

SENATOR WALTER RAND INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

RUTGERS
CAMDEN

Volume 5-1 January 2014

WRI ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

WRI Hosts Forum about South Jersey

On Wednesday, December 4, 2013, the Walter Rand Institute hosted its inaugural "Forum About South Jersey" at Cumberland County College. The event, which featured the research of Rutgers Camden assistant professor Dr. Adam Okulicz-Kozaryn, brought together an audience of almost 80 academics, government officials, business owners, and nonprofit leaders for a descriptive presentation and discussion about the demographic, economic, and health-related changes that have occurred in South Jersey. By inviting such a diverse group of people all unified by their desire to improve the lives of people in their communities, the Walter Rand Institute hoped to use this event as a means of starting a broad discussion on the needs of South Jersey residents with the hope of encouraging future collaborative efforts for the benefit of this region.



Dr. Okulicz-Kozaryn's presentation, entitled "Changes Across the Region: People, Economy, and Wellbeing," was divided into three sections: demography, economy, and public health. The interdisciplinary social scientist used data from the Census, USDA, and many other sources in order to demonstrate county-level trends on topics like employment, land use, and several indicators of poor health including food access. After each of the three key sections of the presentation, a pre-selected group of South Jersey experts was given the opportunity to react and respond to the concepts that were described. These respondents also fielded questions from members of the spirited audience and used their knowledge and experience in order to bring context to Dr. Okulicz-Kozaryn's data driven presentation and facilitate a rich discussion about implications for their respective geographic locales. Overall, the inaugural "Forum About

Spotlight on Burlington County

Encompassing 819.84 square miles, Burlington County is the largest county within the state of New Jersey. It is comprised of 40 political subdivisions broken down as follows: 3 cities, 31 townships, and 6 boroughs. The land area within the county is 798.58 square miles, while water composes the other 21.26 square miles. As of the 2010 census, the population density is approximately 561 persons per square mile. Burlington was the original seat of county government. However, as the need arose for a more central location due to population increases towards the center of the county, it was moved to Mount Holly.



Burlington County is one of the leading agricultural counties in the country. In fact, the first cultivation of the high bush blueberry can be traced back to the Whitesbog area of the county. Burlington County is also the second-largest cranberry-producing county in the United States. It has the most acres of land reserved for farming than any other county within the state and cultivates a large percentage of the sweet corn and fruit grown in the state. About three-fifths of the land within the county is located within the National Pinelands Reserve, where development is highly restricted in order to maintain the integrity of the Pinelands.

The most recent population estimate for 2012 is 451,336, which is an increase of 6.6% from the 2000 Census and slightly outpaces the 5% increase the state of New Jersey had over the same period. Evesham Township is the highest populated municipality within the county (45,395), while the least populated municipality is Fieldsboro Borough (551).

The county is also home to two major military bases, McGuire Air Force Base and the Fort Dix Army Installation, which both combined with Lakehurst Naval Air Engineering Station to become Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in 2009.

Save the Date!!

The 13th Annual Walter and Leah Rand Awards and Scholarship Dinner is coming on May 1st, 2014 at the Battleship New Jersey.

SPOTLIGHT

- Isabella D'Anella-Mercanti joined WRI as a Project Assistant in September. She is currently a senior at Rutgers-Camden, pursuing a B.A. in Sociology and a double minor in Urban Studies and Childhood Studies.
- Rachelle Rankin joined WRI is a project assistant in September. She is a senior at Rutgers-Camden, enrolled in the dual degree program and will be earning a B.A. in Political Science this May and then continue with her MPA studies.
- Caitlee Stanton joined WRI as a Project Assistant in September. She is currently a senior at Rutgers-Camden, pursuing a B.A. in Criminal Justice and a minor in Childhood Studies

Check out these and more news at our updated website: [HTTP://WRAND.RUTGERS.EDU/](http://WRAND.RUTGERS.EDU/)
Questions or comments, please contact us at wrand@camden.rutgers.edu or call 856-225-6566.