Family Mortgage Revenue Bond (MRB) Program*

The MRB program assists primarily low- and moderate-income, first-time homebuyers in purchasing homes by offering below-market interest rates and 30-year mortgages. ADFA does not originate the loans directly; rather, loans are originated by participating lenders throughout the state.

##### *Financing Adjusted Factor (FAF) Program*

FAF offers funds on a competitive basis to nonprofit and for-profit groups and local governments. Use of funds requires groups to reserve rehabilitated properties for very low-income persons for periods of 10 years or more.

##### *Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program*

This federal program allows owners and developers of multifamily housing that is to be rented to families whose incomes are not greater than 60 percent of the area median to apply for federal tax credits. The developers sell the credits to corporations, which use them to offset federal income tax liability. The proceeds of the sale help reduce the total cost of a project.

##### *Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)*

HOME funds are available to government entities, nonprofit organizations and private developers and may be used for a variety of housing needs for very low- and low-income families.

#### **Economic Development Programs**

##### *Industrial Development Bonds (IDBs)*

The IDB program assists smaller manufacturing companies that have traditionally been excluded from bond financing by the high issuance costs and servicing fees associated with this method of financing.

*Arkansas Development Finance Authority (continued)*

*Intermediary Relending Program*

ADFA received a \$3 million, 1 percent loan from Rural Development for business and community development project in rural Arkansas. The proceeds are to be used in combination with ADFA or private funds as a method of leveraging resources and lowering the effective interest rates available through lenders' and ADFA's loan programs.

*Export Finance (Insured Export Program)*

This program is designed to assist small service companies, manufacturers and agribusinesses in obtaining export credit insurance to cover unsecured sales to approved foreign buyers. ADFA can also assist in securing bank financing for insured foreign receivables.

*Speculative Building Loan Program*

This program provides financing to local industrial development corporations that are interested in constructing a speculative industrial building in their communities. ADFA will make a low-interest-rate loan (historically, between 4 and 5 percent) to cover 50 percent of the cost of the building, not to exceed \$250,000. The balance of the loan must be raised or committed through local lenders, area businesses or other sources.

*Capital Access Program (CAP)*

The CAP makes funds available to borrowers who have difficulty in obtaining conventional bank loans. To enhance a lender's participation, a loan-loss reserve fund is created, from which the lender can draw if an enrolled loan defaults. The fund is created from fees paid up-front by the lender, ADFA matching funds and/or enrolled borrowers.

*Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program*

The DBE is funded with a mixture of public and private funds to secure working capital loans for certified disadvantaged business enterprises whose owners are successful bidders for construction contracts but lack the necessary cash reserve.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arkansas Development Finance Authority  
P. O. Box 8023  
100 Main, Suite 200  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-8023  
(501) 682-5900

## **State of Arkansas Arkansas Economic Development Commission**

The mission of Arkansas' economic development is "to foster an environment that leads to improved economic well-being and quality of life for all citizens of Arkansas." Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) achieves its mission by working with three core customer groups: communities, established industries and businesses looking to locate or expand in the state. Programs and services are continually measured and refined to ensure the diverse needs of Arkansas' communities are met.

The Arkansas Community of Excellence (ACE) program provides a community with a blueprint for its future economic stability and creates pathways to community excellence. ACE prepares communities to compete in the global economy by focusing on six key areas: economic development organization, established industry program, industrial sites and standards, community information, strategic planning and marketing.

The AEDC administers the federally funded Community Development Block Grant program, which provides grants for projects ranging from water and sewer systems to child care and senior citizen centers.

The state's established industries are vital to the stability of the Arkansas economy. AEDC's programs for existing industries are designed to enhance their operations by exploring opportunities on local, statewide, national and international levels. Programs include advocacy and market identification, and assisting companies in implementing "total quality management."

Through the Minority Business Development Office, professional services are available to assist the state's minority/small business concerns by securing capital, identifying government procurement opportunities and financial resources, and providing marketing and management assistance. The office also publishes a statewide directory of minority, women and disadvantaged business owners.

Industries looking for a new location or considering an expansion in Arkansas receive consulting assistance, technical management service, site recommendations and financial packaging assistance from AEDC.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arkansas Economic Development Commission  
One State Capitol Mall  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201  
(501) 682-1121

**State of Arkansas**  
**Arkansas Rural Development Commission**  
**Office of Rural Advocacy**

The Arkansas Rural Development Commission (ARDC) was created by the Arkansas General Assembly in 1991. The ARDC serves as the primary source of rural development policy initiatives for the state, advises on the placement of awards through the Arkansas Rural Community Grant Program, and oversees the functions and duties of the state Office of Rural Advocacy.

The Office of Rural Advocacy (ORA) attempts to streamline the bureaucratic process for smaller communities (of less than 20,000 in population) by serving as a single point of contact for local governments, state and federal agencies, and other organizations and individuals interested in the state's rural policies and programs. The ORA's responsibilities include administering the Arkansas Rural Community Grant program.

*Arkansas Rural Community Grant program*

The program provides incentive grants on a matching basis to assist with the construction, development and improvement of local facilities and projects. Incorporated cities and towns, and unincorporated communities of fewer than 3,000 in verifiable population are eligible. Cities and towns can apply through the mayor's office; unincorporated areas must apply through the county judge's office.

The program requires a 50/50 match either in cash and/or real or personal property. The matching funds must be derived locally; either from the local governing body, local businesses and citizens or a combination thereof. Debt financing of any nature and proceeds from other grant programs cannot be used for matching purposes.

The ORA also administers the Arkansas Rural Community Planning Grant program to assist small communities with the development of local strategic plans and vision statements, as well as the Community Fire Protection Grant program to assist with the improvement of local fire protection and related emergency services.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Office of Rural Advocacy  
P. O. Box 34195  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-4195  
(501) 682-6011

## **State of Arkansas Arkansas Science and Technology Authority**

The Arkansas Science and Technology Authority (ASTA) is a state entity that promotes science and technology in both the public and private sectors by supporting scientific research and job-creating technology development, business innovation and education. The ASTA works to integrate science and technology into the state's economic development and education plans.

### *Seed Capital Investment Program*

The Seed Capital Investment Program supports the initial capitalization or expansion of Arkansas-based enterprises involved in scientific or technological projects. The program is not designed to fund entire projects, but instead provides the initial working capital portion of the financing package. The program requires a leverage of funds obtained from other sources with a maximum investment by ASTA of less than \$500,000. Innovative methods of repayment, such as royalty arrangements, are accepted.

### *Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Awareness Program*

This program helps Arkansas-based businesses identify federal funds that are available through 11 agencies' SBIR programs. The Authority disseminates information on SBIR, including pre-solicitation notices, and helps businesses target proposals to appropriate agencies for funding.

### *Applied Research Grant Program*

The Applied Research Grant program is designed to encourage, establish and support applied science and engineering research partnerships by matching the cash contributions made by private industry to Arkansas colleges and universities for the purchase of new equipment. The proposed project must have clear economic potential. Special consideration is given to businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

### *Research and Development Tax Credit Program*

The tax-credit program offers incentives to Arkansas industry to participate in ASTA's Applied Research Grant Program by providing credits against a taxpayer's state income tax.

### *Technology Development Program*

The Technology Development program assists the development and commercialization of new technology-based products and processes. ASTA awards up to \$50,000 for an investment with terms negotiated on a case-by-case basis for a maximum of 5 percent royalty on net sales for 10 years. Qualified applicants include Arkansas-based small businesses and inventors whose projects provide economic and employment growth potential.

*Arkansas Science and Technology Authority (continued)*

*Technology Transfer Program*

The Technology Transfer program links technological resources of state universities, federal labs and private enterprises. The program assists businesses with finding solutions to technical problems; facilitates cooperation between state, public and private entities; and fosters early-stage development projects. Any Arkansas business can access these funds; however, special consideration is given to new, small, technology-based businesses.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arkansas Science and Technology Authority  
100 Main Street, Suite 450  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201  
(501) 324-9006

## State of Arkansas Main Street Arkansas

Main Street Arkansas is a state program that encourages the development and revitalization of downtown commercial areas in small cities and towns across Arkansas. Through economic restructuring activities, Main Street seeks to increase the economic viability of downtown businesses and to improve downtown property values. Based on the National Main Street approach, the programs follow four basic points: organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring.

The Main Street program is not a "quick fix." Instead, it offers downtown business districts the opportunity to develop and implement a comprehensive, incremental, long-range plan, helping them become economically viable. Although Main Street offers guidelines and direction, implementation of a successful local program rests squarely on the community and the downtown organization supporting the program.

