

**Rural Development Institute**

**Annual Report  
1999 - 2001**

*Providing Academic Research and Leadership  
on Issues Affecting Rural Communities  
in Western Canada*

**Rural Development Institute**

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## Messages

### ***A Message from the President of Brandon University***



Since its creation in 1899 Brandon University has been committed to the notion of relevance to the community in which it exists. It has bloomed where it has been planted, namely in the rural community of Brandon, a community, by the way, which is the gateway to the west. To the east are the vast potato fields near Carberry; to the north and west are “the amber waves of grain” which symbolize western Canada in many people’s minds. Rural communities have been important to Brandon’s history and their continued survival is important to the University.

Hence, it is no surprise that we have a strong commitment to rural development, to the Rural Development Department, and to the Rural Development Institute. Over its life time the Institute, the Department, its leaders and its students have been involved in research that is relevant to the health and prosperity of our rural communities. In recent years the focus of the Institute has encompassed not only the traditional economic activities of rural communities but has expanded into the analysis of new initiatives and issues like tourism, health care delivery, and community futures. Rural development is an integral part of the University and a pursuit of teaching and research in this context is what makes the University *Something Special*.

As the University progresses into its second century, it cannot forget its roots and its environment. We are committed to the people, young and old, in southwestern Manitoba, and the Rural Development Institute is a very visible symbol of that commitment.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louis Visentin". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and elegant.

Louis P. Visentin  
President and Vice-Chancellor

## ***Introductory Comments from the Director***

Brandon University's close connection with small, rural and northern communities led to the establishment of the Rural Development Institute (RDI) in 1989 as an academic research centre and a leading source of information on rural issues in Western Canada.



This report describes the work of RDI from 1999-2001. The first section of this report, *Setting the Foundation*, describes the RDI's evolution during this time, including structural changes. This section is followed by *Our Research and Project Activities*, a summary of RDI's efforts in addressing various domains of rural interests, including illustrative examples of research and project activities.

The third section of this report, *Working Together*, acknowledges the importance of our partners and the advisory committees that provide financial support and help guide our research and projects. This section also identifies the members of our research and project teams.

The next section, *Institutional Growth and Development*, summarizes RDI's progress in priority areas of activities over the course of 1999-2001 including a listing of our published reports, conference presentations and workshops delivered. The report concludes with *Impact and Future Directions*, a reflection on RDI's impact over the period 1999-2001 and a look ahead at upcoming research and project activities as well as priority areas for attention in 2002.

RDI's achievements are the result of collaboration and teamwork and I would like to sincerely thank the members of the research and project teams for their efforts. I would also like to acknowledge the support of Brandon University, our funding partners and advisory committees. Among our partners, the Province of Manitoba deserves special recognition for its long-standing support of RDI. Since RDI's inception, the Province of Manitoba, first through the Department of Rural Development and later, through the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, has been a financial supporter of the Institute and advocate for research and project activities for the benefit of rural communities.

On behalf of the Rural Development Institute, I hope that you find this report informative and reflective of our strong sense of commitment to rural communities.

Sincerely,

Robert Annis, PhD.

## **Setting the Foundation**

### ***Our Mandate***

In 1989, Brandon University established the Rural Development Institute to help foster rural community development and community resiliency through research and information on issues unique to rural areas.

Funding from the Province of Manitoba, initially through the Department of Rural Development and later, through the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, was critical in establishing the RDI. Since that time, the Province has continued to provide financial support to RDI. Representatives from various provincial departments have added to this support by acting as advocates for relevant rural research and project activities and by providing advice on various research and project teams.

Principal activities of the Institute are the design, implementation and communication of academic and applied research on rural issues. While its primary focus is on issues of rural and northern communities in western Canada, RDI maintains relationships with rural researchers across Canada and abroad.

The Institute provides an interface between academic research efforts and rural communities by acting as a conduit of rural research information and by facilitating community involvement in rural development.

RDI projects are characterized by cooperative and collaborative efforts of many stakeholders. The Institute has diverse research affiliations and multiple community and government linkages related to its rural development mandate. RDI disseminates information to a variety of constituents and stakeholders and makes research information and results widely available to the public, either in printed form or by means of public lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences.

RDI's research is highly relevant to rural policy and to the people who live and work in rural areas. Ideas for the research activities undertaken by RDI research and project teams are developed through contact with rural groups, towns, rural municipalities, villages, governments, international researchers and observers of the rural situation.

### ***Change Comes to Rural Development Institute***

Since its establishment in 1989 to the present day, the Rural Development Institute has maintained its mandate as an academic research centre and a leading source of information on issues affecting rural communities in western Canada and elsewhere.

In 1998-99, Brandon University reviewed RDI's efforts. Based on the outcomes of the review, Brandon University created the Rural Development unit, consisting of the Rural Development Institute, the new academic program of the Department of Rural Development and the Brandon University Community Outreach Service. The Director of

Rural Development was responsible for the unit. Implementing change and establishing new directions at RDI required careful deliberation and collaboration across Brandon University. For the next 18 months, the Rural Development unit focused its efforts on:

- establishing and building the new Department of Rural Development; and, Master of Rural Development (MRD) and Graduate Diploma academic programs;
- responding to the new realities of Intergovernmental Affairs (Province of Manitoba);
- addressing financial and human resources issues;
- seeking external funding for research projects and institutional activities; and
- developing mechanisms and opportunities to meet rurally focused needs of various stakeholders including municipal, provincial and federal governments and research granting councils.

In addition to core funding from Brandon University, the Rural Development unit received financial support from the Manitoba Department of Intergovernmental Affairs. This support helped the Rural Development unit with a number of activities such as student research support, the establishment of linkages and networks and the Brandon University Community Outreach Service.

### **Evolution of the Role of Director: 1999-2001**

From 1989 until 1998 the Rural Development Institute undertook a variety of research projects under the direction of Richard Rounds with support from Bruce McFarlane, Joan Rollheiser and a number of associates. In May 1999, Robert Annis, the former Executive Director of WESTARC Group Inc., was appointed as the Director of Rural Development. As Director of Rural Development, he reported to the Dean of Arts for academic matters and to the Vice-President (Academic and Research) for RDI matters. The former director, Richard Rounds, became Chair of the academic Department of Rural Development.

Eighteen months after the inception of the Rural Development unit, there were three full-time faculty members in the Department of Rural Development, more than 20 students were enrolled in the new graduate program and RDI's program of research and activities began to take shape.

While the housing of the new Department of Rural Development and RDI under one Director helped build linkages and lever resources, the argument was made that academic programs at Brandon University were traditionally housed within an academic department.

In January 2001, Brandon University Senate approved a motion to include the academic Department of Rural Development as a formal department within the Faculty of Arts.

This move culminated the end of a re-alignment of the Rural Development unit that began in 1998. There were now two complementary units at Brandon University – the Rural Development Institute and the Department of Rural Development housed within the Faculty of Arts.

The Department of Rural Development now has its own Department Chair reporting to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts. The role and responsibilities of the Director of Rural Development shifted to focus solely on the Rural Development Institute including the Brandon University Community Outreach Service.

The role and responsibilities of the Director of the Rural Development Institute changed again in July 2001 when Brandon University integrated the activities of its holding company, WESTARC Group Inc., a non-profit consulting group. At the time of integration WESTARC Group focused its efforts on applied research, training and economic development needs of communities and organizations in western Canada.

