

**Testimony to the United States
House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture
Subcommittee on Rural Development, Biotechnology, Specialty Crops,
and Foreign Agriculture
Regarding U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Business Programs
and Conditions for Rural Entrepreneurship and Business Development
October 21, 2009, Longworth House Office Building, Room 1300
By **Timothy Collins, Assistant Director**
Giselle Hamm, Program Manager
Karen Poncin, Operations Manager
Erin Orwig, Faculty Assistant
and Christopher D. Merrett, Director
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for letting me testify today on the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs' experience with two USDA rural business programs.

More than twenty years ago, the Illinois Governor designated IIRA as the clearinghouse for information on rural issues. As a rural community and economic development agency, IIRA helps rural communities build a better life. It also conducts rural research and works with various agencies and organizations on rural policy issues (Appendix).

USDA funding has been important in IIRA's small-business development efforts. For example, the current RCDI grant helped leverage private funds to work with businesses in Havana (Mason County), Stark County, and Savanna (Carroll County) so they could market more effectively over the Internet. The grant allowed IIRA to meet needs of each community, including training on digital media, renewable energy, youth entrepreneurship, microenterprises, food-based businesses, business succession, youth entrepreneurship, and innovative business approaches.

Based on preliminary estimates from the first eight businesses providing letters of intent, we anticipate the project will create about 13 jobs. We also hope to see 25 to 30 full- and part-time jobs added as IIRA continues to support the project and as other businesses join in. A standard economic development multiplier of 1.5 suggests 40 or more total (direct and indirect) jobs could be created in the region, including businesses not participating in the grant.

IIRA's business partners recognize the importance of working as a region or community of interest. One restaurant owner, for instance, wants to connect to traffic coming from Chicago to visit historic sites. An antique dealer wants to attract tourists by marketing jointly with other nearby dealers. A tourism group wants to put an itinerary tool on the community website to show potential tourists how they might spend one or two days in the region and which businesses might be possible attractions.

In addition, RCDG funding has also spurred entrepreneurship and small business activities. For example, this grant paid for some legal work to set up the only community-owned grocery store

in Illinois in Washburn (Woodford County), which was a rural food desert when the store opened in 2000. According to the cooperative's website,¹ members went door-to-door within 15 miles of Washburn to sell shares. Nearly 500 investors bought the \$50 shares, raising more than \$100,000. The capital, along with grants and low-interest loans, paid for buying, remodeling, and restocking the store. Volunteers cleaned, painted, replaced light fixtures, repaired equipment, and rearranged the store. With RCDG funding, IIRA has been able to assist with several membership drive activities.

In "The Rise of the Creative Class," author Richard Florida talks about the increased role of artists and other creators of intellectual property in economic development. RCDG funds also helped an arts cooperative flourish in rural northwest Illinois – helping rural America to participate in the "creative economy."

The RCDG grant also helped spur entrepreneurial activities among farmers in the "green economy." For example IIRA used RCDG funds to help organize an ethanol producing New Generation Cooperative in Crawford County. This operation helps Illinois farmers add value to their crops, generating increased on-farm profits and employment opportunities.

Our experience with USDA grants has been excellent. State-level staff members are cooperative, support our work, and offer helpful suggestions. With this in mind, we offer these recommendations to make the programs even better:

- USDA grants to support the development of small business entrepreneurship ("earthpreneurship") for the rural green economy;
- Programs to promote the creation of eco-industrial parks where renewable energy projects based on wind or bio-fuels can be linked with new small business start-ups in rural areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.

¹ <http://www.washburnillinois.org/resources.html>

Appendix: About the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs

The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA) was founded in 1989 as a companion agency to the Illinois Governor’s Rural Affairs Council and is focused on research, policy analysis, and technical assistance in rural areas of Illinois. IIRA assists rural communities and their leaders to expand their capacity to improve their quality of life. IIRA also acts as a bridge between local leaders and the state and federal agencies that provide rural programs. Following is a glimpse at some of the things IIRA does to build rural communities in our state.