There are several Arkansas communities that have made the decision to preserve and revitalize their downtown. They are:

Batesville (870) 793-4632	Hardy (870) 856-3571	North Little Rock (501) 375-6707
Benton (501) 778-7712	Harrison (870) 741-4889	Osceola (870) 563-6177
Blytheville (870) 763-2525	Helena (870) 338-9144	Ozark (501) 667-5337
Camden (870) 836-6426	Lonoke (501) 676-5749	Rogers (501) 936-5487
Conway (501) 327-7788	Magnolia (870) 234-2513	Russellville (501) 967-1437
El Dorado (870) 881-4190	Mena (501) 394-8305	West Memphis (870) 735-8814

**Contact:** State Coordinator's Office  
Main Street Arkansas  
1500 Tower Building  
323 Center Street  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201  
(501) 324-9880  
[marian@dah.state.ar.us](mailto:marian@dah.state.ar.us)

**Arkansas Capital Corporation  
and  
Arkansas Certified Development Corporation**

By bridging the gap between the funding needed by a small business and the financing provided through traditional banking services, the Arkansas Capital Corporation (ACC) and its affiliate, Arkansas Certified Development Corporation, is able to achieve its primary goal of assisting small businesses in Arkansas by providing long-term, fixed-rate financing. The activities of this privately owned, nonprofit business development organization includes direct lending, partnership lending with financial institutions, SBA loan packaging services and financial management seminars.

ACC funds can be used for a variety of purposes including new construction, equipment purchases and working capital. Loans generally range from a minimum of \$100,000 to a maximum of \$1,250,000. Loans below \$100,000 are occasionally approved to accommodate the special needs of female and minority applicants. Serving as an alternative funding source, ACC does not compete with financial institutions; instead, it distributes funds independently or in conjunction with bank loans.

As a "Preferred Lender" by the United States Small Business Administration (SBA), ACC has the authority to exceed its standard lending maximum of \$500,000 up to \$1,250,000 on certain projects.

The Arkansas Certified Development Corporation (ACDC) promotes and administers the SBA's 504 loan program. This program provides borrowers with long-term financing (up to 20 years) at below-market interest rates for the purposes of construction, expansion and equipment. A company must meet the SBA definition of a small business for its industry to be eligible for this financing. Among other criteria, the borrower must demonstrate the benefit to the community, such as enhancing the economy or job creation/retention.

In most cases, a bank finances 50 percent of the total project cost, and the borrower contributes 10 percent. The remaining 40 percent (up to a maximum of \$1,000,000) is provided by ACDC. The 50/40/10 funding formula can be adjusted to meet the needs of the private lender or borrower.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arkansas Capital Corporation  
225 South Pulaski Street  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1925  
(501) 374-9247 or 800-216-7237  
[www.arcapital.com](http://www.arcapital.com)

## **Arkansas Human Development Corporation**

Arkansas Human Development Corporation (AHDC) is a private, nonprofit organization. Its major source of funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Labor to administer the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program [Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Title IV Section 402] for the state of Arkansas. Self-employment training, educational assistance, skills training and job placement assistance are at the core of services offered to empower the constituents of AHDC.

Since 1972, AHDC has served more than 4,000 seasonal farm workers with services ranging from basic skills development, classroom and on-the-job training and supportive services. Job placement is the ultimate goal for those participating in the JTPA program, and AHDC continues to place between 80 percent and 85 percent of its participants into full-time, unsubsidized employment on an annual basis. Through a variety of grants and contracts, AHDC has expanded its services to include health outreach services and job creation through entrepreneurship training.

Resources provided by the Arkansas Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control, Levi Strauss Foundation and United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc., make it possible for AHDC to provide prevention education to health services organizations in rural areas. The training is designed to assist senior level staff and Board members in overcoming the language and cultural barriers prevalent when serving the migrant farm workers. Cultural sensitivity training and technical assistance, materials, pamphlets and outreach services are a few of the benefits associated with the program.

In addition, through the assistance of the Arkansas State Plant Board, Association of Farm Worker Opportunity Programs, Corporation for National Service and the Environmental Protection Agency, AHDC provides training and certification to farm workers and growers on the safe handling of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals. The training and certification is mandatory under new Worker Protection Standards. Approximately 1,800 individuals benefit from this training on an annual basis.

Self-employment has long been espoused by AHDC as a viable economic strategy, especially in areas with few employment opportunities. Having taught entrepreneurial skills to youth and adults in rural areas for approximately 10 years, the agency expanded its program offerings in the Little Rock community in 1997 through the Central Arkansas Entrepreneurship Training Program (CAETP).

With funding provided by the Department of Human Services, Office of Community Services (both state and federal levels) the CAETP has provided classroom training to approximately 50 individuals resulting in approximately 20 jobs created in central Arkansas. In partnership with the program, representatives from ten local financial institutions review and assess the

*Arkansas Human Development Corporation (continued)*

participants' business plans for completeness. Three of those institutions have made loans ranging from \$47,000 to \$75,000 to fund start-up businesses in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Additionally, an independent loan fund is being expanded by AHDC from which direct loans will be extended to qualifying CAETP participants beginning in the fourth quarter of 1998.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arkansas Human Development Corp.  
300 South Spring Street, Suite 800  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-2424  
(501) 374-1103

## Arkansas Institute for Economic Development

The Arkansas Institute for Economic Development (AIED) conducts research addressing Arkansas's population, economy and government to help develop an improved economic climate. Research activities include analyzing business and economic conditions and forecasting demographics and population trends. As part of the College of Business Administration at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, AIED divides its expertise into two basic functions: research and training.

### Research

- The business research activities include industry and market studies, economic impact and feasibility studies and surveys.
- The demographic research area works with the Bureau of the Census to provide annual population estimates for the state and its counties. These efforts concentrate on demographic analysis, socioeconomic data analysis and interpretation and long-term research projects. A 20 year projection of the state and county populations by age, race and sex is produced biannually. Technical assistance is provided to government, other agencies and the public.
- The economic research area tracks the state and national economy, presents quarterly forecast conferences, responds to data requests and prepares and distributes several publications.
- The research library specializes in statistical data relating to population, employment, unemployment, personal income and building permits in Arkansas and surrounding states. The library also offers information on economic development, industry-specific trends and surveys.
- The Census State Data Center houses all information on Arkansas provided to the state from the U.S. Census Bureau. Special products and/or services include: the *Arkansas Statistical Abstract*; access to a Geographic Information System that can produce socioeconomic characteristics for user-defined areas; and the Children's Data Center, which, through a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, maintains a database and produces the *Arkansas Kids Count Data Book* on the status of children in Arkansas.

### Training

- The management education program offers management and supervisory training throughout Arkansas. Both public and in-house seminars are conducted to meet the needs of all businesses and organizations. Topics include basic and advanced management skills, stress management, strategic planning, total quality management and time management.

*Arkansas Institute for Economic Development (continued)*

- The labor education program provides training, research and technical assistance to workers and their organizations in areas such as health and safety, workplace skill enhancement, collective bargaining, arbitration and grievance handling.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arkansas Institute for Economic Development  
The University of Arkansas at Little Rock  
5th Floor Ottenheimer Library  
2801 South University  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72204-1099  
(501) 569-8476

## **Arkansas Low-Income Housing Coalition**

The Arkansas Low Income Housing Coalition (ALIHC) advocates for policies, programs and resources to help lower income Arkansans obtain decent, safe and affordable housing. This mission is accomplished by educational programs and workshops; a bi-monthly newsletter, *The ALIC News*; organizational capacity building and advocacy; research and analysis of existing and new programs and resources for affordable housing; and dissemination of housing and related program resource information. ALIHC is a grassroots cross-section of individuals and agencies with an interest in affordable housing policies, programs and resources.

In addition to the bi-monthly newsletter, ALIHC has published "Arkansas Low-Income Housing Resource Study: Review and Analysis of Housing Laws, Regulations and Programs." The coalition is working with an Interim Study Committee of the Arkansas General Assembly on legislation to create an Arkansas Housing Trust Fund. The Trust Fund will enable programs and funding resources to assist lower income Arkansans in accessing and maintaining decent, safe and affordable housing.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arkansas Low-Income Housing Coalition  
1601 South Louisiana Street, Suite 200A  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72206  
(501) 374-6873  
[www.aristotle.net/alihc](http://www.aristotle.net/alihc)

## Consumer Credit Counseling Service

Consumer Credit Counseling Service (CCCS) is a private, nonprofit agency that helps individuals solve debt problems and avoid bankruptcy. Its mission is to provide confidential, professional counseling and money management assistance to financially distressed families and individuals regardless of race, creed, age, color, sex, social position or financial status.

CCCS is a member of the National Foundation for Consumer Credit, an organization of nonprofit human service agencies that requires all counselors employed by affiliated members to become certified. To pass the counselor certification examination, counselors must understand the theories, principles, issues, counseling techniques and forms that are applicable to credit and financial counseling. To maintain the certification, counselors must actively seek professional development through continuing education programs.

