The Center has decided to resume the *CRHSSD Center Briefs* publication as a means of connecting with partners, stakeholders and other interested parties for the benefit of opening lines of communication regarding current issues in rural health and social service development as well as inviting further collaboration. If you have questions regarding this issue of the CRHSSD Center Briefs, please direct them to Kim Sanders at 618-453-5545 or ksanders@biz.siu.edu.

**The National Children’s Study**

The National Children’s Study (NCS) is one of the most important contributions to human health in history. The NCS will give us a better understanding of positive and negative influences on human health and development by studying the effects of genetics, physical environments, lifestyles, and social environments. Children and families, in excess of 100,000, across the nation will participate in the study from preconception or the first trimester through 21 years of age.

The Illinois counties of Johnson, Union, and Williamson (JUWC) will offer 1,000 families and their children an opportunity to participate in this historic study, which is projected to include 105 sites across the United States. Though the date for initiating recruitment in our area has not yet been set, the JUWC site is one of the projected 26 rural sites in the nation. The SIUC Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development (CRHSSD) collaborates with Saint Louis University (principal investigator), Battelle Memorial Institute, SIU School of Medicine, SIU Edwardsville, Washington University, Coalitions Work, and many community stakeholders to plan, implement, and evaluate the work of the JUWC NCS site.

The primary role of the CRHSSD, with its $3.12 million subcontract, is to inform the public and engage community and hospital involvement in the project.

CRHSSD has recruited community and organization leaders from the participating counties to serve on an advisory board to assist with engagement activities. The National Children’s Study will be one of the richest research efforts geared towards studying children’s health and development and will form the basis of child health guidance, interventions, and policy for generations to come. The project’s lifespan is set at 25 years and throughout that time span, the total estimated cost of NCS is $3.2 billion. This is the largest monetary investment in a study of children’s health in history.

**Our New Director**

Kimberly J. Sanders was recently appointed to head the Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development as Director. Ms. Sanders should be no stranger to most of you as she previously worked at the Center as both the Education Coordinator and the Illinois Delta Network Coordinator from 2002-2007. Her most recent position was with SIUC’s Entrepreneurship and Business Development division as Assistant Director of Entrepreneurship. Ms. Sanders has a Masters in Public Health, as well as a Masters in Business Administration, over 17 years professional experience in various health-related fields including 5 years in project and fiscal oversight of programs, grants and cooperative agreements, 5 years in research, need assessments and program evaluation and 12 years in mental health service provision.
“I look forward to renewing and strengthening our valuable University and community partnerships. These partnerships are a critical piece of our core mission to strengthen rural health infrastructure and to promote opportunities for enhancing health primarily in rural communities,” says Sanders. The new Director invites all our past and current partners to stop by or call and become reacquainted with the staff and projects of the Center while exploring ways we can collaborate on new, innovative strategies to benefit rural health and southern Illinois.

Professional Opportunities

The CRHSSD is looking to fill two key positions in the organization. Please pass the word and assist us to complete our team with enthusiastic recruits committed to rural health improvement in southern Illinois!

**Researcher II**
100% FTE term appointment contingent on external funding. MA/MS degree with three years professional experience in research, program evaluation, and/or conducting needs assessments required. Proficiency in Microsoft Office, qualitative and quantitative research design, statistical analysis programs (SPSS) and excellent written and verbal communication skills required. Preference given to applicants with health and social service experience and skills in applied research, project development, data collection and analysis, and summary report preparation. Demonstrated record of successful publication in professional journals or periodicals preferred.

**Rural Health Project Coordinator**
100% FTE term appointment contingent on external funding. Masters Degree required in Public Health, Education, Administration, Community Development. Two years experience in conducting program evaluation, research and/or needs assessments, grant writing, program coordination, group leadership and facilitation, and supervision required. Proficiency in Microsoft Office, excellent written and verbal communication skills, knowledge of rural health issues, excellent organizational skills, and project development/program management experience preferred.

**Application Deadline:**
Friday, October 30, 2009 or until filled.

**Anticipated Start Date:**
Tuesday, December 1, 2009 or as negotiated.

**To Apply:** Submit a letter of application, resume, and contact information for three references to Search Committee, Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development, Mail Code 6892, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 150 East Pleasant Hill Road, Carbondale, IL 62901. Please note the position(s) for which you are applying in your letter of application.

SIUC is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer that strives to enhance its ability to develop a diverse faculty and staff and to increase its potential to serve a diverse student population. All applications are welcomed and encouraged, and will receive consideration.

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