



COLLEGE *of*
CHARLESTON

THE RILEY CENTER FOR
LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

2016 - 2017 Annual Report



176 Lockwood Boulevard, Charleston SC 29403 <http://riley.cofc.edu>



2016 – 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

A MESSAGE TO OUR COMMUNITY:

DURING THE PAST YEAR, THE JOSEPH P. RILEY JR. CENTER FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES BROUGHT OUR MISSION TO LIFE IN MULTIPLE WAYS.

AS A STRATEGIC INITIATIVE OF THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON, WE LEVERAGE THE INTELLECTUAL RESOURCES OF THE COLLEGE TO SUPPORT THE ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL VIBRANCY OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON AND OTHER COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT SOUTH CAROLINA AND BEYOND.

WITH ACCESS TO THE RESOURCES OF THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON'S SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, THE RILEY CENTER STRIVES TO BE A LEADER IN LIVABLE COMMUNITY RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND PRACTICE.



WE KNOW THAT TO BE A “LIVABLE COMMUNITY” THERE MUST BE EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR ALL RESIDENTS TO EDUCATION, JOBS, HEALTHCARE, FOOD, HOUSING AS WELL AS DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES IN ARTS, CULTURE AND

RECREATION.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THIS VISION DRIVES OUR WORK EACH DAY AS WE CONNECT COMMUNITY NEEDS WITH FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENT EXPERTISE. IN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR WORK DURING FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017, OUR TEAM AND THE MANY PARTNERS WE COLLABORATE WITH THROUGHOUT OUR COMMUNITY.

OUR THANKS FOR THE PARTNERSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES WE ARE ABLE TO REALIZE BY WORKING WITH YOU TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES MORE LIVABLE FOR ALL.

Kendra B. Stewart, Ph.D.
Director, Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities
College of Charleston

OUR WORK, OUR TEAM

The Riley Center offers a variety of professional services tailored to fit the needs of those who we serve, including:

- ❖ Strategic planning, program evaluation and policy analysis;
- ❖ Leadership training and coaching;
- ❖ Meeting and focus group facilitation;
- ❖ Board training and team development;
- ❖ Grant writing and research support;
- ❖ Surveys, data collection and data analysis;
- ❖ Faculty research support.

OUR WORK: LIVABLE COMMUNITY PROJECTS FOR 2016-2017

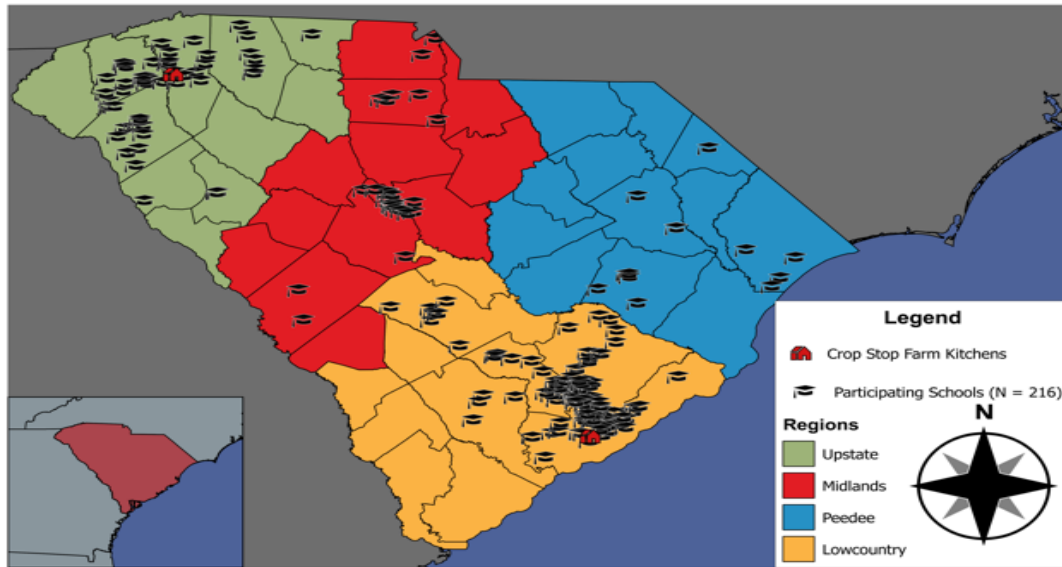
We are proud to highlight some of the fiscal year 2016 – 2017 livable community research projects and programs of the Riley Center.