CCCS provides money-management assistance to individuals and families, assisting them in arranging mutually acceptable debt repayment plans with creditors. CCCS counselors plan monthly budgets that fit families needs and suggest methods to improve money management and spending habits. Services include budget counseling, mortgage default and rent delinquency counseling, debt management and consumer education. Counseling is available in person, by phone or mail.

**Service Area:** Statewide

<b>Contact:</b>	Family Service Agency Consumer Credit Counseling Service 628 West Broadway, Suite 300 P. O. Box 5431 North Little Rock, Arkansas 72119 (501) 753-0202, ext. 209 (800) 255-2227	Consumer Credit Counseling Service Pine Bluff Office 400 Main Street, Suite 109 Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601 (870) 536-6003
	Consumer Credit Counseling Service Jonesboro Office 2218 East Race Street Jonesboro, Arkansas 72401 (870) 932-8277	Consumer Credit Counseling Service West Memphis Office 310 Mid-Continent Plaza, Suite 320 West Memphis, Arkansas 72301 (870) 735-2022

## **Economic Development Districts Planning and Development Districts**

The Districts were created to promote orderly efficient growth, to generate support and to encourage effective economic and industrial development programs statewide. They are structured as private, nonprofit organizations whose Boards of Directors are 51 percent locally elected officials. While the Districts must operate within the guidelines established for federal and state programs, they can be very flexible in the services provided by tailoring assistance to the specific needs of each region.

### Typical Services

- Loan packaging (SBA, CDC, ADFA, ACC, EDA)
- Business plan preparation assistance
- Economic/community planning
- Employee training
- Grant application assistance
- General business counseling
- Government procurement assistance
- Export/import information
- Industrial recruiting
- Transportation planning
- Revolving loan fund

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** Central Arkansas Planning and Development District  
115 Jefferson Street  
P. O. Box 300  
Lonoke, Arkansas 72086  
(501) 676-2721

East Arkansas Planning and Development District  
P. O. Box 1403  
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72401  
(870) 932-3957

Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District  
P. O. Box 190  
Harrison, Arkansas 72601  
(870) 741-5404

*Economic Development Districts (continued)*

Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District  
P. O. Box 6808  
Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601  
(870) 536-1971

Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District  
P. O. Box 767  
Magnolia, Arkansas 71753  
(870) 234-4030

West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District  
P. O. Box 21100  
Hot Springs, Arkansas 71903  
(501) 525-7577

Western Arkansas Planning and Development District  
P. O. Box 2067  
Fort Smith, Arkansas 72901  
(501) 785-2651

White River Planning and Development District  
P. O. Box 2396  
Batesville, Arkansas 72501  
(870) 793-5233

## **The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation**

The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation focuses its grant-making efforts in three areas: education, economic development and civic affairs. Two key issues in the Foundation's efforts are equity--freedom from bias and favoritism--and the involvement of Arkansans in their local communities.

The foundation's goals are to encourage Arkansans to develop programs that provide an equitable, quality education for all children; strengthen the capacity of local communities to break the cycle of poverty by supporting projects that promote local economic development; and nurture strong, broad-based grass roots leadership through the development of community-based organizations.

The foundation makes major grants to support the development of new projects or programs that share the foundation's goals. Grants are awarded only to public agencies and private, nonprofit organizations that have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. To be considered for funding, proposed projects must address the foundation's priority areas (education, economic development and civic affairs) and be located in Arkansas.

The Community Incentive Program (CIP) grants up to \$10,000 for special assistance to community-based organizations that are working to become more effective. Any qualified 501(c)(3) organization or public agency may apply for general operating support, construction funds or equipment purchases that are critical to the organization's programs. CIP grants are made for one year and are not renewable. To be eligible, an organization must serve a minority or disadvantaged population and may not have been a previous recipient of a major foundation grant.

Discretionary Grants up to \$2,000 are awarded by the foundation's president for technical assistance, organizational development, program planning or other projects needing small amounts of money for worthwhile goals. An eligible organization must have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status or designed as a government agency.

**Service Area:** Statewide

**Contact:** The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation  
308 East Eighth Street  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202-3999  
(501) 376-6854

## Arkansas ACORN Fair Housing Organization

The Arkansas ACORN Fair Housing Organization is a nonprofit agency developed by the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) to combat housing discrimination and educate the public about the Fair Housing Act and its amendments.

### Programs & Services

ACORN's Fair Housing activities include investigation by testing and/or gathering data, referrals to federal agencies, researching complaints, and providing education and training to housing industry professionals and the general public.

*Homeownership Counseling* is provided free to approximately 100 clients every month. Counselors are certified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and FannieMae. Counseling is done on an individual basis and in a classroom setting. Individuals deal one-on-one with counselors when repairing or establishing credit. Class meetings are held on budgeting that teach debt reduction, savings and homeownership responsibilities. Clients also learn how to shop for houses by considering things such as the physical conditions, price and how to negotiate price. Through these efforts, ACORN is able to claim a 97 percent loan approval rate.

ACORN staff members work closely with their clients through the entire homebuying process. To assist clients with downpayment and closing costs assistance, ACORN has secured Affordable Housing Grants from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas in conjunction with local banks. Once clients complete the counseling courses they may be eligible for up to \$3,000 in assistance.

ACORN also provides post-purchase counseling and has developed and published, "Homeowner's Guide: A Monthly Maintenance Guide to Saving You Money" to assist new homeowners.

Homebuyer Seminars and Bank Fairs are sponsored in neighborhoods regularly to encourage individuals that homeownership can be a reality and to give potential homebuyers the opportunity to visit with bankers.

**Service Area:** Little Rock, Pine Bluff and surrounding areas

**Contact:** Arkansas ACORN Fair Housing Organization  
523 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202  
(501) 374-2114  
(800) 575-2114

104 Main Street  
Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71603  
(870) 534-5160

## **Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation**

Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation (ALFDC) was established in 1980 with a mission to improve the quality of life of rural communities through land retention, family farm development, and land-based economic development for limited resource and socially disadvantaged people. Since its inception, ALFDC has grown to a staff size of 32 salaried and contracted employees with an annual budget of approximately \$5.6 million. ALFDC works with individual farmers and landowners, particularly minorities, women and youth. Its programs focus on rural low-income families and limited resource farmers who have not traditionally been involved in community development programs.

### **Programs & Services**

#### **The Agriculture and Rural Community Development Division**

- Small Farm Outreach, Training and Technical Assistance. Limited resource and small family farms are provided financial and management expertise to help them achieve greater yields and more profitable operations. Farm advisors help individual operators utilize government resources and agricultural programs with services such as debt restructuring, loan packaging, advocacy, marketing and irrigation systems.
- Rural Development Finance Initiative. With funding provided by the Rural Development's Intermediary Relending Program, ALFDC provides flexible-term loans to new and existing small, rural businesses that cannot obtain traditional bank financing.
- Rural Information Network. Computers have been placed in outlying areas and strategically linked via modem to establish a dedicated network for rural economic and community development. The network helps Arkansas' rural leaders coordinate regional plans and share resources.
- Agri-Business Training Center. The Center offers an education and training curriculum to help establish rural businesses or community development initiatives. On-site or strategically located workshops focus on individual development needs or basic business skills such as marketing, computerized accounting, budgeting and forecasting, strategic planning and funding.

#### **Youth Division**

- Youth Enterprise in Agriculture Program (YEA). YEA introduces youth, ages 16-19, to farming and agriculture related careers through hands-on training, education and leadership development. In the two-year program, students are offered paid internships and apprenticeships for six-week periods. The internship placements provide exposure to various areas of agriculture administration at the public and private level. The apprenticeships are with Arkansas family farmers and provide the youth with training, work experiences and exposure to agriculture as a lifestyle and a business.

**Housing Division**

- Rural Housing Initiative. ALFDC has extensive experience in developing both single- and multi-family housing. An example is ALFDC's Lease-Purchase Program where HOME funds are used to acquire and rehabilitate substandard housing which is then leased with an option to purchase. Eligible applicants may apply a portion of their monthly rents as down payments toward the purchase of their homes and are required to complete credit and pre- and post-purchase homebuyer counseling.

As a supplement to the single-family program, ALFDC's partnership with Forrest City Bank, Forrest City, Arkansas yielded a \$240,000 Affordable Housing Program grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas. The grant provides 80 very low- and low-income, first-time homebuyers with principal reduction, down payment and closing costs assistance. All homeowners are required to attend mandatory pre- and post-purchase counseling.

ALFDC's experience with multi-family housing development includes new construction, rehab, management and ownership.

**Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation/Neighborhood Housing Services**

As an enhancement to its housing program, ALFDC was approved as an affiliate of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation in 1997. An affiliation with this national, nonprofit housing organization will bring technical assistance and support, as well as access to financing for housing programs.

**Service Area:** Eastern and Southern Arkansas

**Contact:** Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation  
Route 2, Box 291  
Brinkley, Arkansas 72021  
(870) 734-1140  
(800) 264-1141

## **Black River Area Development Corporation**

Black River Area Development Corp. (BRAD) was incorporated in 1965 to administer community service programs, work with the poor and public and private sectors to identify and eliminate poverty in the community, and to mobilize resources to ensure priority needs are effectively and efficiently met. Its Board of Directors is composed of 1/3 low-income community residents, 1/3 local public officials and 1/3 representatives of private organizations. With an annual budget in excess of \$4 million, BRAD is able to serve more than 5,000 low-income people in its service area. Approximately 1,000 volunteers work to support the delivery of services to those individuals.

### **Programs & Services**

#### Public Transit

Since 1975, BRAD has operated a public transportation system providing low-cost transportation to local residents. It is the only public transportation system serving the area. This program was named as a National Model Project by the Arkansas Highway Department.

#### HUD Section 202 Housing

BRAD operates five Section 202 housing projects for the elderly and handicapped and one group home for developmentally disabled individuals. Each project is established as an independent Housing Development Corporation. During construction, BRAD served as the project developer and currently manages the developments with responsibilities including tenant selection, collection of rents and rent subsidies, and maintenance.

#### Weatherization

Funding through this program is used to weatherize homes of low-income owners in accordance with Department of Energy regulations. Approximately 88 homes are weatherized annually.

#### Homeless Shelter

In 1988 funding was secured to renovate and staff an emergency homeless shelter for families with children. The shelter also assists them in obtaining the necessary means to live independently of the shelter. Approximately 32 families and 104 individuals are served on an annual basis.

#### Housing Rehabilitation

Using HOME funds, BRAD has assisted homeowners in Lawrence County in refurbishing their home.

**Service Area:** Clay, Lawrence, and Randolph counties

**Contact:** Black River Area Development Corp.  
1403 Hospital Drive  
Pocahontas, Arkansas 72455  
(870) 892-4547

## **Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center**

The Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center (BGACDC) began in 1978 as a recreation center, providing students--especially young males--a healthy and safe environment for after-school activities. Over the years, BGACDC has expanded into a community organization providing services to adults and children of all ages. Through a mix of educational, recreational, health, housing and job development programs, BGACDC works to strengthen individuals and families, linking them to vital public and private resources.

Marvell is located in Phillips County and is largely agriculturally sustained. The area's population has dramatically declined in the last decade due to the lack of employment opportunities. Located 21 miles from Helena, Arkansas, options are still limited. BGACDC is the third largest employer in Marvell, preceded only by the public school system and the nursing home; the Center has 25 full-time and 25 part-time, paid staff positions and receives additional support from volunteers and interns.

BGACDC emphasizes community development, working collaboratively with local, state and private resources to achieve its goals. BGACDC's philosophy of shared decision making includes a commitment to ensure that people who receive services are stockholders in the operation of the Center.

### **Programs & Services**

#### Housing

Housing activities began initially with the development of 39 units of rental housing for low-income and elderly residents. The project was financed with a \$1.4 million loan from Rural Development's Section 515 Loan Program and with a land acquisition loan provided by a local financial institution.

Currently, BGACDC has initiated a 12-block revitalization project in Marvell, not only to rehab houses, but to "rehab" minds that homeownership can be a reality. Funding from the Foundation for the Mid South assisted in forming Neighborhood Resident Groups that keep residents actively involved in the planning process through monthly meetings with BGACDC staff. The City of Marvell has agreed to make infrastructure and drainage improvements when funds become available.

Eighteen houses have been acquired by BGACDC with a layering of funding from the Kellogg Foundation, Mid South Delta LISC, Arkansas Development Finance Authority and Helena National Bank. Once the houses are refurbished, tenants will have an option to purchase. Additional funds allowed for four new homes to be constructed, two of which are occupied by tenants under leases to purchase agreements.

*Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center (continued)*

Credit counseling is provided in conjunction with East Arkansas Legal Services in West Memphis. Upon completion, homeowners may be eligible for up to \$3,000 in downpayment and closing cost assistance.

Additionally, BGACDC is working with Mid South Delta LISC to acquire nine single-family units it currently manages for absentee landlords in Marvell.

Economic Development

BGACDC operates a JTPA funded program in collaboration with Phillips County Community College to provide construction skills training to mothers receiving public assistance. An expansion of this effort has led to the same training being offered to local residents in the above mentioned 12-block area. Once the training is complete, residents are offered the opportunity to bid on the refurbishment of homes in an effort to keep dollars circulating in the local economy. Eventually, BGACDC intends to form a construction company employing local residents to do local and non-local jobs.

Operation of a licensed day care center for 24 children has allowed BGACDC the expertise to provide technical assistance to in-home child care providers. Assistance includes help with rehabbing a home or a building to serve as the facility and providing referrals to other resources.

Health Care Facility

In partnership with Phillips County Health Department, BGACDC established a health care facility initially to serve low-income children in the school district who could not attend school because they lacked the required immunizations. Today the facility is open two days per month and provides a variety of health care services to all residents.

Best Food In Town

To generate income for programs and provide jobs, as well as a needed service, BGACDC owns and operates a full-service restaurant--Best Food In Town. The restaurant serves traditional southern cuisine. Catering services are also available. An adjoining room that can be rented for a small fee provides space for receptions and meetings. BGACDC also owns and operates a small commercial laundromat.

BGACDC operates numerous child development programs for children of all ages, including after-school intergenerational programs that pair kids with seniors, summer day camps and summer youth employment. A Parent Center is available that provides space for parents to meet and learn enhancement skills, and provide young mothers access to clothing and supplies. A Youth Center is located in the 12-Block Revitalization area that provides a space for youth activities.

*Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center (continued)*

**Service Area:** Marvell, plus 12 surrounding communities

**Contact:** Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center  
P.O. Box 1356, Highway 49  
Marvell, Arkansas 72366  
(870) 829-3636  
[bgadc@aol.com](mailto:bgadc@aol.com)

## **Chicot County Housing Assistance**

Since 1991 Chicot County Housing Assistance has utilized the Rural Development's Self-Help Housing program to assist very low- and low-income people in becoming homeowners. The homeowners work in groups of four to nine families to build each other's homes. Approximately 28 houses are completed annually.

Mortgages are received directly from Rural Development with Chicot County Housing Assistance doing the "intake" and program administration. All of the homes are new construction and average \$50,000 (property included). Approximately 65 percent of the construction is done by the groups and the "sweat equity" serves as a families' down payment. The closing costs and related expenses are included in the loan.

Credit is the number one barrier to a family's participation in the program. Many times Chicot County Housing Assistance assists in resolving minor credit blemishes, allowing the applicants to reapply.

There are opportunities for local banks to partner with Chicot County Housing Assistance by providing mortgages to the higher-income, Self-Help program participants that are guaranteed by Rural Development.

Chicot County Housing Assistance also has previous experience with housing rehab in Desha County. Under the program, homebuyers used "sweat equity" to rehab houses foreclosed by Rural Development.

**Service Area:** Ashley, Chicot, Desha and Drew counties

**Contact:** Chicot County Housing Assistance  
409 Main Street  
Lake Village, Arkansas 71653  
(870) 265-3237

## **Crowley's Ridge Development Council**

Crowley's Ridge Development Council, Inc. (CRDC) organized in 1969 to develop and administer programs that improve the social and economic status of residents in Northeast Arkansas. With 335 on staff and an annual budget of between \$8 million and \$10 million, CRDC serves as an umbrella agency for many programs that combine to provide a broad base of community services.

### Housing

CRDC has extensive experience in making homeownership a reality for many low- and moderate-income persons in the service area. Since entering the single-family housing development arena, more than 160 units have been made available for purchase.

Having obtained the designation of Certified Housing Development Organization (CHDO), CRDC may use HOME and HOPE 3 funds to construct new and refurbish existing housing units for sale to first time homebuyers. Generally, prices range from \$35,000 to \$40,000 for refurbished homes and \$55,000 for newly constructed homes. Financial counseling is available to repair credit reports and assist with budgeting. Home maintenance training is also provided.

In conjunction with Union Planters Bank of Northeast Arkansas in Paragould, CRDC has obtained an Affordable Housing Grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas. The \$160,000 will be used as a direct subsidy for principal reduction, down payment and closing costs assistance on a project to rehabilitate 16 and construct four single-family homes.

