

Rural Sociologists in the News

Editors Note: Take a moment now and put the RSS Business Office on the mailing list for your departmental or office newsletter. Do not be bashful about sending us information about your awards, promotions, new opportunities and accomplishments. Much is happening in the world of Rural Sociology and we need to hear about it.

Conner Bailey, Auburn University, has been appointed Adjunct Professor at the Norwegian College of Fisheries Science, University of Tromso — the northern most university in the world. Bailey was selected for his expertise in marine fisheries management and development in tropical Asia and will contribute to a newly established graduate program oriented towards training policy makers from developing nations. He will spend approximately one month a year in Tromso over the next four years. However, Conner's real achievement last year was in swimming competition where he set a national record in a pentathlon event (set of 5 swims in the ironman division) and broke into the top 10 nationally for times swum in his age group in '98. For those in swimming this is really a big deal. Bailey also reports that **Alessandro Bonanno** of Sam Houston State University and **Lou Swanson** of Colorado State University are Master Swimmers.

Pat Mooney, University of Kentucky, signed up 13 new RSS student members from his Rural Sociology 517 course. Pat used previous issues of *Rural Sociology* as text material. Congratulations to Pat.

David Blandford has been appointed Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at Penn State University, University Park, PA. David formerly was Head of the Trade and markets Division of the Directorate for Food, Agriculture, and Fisheries of the organization for Economic cooperation and Development (OECD).

Refugio I. Rochin, Director of the Julian Samora Research Institute at Michigan State University and a Professor of Rural Sociology, has been appointed the first director of the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives. As Director, Rochin is overseeing a variety of projects at the Smithsonian designed to increase awareness of the role of and contributions of Latinos to the history and culture of the United States.

Emmett P. Fiske, Washington State University at Pullman, received a 1998 Fulbright Scholarship to Chile.

Lee Maril, Oklahoma State university. Testified before the Senate Commerce Committee September 9, 1998 in support of S.625, the Auto Choice Reform Act. His testimony was based on survey research he conducted in Maricopa County, Arizona, of low-income drivers who could not afford mandatory car insurance.

Minnie Miller Brown is to be inducted into the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University's School of Agriculture Hall of Fame on March 23, 1999. Mrs. Brown, now deceased, was the first African American to be awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. **She received the Rural Sociological Society Distinguished Service to Rural Life Award in 1992.**

Phil McMichael has accepted the position of Chair, Department of Rural Sociology at Cornell University starting on July 1, 1999.

Rex Campbell, University of Missouri Columbia, received the mid-west award for National Excellence in Teaching Programs sponsored annual by the Science and Education Resources Development Division of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. **Fern K. (Bunny) Willits** was a recognized nominee from the Northeast region. The annual program is in cooperation with the Academic Programs Section of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.

Of Interest to Rural Sociologists

AAEA Extension Section Announced

A new organization of agricultural economists, practitioners, and managers who work on applying theory to practice and policy invites prospective members. This group will focus on professional responsibilities, development, and recognition of extension economists. For more information contact the AAEA business office at: 415 S. Duff Ave., Suite C, Ames, Iowa 50010-6600. Membership@aaea.org