Today, the Director is responsible for carrying out the mandate and expanded range of RDI activities. He continues to play a key role in facilitating the strong linkage between the Department of Rural Development and the Institute. He also encourages members of other Brandon University faculties to engage in rural research and activities.

The Director of RDI also carries administrative responsibilities for Brandon University's Community Outreach Service. A Community Outreach Coordinator provides operational support to faculty and community groups using the service and an Outreach Advisory Committee provides guidance and advice. Further information is contained in the Community Outreach Service Annual Reports.

Currently, RDI occupies office space with the Department of Rural Development in the Lower Concourse of McMaster Hall, as well as office space and meeting rooms located in the Jeff Umphrey Centre.



*Rural Development  
Lower Concourse McMaster*



*Rural Development Institute, Jeff Umphrey Centre*

## **Our Research and Project Activities**

RDI currently focuses on eight general domains of research including:

*community economic development*

*community leadership*

*rural adaptation and change*

*agro-economic and environmental issues*

*rural tourism*

*rural health*

*information management and technology utilization*

*rural policy development.*

These evolving domains are intended to be responsive and relevant to rural communities. Many domains are inter-related and there are themes such as quality of life and rural change that are common across more than one domain.

RDI's research and project activities are made possible through RDI's partnerships as well as through a network of collaborators and project teams of academic and independent researchers. Most importantly, RDI has made considerable efforts to encourage the participation of students in the Department of Rural Development (DRD) and faculty from across Brandon University.

The cumulative effect of RDI's efforts is its enhanced ability to carry out rural research and project activities. Much of RDI's capacity for rural research has been the result of the long-standing, broadly based financial support from Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs. This support has enabled RDI to be responsive to rural research needs as well as facilitate linkages and partnerships with other rural stakeholders.

This section provides illustrative examples of RDI's rural research and project activities, as well as the organizations with which we have partnered and the many individuals who have participated as members of our project teams.

### ***Community Economic Development***

Community and regional linkages help encourage community economic development, the sharing of information and resources, the development of regional strategies and the building of economic and social networks. These linkages help facilitate community involvement, encourage collaboration and expand the geographic boundaries of communities.

RDI's efforts in 1999-2001 in the area of community economic development involve facilitating community-based processes, presenting workshops, sharing information and expertise, and assisting communities in development strategies and building economic and social networks. Efforts in this domain include:

### **Community Collaboration Project**

The three-year Community Collaboration Project (CCP) established three regional round table pilot sites in northern and rural Manitoba for the purpose of building community capacity and supporting inter-sectoral and inter-agency collaboration at a regional level.

The three regional roundtables include:

- Northern Vision Regional Round Table: South Indian Lake, Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids, Village of Granville Lake
- Southwest Regional Round Table: Deloraine, Killarney, Souris, Baldur, Wawanesa, Glenboro
- Bayline Regional Round Table: Pikwitonei, Ilford, Cormorant, Wabowden, Thicket Portage, War Lake First Nation

Prior to the establishment of regional round tables, there had been little or no communication between the communities. Regional Round Tables have initiated regional promotional activities, facilitated community discussions on regional issues and engaged communities in multi-sectoral planning sessions.

Sustainable Resource Management Information Systems Group (SRMIS), RDI's information technology group of students, assisted the regional round tables with developing regional websites, utilizing information technology and training youth in the community to use the Community Access Program. Robert Annis is the project lead for the Community Collaboration Project.



*Northern Vision  
Regional Round Table meeting*

### **Workshops for Community Economic Development**

In the fall of 2000, David Darling, visiting scholar from Kansas State University, presented a series of workshops on rural community development. During Dr. Darling's four-month stay at RDI, he delivered more than 10 workshops in rural areas as well as

on-campus lectures. Communities included Minnedosa, Souris, Boissevain, Thompson and Leaf Rapids.

More than 100 participants from these communities learned about local asset mapping, community and economic development change models, understanding a community's economic function and combining the vision with action planning. Dr. Darling also provided academic advice to the Department of Rural Development.

### **Northern Communities Workshop**

Also in the fall of 2000, Robert Annis and David Darling presented a workshop on community economic development for the community members of the Northern Vision Regional Round Table. Nearly 25 community members from the northern communities of Thompson, Leaf Rapids, Lynn Lake and South Indian Lake participated in the session.

### **Meeting with the Town of Steinbach**



*Minister Jean Friesen*

Exposing Department of Rural Development graduate students to actual situations and community perspectives on rural economic and social issues was the objective of a workshop held with the Town of Steinbach in the fall of 2001. Organized by Master of Rural Development student, Garry Enns, the workshop presenters included Robert Annis and Karen Rempel from RDI as well as DRD faculty members Gabe Ferrazzi, Doug Ramsey and Richard Rounds.

The session was held in Steinbach and attracted nearly

60 participants over the course of the two days. The proceedings included a number of presentations by municipal politicians as well as Minister Jean Friesen from Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs.



*Working sessions at Steinbach*

### **Rural Forum**

RDI and the Department of Rural Development were and continue to be active participants in *Rural Forum*. Faculty members, individuals from research and project teams, staff and students were involved in making presentations and hosting the Rural Development display. For example, in 2001, Robert Annis facilitated a day-long, intensive Rural Dialogue session, Karen Rempel presented a workshop on community adjustment and Doug Ramsey from the Department of Rural Development gave two sessions on agri-tourism. RDI also provided partnership support for the Forum.

## **International Community Economic Development Workshops**

Internationally, Robert Annis gave a keynote address at a community economic development workshop held in February 2001 at the Autlan and Puerto Vallarta campuses of the University of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Gabe Ferrazzi, DRD, and Karen Rempel and Robert Annis from RDI, wrote the presentation entitled *Actions of Local Governments*. The presentation drew an audience of about 100 academic faculty and students from the University of Guadalajara. Future exchanges and RDI workshops will likely occur.

## **Community Leadership**

Community leadership is a significant contributor to successful rural communities. In 1999-2001 RDI helped organize several opportunities for community leadership.

## **Community Health Institute**

The Community Health Institute offers professional development opportunities for health care professional in the form of summer institutes. The CHI was initiated as a collaborative effort between the School of Health Studies and the Rural Development Institute of Brandon University. Program planning was undertaken in collaboration with an advisory committee composed of health educators and health professionals from a variety of backgrounds.

In 2000 and 2001, the CHI organized two summer institutes for community health practitioners and leaders. The Institutes were aimed at improving the health and well-being of communities by exploring the determinants of health and by helping community leaders translate population health promotion theory into action.

In total, more than 400 community development and health practitioners from Manitoba and Saskatchewan participated in the Institutes that were held in August of each year at the Westman Centennial Auditorium in Brandon.

Individuals involved in planning and organizing the Summer Institutes included Linda Ross (Dean) and Fran Racher from the School of Health Studies, Karen Casselton-Bower (CHI coordinator) and Robert Annis from RDI.

## **Community Development Conferences for Practitioners**

RDI helped organize and co-sponsor two annual conferences – the Community Futures Partners of Manitoba Conference held in September in Brandon and the annual meeting of the Manitoba Community Development Corporations held in October in Winnipeg.

The conferences were aimed at improving the skills of the directors of community economic development boards and community development practitioners. In total more than 200 community development practitioners and community development board members attended the conferences.

Robert Annis and Karen Rempel from RDI, along with Gabe Ferrazzi and Doug Ramsey from the DRD helped organize the conferences.