As with most affordable housing programs, supply exceeds demand. To determine eligibility CRDC established a Review Committee composed of local professionals and residents. The Committee reviews each application and makes its decision based on need and the applicant's ability to repay a mortgage.

### Demonstration Program

A collaboration with the Local Initiatives Support Corp. (LISC), National Head Start Assn., the Rural Housing Service, Federal Housing Finance Board, Federal Home Loan Bank system and Freddie Mac is providing grants and loan guarantees for head start programs and child care facilities. CRDC was one of five demonstration programs in the United States chosen to receive aid from this collaboration, which will result in the construction of a new Head Start facility.

**Service Area:** Craighead, Greene, Poinsett, Jackson

**Contact:** Crowley's Ridge Development Council, Inc.  
249 South Main Street  
P. O. Box 1497  
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72403  
(870) 935-8610

## The Developmental Center

The Developmental Center's goal is to provide physically and mentally challenged children and adults a place they can go within their community to receive the necessary skills and socialization that all people desire in order to become productive citizens.

The Center began its operations in September of 1970 and is licensed by the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services. The staff consists of certified professionals, paraprofessionals and a director who serves as the center administrator. All 72 staff members are trained in the field of Special Education and/or related areas. The Center's funding comes from title XIX (Medicaid) along with general revenues, contracted services, local contributors and entrepreneurial activities such as an aluminum can recycling program.

### The Delta House

In June 1990, the Developmental Center developed The Delta House, an intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded. This transitional housing facility has 10 dormitory style rooms, as well as kitchen and laundry facilities.

Even though many of the residents receive training at the Developmental Center, training is an ongoing feature of The Delta House. The training includes communication and socialization skills, relationship development, self-care, self-administration of medication, and basic cooking, cleaning and laundering techniques. After mastering these skills, many residents move on to less-structured living arrangements or complete independent living. Independence is determined by a committee of staff and physicians.

### Independent Living

The Developmental Center has obtained and refurbished seven homes near the center, two of which were sold to clients. Despite the clients independent status, staff visits the homeowners for approximately two hours each night to ensure diets are being followed and the homes are being maintained.

In addition to the above programs, the Center administers several other related programs including an integrated preschool/day care facility, school age program, speech therapy, occupational and physical therapy, food service and transportation.

**Service Area:** Phillips, Lee, Monroe Counties

**Contact:** The Developmental Center  
1221 Highway 49  
P. O. Box 3468  
West Helena, Arkansas 72390  
(870) 5752-3417

## **Delta Research, Education and Development Foundation**

Delta Research, Education and Development (DRED) Foundation is a nonprofit corporation formed to advance the social, economic and educational status of people in the Delta. More specifically, the goals and objectives of DRED are to raise the economic conditions and expand the entrepreneurial opportunities for area residents and assist those residents in obtaining adequate low-cost housing.

### Housing

DRED has extensive experience in developing, managing and owning affordable housing. Certification as a Certified Housing Development Organization (CHDO) has allowed it to successfully compete for state grant funds that were leveraged with funds from other sources. A product of this leveraging is the 36 single-family housing units DRED purchased and rehabbed to rent to low-income residents. As is the case in all its projects, DRED used local suppliers and contractors to help spur the local economy.

DRED's first new construction project (estimated cost of \$1.2 million) will layer its own equity with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (purchased by National Equity Fund), locally provided loans, and state grants to develop 24 housing units consisting of scattered site, duplexes and four-plexes. The Mid South Delta LISC is providing additional grants and technical assistance. A professional management firm will manage the properties for the first year while DRED staff seeks training to become certified property managers.

A HOPE 3 grant allows DRED to provide counseling and downpayment assistance to prospective homebuyers.

### Economic Development

As a statement that it is a permanent fixture in the community, DRED was able to obtain bank financing to purchase its own building. DRED has also created an Afrikan Business Incubator that provides subsidized rental rates, technical assistance, secretarial, billing and bookkeeping services and access to office equipment to emerging businesses.

**Service Area:** Crittenden County

**Contact:** Delta Research, Education and Development Foundation  
2126 East Broadway  
P. O. Box 2511  
West Memphis, Arkansas 72303  
(870) 732-1723

## **East Arkansas Legal Services**

East Arkansas Legal Services (EALS) is a nonprofit corporation with a primary purpose to provide legal services to poor people in non-criminal matters. The Board of Directors and staff are committed to the ideal of providing access to justice for the poor who otherwise would go unrepresented in most instances.

### Community Economic Development

In addition to the traditional legal services to clients in civil legal matters, EALS has diversified its offerings to include a community economic development program. Implemented in July 1993, the program is designed to provide legal and technical assistance to community organizations by assisting them with planning, developing and implementing economic development projects within their communities

Assistance includes organizing residents, Board training and development, serving as fiscal agent, developing fundraising strategies and grant writing. The assistance is designed to enhance an organization's efforts to gain access to more economic resources, develop needed services and business ventures and train leaders

EALS sponsors an annual economic development conference that provides a forum for networking and education to East Arkansas nonprofits and residents.

### Credit Counseling

Funding from the Arkansas Development Finance Authority enables EALS to provide credit counseling and downpayment and closing cost assistance to homebuyers (participants may be eligible for up to \$3,000). The classes emphasize budgeting and financial planning to deter impulse buying. EALS welcomes the participation of professionals, such as bankers, realtors and home inspectors, to enhance the classroom curriculum. Approximately 400 families have worked to repair their credit or establish credit, and 160 have purchased homes.

In partnership with the Mississippi County Enterprise Community (E/C), EALS provides homebuyer assistance and credit counseling for any resident wanting to purchase a home in the E/C. Approximately 100 families have received counseling, and 17 families have purchased homes. Local banks and a regional mortgage company provide the mortgages.

Home maintenance classes are also offered that stress self-maintenance to homeowners and provide assistance in selecting contractors.

*East Arkansas Legal Services (continued)*

**Service Area:** Crittenden, Cross, Lee, Mississippi, Monroe, Phillips and St. Frances counties

**Contact:** East Arkansas Legal Services  
500 East Broadway  
P. O. Box 1149  
West Memphis, Arkansas 72303  
(870) 732-6370

## **Good Neighbor Center**

The Good Neighbor Center has fixed and sold more than two dozen homes since beginning a Lease Purchase program with about \$1 million in HOPE 3 grants from HUD in 1992 and 1993. Under the program, Good Neighbor purchases HUD foreclosed homes and rehabilitates them for sale. Many times, houses that are repaired are purchased from absentee landlords helping to stabilize neighborhoods through homeownership.

The program is financially self-sufficient and continues to grow from home sales proceeds. Tight management helps keep the initiative fiscally healthy (the program has one part-time paid staff person). Good Neighbor has a housing committee with representatives from local nonprofits, lenders and city community development staff overseeing the Lease Purchase mission. On the recommendation of the housing committee, the Good Neighbor Center Board approves deals and disbursement of funds.

About half of the program's clients are families with poor or no credit ratings. The family works to repair its credit by attending required homeownership, personal finance and home maintenance training offered by the Center, local financial institutions or Consumer Credit Counseling Service. Once the family maintains good credit for 12 months, it's ready to purchase the property. The family must also save for a one-percent downpayment required at the time of closing. The typical time frame to move a client from leasing to homeownership is usually six months, but can be longer depending on the circumstances.

The system allows potential homeowners to lease their houses and provide 40 hours of sweat equity to repair any defects. The typical home purchased by Good Neighbor averages \$30,000 and usually requires about \$2,000 of rehabilitation. The client takes out a 20-year mortgage through a local mortgage company and after a year of timely repayment is sent a letter of congratulations on his or her success.

The group plans to develop a procedures manual to help others replicate its use of the HOPE 3 program. Until the manual is developed, technical assistance can be obtained via phone.

In 1997, the Good Neighbor Center and the City of West Memphis were selected as a "Best Practice" in the area of Decent Housing by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Arkansas State Office, for their success with the Lease Purchase program.

**Service Area:** City of West Memphis

**Contact:** Good Neighbor Center  
P. O. Box 2990  
680 North Airport Road  
West Memphis, Arkansas 72303  
(870) 735-0870

## **Helena Community Renewal Corporation**

Helena Community Renewal Corporation (HCRC) was formed to revitalize downtown Helena by promoting homeownership and providing affordable rental housing in a 12-block service area. Formed in 1992 as a private nonprofit corporation, HCRC partnered with Opportunity Lands Corporation, Helena National Bank, First National Bank of Phillips County and the City of Helena to implement the first phase of the plan. Using HOME funds, the partnership constructed four single-family homes to sell to low-income, first-time homebuyers.

Future plans include the construction of 16 to 20 rental units that will provide housing for low-income, elderly residents. Again, HCRC is working with Opportunity Lands Corporation who is providing technical assistance on how to layer the financing needed for the project and advising on site selection. Additionally, HCRC has secured \$150,000 in grants that will be used for owner-occupied, single-family rehab in collaboration with the city of Helena.

