



Students transported by WTA to Boys and Girls Club of the Wiregrass

# WIREGRASS TRANSIT AUTHORITY

(August 1, 2015 – July 31, 2016) Budget (FY16): \$2,150,000

**EMPLOYEES:**

Full Time Drivers	8
Part Time Drivers	8
Admin. Staff	3

**DIAL-A-RIDE SERVICE:**

Operating Days:	253
Service Hours:	26,000+
Service Miles:	313,000 miles
Total Passengers:	77,000

**JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE (JARC):**

Riders Served:	
Passengers:	1696
Total Trips:	50,685
Total Miles:	939,448

**OVERALL BENEFITS PROVIDED TO WTA PATRONS:**

- Transportation for individuals without available personal transportation
- Transport to medical facilities, jobs, social service agencies, child care centers, shopping and pleasure trips
- All buses are equipped with wheelchair lift and are ADA accessible
- Without Wiregrass Transit, many passengers have no other option to travel due to excessive costs and accessibility

**CONTRACT PARTNERS:**

- Boys and Girls Club of the Wiregrass
- Girls Incorporated
- Southeast Alabama Medical Center Child Development Center
- Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center
- Vaughn Blumberg Center
- Vivian B. Adams School

**BENEFITS OF JARC:**

- Provides funding to transport low income individuals attempting to access employment and job training activities
- Goal is to transition from government assistance to employment
- JARC also benefits disabled individuals attempting to access employment, job development and job training activities

**PARTNERS:**

- Department of Human Resources in Houston, Henry, Dale, Geneva, and Coffee counties.

- Vivian B. Adams School
- Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center
- Call-A-Cab Company

For additional information about or organization, please contact us:  
334-794-4093 phone  
334-794-3288 fax  
www.searpgdc.org

# WHAT IS SEARP&DC?

Alabama’s multi-county regional planning and development commissions were created in 1969 under legislation passed by the State Legislature. Through the initiative of elected officials and civic leaders concerned about physical and economic development in Southeast Alabama, the Southeast Alabama Regional Economic Development District was formed. Later, because of the need to expand services provided by the organization, the District was renamed. The Southeast Alabama Regional Planning & Development Commission (SEARP&DC) has now provided for over 46 years a wide range of regional services to the seven most southeastern Alabama counties: Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston. Our mission is to “improve the Quality of Life” for the residents of

these counties through our motto of “Help Today with a Vision for Tomorrow”. The SEARP&DC is administered and governed by a Board of Directors with 42 individuals from the seven member counties. Each county is represented by five (5) Directors and one (1) alternate member of whom at least three (3) must be elected officials of county or municipal governments. The Directors, acting as liaisons for the citizens of their counties, are responsible for transmitting the needs and desires of local people to the Board of Directors, who pass warranted requests on to the Commission’s professional planning and development staff. Today, the SEARP&DC provides valuable regional services that include; Community Development Grants and Administration, Planning and Mapping

Services, Economic Development Grants and Administration, Early Childhood Education, Public Transportation, Small Business Development Lending, Senior Employment Training/Community Service and Special Project Assistance. The SEARP&DC’s main funding sources are derived through State and Federal programs under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/Office of Head Start/Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Commerce/ Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Labor/ Senior Service America, Inc., Alabama Department of Transportation, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Alabama Department of Senior Services and regional contributions.

## SEARP&DC STAFF

**Thomas B. Solomon,**  
**Executive Director**

**Community Development Department**  
Scott Farmer, AICP, Director  
Glenda Chancey, Secretary

**Economic Development Department**  
Emily VanScyoc, Director  
Rachel Armstrong, ED Specialist  
Glenda Chancey, Secretary

**Wiregrass Transit**  
Darrell Rigsby, Director  
Lisa Culbreth, Assistant Director  
Chet Atwell, Dispatcher

**Senior Employment**  
Richard Devore, Director  
Gail Clark, Job Placement Specialist  
Vera Bailey, Administrative Assistant

**Administrative/Fiscal Department**  
Mark Williams, Director  
Natalie Cook, Senior Accountant  
LaKisha Williams, Fiscal Assistant  
Lisa Rose, Fiscal Assistant  
Amanda Reed, HR Director  
Abiezer Soto, IT Administrator

**Head Start**  
Ronald Holliman, Director  
Martha Lisenby, Assistant Head Start Director  
Jackie Daniels, Education Services Manager  
Stephanie Dawsey, F&C Services Manager  
Pat Nobles, Disability Services Manager

Dear Friends:

Thanks to a very dedicated staff and support from our regional Board members and regional partners of the Commission, the SEARP&DC has completed another very successful year. While some of the specific projects we are involved with vary on a year to year basis, the information contained in the Annual Report showcases, generally, the type of work that we do within the region. The common theme of our work centers on our efforts year after year in promoting successful communities for the citizens living in southeast Alabama including Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston counties. We are successful due to the strong partnerships with our Board members, regional elected officials, community leaders and regional business partners who share our commitment to a better region and quality of life. Please review this Annual Report. I am honored to be working along with such an amazing team here at SEARP&DC. Thank you for all that you do.