IIRA receives about 25% of its annual budget through Western Illinois University, where it is located. The remaining funding is raised through grants. Because of this dependence on grants, IIRA is an entrepreneurial organization that constantly seeks new opportunities.

The staff of about 40 includes five Ph.D.s and 25 master’s level outreach specialists and about 20 students. IIRA has created grant-funded outreach and research programs in a number of areas, including economic and community development; housing and health; transportation; rural schools; and alternative energy using wind and biomass (Figure 1). IIRA’s research is not only theoretical; it is intended to be applied in the local communities.

IIRA partners with public and private agencies on rural local development and enhancement efforts with the goal of developing sustainable communities. Efforts involve building local support to create a community vision and plan for achieving that vision. IIRA’s holistic model links research, outreach, and policy activities.

Figure



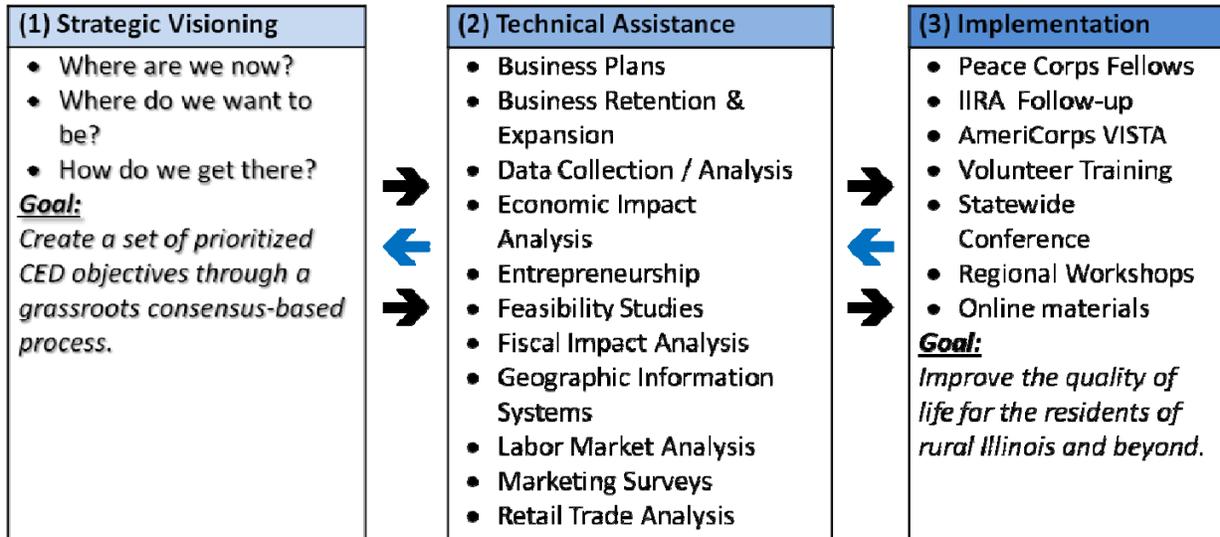
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IIRA’s approach to rural development is predicated on the idea that community and economic development occur hand in hand. This recognizes the dynamic complexities of rural communities and the importance of strong community life as the basis for strong national economic and civic life. This is the rationale for approach that links strategic planning and visioning, technical assistance, and implementation in communities (Figure 2). These strategies

are often mixed to provide a wide spectrum of assistance to rural communities throughout the state. As a result, IIRA has developed a national reputation for innovative programs and services.

Figure 2



Curriculum Vita Timothy Collins

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle, Stipes 520
Macomb, IL 61455
Phone: 309.298.3412
E-mail: t-collins@wiu.edu

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., Sociology, University of Kentucky. Emphasis, Rural Sociology. May, 1995. Dissertation title: *Tapestry of Conflicts: A Political Economy of Kentucky's Economic-development and Education Policies.*
- M.S., Agricultural Economics, West Virginia University. December, 1986. Thesis title: *Profile of Skiers in Tucker County, WV.*
- B.A., Journalism, News-Editorial Sequence, The Ohio State University. March, 1975.