### **Seminar: Rural Political Deskillling**

Robert Epp from Augustana University College was a featured speaker at a discussion seminar, *Rural Political Deskillling*, held in the fall of 2001 at Brandon University. The presentation used Alberta's long-term Conservative government as a case study to illustrate the political inertia in rural areas of Alberta, which, he believed, results from limited political change.

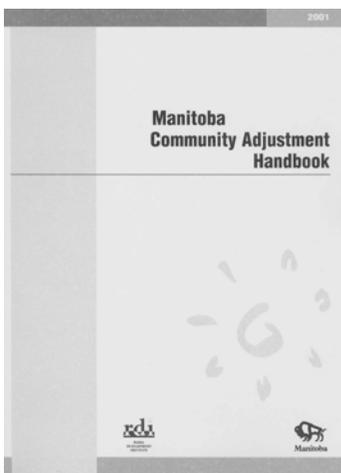
### **Rural Adaptation and Change**

Many rural areas are striving to adapt to new economic factors, technological change, shifting trade patterns and industrial development policies influenced by globalization, deregulation and privatization of government operations. RDI's projects in this domain produced information and practical tools to assist communities with these changes.

### **Brandon and Area Labour Market Survey**

Based on the 1996 Census of Canada, the Brandon and Area Labour Market Survey is a collection of seven documents that present comprehensive, easy access to labour market information. Karen Rempel coordinated the project on behalf of RDI. Ginger Pelletier and DRD graduate student Martina Rehor provided research assistance. The reports are available through RDI.

### **Manitoba Community Adjustment Handbook and Toolkit**



Many communities in rural Manitoba have felt the effects of economic, social or environmental changes. RDI, as well as Manitoba Labour and Immigration, Manitoba Industry, Trade and Mines and Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs provided funding and guidance to develop the Manitoba Community Adjustment Handbook and Toolkit that will help community adjustment committees develop effective, community-based action plans.

Karen Rempel coordinated the project and edited the manual on behalf of RDI. Gabe Ferrazzi from the DRD provided research information on the subject of community adjustment. Sarah English, Brandon University student, provided research assistance. The

Handbook is available in pdf format at <http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/publications>.

## **Manitoba Community Survey – New Rural Economy Research Project**

The New Rural Economy (NRE) Project is a five-year research and education project of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation, a non-profit organization committed to understanding rural Canada. The research project is based at Concordia University in Montreal and is led by Bill Reimer.

RDI provided modest additional financial support to Doug Ramsey, DRD, to assist with the Manitoba component of the research fieldwork. The research team of Doug Ramsey and student research assistants, Rebecca Cowan and Steven Pravat from Brandon University and Deatra Walsh from Concordia University, surveyed households in the Rural Municipality of Rhineland on changes in quality of life, including level of resources such as health, education and municipal services. Rhineland, which includes the communities of Altona, Plum Coulee and Gretna, is one of 32 rural sites in Canada under study in the NRE Project.

## ***Agro-economic and Environmental Issues***

RDI's efforts in responding to agro-economic and environmental issues are based on a multi-disciplinary approach. Over the course of 1999-2001, RDI worked with a number of organizations on awareness, coordination and research activities designed to address the serious issue of leafy spurge infestation in Manitoba. Leafy spurge is an invasive and destructive plant that causes an estimated \$20 million economic loss in Manitoba per year. Leafy spurge is an invasive and persistent plant. The impact of leafy spurge affects landowners, conservation and parkland managers as well as rural municipalities. RDI's activities included field research on bio-control agents, integrated pest management strategies and an inventory on plant species at risk by the invasion of leafy spurge.

## **Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group**

RDI plays an essential role in coordinating and managing the Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group (LSSG) – a diverse association of public, private and non-profit agencies established to increase the awareness of the problem of leafy spurge in Manitoba and to identify strategies for land owners and land managers that will help control infestations.

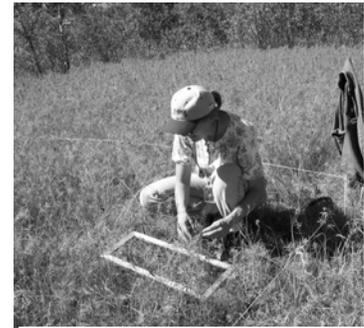
Wayne Digby, former Regional Director for Manitoba Agriculture and Food, chaired the LSSG. The LSSG is coordinated for RDI by Beth Peers. Jennifer Pachkowski, a graduate of Brandon University, has worked on a number of the LSSG's project activities. Project information is found at: [www.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/leafyspurge.html](http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/leafyspurge.html). If you put these links as html, then when published to the Web, would automatically link to the site.



***Jennifer Pachkowski,  
Research Assistant***

## **Field Research Project for Biological Control Agents for Leafy Spurge**

RDI completed the first two years of a three-year field research project, which focused on the survival and success rates of the bio-control populations (resulting from the 1997 beetle releases undertaken by the Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association). RDI's research assistants also collected baseline vegetative data and developed species lists for the sites. Karen Rempel for RDI coordinated the field research project. Pauline Morton, Brandon University geography graduate, with the assistance of Brandon University geography student Nathan Chubak, carried out the field research. Robin Marles, Bill Paton and Al Rogosin from the Brandon University's Faculty of Science provided expertise and assistance to the project. Principal researchers for the project were Rob Bouchier from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Lethbridge Research Station and Paul McCaughey from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Brandon Research Station.



*Pauline Morton,  
Research Assistant*

## **Rural Tourism**

Rural tourism is growing as a potential economic development strategy for rural areas. In 1999-2001, RDI provided resources to support activities in this area of rural interest.

## **University of Guadalajara workshops**



In 2001, BU faculty member, John Everitt and Bryan Massam from York University in Toronto, gave two RDI presentations at the University of Guadalajara's Puerto Vallarta campus. Doug Ramsey from the DRD collected information on cultural festivals and made a presentation on rural tourism at the Autlan campus of the University of Guadalajara. DRD graduate student, Mike Pelliccotti, whose master's research is focused on rural tourism, also attended the workshops.

*Mike Pelliccotti, DRD Graduate Student  
and Doug Ramsey, Department of Rural Development*

## **Manitoba BEST Service Excellence Seminars**

RDI partnered with the Manitoba Tourism Education Council (MTEC) to provide the Manitoba BEST program. The goal is to provide service excellence seminars in the southwest region of Manitoba. The program is coordinated on behalf of RDI by Pamela McTavish.

## Northern Tourism Opportunities



Robert Annis and David Darling (pictured left) presented a workshop for the Northern Visions Regional Round Table providing an opportunity for Doug Ramsey and several graduate students from the DRD to more closely examine northern tourism in the communities of Thompson, South Indian Lake and Leaf Rapids.

## Rural Health

RDI has a particular interest in rural health research and its relationship to rural community development. The Institute works closely with rural communities, policy makers and practitioners, and builds upon linkages with researchers across Canada.

## Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities

The goal of this innovative and interdisciplinary, three-year Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) funded project is to investigate the health of rural populations and communities from a population health model and an interdisciplinary perspective. The project involves a team of university-based researchers and community and government partners. Describing the health of rural Canadians and building tools to assess the health of rural communities exhibits promise for identifying strengths and areas that show potential for improvement.