Food Systems Change Initiative

The Food Systems Change Initiative is a multi-agency collaborative directed by Dr. Olivia M. Thompson of the Riley Center. The initiative began in 2012 as a Charleston-based farm-to-school program and has since become a statewide effort to increase access to healthful, local foods among food insecure youth in particular. Existing strategies proven to increase local food supply and demand are supported while new strategies are developed, implemented, and scaled in consultation with key stakeholders from a number of agencies across the state. Dr. Thompson and her team are currently working to develop state and local policies and procedures to positively change South Carolina's food system indefinitely. Supporting activities have included constructing and opening two commercial farm kitchens; creating a comprehensive school gardening course for educators, which includes installing physical gardens on school grounds; and creating a skill-based culinary training course for school food service professionals. The map below shows the location of the farm kitchens as well as the location of the 216 schools that currently participate in the school-based programming.

South Carolina Schools Participating in South Carolina Schools Cook! and/or School Gardening for South Carolina Educators



Major accomplishments of the Initiative include:

- ❖ **School Gardens:** Installed gardens across 138 schools and community centers and trained 340 educators to use them as outdoor classrooms (Strategic Partner Organization: Clemson University Extension, Amy L. Dabbs is the Project Lead).
- ❖ **Culinary Training:** Trained 398 school nutrition professionals across 178 schools to cook healthful, scratch meals and provided on-site technical assistance for professionals at 47 schools (Chef Miles Huff is the Project Lead).
- ❖ **Commercial Farm Kitchens:** Constructed and opened two commercial farm kitchens that are SCDA and DHEC Grade A certified (Strategic Partner Organizations: Clemson University Center for Architecture, Sweetgrass Gardens, and Mill Village Farms; David Pastre and Harry Crissy are the Project Leads).
- ❖ **Publications:** Four books have been published, including: *The Garden STEM: Curriculum for Your Garden Classroom*; *Seasonal Planting Guide and Calendar for School Gardens* (Upstate and Lowcountry Regions); and *South Carolina Schools Cook: Training Manual for South Carolina Nutrition Service Professionals*.
- ❖ **Nutrition Education:** In partnership with the Lowcountry Food Bank, provided funding for 117 families to participate in the six-week *Cooking Matters* cooking course and 218 families to participate in the *Cooking Matters* grocery store tours.
- ❖ **Sustainable Agriculture:** In partnership with Lowcountry Local First, provided funding for 131 new and beginning farmers and food systems leaders to complete their six-month Growing New Farmers Apprenticeship program.

South Carolina City and County Management Association

The Riley Center manages all professional development and other activities for the South Carolina City and County Management Association (SCCCMA). In fiscal 2016-17 year, we successfully executed two major conferences with 175 attendees at the Florence, SC gathering and 202 participating in Myrtle Beach, SC. Approximately 120 city



and county managers and administrators registered for each of the conferences. Featured topics of discussion included: strengthening police-community relationships, ideas for better citizen engagement and communication, effective council-manager relations, the South Carolina retirement system, employment contracts and more. SCCMA also awarded two \$2,500 *Max Holland and Mitch Sizemore Scholarship Fund* grants to Masters in Public Administration students. Recipients were Katelyn Hruby of the University of South Carolina and Roland Windham of the College of Charleston. This was the largest scholarship amount that SCCMA has awarded to date. For more information about SCCMA see their website at <http://icma.org/en/sc/home>.

Local Government Leadership Institute

In collaboration with Francis Marion University, Coastal Carolina University and the Lake City Partnership, the Riley Center developed and is implementing a program to train and develop local, government leaders. Launched in September 2016, with sessions held throughout 2017, this initiative is underwritten by the Darla Moore Foundation.