EMPLOYMENT

March, 2005 to present

Assistant Director, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University. Responsible for working with the Director and Implementation Team to provide leadership in IIRA activities. Duties include coordinating special projects, conducting research and surveys, community and school consulting, supervising staff and graduate students, undergraduate teaching, report preparation, and participation in scholarly and professional activities.

- Authored reports, presentations, and scholarly work, including starting web-based rural policy paper series.
- Initiated research program on sustainable land use.
- Created website commemorating centennial of Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission.
- Co-principle investigator, "Building Rural Libraries and Communities" LSTA grant through Illinois State Library
- Took leadership role in implementing campus-wide environmental summit and interdisciplinary sustainability brown baggers. Represented IIRA on campus Sustainability Committee; chaired administration subcommittee.
- Represented IIRA at state and regional policy meetings, including Lieutenant Governor's Broadband Deployment Council; co-chaired policy subcommittee.
- Implemented monthly statewide column featuring IIRA research and outreach and wrote monthly essays for Daily Yonder rural website.
- Taught courses for Honors College on land use on the rural-urban fringe and global social justice.
- Adjunct professor, Department of African-American Studies

February, 2001 to February 2005

Extension Educator, Community and Economic Development, Penn State University Cooperative Extension in Adams County. Responsible for curriculum development and educational programs related to land use planning, farmland preservation, local government, and agricultural economic development. Headed Capital Region Economic and Community Development Team. Built networks and community capacity to deal with change; taught interested stakeholders, including government officials; prepared materials for media; provided information to citizens; and evaluated programs.

- Co-founder, Northeast Extension Land Use Network.
- Conceptualized and supervised team development of Land Use Toolbox website.
- Facilitated participatory research on land use and agricultural economic development.
- Co-founder, Leadership Adams Hanover.
- Created oral history program focusing on historic farmsteads in Adams County, PA, for students in historic methods course at Gettysburg College.

August, 2000 to January, 2001

Self-employed consultant. Selected clients:

- *SERVE*, Greensboro, NC. Professional services in planning and development, including concept paper on community indicators, proposal review, and advice on building rural school-community capacity.
- *AEL, Inc.*, Charleston, WV. Writing and editing services.

July, 1998 to July, 2000

Director, ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, AEL, Inc. Supervised input of data to national education database; oversaw publications, special projects, World Wide Web site, user services; maintained records, wrote reports, presented papers, and authored publications. Also assisted with research and development in federal regional educational laboratory. Selected projects:

- Research on curriculum of place.
- Research on high-poverty, low-performing schools.
- Developed guidebook for community engagement for academic achievement, leading incubator process with five members, including consultant.
- Helped develop NSF-sponsored Transitions from Childhood to Workplace national working conference on persistent poverty communities, October, 1999.
- Developed materials on schools as focus for community development.

January, 1995 to July, 1998

Director of Research, University of Kentucky Appalachian Center. Supervised and maintained research program and database; publication writing and editing; mapping (GIS); program evaluation, policy analysis, solicited grants and research contracts; supervised graduate students and part-time employees; provided information to media and public; oversaw development of World Wide Web pages. Selected projects:

- *Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence* - Assessed efforts to involve parents in data analysis to improve student achievement.
- *University of Tennessee-Knoxville Community Partnership Center* - Supervised two community research teams in Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community. Did initial baseline studies, wrote introductory sections for revision of learning team training materials, wrote analysis of newspaper clippings covering EZs and ECs.
- *Kentucky River Area Development District* - Principal author of socioeconomic profile of eight-county region to assist with comprehensive planning process.

COURSES TAUGHT*Western Illinois University Undergraduate Classes*

“Local Land Use.” (GH 299, 1 semester). WIU Honors College., Fall Semester, 2009.

“Rural Roots of Urban African Americans,” (AAS 455, 1 semester) African American Studies, Fall Semester, 2008.