In 1999-2001 research activities included the development of a framework and indicators for the determinants of health and a series of focus groups in 15 rural communities in southwest Manitoba. Principal investigator for the project is Robert Annis. Co-investigators from Brandon University include John Everitt and Barbara Gfellner from the Faculty of Science and Fran Racher from the School of Health Studies. External researchers include Betty Havens from the University of Manitoba and Bill Reimer from

Concordia University. Brandon University faculty members who are collaborators on the project include Nukte Edguer from the



*Shoal Lake Community Assessment Team formed in 2002*

Faculty of Science, Chris Hurst from Library Services, Doug Ramsey from the DRD; and, Kim Ryan-Nicholls and Renée Robinson from the School of Health Studies. Brandon University students Rebecca Cowan, Mike Kolba and Mark Matiassek provided research assistance to the project and Karen Rempel acted as research coordinator.

### **Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centred Prairie Communities**

The Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centred Prairie Communities is a five-year research initiative to conduct community-focused, action-based research throughout the Prairies. The main purpose of the project is to examine the community determinants of child and youth well-being. The mission of the Centre is to make existing knowledge accessible, to create new knowledge and use both to influence policy and practice as well as to promote communities' capacity to support children and youth, with an emphasis on Aboriginal communities. The Centre is comprised of six networks that represent major Prairie cities or sites.

Brandon University's School of Health Studies is the lead partner in the Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centre Prairie Communities in Brandon. RDI helps to facilitate the project. Elicia Funk from RDI is the project coordinator.

### ***Information Management and Technology Utilization***

Information management and the use of technology can assist communities with sustainable development process, by promoting the role and use of technology in education and training, lifelong learning, investment opportunities and resource development.

In 1999-2001, RDI encouraged rural communities to explore the potential of information management and technology utilization.

### **Community Connections**

The Community Connections project helped communities use technology to build community and regional information systems through the use of community web site development tools.

The impetus for the project came from the SRMIS Group, a group of Brandon University students. Core members of the SRMIS Group include Brandon University students Bruce Hardy, Wayne Kelly, Brett Wilson, Eric Phillips and Pam Robins.

### **CIMnet Utilities**

CIMnet Utilities evolved from the efforts of the SRMIS group. The objectives of this Internet development team were to enhance and provide Community Access Program youth interns with additional experience in working with rural and remote communities; to continue developing information and communication technology skills in order to

maintain and increase their level of employable knowledge and skills; and to assist in the development of rural and remote communities by assisting and enabling them to utilize the potential of the Internet.

### **Network of Community Enterprise Development Centres – Session Facilitation**

The Network of Community Enterprise Development Centres (NCEDC) is comprised of six participating communities: Swan River, Russell, Rossburn, Neepawa, Deloraine and Souris. The goal of the Centre is to foster entrepreneurship in the communities and establish more rural enterprises. In 2001, Robert Annis from RDI assisted the NCEDC by facilitating a session for the Community Access Program interns on identifying and responding to the Internet and related technology needs of communities.

### ***Rural Policy Development***

RDI's research efforts have become useful sources of information for the development of rural policies and programs.

### **Rural Research Scoping Strategy for Western Economic Diversification Canada**

RDI worked with Western Economic Diversification Canada to identify a rural research scoping strategy for the agency to consider as part of its deliberations for future rural policies. The purpose of the strategy was to identify rural research issues, mechanisms and areas of significance to rural communities. The discussion document was completed in 2001 and included an inventory of current research institutions, networks and alliances with interests in rural research. Robert Annis, Gabe Ferrazzi, Karen Rempel and Les Routledge researched, developed and wrote the final report.

### **National Rural Policy Conference**

In May 2001, Robert Annis was invited by the Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, to participate in their National Rural Conference as part of the Rural Dialogue Initiative. Rural community stakeholders from across Canada attended the conference held in Magog, Quebec. Outcomes from the conference have been used to develop new policies and approaches to help rural leaders develop sustainable communities. DRD graduate student Mark Matiassek was invited to attend the conference as a youth delegate.

## **Working Together**

RDI projects include partnerships and collaboration with government and community partners and research granting agencies. Over the course of 1999-2001, RDI worked with a number of partners on its research and outreach activities. RDI gratefully acknowledges the support of a wide variety of partners for providing financial resources for projects, in-kind contributions, advice and guidance.

### ***Research Grants and Project Funding***

RDI's academic and applied research activities rely on financial support from research grants or project funding provided by rural stakeholders including government agencies. Financial support for academic research came mainly from highly competitive processes originating from Canada's national research granting councils and other government programs and initiatives.

RDI was highly successful in garnering financial support for our research and project activities. A more complete listing of RDI funders can be found on page 28.

### ***Support from the Province of Manitoba***

RDI also acknowledges and appreciates the support of Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs in helping us develop our institutional capacity and academic program in order to meet the needs and interests of rural Manitobans. A three-year agreement between the Province and Brandon University for rural development has helped RDI build and sustain a number of key activities, such as:

- Research program support is used to carry out research on rural themes and to develop activities for rural community stakeholders and the DRD academic program such as distance delivery of some DRD courses.
- The Research Fellows Program is an important initiative aimed at expanding the capacity, visibility and expertise of RDI. Over time, the Research Fellows Program will encourage broader academic knowledge as well as practical experience in community development situations.
- The Brandon University Community Outreach Service provides financial support for related costs associated with Brandon University students and faculty carrying out designated community outreach projects.
- Financial support is provided to DRD graduate students to assist them with work related to graduate thesis research.

## **Advisory Committees**

RDI places high value on the collaboration and advice from its partners. Frequently, RDI benefits from project steering committees comprised of rural residents, organizations and stakeholder groups. Over the past 2 years, a large number of individuals and institutional representatives have contributed to various steering and advisory committees.

***Brandon and Area Labour Market Survey:*** Assiniboine Community College; Manitoba Education, Training and Youth; Manitoba Métis Federation; Human Resources Development Canada

***Community Collaboration Project (Years I and II):*** Community Connections Initiative; Community Futures Partners of Manitoba; Environment Canada; Health Canada – Population and Public Health Branch; Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs; Rural Secretariat – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; Western Economic Diversification Canada

***Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities: Brandon*** Regional Health Authority; Community Futures Partners of Manitoba; Health Canada; Marquette Regional Health Authority; Rural Secretariat – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; South Westman Regional Health Authority; Virden-Wallace Community Development Corporation; Wheat Belt Community Futures Corporation

***Manitoba Community Adjustment Handbook and Toolkit:*** Manitoba Industry, Trade and Mines; Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs; Manitoba Labour and Immigration

***Leafy Spurge:*** Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group; Lethbridge Research Station, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; WESTARC Group Inc.

***Summer Health Institute (2000, 2001):*** Addictions Foundation of Manitoba; Alliance for the Prevention of Chronic Diseases; Brandon Regional Health Authority; Health Canada – Population & Public Health Branch; Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism – Recreation & Wellness; Manitoba Health; Winnipeg Regional Health Authority; University of Manitoba

***Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centered Prairie Communities:*** Brandon Early Years Team; Brandon University – School of Health Studies; Brandon Youth Services Committee; Calgary Aspen Family and Community Network Society; Edmonton Social Planning Council; Regina Council on Social Development; University of Saskatchewan – Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit; University of Winnipeg – Institute of Urban Studies

## ***Research and Project Teams***

RDI's research and activities depend on the significant contributions from academic faculty, professional experts and practitioners with skills and experience in project management, group facilitation, research design, data analysis and topic-specific expertise.