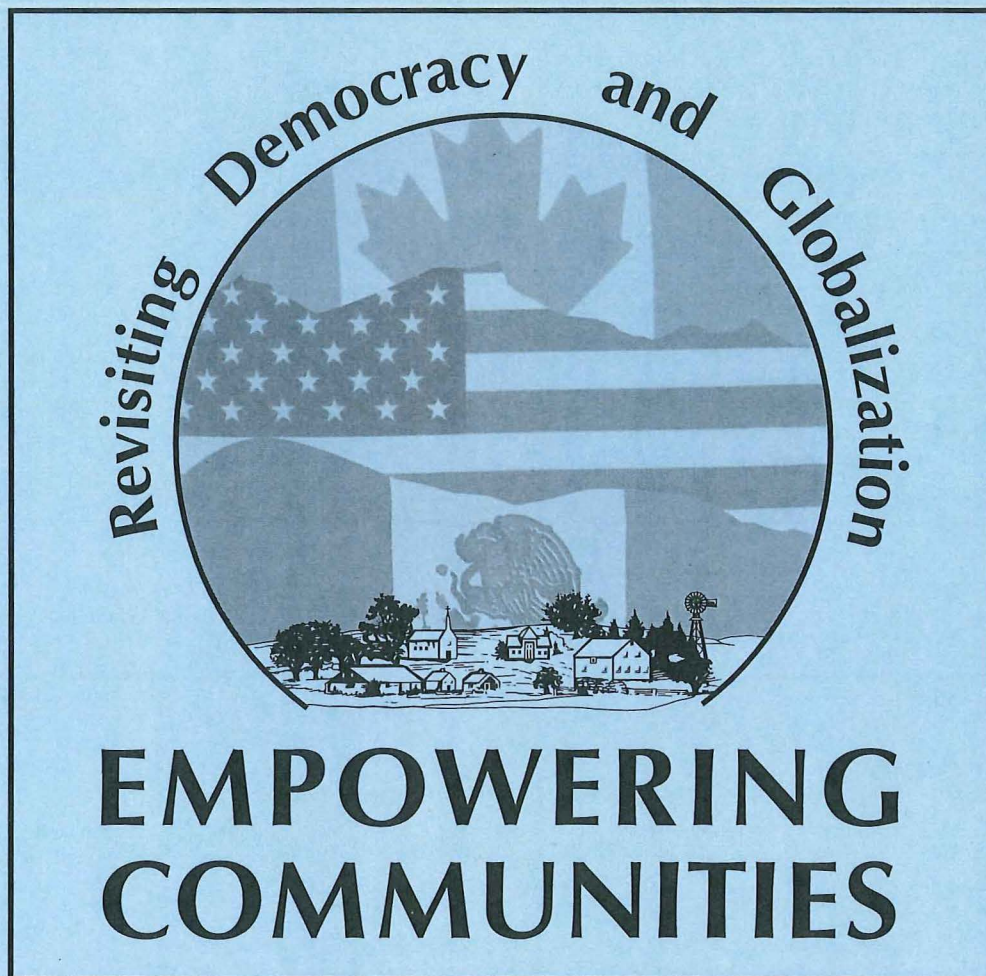
The January issue of *Prospect*: reports on Sociology's new golden age.

As many sociological concepts and arguments have entered the political and intellectual mainstream in the last 30 years, sociological insights have become "more valuable and better grounded than ever before," writes Ian Christie, the deputy director of Demos, an independent British public policy group. The problem, Mr. Christie writes, is that academic sociologists haven't kept up. He says that the discipline suffers from a gap

between theory and empirical research. The academy, he writes, "has had little interaction with large-scale users and developers of social theory and sociological research" in such institutions as public-policy groups and market-research organizations, which are often more sophisticated consumers of sociological ideas than academics realize. Educational reforms in Britain have further contributed to the downfall of the discipline by overvaluing the production of refereed journal articles and by devaluing teaching, Mr. Christie writes. But if sociologists are failing, sociology is not, Mr. Christie notes. Issues such as crime, families, and the changing nature of work are common topics of discussion, and people in sociology, social administration, and social policy departments at universities have done much survey-type, empirical research in the past decade. Sociologists, he says, simply must become involved in the proliferation of sociological theory and practice that have been "mingling fruitfully" outside of the academy. "Sociology is entering a golden age," Mr. Christie writes. "All we need is for sociologists to start joining in." The article may be found on line at http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/highlights/return_sociology/index.html

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What's missing in this issue?

TRS publishes materials of interest to the Society gleaned from other newsletters and submissions by readers. We need to hear news from your agency or department as well as what is happening to Rural Sociology as a discipline. Our goal is to have a TRS contact in every state, province, and most countries. To be a TRS correspondent, contact the editor! Academic departments, state, provincial and federal agencies, and other organizations, please send us copies of your newsletters!

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