“Land and Community on the Rural-Urban Fringe” (GH302W, 1 semester) Centennial Honors College, Fall Semester, 2007

“Globalization, Social Justice, and Rural Communities” (GH302W, 1 semester) Centennial Honors College, Winter Semester, 2006

January, 1988 to December, 1996*University of Kentucky Undergraduate Classes*

“Introductory Sociology” (4 semesters)

“Social Change” (1 semester)

“The Sociology of American Indians” (1 semester)

“Political Sociology” (1 semester)

CURRENT RESEARCH

Reform and Reaction: A Political Economy of Kentucky Education Policy – book manuscript

Enduring Values: Land, Community, and Sustainability – book manuscript

Sustainable land use curriculum

Biomass energy and community land use

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Land use and sustainable economic and community development; rural education.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Collins, Timothy. Book review. *Ecosystem Planning in Florida: Solving Regional Problems through Local Decision-making* by Samuel David Brody. In: *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society*.

Collins, Timothy. Book. *Tapestry of Conflicts: A Political Economy of Kentucky’s Economic Development Policy*.

Collins, Timothy. Entry for *Encyclopedia of Green Politics*. “The Conservation Movement.” Sage Publications.

Collins, Timothy. Entry for *Encyclopedia of Green Politics*. “The Industrial Revolution.” Sage Publications.

Collins, Timothy. Book Review. *Cultural Landscapes: Balancing Nature and Heritage in Preservation Practice*, edited by Richard Longstreth. In: *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society*.

Collins, Timothy. (under review). “Place-based Education, Rural Schools, and Sustainable Communities.” *Community Education Journal*.

PUBLICATIONS/ESSAYS/REPORTS

Collins, Timothy. 2009. Book Review. *Born in the Country: A History of Rural America*, by David B. Danbom. In: *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society* 40(3):293-294.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. “Becky and Oscar Have Been My Amenities.” <http://www.dailyonder.com/becky-and-oscar-have-been-my-amenities/2009/08/30/2319>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. “You’re Not From Around This Watershed, Are You?” <http://www.dailyonder.com/youre-not-around-watershed-are-you/2009/08/07/2277>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Confessions of a Little League Dad." <http://www.dailyonder.com/confessions-little-league-dad/2009/07/18/2211>.

Collins, Timothy; Setty, Michael D. 2009. "Connecting the Spots: Twenty-First Century Electric Interurban Railways to Meet Strategic Transportation Goals." <http://www.iira.org/pubs/ruralpolicy/Policy%20Brief%20Connecting%20the%20Spots%20Interurban%20Railways.pdf>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Country Life Movement -- Miles to Go." <http://www.dailyonder.com/country-life-movement-miles-go/2009/06/24/2189>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Rural Entrepreneurs v. Straw Men." <http://www.dailyonder.com/rural-entrepreneurs-v-straw-men/2009/06/10/2164>.

Collins, Timothy; Hicks, Stephen R. 2009. Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission: A Foundation for Sustainable Community Development. <http://www.iira.org/clc/>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Rural Sustainability: Plenty of Room for Optimism." In: *Community Education Journal*, v. 15, no. 3, p. 3-4.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. Book Review. *Sprawling Places*, by David Kolb. In: *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society* 39(4):118-119.

Collins, Timothy. Book Review. *This Land: The Battle over Sprawl and the Future of America*, by Anthony Flint. In: *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society*, 39(3):165-166.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Earthpreneurship." <http://www.dailyonder.com/earthpreneurship/2009/05/14/2118>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Bring Back the Interurban." <http://www.dailyonder.com/bring-back-interurban/2009/04/03/2040>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. Book Review. *From the Bottom Up: One Man's Crusade to Clean America's Rivers*, by Chad Pregracke. In: *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society* 39(3):165-166.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "There's Opportunity for Rural in 'Reglobalization.'" <http://www.dailyonder.com/theres-opportunity-rural-reglobalization/2009/03/14/1990>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Speak Your Piece: Let's Get Disaster-Wise." <http://www.dailyonder.com/speak-your-piece-lets-get-disaster-wise/2009/03/03/1967>.

Collins, Timothy. 2009. "Speak Your Piece: The Future of Urban and Rural America are Linked." <http://www.dailyonder.com/speak-your-piece-future-urban-and-rural-america-are-linked/2009/01/13/1842>.