Team members come from across the range of disciplines involved in rural development research and from the community, the private sector, government agencies or non-government agencies. In 1999-2001 research and project team members included:

- faculty members and students from Brandon University;
- individuals involved in related research networks or alliances;
- faculty members from other universities; or are
- independent, experienced professionals coming from a range of rural development disciplines, backgrounds and rural communities.

### ***Brandon University faculty members***

Robert Annis, Ph.D., Director, Rural Development Institute  
Ken Bessant, Ph.D., Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Arts  
Nukte Edguer, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Faculty of Science  
Noreen Ek, Ph.D., School of Health Studies  
John Everitt, Ph.D., Department of Geography, Faculty of Science  
Gabe Ferrazzi, Ph.D., Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Arts  
Barbara Gfellner, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Faculty of Science  
Chris Hurst, B.Sc., M.L.I.S., Library Services  
Doug Ramsey, Ph.D., Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Arts  
Fran Racher, R.N., B.Sc.N., B.A., M.Sc., School of Health Studies  
Karen Rempel, B.Ed., M.Ed., Rural Development Institute  
Renee Robinson, R.P.N., B.Sc.M.H., M.Sc., School of Health Studies  
Linda Ross, Ph.D., Dean, School of Health Studies  
Kim Ryan-Nicholls, R.P.N., R.N., B.Sc.N. M.D.E., School of Health Studies

### ***RDI support staff and administration***

Robert Annis, Director  
Sylvia Henry, clerical support (2001)  
Bev Lischka, Administrative Assistant (2001)  
Joan Rollheiser, Administrative Assistant (1999-2001)  
Ginger Pelletier, clerical support (2000-2001)

### ***Community Development Professionals***

Pamela McTavish, B.A. Hamiota  
Beth Peers, B.A. (Spec.), Virden  
Les Routledge, P.Eng., B.Sc., MBA, Virden

***Faculty members from other universities***

David Darling, Ph.D., Kansas State University  
Betty Havens, D.D.L., University of Manitoba  
Bill Reimer, Ph.D., Concordia University

***Student assistants and research assistants***

Nathan Chubak, Brandon University student, Faculty of Science  
Rebecca Cowan, Brandon University student, Faculty of Arts  
Sarah English, B.A., Brandon University graduate, Faculty of Arts  
Garry Enns, B.A., Brandon University, Master of Rural Development student  
Elicia Funk, B.Sc., Brandon University graduate, Faculty of Science  
Bruce Hardy, Brandon University student, Faculty of Arts  
Wayne Kelly, B.A., Brandon University graduate, Faculty of Arts  
Mike Kolba, B.Sc., Brandon University graduate, Faculty of Science  
Mark Matiasek, B.A., Brandon University, Master of Rural Development student  
Pauline Morton, B.Sc., Brandon University graduate, Faculty of Science  
Martina Rehor, B.A., Brandon University, Master of Rural Development student  
Pam Robins, Brandon University student, Faculty of Science  
Tanya Robins, Brandon University student, Faculty of Arts  
Jennifer Pachkowski, B.Sc., Brandon University graduate, Faculty of Science  
Steven Pravat, Brandon University student, Faculty of Education  
Eric Phillips, Brandon University student, Faculty of Science  
Bev Pshebniski, B.A., Brandon University, Master of Rural Development student  
Bob Walberg, B.A., Brandon University, Master of Rural Development student  
Deatra Walsh, Concordia University student  
Lydia Van Zyl, B.T&RP; B.Com. (Hons.), Brandon University, Master of Rural Development student  
Brett Wilson, Brandon University student, Faculty of Arts

## **Institutional Growth and Development**

The term “institutional growth and development” is used to describe the managerial and administrative objectives identified by RDI as priority areas of activities over the short and medium-term. The overall goals of these priority areas of activities are to enhance RDI’s ability to remain open and attentive to the changing context of rural communities; to foster an interest in rural research activities among Brandon University faculty, graduate students, professionals in the community and rural community stakeholders; and to sustain the Institute over the long term.

Financial support and advice from Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs supports much of RDI’s efforts for institutional growth and development. Ongoing liaison with provincial rural development interests is maintained through a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Brandon University. With the guidance of the Steering Committee, RDI identified a number of priority areas of activities for 1999-2001 including:

- identifying focused research domains and building RDI’s capacity for academic research and activities;
- establishing a foundation for growth and governance;
- supporting the development of an academic program in Rural Development;
- fostering the development of rural research networks and alliances;
- communicating on rural issues; and
- broadening the financial support for RDI in order to carry out its vision and mandate.

### ***RDI’s Domains and Capacity for Research***

RDI’s vision is to establish itself as a centre of excellence for rural development research and a leading source of information for rural communities. Research builds knowledge and skills. It is also a critical component of rural development policies and programs. This means that research needs to provide meaningful and accurate information, and policy makers and practitioners need to feel comfortable and confident in asking for information and listening to the responses.

RDI’s research program on rural issues and quality of life dimensions is continually evolving as a result of contact and partnerships with organizations, communities, government agencies, individuals, research and project funders and observers of the rural situation.

- The RDI Advisory Committee is structured to include a broad spectrum of stakeholders with interests in rural issues, representing both internal and external constituencies of Brandon University.
- Support provided to RDI, through the funding agreement with Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, helps RDI identify relevant rural issues for further research or action.

### ***Foundation for Growth and Governance***

The significant and complex challenges confronting rural communities prompted Brandon University to seek changes to RDI. Establishing the foundation for growth and governance were some of the first steps in implementing change and enhancing RDI's ability to address rural issues.

Over the 1999-2001 time period, RDI established governance and decision-making processes that would enable RDI to identify priorities, seek advice from rural stakeholders, fulfill the requirements of the funding agreement with the Province of Manitoba and provide information to Brandon University administration.

### ***Establishment of the RDI Advisory Committee***

The Committee includes rural community stakeholders, provincial and federal government representatives and Brandon University faculty members. The role of the Committee is to act as a sounding board concerning the future development and advancement of the Institute.



*RDI Advisory Committee: (Back row) Jonathan Maendel, Ben Maendel, Robert Annis, Doug Ramsey, Reg Helwer, Bill Pugh, Fran Racher. Front row: Bev Lischka, Frank Thomas, Dion Wiseman, Scott Grills, Bob Grodzik, Darell Pack, Jeff Williams. Missing: Ray Simms, Jim Feeney.*

Members of the RDI Advisory Committee are:

Scott Grills (Chair) Dean, Faculty of Arts, Brandon University  
Robert Annis, Director, Rural Development Institute  
Jim Feeney, Canadian National Railway, Winnipeg  
Reg Helwer, Shur-Gro Farm Services Ltd., Brandon  
Ben Maendel / Jonathan Maendel, Baker Hutterite Colony, MacGregor  
Darell Pack, Rural Secretariat, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Winnipeg  
Bill Pugh, Meyers, Norris, Penny Chartered Accountants, Brandon  
Fran Racher, School of Health Studies, Brandon University  
Doug Ramsey, Department of Rural Development, Faculty of Arts, Brandon University  
Ron Riopka / Bob Grodzik, Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs, Winnipeg  
Ray Simms, North/West MTS Communications Inc., Brandon  
Frank Thomas, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Brandon  
Jeff Williams, VP (Academic and Research), Brandon University  
Dion Wiseman, Department of Geography, Faculty of Science, Brandon University

Resource: Bev Lischka, Administrative Assistant (RDI)

### **Preparation of Internal Documents**

RDI submitted a number of seminal discussion documents, reports and strategies for consideration by Brandon University. These documents were aimed at providing better information to senior administration and the Board of Governors on the role and mandate of RDI, establishing governance and decision-making processes, preparing reports for Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and strategies for RDI's potential role in helping support Brandon University's strategic research plan.

