



UNIVERSITY

Bowling Green State University
Ohio University

CENTER DIRECTOR

Dr. Russell Mills, Senior Director
Dr. Jason Jolley, Professor and Director

CENTER LOCATION

BGSU's Center for Regional Development
OU's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs

CENTER SINCE 1995

CENTER ACTIVITIES

- Technical assistance
- Convening regional planning processes
- Applied research
- Entrepreneurship support

CLIENTS

- Local and regional economic development and workforce organizations
- Local governments
- Entrepreneurs and innovators
- Small businesses and start-ups

CONTACT INFO

Dr. Russell Mills
millsrw@bgsu.edu
Dr. Jason Jolley
jolleyg1@ohio.edu

WEBSITE

www.bgsu.edu/crd
www.ohio.edu/voinovich-school/

Rural Universities Consortium University Center

Bowling Green State University's (BGSU) Center for Regional Development (CRD) and Ohio University's (OU) Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs comprise a joint University Center known as the Rural Universities Consortium (RUC). The RUC covers 59 of the 88 counties in Ohio, with CRD serving 27 counties in northwest Ohio and the Voinovich School serving 32 counties in southeast Ohio. While both are rural areas, the regions covered by each partner are unique and face very different economic challenges. The joint center allows the partners to better leverage their resources and expertise to address the challenges in each region, while also partnering on projects, such as planning initiatives.

PARTNERS AND SERVICES

The funding provided by the EDA allows the RUC to partner with economic developers and businesses on expansion and attraction projects, entrepreneur applied research, and economic engagement in underserved rural communities. The RUC assists dozens of partners throughout the two regions, which allows the center to more effectively carry out its technical assistance, applied research, and business assistance work.

STATE OF THE REGION

The work of both partners culminates in two State of the Region events each year. The purpose of the events is to provide economic guidance and an understanding of the current economic conditions to local leaders and the general public. More than 500 individuals attended the 2019 conferences, bringing the total of attendees over the last five years to more than 2,000. Attendees are a cross-section of regional businesses, public officials, economic development practitioners, academics, and members of the media. The continued success of the conferences illustrates BGSU and OU are viewed as key conveners of public discussion around economic development in the State of Ohio.

REGIONAL IMPACTS

Since its inception over two decades ago, the RUC has helped improve economic opportunity in communities facing severe economic distress. Over the past five years, CRD has assisted communities secure approximately \$8.5 million in local, state, and federal infrastructure grants that have created 1,140 jobs and leveraged approximately \$360 million in private sector investment in northwest Ohio. In just the last year through its University Center efforts, the Voinovich School assisted over 30 businesses and communities in the southeast region of Ohio with business and technical assistance in areas such as: strategic planning, market feasibility studies, business planning and mentoring, fiscal and economic impact analysis.



OHIO
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Center for Regional Development

BGSU