Collins, Timothy. 2008. "Rural Schools Need to Train Rural Stewards." <http://www.dailyonder.com/rural-schools-need-train-rural-stewards>.

Collins, Timothy. 2008. "'Tough Love' for Tough Times in the Midwest." Book Review. <http://www.dailyonder.com/tough-love-tough-times-midwest>.

Collins, Timothy. 2008. "Two Candidates, Two Ways to Better Rural Broadband." <http://www.dailyonder.com/two-candidates-two-ways-better-rural-broadband>.

Collins, Timothy. 2008. "Rural IT: Let's Look Beyond Friday Night Lights." <http://www.dailyonder.com/rural-it-lets-look-beyond-friday-night-lights>.

Collins, Timothy (with assistance from Danielle Rogers, Lori Sutton, and Amanda Zukas). 2008. "Rural Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey Report to the Brown County Education Action Team." [Unpublished]

Collins, Timothy. 2008. "Speak Your Piece: More Than A New Coat of Paint." <http://www.dailyonder.com/speak-your-piece-more-new-coat-paint>.

Collins, Timothy; Sutton, Lori. 2008. "Building Rural Libraries and Communities: A Survey of Library Administrators." <http://www.alliancelibrarysystem.com/Rural/documents/2008LIBRARYSTUDY.pdf>.

Collins, Timothy; Chu, Felix. 2008. "Building Rural Libraries and Communities: White Paper Summary of a Statewide Meeting, January 30, 2008, East Peoria, IL." <http://www.alliancelibrarysystem.com/Rural/documents/whitepaper.pdf>.

Collins, Timothy. 2008. Entry for *Encyclopedia of Global Warming and Climate Change*. "Conservation." Sage Publications.

Collins, Timothy. 2008. Entry for *Encyclopedia of Global Warming and Climate Change*. "Industrialization." Sage Publications.

Collins, Timothy. 2007. "Community Capitals and Land Use: Values for Assessing Sustainability." North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. Community Capitals Framework Workshop, November, 2007. <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/projects/commcap/2007/collins.pdf>

Collins, Timothy; Merrett, Christopher D. 2007. Book Review. *Township: Diffusion and Persistence of Grassroots Government in Illinois, 1850-2000*, by Michael D. Sublett. In: *Political Geography* 26:866-875

Collins, Timothy. 2007. "Overarching Values as Sustainability Indicators for a Stakeholder-based Land Use Curriculum." *Proceedings of the Trans Atlantic Land Use Conference*, September, 2007. <http://www.ncrcrd.psu.edu/TALUC/Papers/Collins.pdf>

Collins, Timothy. 2007. Book Review. *All Together Now: Common Sense for a Fair Economy*, by Jared Bernstein. In: *Community Development: Journal of the Community Development Society* 38(4):95-97.

Collins, Timothy; Merrett Christopher D. 2007. "The Place of Rural Community Development in Urban Society." In: *The Community Development Reader*, Eds.: DeFilippis, J; Saegert, London: Routledge.

Collins, Timothy. 2006. "Community Capitals, Human Agency, and Values for Sustainability: A Land Use Example." North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. Community Capitals Framework Workshop, December, 2006. <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/projects/commcap/2006/collins.pdf>.

Collins, Timothy; Goetz, Stephan. 2006. "A Systems Approach to Community Land Use Education, Planning, and Action." *Rural Development Papers from the Northeast Region*, RDP 35; <http://www.ncrcrd.psu.edu/Publications/rdppapers/rdp35BW.pdf>

Collins, Timothy; Brasier, Kathryn J.; Kelsey, Timothy W.; Lenihan, Martin H.; and Whitmer, Walter. 2006. "The Future of Agriculture in Our Community: A Pilot Program to Increase Community Dialogue about Agricultural Sustainability." *Journal of Extension* April 2006, Volume 44 Number 2, Article Number 2FEA3 <http://www.joe.org/joe/2006april/a3.shtml>

Collins, Timothy. 2005. *In Pursuit of Best Practices: A Research Agenda for Rural Education in Illinois*. Macomb: Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University. *Rural Research Report*, Summer, 2005. http://www.iira.org/pubs/publications/IIRA_RRR_645.pdf.