### **Implementing a New, Three-year Agreement between Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs and Brandon University for Rural Development**

The agreement provides \$100,000 annually for institutional support and development activities. Representatives from Intergovernmental Affairs meet at least once a year with Brandon University and RDI through a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee ensures that appropriate support is provided to RDI activities and also actively identifies other projects and research activities that may be developed into RDI projects.

### **Encouraging the efforts of the Brandon University Community Outreach Service**

The Brandon University Community Outreach Service is designed to enhance collaboration and knowledge transfer between the resources of the University and the needs of the community. RDI also helped implement a decision-making and implementation process to be used by the Community Outreach Service Advisory

Committee. Brandon University Community Outreach Service Annual Report contains more information on outreach activities.

### ***Supporting the Academic Program in Rural Development***

In 1999, Brandon University created the new Department of Rural Development and the Masters in Rural Development (MRD) program. From 1999 to 2001, the academic program, including budgetary responsibility, was linked with RDI under the umbrella of the Rural Development unit. During this time considerable energy was devoted to the growth and development of the MRD program, including the planning and development of distance delivery for MRD courses. While the Department of Rural Development is now housed in the Faculty of Arts, it still remains closely linked with the Rural Development Institute. For example, RDI and the Department have worked closely on efforts to recruit students to the program. RDI provides research stipends to financially support DRD students during the research phase of their academic program, as well as employment opportunities for students. These efforts are critical factors in attracting students to Brandon University and the MRD program.

One of the most visible examples of student support is the Henry F. Wiebe Scholarship that is awarded annually to graduate students in the Department of Rural Development. This award is in recognition of the Honourable Henry F. Wiebe, former Mayor of the Town of Winkler. In 2000, Beverly Pshebniski, was the inaugural recipient of the scholarship, and in 2001, Aldin Foy received the award.

The inter-disciplinary nature of RDI's research also provides opportunities for students from a variety of departments and disciplines. Student research assistants have been hired to help with any and all areas pertaining to assisting with the research efforts of members of RDI or individuals involved in projects coordinated by RDI.

### ***Rural Research Network and Alliances***

RDI's effort to conduct rural research depends upon a research network of faculty, professionals in the community, research institutions and affiliations with other organizations interested in rural issues. This network extends locally, provincially, nationally and internationally.

#### ***At the Local Level***

RDI encourages faculty members from across Brandon University to take an academic interest in rural development issues. RDI assists researchers with proposal development, establishment of project teams, information management, as well as publication and dissemination of research findings.

## **At the Provincial Level**

RDI has a close relationship with a number of provincial government departments including Intergovernmental Affairs; Education, Training and Youth; and Industry, Trade and Mines. RDI's Director and project team members have been actively involved in community development associations such as the Community Futures Partners of Manitoba and Manitoba Community Development Corporations. In June of 2001, Community Futures Partners of Manitoba elected RDI's Director, Robert Annis, as Chairperson of the association.

RDI's efforts in increasing the awareness of leafy spurge and bio-control field research have encouraged a rural research network comprised of Manitoba Agriculture and Food, several provincial commodity groups as well as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

## **At the National and International Level**

RDI has built linkages and affiliations at the national and international level with research institutions and individual researchers. Examples include:

### **Canadian Economic Development Technical Assistance Program (CEDTAP)**

RDI was selected by Carleton University to be a regional representative on the Prairies for its CEDTAP. Potential activities for RDI include:

- identifying initiatives from community economic development organizations that have the potential of applying to CEDTAP;
- promoting CEDTAP's programs and activities; and
- playing a pro-active role to select key professional resources in the CED regional community that could benefit the CEDTAP program.

RDI also acts in an advisory capacity to CEDTAP on different issues concerning rural economic development. Through this new collaboration, both Brandon University and Carlton University hope to create opportunities for joint research on community economic development as it relates to rural development.

### **Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNET)**

The CCEDNET promotes excellence and investment in community economic development. The goals of CCEDNET are enhanced community capacity for revitalization and self-reliance; widespread recognition of CED as a significant strategy on a national scale; and solving economic, social and environmental problems at the local level. Member organizations are committed to working towards CCEDNET's goals.

### **Canadian Universities Network on Rural Development (CUNORD)**

CUNORD was established in 1990. It is a collaborative, non-profit undertaking designed to enhance the research, outreach, instructional and other capabilities of its member university-based institutions in the broad field of rural development in Canada. Its purpose is to advance the welfare of rural communities and the integrity of rural environments.

### **University of Guadalajara, Mexico**

RDI exchanged visits and presentations with the University of Guadalajara, Mexico. The Director of RDI and faculty from the Department of Rural Development worked with the Office of International Activities to conduct workshops and explore the potential for cooperation with the University of Guadalajara.

## ***Communicating on Rural Issues***

Encouraging academic, policy, government and community interest in rural research requires a sustained effort to communicate with rural stakeholders. RDI acts as a leading source of information on rural issues to rural community stakeholders including community groups and organizations, government policy makers and academic researchers. Creating an awareness of RDI and promoting its research capacity are also important activities for the Institute.

RDI has a commitment to producing high quality publications. Since 1989, RDI has published more than forty reports on a wide range of issues affecting rural communities. In the fall of 2000, RDI established an Editorial Board to review, adjudicate and recommend research reports for suitability for publication. The Chair of the Editorial Board is former geography professor, John Welsted, Professor Emeritus, Brandon University. Other members of the Board include John Mallea, President Emeritus, Brandon University; Stella Fedenuik, Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration; Alec Paul, Department of Geography, University of Regina; and Robert Annis, RDI.

Communications activities in 1999-2001 included:

- production and distribution of regular newsletters for RDI and the Department of Rural Development;
- regular updating of the Institute's and Departmental websites;
- availability, whenever possible, of electronic versions of documents via RDI's website;
- ordering of RDI publications on-line (<http://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/publications>);
- preparation of annual reports for multi-year projects and agreements, as well as final or summary reports for individual activities; and,

- presentations at conferences and proceedings, meeting and liaising with rural stakeholders, organizations and agencies and/or participation in related rural activities by the Director of RDI, faculty members of the Department and project team members whenever possible.

The following is a summary of RDI's reports, conference and workshop presentations, working papers and publications over 1999-2001.