Thomas B. Solomon, Executive Director



**BOARD MEMBERS**  
Executive Committee \*

**BARBOUR**  
Rebecca Beasley  
Thomas E. Crossley  
Roy Crow  
Henry Franklin  
Earl Gilmore\*  
Jack Tibbs, Jr.

**COFFEE**  
AL Britt  
Ross Cotten  
John Rodgers (Rod) Morgan III  
Mickey Murdock\*  
Gladys Yelverton

**COVINGTON**  
Arlin Davis  
Sammy Glover  
Bill Godwin  
Kennith Mount  
Bernard Stewart\*  
Ralph C. Wells

**DALE**  
Billy Blackwell  
Wess Etheredge\*  
Dr. Diane Flournoy  
Charles Gary  
Steve McKinnon\*  
Claudia Wigglesworth

**GENEVA**  
William Birdsong  
Todd Brannon  
Fred Hamic\*  
Gail Hayes  
Rob Hinson  
JoAnn Lindsey  
Joe Paul\*

**HENRY**  
Sandranette (Sandra) Abney\*  
Edwin M. (Butch) Glover  
Henry Grimsley  
David Money  
Gregory Reynolds

**HOUSTON**  
Addie Buze  
Mark Culver\*  
Kevin Dorsey  
Matt Parker  
Lori Wilcoxon

# SOUTHEAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

## FY 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

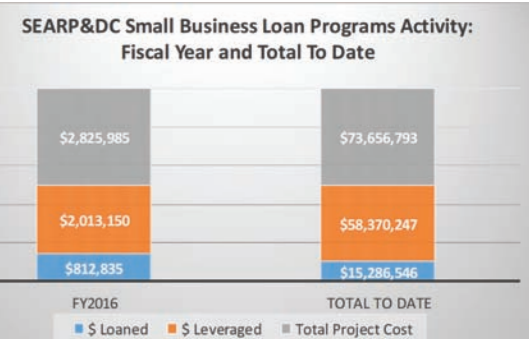
## COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY**

One application funded: **\$49,350** in grant funding;  
**\$1,500,000** in private investment; **22** new jobs.  
One application submitted: **\$250,000** in grant request;  
**\$330,150** in total estimated project costs;  
**75** people benefitting from proposed project.

**USDA-RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Two applications submitted and funded: **\$98,000** in grant funding;  
**\$180,328** in total project costs.



City of Taylor Drainage Improvements



Town of Black Recreation Park

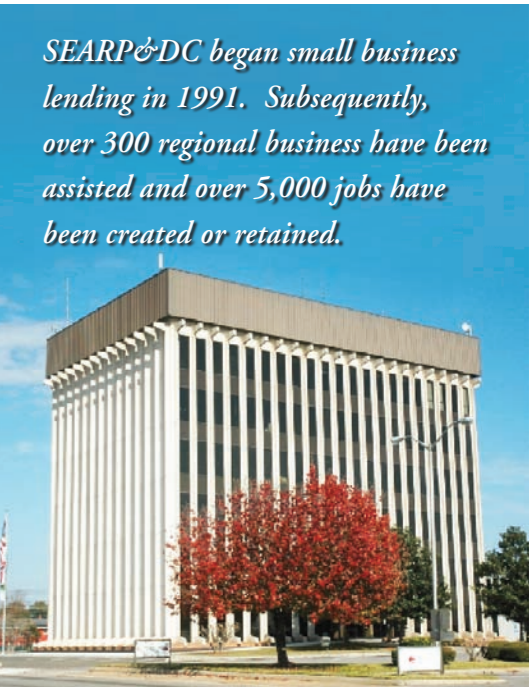


Commercial Jet, Dothan Regional Airport



City of Eufaula/CARBO Ceramics

- ✓ Submitted **17** Community Development Block Grant applications: **\$5,273,525** in grant requests; **\$6,206,627** estimated total project costs; **2,762** people benefitting from proposed projects.
- ✓ Administering **22** Community Development Block Grant projects: **\$6,252,121** in grant funding; **\$6,982,167** in total project costs; **8,027** people benefitting with improved infrastructure and facilities.
- ✓ Administering **2** Land and Water Conservation Fund projects: **\$100,000** in grant funding; **\$200,000** in total project costs.



SEARP&DC began small business lending in 1991. Subsequently, over 300 regional business have been assisted and over 5,000 jobs have been created or retained.