**Service Area:** City of Helena

**Contact:** Helena Community Renewal Corporation  
P. O. Box 465  
Helena, Arkansas 72342  
(870) 338-8115

## **City of Jonesboro Community Development**

In 1997, the city of Jonesboro was designated as an entitlement city by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) after a special census revealed Jonesboro had reached a population of more than 50,000. The designation of “entitlement city” brings with it annual, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds which are received directly from HUD. For fiscal year 1997 the CDBG allocation was \$626,000. There are a number of uses for the funds, but all must benefit low- and moderate-income residents and areas.

The city receives input on disbursement of CDBG funds from a variety of sources including annual public hearings and a 10-member Community Participation committee. Once the input is received, staff members evaluate it in relation to the City’s objectives, and proposed projects are submitted for approval by the city Board of Directors.

Infrastructure improvements are a high priority for low- and moderate-income areas in the city. Drainage improvements are being made on Washington Street and sewer improvements on Tulip and Sweetheart Lanes, as well as in the Mays addition. Community service investments include the renovation of two community centers and the opening of two police substations.

The city is exploring avenues to leverage the CDBG entitlement with other resources to meet affordable housing needs. Homeowner rehabilitation assistance has been identified as the greatest need. That, coupled with a high priority to increase homeownership, will help stabilize the low- and moderate-income communities in Jonesboro.

**Service Area:** Low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in Jonesboro

**Contact:** Community Development Grants Coordinator  
City of Jonesboro  
314 W. Washington  
P. O. Box 1845  
Jonesboro, Arkansas 72403-1845  
(870) 933-4635  
[jmckinnon@Jonesboro.org](mailto:jmckinnon@Jonesboro.org)

## **Lee County Community Development Corporation**

The Lee County Community Development Corporation (CDC) is dedicated to revitalizing and improving the community and assisting the residents of Lee County. The CDC was formed and incorporated in 1996 by Mayor Robert Taylor and other community leaders.

### Housing

Using a \$180,000 grant from the Rural Development's Mutual Self-Help Housing Program, the CDC will provide 20 single-family homes to buyers in Lee County. Under the program, self-help groups of six to seven people build each other's homes. Their labor will become the downpayment, which is commonly referred to as sweat equity. The groups share the common goal of homeownership and must commit themselves to share in the work until that goal is a reality for all in the group. The groups will be working on a six-month time schedule.

To be eligible for the program, participants must fall within the HUD established income guidelines for low- and very low-income families and must be able to repay a mortgage. The average loan size will be \$50,000 with payment dependent on the borrower's income; interest rates are flexible. Rural Development will make the loans directly to the borrower, and the CDC will serve as the "intake" point.

The Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corp. has agreed to make available to the self-help participants 20 lots in the Meadowbrook subdivision.

### Rehabilitation

Owner-occupied housing rehab is offered under Rural Development's 502 and 504 programs. Funding has been secured for 15 homes, but the CDC is searching for partners to help leverage this initial capital. The primary focus of this program is lead-based paint abatement.

### Credit Counseling

Each self-help homeowner will be required to complete homeownership training and credit counseling with curriculum adapted from the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation (NRC). The CDC staff has been certified by NRC and the Housing Assistance Council.

There are opportunities for local banks to participate with the CDC in providing credit counseling. Because local businesses do not report to credit reporting agencies, it is difficult for borrowers to obtain financing from local sources. Bankers can educate borrowers not only on how to establish credit, but also how to manage it.

Bankers are also needed to help educate very low- and low-income residents on basic financial services and the various account options. It is estimated that more than 50 percent of the CDC's clientele do not have bank accounts for various reasons.

*Lee County Community Development Corporation (continued)*

**Small Business Development**

The Lee County CDC provides technical assistance to start-up or existing (home-based) small businesses in developing business plans and conducting feasibility studies. Assistance is offered one-on-one and in-group classes and usually with partners such as the Small Business Administration, Enterprise Corporation for the Delta or the Arkansas Enterprise Group.

Many small business owners report that they have to go outside the area (Little Rock or Memphis) to obtain financing. Small business loans of \$5,000 to \$6,000 are needed.

**Service Area:** Lee County

**Contact:** Lee County Community Development Corporation  
28 South Poplar Street  
P. O. Box 1005  
Marianna, Arkansas 72360  
(870) 295-5828

## **Mississippi County Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc.**

Established in 1965, Mississippi County Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc. (EOC) is committed to alleviating poverty and assisting low-income individuals and families to secure knowledge, skills and opportunities to become self-sufficient and lead lives of dignity. With an annual budget in excess of \$6.5 million and more than 200 employees, EOC is able to provide direct services and referrals to ensure both immediate (emergency food and shelter) and longer-term needs (employment and housing) are met.

### **Programs & Services**

#### Housing Services

EOC has experience in both multi- and single-family housing development. Using a layering of financing from the Arkansas Development Finance Authority and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, EOC constructed a multi-family development providing 38 units for rent to the low-income elderly. The project's total cost was approximately \$2 million.

Single-family homeowner rehabilitation is made possible through Rural Development's Housing Preservation program. The program's goal is to bring the units up to code standards.

In partnership with the Mississippi County Enterprise Community (E/C) and the East Arkansas Legal Services, housing counseling is provided to potential homeowners to assist in credit repair, the home buying process and to teach home maintenance. Once the course is completed, potential homeowners may be eligible for downpayment and closing costs assistance. Staff counselors have received training from the Housing Assistance Council and the National Federation of Housing Counselors. While the program follows a set curriculum, professionals such as bankers and realtors are asked to address the class on their areas of expertise.

The Small Business Lending Program is funded at \$1.5 million by the Rural Development's Intermediary Relending and Rural Business Development Grant programs, with administrative costs being underwritten by the local E/C. Under the program, loans are made to low-income borrowers desiring to start, expand or preserve a business. The average loan size has been between \$20,000 and \$25,000 and made to borrowers who cannot obtain traditional bank financing. Loan decisions are the responsibility of a loan committee, which is composed of representatives from the community and local financial institutions.

In addition to obtaining credit counseling, borrowers are required to attend the small business training program *FastTrac* which is offered at the Mississippi County Community College in partnership with the Enterprise Corporation of the Delta. There have been instances where, once borrowers have completed the counseling and training, they have been able to obtain financing from local banks.

Many times there are opportunities for EOC to participate loans with other providers such as local banks, Enterprise Corporation of the Delta and Arkansas Enterprise Group. For loan request that are too large to consider, EOC refers the borrower to the above-mentioned lenders.

Employment Services have been provided for local residents for the past 15 years. Services include one-on-one counseling and group workshops on job preparedness such as how to dress for success, look for a job and prepare a resume. Under a contract with the Arkansas Department of Human Services, EOC provides job referrals, employer contacts and follow-up activities to those moving from public assistance into the employment sector. Individuals are required to spend 20 hours per week searching for a job.

The Homeless Program is geared toward both individuals and families. Food, shelter, transportation and emergency medical supplies are available as circumstances warrant. Referrals are made for assistance in employment, income maintenance, medical treatment and other transitional support services.

The Home Energy Assistance Program makes payments on a one-time basis to energy suppliers to assist low-income households in paying their energy bills.

The Mississippi County Enterprise Community chose the EOC to serve as the lead entity. The responsibilities in this role include fiscal agent and ensuring the E/C plan is properly implemented. While the EOC is an active partner in many of the E/C initiatives, it is quick to point out the roles are completely separate.

In addition to the above-mentioned programs, EOC is collaborating with Mid South Delta LISC to develop a child care center that will provide low-cost, and in some cases free, child care services to parents moving from welfare to work.

**Service Area:** Mississippi County

**Contact:** Mississippi County, Arkansas EOC, Inc.  
P. O. Drawer 1289  
2513 Atlanta Avenue, Building 205  
Blytheville, Arkansas 72316  
(870) 532-2348

**New Horizon Church and Its Ministries, Inc.**  
**and**  
**New Horizon Community Development Corporation**

New Horizon Church and Its Ministries, Inc. is a nondenominational congregation that has committed itself to the holistic mission of “meeting the needs of the whole man” through community empowerment and outreach programs. Its overall program theme is “Restoration Hi-Rise Project”.

New Horizons provides employment to 30 local residents, including five VISTA workers. It has been successful in securing funding from various sources such as the Foundation for the Mid South, the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA) and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and leveraging it with funds from Citizens First Bank in Fordyce and individual donations.