### **Conference and workshop presentations**

- Annis, R.C. (March 2001). Technical and leadership resources for CED. Panel presenter, *Canadian Community Economic Development Network National Policy Forum*, Vancouver, BC.
- Annis, R.C. (February 1999). The role of universities in rural development. Presented at *Sixth Annual Colloquium of the Rural Research Centre*, CUNORD panelist, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Truro, NS.
- Annis, R.C., Ferrazzi, G., & Rempel, K. (February 2001). Actions of local governments and Brandon University for rural development. Presented at *Seminario Taller Sobre Gestion Municipal en la Costa Sur de Jalisco*, Universidad de Guadalajara, Autlan, Mexico.
- Annis, R.C., Perry, S. & Bruce, D. (July 2000). Building a community economic development movement in Canada. *32nd Annual International Conference of Community Development Society*, Saint John, NB.
- Darling, D. (October 2000). Home based businesses. Workshop given at Neepawa, MB.
- Darling, D. (October 2000). Business retention. Workshop given at Minnedosa, MB.
- Darling, D. & Annis, R.C. (November 2000). Back to basics workshop. Workshop given to Southwest Regional Round Table, Boissevain, MB.
- Darling, D. & Annis, R.C. (November 2000). Building a healthy community. Workshop given at Souris, MB.
- Darling, D. & Annis, R.C. (October 2000). Community strategic planning workshop. Workshop given at South Indian Lake, MB.
- Everitt, J.C., Ramsey, D., Racher, F.E., Bessant, K., & Havens, B. (2001). Putting theory into practice: Conceptual and operational definitions of rural and remote populations in Canada. Presented at *Meeting of the Royal Geographical Society - Institute of British Geographers*, Plymouth, UK.
- Gfellner, B.M. (2001). Profiling rural older adult volunteers. Presented at *Second Annual Scientific Meeting on Rural and Remote Health Research*. Saskatoon, SK.
- Gfellner, B.M., Racher, F.E., & Havens, B. (2001). Challenges in utilizing national secondary databases to explore the health of rural seniors. Presented at *Second Annual Scientific Conference, Rural Health Research Consortium*, Saskatoon, SK.

- Havens, B., Stloukal, L., Norri, D., Keefe, J., Racher, F.E., Coppin, A. (2000). Finding and using data on rural aging: An international perspective. Presented at *First International Conference on Rural Aging*, Charleston, West Virginia.
- Racher, F.E. (2001). Exploring the determinants of rural health. Presented at *First Annual Nursing Conference*, University of Manitoba, Brandon, MB.
- Racher, F.E. (2000). Searching for and using rural data. Presented at *First International Conference on Rural Aging*, Charleston, West Virginia.
- Racher F. and Annis, R.C. (July 1999). Brandon University Community Outreach Service. Presented at *Community Development Society 31st Annual International Conference*, Spokane Washington.
- Racher, F.E., Gfellner, B.M., & Havens, B. (2001). Challenges in utilizing national databases to explore the health of rural seniors. Presented at *17<sup>th</sup> World Congress, International Association of Gerontology*, Vancouver, BC.
- Racher, F.E., Ryan-Nicholls, K., & Robinson, R. (2000). Rural consumers' perceptions of mental health services and other resources utilized following discharge from inpatient programs. Presented at *First Scientific Conference, Rural Health Research Consortium*, Ottawa, ON.
- Ramsey, D. (2001). Defining and describing rural health in Westman: A report of focus group discussions. Presented at *Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation Conference*, Muenster, Saskatchewan, SK.
- Ramsey, D., Annis, R.C., & Everitt, J.C. (2001). The rural community in Westman: Theoretical and empirical considerations. Presented at *Rural Canada: Moving Forward or Left Behind*, Saskatchewan Institute for Public Policy, Regina, SK.
- Ramsey, D., Annis, R.C., & Everitt, J.C. (2001). Definitions and boundaries of community: The case of focus group analysis in Southwestern Manitoba. Presented at *Annual Meeting, Prairie Association of Geographers*, Moose Jaw, SK.
- Ramsey, D., Bessant, K., Everitt, J.C., Havens, B., & Racher, F.E. (2000). Putting theory into practice: Conceptual and operational definitions of rural and remote populations in Canada. Presented at *First Scientific Conference, Rural Health Research Consortium*, Ottawa, ON. Available [http://rhrhg.brandonu.ca/papers\\_conferences\\_presentations](http://rhrhg.brandonu.ca/papers_conferences_presentations)
- Rempel, K. (March 2001). Manitoba community adjustment project. Workshop given at *Rural Forum 2001*, Brandon, MB.
- Ryan-Nicholls, K., Racher, F.E., Gfellner, B.M., & Annis, R.C. (2001). Framework and indicators for quality of life and health of rural communities. Presented at *Second Scientific Conference, Rural Health Research Consortium*, Saskatoon, SK.
- Ryan-Nicholls, K.D. Racher, F.E., & Robinson, J. R. (2001). Mental health service providers' perceptions of mental health services and resources utilized by rural consumers' following discharge from inpatient mental health programs. Presented at *World Assembly for Mental Health*. Vancouver, BC.

Ryan-Nicholls, K., Racher, F.E., Gfellner, B. M. & Annis, R.C. (2000). Toward a framework to explore the health of rural communities. *First Scientific Conference, Rural Health Research Consortium/ Canadian Coalition for Agricultural Safety & Rural Health*, Ottawa, ON.

### **Published papers**

Havens, B., Stloukal, L., Racher F.E., Norris, D., Keefe, J., & Coppin, A. (2001). Finding and using rural aging data: An international perspective. *Journal of Rural Health*, 17(4), 55-63.

Racher, F.E., Vollman, A.R., & Annis, R.C. (submitted). Conceptualizations of 'rural': Challenges and implications for nursing research. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*.

Ramsey, D., Annis, R.C., & Everitt, J.C. (in press). Definitions and boundaries of community: The case of focus group analysis in southwestern Manitoba. *Prairie Perspectives*.

### **RDI Publications**

Ferrazzi, G., Rempel, K., Annis, R., and Routledge, L. (2001) *Final report phase I: Toward a strategic rural research agenda for Western Economic Diversification Canada*. Prepared for Western Economic Diversification Canada.

*RDI Rural Report Spring 2000 and Fall 2001*

Newsletters available in pdf format at:

<http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/RDI%20news.html>

Rempel, K. (ed). *Brandon and Area Labour Market Report Series (2000)*.

*Detailed Report: Overview.*

*Detailed report: Sources of labour market information*

*Detailed report: Mobility, employment, occupations and education levels.*

*Detailed report: Population.*

*Detailed report: Labour force by gender and occupation.*

*Detailed report: Community profiles.*

*Detailed report: Métis population of Southwest Manitoba.*

Rempel, K., Annis, R., English, S. and Ferrazzi, G. (2001). *Manitoba community adjustment handbook and toolkit*. Tool for community adjustment committees. Available: [http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/community\\_adjustment.htm](http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/community_adjustment.htm)

Rounds, R. (2000). *An analysis of the population of agro-Manitoba*. Brandon: Rural Development Institute. (ISBN 1-895397-68-5).