Collins, Timothy; Westerhold, William. 2005. *Census Definition Changes May Influence Rural Policy in Illinois*. Macomb: Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University. *Rural Research Report*, Spring, 2005. http://www.iira.org/pubs/publications/IIRA_RRR_646.pdf.

Collins, Timothy; Brasier, Kathy; and Kelsey, Tim. 2004. *What is the Future of Agriculture in Your Community? A Community-based Program to Address the Needs and Future of Farming*. Extension Bulletin, Penn State Cooperative Extension Service. <http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/FreePubs/pdfs/ua393.pdf>

Collins, Timothy; Tunceli, Ozgur; Goetz, Stephan. 2003. *GIS and Your Community*. <http://www.nercrd.psu.edu/GIS/GIS.pdf>

Collins, Timothy, Stephens, E. Robert, Stern, Joyce, Sanders, John R. 2001. *Milestones in Rural Education, 1950-2000: A 2001 SERVE Special Report*.

Collins, Timothy; Dewees, Sarah. 2001. "Challenge and Promise: Technology in the Classroom." In: *The Rural South: Preparing for the Challenges of the 21st Century*, No. 18.

Collins, Timothy; Dewees, Sarah. 2001. "Distance Education: Taking Classes to the Students." In: *The Rural South: Preparing for the Challenges of the 21st Century*, No. 17.

Collins, Timothy; Flaxman, Irwin. 2001. "Improving Urban and Rural Schools and Their Communities: Perspectives on Interdependence." In: *ERIC Review* 8(2):2-4 (Winter, 2001).

Collins, Timothy. 2001. "Rural Schools and Communities: Perspectives on Interdependence." In: *ERIC Review* 8(2):15-24 (Winter, 2001).

Collins, Timothy; Dewees, Sarah. (2000). "Telling the Story of School Improvement in Rural America." *The Rural Educator: Journal for Rural and Small Schools, Special Issue*. 21(2), (Winter 1999-2000).

Collins, Timothy. 2000. *Rural Schools and Communities Talking and Acting Together: Community Engagement to Enhance Academic Achievement: A Guide*. Charleston, WV: AEL Inc. Rural Specialty. [Unpublished]

Collins, Timothy. 2000. "Curriculum of Place: Linking Rural Schools and Communities." Charleston, WV: AEL Inc. Rural Specialty Research Brief. [Unpublished]

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Collins, Timothy. 2000. *Community Engagement: An Inventory*. Charleston, WV: AEL Inc. Rural Specialty Toolkit.

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Collins, Timothy. 1999. *Recruiting and Retaining Rural Teachers: Issues and Strategies*. ERIC Digest. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

Collins, Timothy. 1999. *Cultural Resources for Mexican-American Educators*. ERIC Digest. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

Collins, Timothy; Dewees, Sarah. 1999. "It Don't Come EZ': A Case Study of Participatory Research in the Jackson County, KY, Empowerment Zone." In: *Sociological Practice: A Journal of Clinical and Applied Research*, 1(2):157-171.

Dewees, Sarah; Collins, Timothy. 1999. "Geographic Information Systems: A Tool for Community Research." In: *Southern Rural Sociology*, vol. 14, pp. 1-17.

Collins, Timothy. 1999. "Research into the Appalachian Region's Educational Needs." In: Symposium Proceedings, Issues of Higher Education in Appalachia, Berea College, Berea, KY, September 25, 1998. In: *Appalachian Heritage*, Spring, 1999.

Collins, Timothy. 1999. "Charter Schools: An Approach for Rural Education?" ERIC Digest EDO-RC-98-3, January, 1999. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

PRESENTATIONS/PAPERS

"Sustainable Land Use Indicators: A Values-based Approach to Implementing a Comprehensive Land Use Curriculum." Presented at the first meeting of the Association of Environmental Studies and Sciences, Madison, WI, October 9, 2009

"Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission and Community Sustainability, 1909-2009." Presentation for the Community Development Society, Memphis, TN. July 29, 2009. With Stephen R. Hicks.

"Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission and Sustainability, 1909-2009." Presentation for Western Illinois University Sustainability Brown Bag Series, February 24, 2009. With Stephen R. Hicks.

"Teaching Community Sustainability across the Curriculum." 2009 Sustainable Schools Symposium. February 27, 2009, Joliet, IL.

"Building Rural Libraries and Communities." With Phyllis Self. Presentation for the Syracuse University Center for Digital Literacy, 2008 Institute on Digital Empowerment, Insights, Incite Innovation. Syracuse, NY, December 2008.

"Place-based Education, Schools, and Sustainable Communities." Presentation for the National Community Education Association Conference, Dallas, TX. November, 2008.

"Illinois Broadband Deployment Council Subcommittee Reports (Policy)." Testimony before the Illinois House of Representatives Computer Technology Committee, Chicago, IL, July 24, 2008.

"Sustainable Land Use Indicators: A Values-Based Approach to Implementing the Community Capitals Framework." Presentation for the Community Development Society, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, CA. June, 2008.

"Uneven Rural Development and Community Development: From Chasing Smokestacks to Building Entrepreneurship." Presentation for the Community Development Society, Appleton, WI. June, 2007. With John Gruidl.

"Community Capitals, Human Agency, and Values for Sustainability: A Land Use Example." Presentation and Paper for North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, December, 2006.

“Conversations about sustainability: Natural and social sciences, arts and humanities – Where the minds could meet.” Presentation for Western Illinois University Sustainability Brown Bag Series, October, 2006.

“A Systems Approach to Community Land Use Education, Planning, and Action.” Presentation for the Community Development Society, June, 2006.

“A Cooperative Approach to Marketing Agritourism Ventures.” Presentation for the Community Development Society, St. Louis, MO. June, 2006.

“Citizens’ Learning Team: An Introduction.” Penn State Cooperative Extension In-service presentation, University Park, PA. January, 2005.

“Land and Community: A Few Small Steps toward Youth Education for Sustainable Development.” Presentation for the Sustainable Communities 2004 conference, Burlington, VT, July, 2004.

“Some Things I’ve Learned about Education for Sustainable Development since Third Grade.” Presentation for the Goddard Forum for Sustainable Development, Camp Hill, PA, May, 2004.

“Big. Out There. Still Moving: A Local Quest for Equity and Sustainability.” Presentation for the Goddard Forum for Sustainable Development, Camp Hill, PA, May, 2004.

“Leadership for Sustainability: Local Extension and Land Use.” Presentation for the International Center for Leadership Results, Gettysburg, PA, May 2003.

“The Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Act: Implications for Local Planning.” Presentation with Neal Fogle, Charles Abdallah, and Alyssa Dodd at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Planning Association, Pittsburgh, PA, September, 2003.

“What a Place! Rural Schools and Curriculum of Place.” Presentation with Victoria Robinson at the annual meeting of the National Rural Education Association, Charleston, SC, October, 2000.

“Schools and Community Development: Next Steps.” Presentation with Sarah Dewees at the annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Washington, DC, August, 2000.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

“Sustainable Land Use Indicators: A Values-based Approach to Implementing a Comprehensive Land Use Curriculum.” SociETAS Seminar, University of Wisconsin – Madison. Department of Community and Environmental Sociology, October 12, 2009

“A Model for Strengthening Civil Society in Uzbekistan: The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs.” Formation of Civil Society in Uzbekistan: Conditions, Achievements and Prospects, September 22-23, 2009, Bukhara, Republic of Uzbekistan.

“Illinois Broadband Deployment Council Subcommittee Reports (Policy).” Testimony before the Illinois House of Representatives Computer Technology Committee, Chicago, IL, July 24, 2008.

“Rural Illinois: Uncertainty and Opportunities.” State Farm Insurance Rural Market Opportunity: Agent Symposium, Bloomington, IL, January 16, 2008.

“What is sustainability? Why teach it across the curriculum?” Mt. Vernon Conference, Mt. Vernon, IL, October 26, 2007.

“Socioeconomic Features of Three Midwestern States: A Report to the Girl Scouts USA High Share Market Team.” Quincy, IL, May, 2005.