Human resources have also been successfully leveraged. The Restoration Hi-Rise Project is not a vision of one person, but of the whole New Horizon Church congregation. So when members were surveyed early in the process to determine their individual skills and abilities, they learned they could provide many of the services needed administratively and on development projects. Many of Restoration’s administrative services are performed by members with professional experience in areas such as accounting and technical writing. Other members have contributed their electrical, plumbing and construction expertise to development projects.

New Horizon has identified three areas of need specific to the Fordyce community: adequate and affordable housing, child care and supportive services for low-income individuals.

**Family Life Center**

Rising-Hi Child Development Centers offer quality affordable child care in a safe, educational environment to children ages six weeks to five years. In most cases children attend at no cost to the parents. Two centers have been licensed: one in Fordyce that serves 72 children and one in Sparkman that serves 18 children. Fully staffed, Rising-Hi employs a full-time director, assistant director, food services director, three classroom aides and three part-time employees. Parent meetings are held monthly.

In addition to childcare, both centers are used for job training sites for the Welfare-to-Work initiatives sponsored by the local Department for Human Services.

Reaching a Call to Excellency (RACE) is a direct preventive service program offered to preschool and school-aged children between the ages of three and 19 years old. RACE, through the use of educational, recreational and cultural enrichment activities, provides children and youth with basic skills that will enable them to make sound decisions regarding alcohol and drug abuse and violent behavior. This program serves an average of 86 children per day during the summer months.

*New Horizons (continued)*

During the fall and spring RACE participants are eligible to participate in the Hi-Light Tutorial Services.

Hi-Light Tutorial Services uses community volunteers three afternoons per week during the school year to assist students with homework. Peer tutors provide additional reading instruction using the “Laubach Way To Reading” program.

A Second Chance is an outreach program for Narcotics anonymous. This group offers support to persons attempting to combat chemical and substance abuse.

### **Housing**

Higher Heights Apartments offers 24, two-bedroom rental units to very low- and low-income residents. Funding for the development came from HOME funds, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and local bank financing.

Restoration Hi-Rise Mobile Home Park is a 40-unit park purchased with a first mortgage provided by Citizens First Bank that was leveraged with an ADFA Financing Adjusted Factor (FAF) program loan.

Higher Dimensions Apartments is a proposed six-unit transitional living facility that will target single-parent families that are uneducated or undereducated and are seeking an opportunity to improve their current economic status. The funding package has been seeded with HOME funds from ADFA. Supportive services will include living skills development, GED obtainment, home management and job preparedness.

Housing Counseling is provided by three certified counselors with expertise in various federal and state housing programs

**Service Area:** Dallas County

**Contact:** New Horizon Church & Its Ministries, Inc.  
205 East Third Street  
P. O. Box 979  
Fordyce, Arkansas 71742  
(870) 352-3200

## **Pathways Community Development Commission**

Pathways Community Development Commission is dedicated to transforming Arkansas' southeastern economy through food production. An initial step was a year-long planning process with the Kellogg Foundation resulting in the formation of a Produce Growers Association that provides local farmers with assistance in establishing markets for their produce and also space to ready the produce for market.

### Small Business/Farm Development

The first phase of this initiative is to establish a loan fund for small farmers who cannot obtain credit from traditional sources, with small credit lines. The seed capital for the fund is provided by the Kellogg Foundation. Secondly, a Leadership and Economic Development Institute will be developed to provide continuing education for farmers, a format to network with one another, and a tool to recruit new farmers to the profession.

Through hands-on business training and self-development, Pathways teaches entrepreneurs (youth and adult) how to start and manage their own businesses. It currently operates two consignment shops--one in Dermott and the other in Lake Village--that serve as training facilities. To further assist the entrepreneurs, Pathways operates a revolving loan fund that provides small start-up loans. Participants must commit to achieving one of three goals: completing their education, obtaining jobs or starting or expanding businesses.

### Demonstration Project--Individual Development Accounts

Pathways is currently participating in a demonstration project to create Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) with funding provided by the Foundation for the Mid South. IDAs are designed to afford low-income individuals the opportunity to save money and commit those resources to asset building. Participants are required to save 10 percent of their earnings through payroll deduction. The savings are then matched 2 to 1 by Pathways. The maximum that can be saved under this program is \$1,000, and the funds must be used for home or business acquisition, health care costs or education expenses.

**Service Area:** Ashley, Chicot, Desha and Drew Counties

**Contact:** Pathways Community Development Commission  
209 East Iowa Street  
Dermott, Arkansas 71638  
(870) 538-5236

## **Phillips County Self-Help Federal Credit Union**

The Phillips County Self-Help Federal Credit Union was established in 1996 to provide small loans to people who live, work or worship in Phillips County and are unable to obtain traditional bank financing. Since its inception, the Credit Union has made loans, mainly for consumer loans, with the average loan size between \$300 and \$500.

For one year prior to its charter, the Credit Union held organizing drives that yielded \$7,000-\$8,000 in capitalization. Those funds, leveraged with two \$100,000 deposits from two other credit unions, serve as the Self-Help Credit Union's total capitalization for loans. In addition to loans, the Credit Union offers interest bearing savings accounts to its 300 plus members.

A portion of the Credit Unions' administrative and operational support has been provided by local financial institutions. There is an opportunity for the institution's to increase their support by providing technical assistance on loan documentation and servicing, as well as serving on the Board of Directors and various committees.

Membership in the Credit Union may be obtained with \$15; \$5 going for the one-time membership application fee and \$10 for the first month's deposit into the member's share account. It is recommended that the member deposit at least \$10 per month into his or her share account. All share deposits are insured up to \$100,000 by the National Credit Union Administration.

Members may apply for a loan 30 days after becoming a member by completing an application and paying a \$5 credit report processing fee. Loan underwriting requirements are based on the "Five C's of Credit": character, capacity to repay, capital, condition of the economy and collateral. Loan approval can be determined in approximately 30 minutes.

**Service Area:** Phillips County

**Contact:** Phillips County Self-Help Federal Credit Union  
P. O. Box 356  
420 Elm Street  
Helena, Arkansas 72342  
(870) 338-3798

## **The City of Pine Bluff Community Development Department**

The Community Development Department is the lead agency for the City of Pine Bluff for revitalization efforts in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The agency primarily uses Community Development Block Grants and HOME program funds for its programs.

The *Home Buyer Assistance Program* is designed to assist low- to moderate-income residents wanting to purchase a home. The funds may be used to acquire a home and/or moderately rehab a home that is being purchased. Participation in the program can yield up to \$3,000 in downpayment and closing cost assistance. Applicants must qualify through a local bank to participate. The maximum qualifying sales price is \$42,000.

The *Rental Housing Program* is designed to expand decent, affordable rental housing options for very low- and low-income families. The program pays one-half of the total rehabilitation costs up to a maximum of \$7,500, on single- or multi-family dwellings. Rents on this program are strictly controlled.

The *Emergency Rehabilitation Grant* program assist homeowners and who have no other means of financing the repairs with exterior, and in some cases interior, repairs in order to avoid displacement. The focus of the program is safety, sanitation and protection against the weather. Eligible applicants must be owner-occupants, or “purchaser-occupants” of a property under a land sales contract. Preference is given to senior citizens.

The *Housing Rehabilitation Program* makes grants and loans available to low- and moderate-income, owner-occupied homeowners for needed repairs. The main purpose of this program is to bring these substandard houses up to the Standard Housing Code. Eligible repairs include heating, plumbing and ceiling repairs. The maximum amount available is \$7,500.

**Service Area:** Low- and Moderate-Income areas of Pine Bluff

**Contact:** City of Pine Bluff Community Development Department  
200 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601  
(870) 543-1820

## **Southeast Arkansas Community Action Corporation**

For more than 30 years the Southeast Arkansas Community Action Corporation (SACAC) has provided services to very low-, low- and moderate-income residents in a five county area. Its mission is to plan, execute and coordinate programs to alleviate and/or eliminate poverty and the causes and conditions of poverty. To ensure resources are leveraged to the fullest extent possible, SACAC diligently seeks partnerships with like organizations to avoid duplication of services.

A 1998 community needs assessment completed by SACAC's clientele revealed their top five concerns are welfare independence, education, income maintenance, employment and emergency services. Housing was ranked sixth.

### Housing

Using HOME funds SACAC assists very low- and low-income homeowners in refurbishing their home. The SACAC staff works closely with the homeowner and local contractors to ensure satisfaction by both parties.

### Head Start

SACAC's Head Start program provides comprehensive health, educational, nutritional and social services to preschoolers and their families.

### Utility Assistance

To assist with utility costs the SACAC administers two programs: the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance program that provides eligible households assistance in meeting high utility costs and the Home Weatherization program that assist eligible households in conserving energy and reducing the costs of utility bills through the installation of energy conserving measures.