## Working papers

- Massam, B. & Garrison, R. (2001). *Discourse analysis of policy concerning seniors & aging*. Available: [www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/RDIpublications.html](http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/RDIpublications.html)
- Racher, F.E. (2001). *Challenges in using the National Population Health Survey to provide information about rural Canadians*. (Working paper #4, SSHRC Grant #828-1999-1029). Available Brandon University: Rural Development Institute.
- Racher, F.E. (2001). *Access to health services: The concept, application to rural populations and implications for nurses*. (Working paper #3, SSHRC Grant #828-1999-1029). Available Brandon University: Rural Development Institute.
- Racher, F.E., Ryan-Nicholls, K., & Robinson, R. (2000). *Rural consumers' perceptions of mental health services and other resources utilized following discharge from inpatient programs*. (Project Report, BURC Grant #2604). Available Brandon University: School of Health Studies.
- Ramsey, D., Everitt, J.C., Havens, B., Racher, F.E., & Bessant, K. (2000). *Putting theory into practice: Conceptual and operational definitions of rural and remote populations in Canada*. (Working paper #2, SSHRC Grant #828-1999-1029). Available: [http://rhrhg.brandonu.ca/papers\\_conferences\\_presentations.htm](http://rhrhg.brandonu.ca/papers_conferences_presentations.htm)
- Ryan-Nicholls, K., Racher, F.E., Gfellner, B.M., & Annis, R.C. (2000). *Toward a framework to explore the health of rural communities*. (Working paper #1, SSHRC Grant #828-1999-1029)  
[http://rhrhg.brandonu.ca/papers\\_conferences\\_presentations.htm](http://rhrhg.brandonu.ca/papers_conferences_presentations.htm)

## Websites

- Rural Development Institute home page  
<http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/>
- RDI publications  
<http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/RDI/publications.html>
- Community Health Institute  
<http://www.brandonu.ca/Organizations/CHI/>
- SSHRC Research Projects: Determinants of Health of Rural Populations  
<http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/sshrcproject.htm>
- Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group  
<http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/leafyspurge.html>
- Department of Rural Development  
<http://www.brandonu.ca/academic/ruraldevelopment/>

## ***Broadening Financial Support***

Brandon University fully supports the positions of the RDI Director and Administrative Assistant. It also provides modest operational support. However, RDI is largely responsible for securing external funding support for research and project activities.

On an on-going basis, RDI seeks financial support for research project and activities. Over the period of 1999-2001, RDI received more than \$1M in financial support for rural research and related activities from various agencies and community stakeholders including:

- Addictions Foundation of Manitoba
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Alliance for the Prevention of Chronic Diseases
- Assiniboine Community College
- Brandon School Division
- Community Connections Initiative
- Ducks Unlimited
- Environment Canada
- Health Canada
- Human Resources Development Canada
- Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group
- Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- Manitoba Education, Training and Youth
- Manitoba Health
- Manitoba Industry, Trade and Mines
- Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs
- Manitoba Labour and Immigration
- Network of Community Enterprise Development Centres
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Winnipeg Regional Health Authority

This funding support is leveraged many times over by the in-kind support and contributions from hundreds of community volunteers and community stakeholders that participate in RDI's research and project activities.

## Impact and Future Directions

This report concludes with highlights of RDI's impact as we look back over the period 1999-2001. It also includes a look ahead at some of RDI's upcoming activities and future directions.

### ***Making a Difference***

There are definite indicators that RDI is making a difference to rural and northern communities in Manitoba, to students seeking research and employment opportunities, to policy makers seeking accurate assessments of rural issues and to rural community stakeholders.

- Over the period 1999-2001, RDI's research and employment opportunities provided more than \$126,000 for 19 Brandon University students or graduates.
- More than 50 rural and northern communities directly benefited from RDI's efforts in community development through workshops, reports, facilitation and collaboration.
- The research project, *Determinants of Health of Rural Populations and Communities*, has fostered national interest in issues around rural health. It has also raised the awareness at a national level of the statistical obstacles and barriers to defining rural. SSHRC's total funding support for the three-year project is \$410,000.
- The *Community Collaboration Project* has encouraged the development of regional round tables in more than three areas across Manitoba. Partners have contributed more than \$200,000 over the two-year period. The CIM-Net component of the project has helped more than 30 communities involved in the Community Collaboration Project build infrastructure and technical support for information technology.
- Advice and lessons learned from more than a dozen rural community leaders on ways in which community groups can develop resiliency and respond to rural change assisted the development of the *Manitoba Community Adjustment Handbook and Toolkit*. This handbook has been given good reviews by participants involved in the community adjustment process. It is available in electronic format for communities.
- RDI has helped coalesce a multi-stakeholder effort on leafy spurge as evidenced by the Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group. This effort has combined the efforts of landowners, rural municipalities, provincial and federal government departments, conservation and wildlife organizations and researchers. Financial support for the \$60,000 three-year field research

project is generated from the Matching Investment Initiative of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

- More than 40 local, provincial and federal government agencies have been involved in RDI projects including a number of rural units.
- The RDI Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from across a variety of sectors involved in rural communities. This community-based committee is unique to Brandon University.
- Community development boards and practitioners have benefited from RDI's knowledge and expertise. In combination, the Summer Institutes and the Community Development Conferences drew more than 500 participants eager to expand their expertise in rural community development.
- RDI's multi-disciplinary, community stakeholder approach to rural research and project activities reflects its vision of a centre of excellence for rural development research and a leading source of information. Research and project teams have involved more than 20 faculty members from Brandon University and other universities and an increasing number of community development professionals.
- The institutional support provided by Brandon University and Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs has enabled RDI to lever nearly \$1 M for rural research and activities.
- RDI has promoted and expanded its efforts to communicate broadly on rural issues with more than 35 conference presentations, reports, working papers, and newsletters.

### ***Looking Ahead for 2002***

RDI has much to look forward to in 2002. Illustrative examples of future research and project activities and priority areas for institutional growth and development include:

- As in the past, RDI will be supporting the *Summer Health Institute 2002: Building Supportive and Influential Communities* being held in Winnipeg in August. In 2002, the University of Manitoba will join Brandon University to host the event.
- RDI will be concluding the three-year leafy spurge bio-control field research study. Research goals include revisiting the sites based upon predictions of peak population; releasing more beetles to closely monitor their survival rates; developing a nurse site of 100,000 beetles or more; performing soil samples; and increasing public education and awareness. However, RDI is pursuing a second-generation project through the Matching Investment Initiative. In addition, the awareness and extension efforts of the Leafy Spurge

Stakeholders Group will continue and expand under the coordination provided by RDI.

- In 2002, RDI will be completing the *Rural Adaptation Needs Assessment* project initiated by WESTARC Group Inc. This project is investigating the needs of agricultural producers as they attempt to carry out rural adaptation plans – specifically, identification of adaptation, succession and transition issues; determination of the gaps and deficiencies in existing programs; and an examination of the experience of past programs designed to assist farmers transitioning out of agriculture.
- The SSHRC research project, *Determinants of Health of Rural Populations*, will be developing a framework of indicators followed by a workbook for communities to self-assess the health of their communities. Community assessment committees in selected communities will be established to field test the workbook.
- The Network of Community Enterprise Development Centres (NCEDC) *Learning for Life Project* is designed to encourage a culture of lifelong learning as a strategy for community economic development. RDI will be assisting the NCEDC in evaluating the project as well as providing professional development workshops to assist the NCEDC community-based facilitators.
- The Province of Manitoba has sought RDI's expertise in developing government policies through a community economic development lens across the provincial government.
- The development of print, electronic and conference presentations are on-going efforts at RDI. With the active involvement of Department of Rural Development faculty members, RDI is preparing a comprehensive approach for preparation and distribution of existing and future research reports, working papers, project reports and tools for communities.

Through careful deliberation and collaboration with administration at Brandon University, RDI will be addressing the following priorities for institutional growth and development in 2002:

- building a stronger focus for RDI's research and outreach programs;
- enhancing rural research capacity and output at Brandon University;
- supporting rural communities in their development activities and processes;
- building partnerships and establishing RDI in strategic research networks;
- securing external funding support for RDI activities;

- providing input into rural policy at the local, provincial and national levels; and,
- increasing communications with rural stakeholders.