“Leadership for Change: Theory, Research, and Action for a Sustainable Community.” Gettysburg College, National Science Foundation Research Education for Undergraduates seminar, July, 2004.

“Connecting the Dots: Building Capacity for Land Use Education.” United States Department of Agriculture national program leaders. April, 2004.

“Future of Agriculture in Your Community.” In Service. University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service, College Park. October, 2003.

“Celebrating Appalachia: Curriculum of Place.” Essentially Appalachian Network, February, 2000. Chauncey, OH.

“Rural Education Research Needs.” National Science Foundation-sponsored Transitions from Childhood to the Workforce session at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA, November, 1999.

Participant in the National Science Foundation-sponsored Transitions from Childhood to the Workforce session at AEL, Inc., Arlington, VA, October, 1999.

“Research into the Appalachian Region’s Educational Needs.” Issues of Higher Education in Appalachia, Berea College, Berea, KY, September, 1998.

SERVICE

- Prairie Land Conservancy Board Member, July, 2009 –
- National Community Education Association, Global Community Education Network, 2008-
- National Community Education Association, Rural Revitalization planning committee, 2008-
- Community Development Society Board Member, Professional Development group June, 2008-
- Illinois Broadband Deployment Council, co-chair, Policy Subcommittee, 2008.
- Western Illinois University Campus Sustainability Committee, January, 2007-
 - Chair, Administration (Policy, Staff, and Structure) Subcommittee
- Advisory Committee, University of Illinois, NSF Math and Science Partnership project, the “Institute for Chemistry Literacy and Computational Science for the 21st Century,” 2006-2007.
- Western Illinois University Environmental Summit planning committee, 2006-
- Community Development Society, Program Committee, June, 2006-2009.
- Western Illinois University Building Community Committee, September, 2006-2007.
- Board member, *Leadership Adams Hanover*, 2003-2005.
- Member, *Regional Economic Development District Initiative* agricultural economic development Advisory Committee, 2002-2004.
- Board member, chair of education committee, *Land Conservancy of Adams County, PA*, 2002-2005.
- Member, *Gettysburg-Adams County Area Chamber of Commerce* agriculture and government cooperation committees, 2001-2005.
- Member, *USDA Fund for Rural America* proposal review team, 2001.
- Board Member, *West Virginia Rural Development Council*, 1999-2000.
- Reviewer, *Rural Sociology*, 1999-2000.
- Advisory Board Member, *Kentucky Commodity Growers’ Cooperative Marketing*, 1997-1998.
- Member, *USDA NRI review team*, 1997, reviewed individual proposals in 1996, 1994.
- Member, *Interstate 66 Corridor Advisory Committee, Kentucky Dept. of Highways*, 1996-1997.

- Advisory board, *Kentucky River Basin Water Supply Assessment, University of Kentucky*, 1996-1997.
- Member, *Social Sciences Research Committee, University of Kentucky*, 1996-1997.
- Secretary, *Squire Oak Homeowners' Assn.*, 1996-1998.
- Advisory Board Member, *Appalachian Rural Systemic Initiative for Math and Sciences, Kentucky Science and Technology Council*, 1996-1997.
- Founding president, member, *Friends of Friendship Hill National Historic Site, PA*, 1982-1985.
- Volunteer, *Romero House of Hospitality, Morgantown, WV*, 1983-1986.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS/MEMBERSHIPS

Community Development Society
National Community Education Association
Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences
Illinois State Microenterprise Initiative
NAACP of McDonough County, IL

AWARDS/HONORS

AEL, Inc., Golden Quill/Gold Star for publications, 1999. *University of Kentucky*: Gamma Sigma Delta agriculture honorary, 1993; Haggin Fellowship, 1986-1987. *West Virginia University*: Phi Kappa Phi academic honorary, 1985. *The Ohio State University*: Kappa Tau Alpha journalism honorary, 1974; Newspaper Fund copy editing internship/scholarship (*Cincinnati Post*), 1974; Heller Scholarship; Spielman Award; McKeown Award; National Society for Medical Research writing contest, first place, 1973.