**Service Area:** Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Desha and Drew Counties

**Contact:** Southeast Arkansas Community Action Corporation  
P. O. Box 312  
Warren, Arkansas 71671  
(870) 226-2668

## **Southeast Arkansas Community Development Corporation**

In partnership with the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (U.A.P.B.), the Southeast Arkansas Community Development Corporation (CDC) received a \$103,000 capacity building grant from Seedco to establish an affordable housing program. The basis for the program was a market study that revealed that of the area's 800 housing units, more than 80 percent were substandard. The program's target area is that immediately surrounding the college, where the majority of residents are elderly and low-income.

The CDC was able to secure \$132,000 additional funding for the program with an Affordable Housing Grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas. The application was sponsored by Simmons First National Bank of Pine Bluff. The grant is used to provide very low-, low- and moderate-income homebuyers with a direct subsidy for principal reduction. The local ACORN office provides the required credit counseling.

Since the program's inception in 1996, 12 houses have been constructed and sold to first-time homebuyers. The average sales price is \$51,000. The CDC is currently constructing three new homes that are pre-sold to buyers. An additional two houses are being refurbished for sale. Most of the new construction is in-fill development.

The CDC works closely with the Pine Bluff Housing Authority in an attempt to move residents from public housing to the CDC's homes. The CDC provided a \$30,000 grant that allowed the Housing Authority to construct a laundromat and small goods store at two of its properties.

### Entrepreneurial Activities

The CDC owns a for-profit construction company that builds and refurbishes the housing units and other projects undertaken by the CDC. It employs six professionals and subcontracts with local small contractors on specialized work such as electrical and plumbing. Initial capital to form the company came from a variety of sources including the U.A.P.B., Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Office of Community Services. The \$359,000 received was used to purchase equipment and to cover overhead expenses. Additionally, the company has a training component that offers classroom and on-the-job construction skills training to individuals.

In partnership with the Merrill Restoration Alliance (concerned citizen's group) the company is constructing a community facility on the site of an old school. The total cost of the project is \$169,000. The funding for the project came from HUD through the U. A. P. B.

### Economic Development

Through a \$350,000 loan fund the CDC makes loans to small businesses in urban and rural communities. The minimum loan amount is \$5,000. For requests of less than \$5,000, borrowers are referred to the Good Faith Fund. To date, approximately \$250,000 in loans have been made, which are also serviced by the CDC.

*Southeast Arkansas Community Development Corporation (continued)*

The foundation has begun participating in loans with other lenders, including local financial institutions and the Enterprise Corporation of the Delta. The CDC is also becoming increasingly involved in Industrial Recruitment in outlying communities.

**Service Area:** Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Jefferson and Lincoln counties.

**Contact:** Southeast Arkansas Community Development Corporation  
512 South Pine Street  
P. O. Box 7454  
Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601  
(870) 534-8171

## **Southern Development Bancorporation**

Southern Development Bancorporation was organized in 1986 and became operational in 1988. It is a bank holding company with five subsidiaries. The company is divided into two distinct components: One, Southern Development Bancorporation, Inc., is the taxable portion of the conglomerate and contains two subsidiaries--Elk Horn Bank & Trust Company and Opportunity Lands Corporation. The other, Arkansas Enterprise Group, is a tax-exempt entity containing three divisions--Southern Ventures, Inc., Good Faith Fund and AEG Manufacturing Services. All of the subsidiaries' activities are part of a comprehensive program of the holding company to help stimulate long-term economic development of targeted Arkansas regions suffering from high unemployment.

### **Elk Horn Bank & Trust**

Elk Horn Bank & Trust is a traditional commercial bank, organized in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, in 1884. Principal shareholders include the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and the Walton Foundation, both Arkansas-based.

The bank engages in the usual functions of an independent community bank: soliciting deposits, making loans and investments. In the area of community development, it makes Small Business Administration guaranteed loans, agricultural loans and working capital loans to borrowers. It also plays an integral part in supporting the other components of the holding company.

### **Opportunity Lands Corporation (OLC)**

Opportunity Lands Corporation is the other for-profit member of the holding company. It acquires and renovates distressed residential and commercial properties for use as low-income rental housing and affordable office space for small businesses. The properties are purchased with OLC capital, with renovation or construction loans provided by other local banks. The long-range objective of the residential activity is homeownership.

OLC has concentrated the bulk of its efforts in the Delta, first in Pine Bluff and more recently in Helena, Arkansas. OLC's approach has been to target a town for development with the intent of working in that community for a period of time, building and encouraging local development capacity. In August of 1994, OLC opened a completely remodeled 31-unit apartment building in Pine Bluff for low-income families. Recently, OLC completed the rehab of 12-units in Helena; and in partnership with Helena Community Renewal Corporation, OLC has constructed four affordable houses.

*Southern Development Bancorporation (continued)*

As OLC expands its work in the Delta, the major organizational goal will be to create a nonprofit housing affiliate “parallel” to OLC. A nonprofit has greater flexibility to utilize subsidies, both private and public. This will give Southern two vehicles for developing real estate, the choice depending largely on which has better access to financing for a particular project.

Arkansas Enterprise Group (AEG)

Arkansas Enterprise Group is the nonprofit component of the tax-exempt affiliate of the holding company. AEG provides financial, technical and marketing assistance to new entrepreneurs and microenterprises to help increase their probability of success and generate employment opportunities.

AEG conducts the bulk of its activities primarily through two programmatic areas, AEG Manufacturing Services (AMS) and the Good Faith Fund (GFF).

**Arkansas Manufacturing Services** delivers financial and technical assistance designed specifically for small, locally-owned and operated manufacturing firms. AMS financial assistance focuses on pre-bankable transactions for more established companies. AMS provides equipment loans, lines of credit, contract financing and long term, fixed rate loans. AMS has assisted businesses that now have sustained or created more than 1,057 jobs.

The **Good Faith Fund’s** mission is to increase the incomes and assets of low- and moderate-income residents through the development of entrepreneurial skills, the provision of credit, training for self-employment and employment and support services. GFF is also committed to the specific goal of widening the profile of successful entrepreneurs and the fully employed to include women, minorities and AFDC-eligible adults. Approximately 80 percent of the individuals assisted by GFF are women, and approximately 80 percent are African Americans. Other GFF programs include Woman to Woman, a mentoring program that offers business assistance through mentor relationships, and FastTrac, an entrepreneurship training program offered in partnership with the Enterprise Corporation of the Delta.

Southern Ventures, Inc. (SVI)

Southern Ventures, Inc. is licensed by the Small Business Administration as a Small Business Investment Company. SVI is a venture capital company concentrating on transactions in the \$50,000 to \$250,000 range. It is a for-profit component of the tax-exempt subsidiary of the holding company and provides equity investments for the creation of small manufacturing and service-type companies. These companies include wastes water treatment, aluminum casting, plastic injection molding, biochemical assay and petroleum refining.

*Southern Development Bancorporation (continued)*

**Service Area:** Southern and Eastern Arkansas

**Contact:** Southern Development Bancorporation  
605 Main Street, Suite 202  
Arkadelphia, Arkansas 71923  
(870) 246-3945

## **The City of West Memphis Community Development Agency**

The Community Development Agency is the lead agency for the City of West Memphis for revitalization efforts in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. The agency primarily uses Community Development Block Grants and HOME program funds for its programs.

### **Programs**

The Home Security program provides persons 60 years of age or older, who own and occupy their own homes with deadbolt locks, peep holes, window pins and one smoke detector to help ensure the owners safety. The security devices are installed by off-duty police or fire officers at no cost to the homeowner.

The Officer Next Door program allows a police officer to purchase a HUD foreclosed property at a 50 percent discount. The program strengthens low- and moderate-income neighborhoods by increasing the number of homeowners and enhancing the residents' safety.

*World Changers* is a co-educational missions project of education and involvement sponsored by the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. World Changers mobilizes young people to work together by providing free labor to renovate and repair homes when residents are unable to do so themselves. The city provides the materials and supplies. The program targets seniors and handicapped homeowners. Fifteen homes were repaired in 1997.

*The Homeowner Rehab* program makes funds available to completely rehabilitate owner-occupied housing and bring it up to code. The program targets elderly and handicapped owners.

Under the Good Samaritan program up to \$500 is made available to eligible elderly and handicapped homeowners for the purchase of materials and supplies to rehab their home. The owner must be working with a nonprofit organization or have an individual sponsor that has agreed to donate labor and services.

The HOME program consists of completely demolishing the existing structure and rebuilding a new maintenance-free home. Homeowners must occupy the home and fall within certain age and income requirements to qualify for the program.

**Service Area:** Low- and Moderate-Income Areas of West Memphis

**Contact:** Community Development Agency  
205 South Redding  
P. O. Box 1728  
West Memphis, Arkansas 72303  
(870) 732-7520