ANNUAL SUMMARY  
OF HEAD START  
PROGRAM  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PY 2015-2016  
SCHOOL YEAR



Geneva Head Start playground  
donated by Ronald McDonald  
House Charities

- Successful in re-competing in designated renewal of our Head Start Grant through Office of Head Start, Washington, D.C.
- Negotiated a new partnership for Geneva Head Start with Will Jenkins Center
- Negotiated partnership with Eufaula City School Board to relocate Eufaula Head Start within their Early Learning Center
- Eufaula Head Start receives new playground at Eufaula Early Learning Center
- Geneva Head Start receives new playground equipment through Ronald McDonald House Charities
- Renewed community partnership and support letters with local government entities
- Participated in School Readiness Meetings with LEA (local education agencies) and state early learning officials
- Complied with programmatic & fiscal requirements and current regulations published in Head Start Performance Standards
- Complied with all program mandates issued by the Department of Health and Human Services
- Provided 52,987 breakfasts, 53,427 lunches, and 48,573 snacks through the USDA Child Nutrition Program during the 2015-2016 School Year
- Physical exams provided to 100% of the children enrolled during 2015-2016 school year in accordance with EPSDT requirements
- Dental exams provided to 99% of the children enrolled during the 2015-2016 school year
- Provided monthly reports to Board and Policy Council
- Provided services to children with disabilities
- Provided staff with assistance in professional development
- Provide appropriate training to employees as required by Head Start, State Department of Human Resources, Health Department, and other regulatory agencies
- Recruited new employees that met or exceeded Head Start educational requirements
- Provided individual age appropriate educational services to Head Start children (ages 3 to 5)
- Provided individual age appropriate services to Early Head Start children (ages 0 to 3)
- Encouraged Head Start / Early Head Start parents to become more involved in their children's early learning process
- Provided mental health consultant services to children, parents, and staff in regard to behavioral issues
- Ensured that each child to the best their ability achieve school readiness and provided transition services to children and parents as they move to public schools



Ms. Bunni Holston hired by Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center (WRC) – L to R: Mr. Richard De Vore, Ms. Bunni Holston, SCSEP Graduate, Mr. Paul Lee, District 86 Alabama State Representative and WRC Executive Director



Mr. Jim Eason hired by the City of Samson – L to R: Mr. Roger Baine, Samson City Councilman, Ms. Sherry Baine, Samson Senior Center Director, Mr. Jim Eason, SCSEP Graduate, Mr. Richard De Vore, Mr. Clay King, Mayor, City of Samson

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

- We serve over 60 participants in the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) within the seven county region of Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry, and Houston Counties.
- Seventeen SCSEP graduates have re-entered their local community workforce as either full/part time workers this past year and earns an average of over \$13,067.00 per person ending June 30, 2016:
  - Barbour – 2
  - Coffee – 3
  - Covington – 2
  - Geneva – 2
  - Henry – 1
  - Houston – 7
- We provide over 65,728 hours of community service hours to local communities through 60 host agencies.
- We have an average of 35% of our Senior Community Service Employment Program Participants re-enter the local workforce in their local communities each year.

- We provided over 56,095 community Service hours per year and provide over \$406,015.00 in wages per year through the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) each year.
- We have provided over \$406,015.00 in Employment Search Training and Part time Return on Investment each project year

**HUMAN RESOURCES ANNUAL REPORT**

The HR department has provided anti-harassment and policy training to all employees. We continue to stay current on workplace legal issues and lawsuit prevention.

**EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS:**

- Resignations – 16
- Retired – 5
- Terminations – 7
- New Hires (FT) – 17
- New Hires (PT and Temps) – 19

SCSEP Annual Return on Investment PY 2015-2016		
County	Workers	ROI
Barbour	5	\$37,225
Coffee	7	\$52,115
Covington	5	\$37,225
Dale	7	\$52,115
Geneva	5	\$37,225
Henry	5	\$37,225
Houston	22	\$163,790

The return on investment of \$7, 445.00 per person returned to each county ending June 30, 2016.

ACCOUNTING UPDATES

**AUDIT AND TRAINING:**  
The SEARP&DC audit is performed by Ferguson, Sizemore, & Associates by June 30th annually. Over the past 15 years, the auditor has reported an “unqualified opinion” with no audit findings, including the most recent FY15.  
Training of the accounting staff over the past fiscal year include:  
• 3 of the staff attended the Annual GMS Accounting Software Conference in St. Petersburg, FL

- The entire staff attended 2 webinars sponsored by GMS that included Balance Sheet Issues & Reconciliations and The Mechanics of Month-End Processing
- 1 member of the staff attended Region IV Head Start Association 2016 Pre-Conference Seminar on Developing, Tracking, and Reporting the Continuation Application
- 1 member of the staff attended the Alabama Department of Children's Affairs conference in Montgomery, AL
- 1 staff member attended 2 quarterly financial meetings in Montgomery, AL

Monthly Benefits Cost: SEARP&DC Benefits	
Benefit	Cost per Month
BCBS Health Insurance	\$32,588
BCBS Dental	\$1,384
Group Life	\$950
Short Term Disability	\$1,010
Monthly Total	\$35,932

FY 2016 Payroll to date: \$2,951,464.49  
Number of employees paid: 255  
Current employees on payroll: 187