South Carolina Clerks to Council Association

The Riley Center administers programs for the Clerks to Council Association, which had a very successful year in 2016-17. Two clerks graduated with their Certified County Clerk (CCC) designation following their annual conference in Myrtle Beach in February 2017. Many new clerks joined the Association, making for very well attended classes throughout the year, and opportunities for more seasoned clerks to mentor those new to the profession. The Association continues to work on their Advanced Certification program so that after clerks attain their CCC, they continue to learn more.

Municipal Association of South Carolina

The Riley Center continues to work with the Municipal Association of South Carolina throughout the year to support their Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute, most significantly in the capstone phase of the program. A Riley Center team member attended the International Institute of Municipal Clerks' annual meeting in Montreal to learn more about how municipal associations work worldwide.

City of Columbia Fire Department

The Riley Center conducted a promotional process for internal candidates for Engineer, Captain, and Battalion Chief. The project involved the design and administration of job-related selection procedures including written tests, management exercises, panel interviews and fire ground simulations. A total of 88 fire department employees took part in the process, resulting in 66 identified as eligible for promotion.

City of Beaufort

The Riley Center conducted a one-day training session on developing performance measures for City of Beaufort department heads. Each department head submitted draft performance measures for review by the Riley Center. One-on-one coaching sessions were conducted with each department head to refine their performance measures. Eighteen department heads attended the program.

City of Greenville

The Riley Center conducted a one-day training session on managing and developing high performance work teams. This session is one in a series offered as part of the City's management development program. Twenty-five managers and supervisors attended the program.

Polarity Thinking Institute

During the summer of 2016, leading community members gathered at the College of Charleston for a three-day seminar to learn an approach and techniques to effectively work through contentious issues facing stakeholders of any group or our broader community. The Riley Center partnered with Bob and Margaret Seidler who provided grant support and also facilitated the interactive training on polarity thinking. Recently used throughout the Charleston Illumination Project, the polarity thinking approach focuses on addressing the natural tensions that exist within groups, organizations, communities and society at large. By equipping 22 local leaders with polarity thinking techniques, effectiveness of various groups can be improved and greater collaboration achieved. Both outcomes further enhance the livability of our community.



Point-in-Time Homeless Count

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandates the counting of people experiencing homelessness for all communities receiving federal funds through the McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Grant program. Each study is carried out locally by a Continuum of Care organization. Local planning bodies are responsible for coordinating the full range of homelessness services in a geographic area.



In Charleston the Lowcountry Homeless Coalition (LHC) is the Continuum of Care. The Riley Center supported the LHC by providing volunteer support to collect data among

people experiencing homelessness and who are unsheltered. In addition, the Riley Center facilitated two focus groups of volunteers. The purpose was to learn more about the insights gained as they collected data from people experiencing homelessness and to generate ideas about how both the process and the services provided could be improved.

South Carolina Sea Grants Project: Climate Change Deliberation



The Riley Center partners with political science professor Matt Nowlin to administer a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant through the South Carolina Sea Grants Consortium. The project is focused on policy options to address climate change and sea level rise. The Center is working on both the quantitative and qualitative collection of data by carrying out surveys of coastal counties, the entire state of South Carolina and ultimately a national poll. The project's aim is to examine attitudes of residents in

South Carolina coastal communities on climate change and test methods for consensus building on policy solutions. The effort will culminate in late October 2017 when a large public deliberation event will be held in Charleston with participants from across the Palmetto state.

Feeding the Carolinas

The South Carolina Food Bank Association and the North Carolina Association of Feeding America Food Banks recently announced the formation of a strategic alliance culminating in a new association called *Feeding the Carolinas*. The Riley Center facilitated the negotiations that included a series of six sessions with the CEOs of the food banks in the two states. After rigorous review of the feasibility and potential benefits of the strategic alliance was completed, the decision was made to form the new association. As part of the process, new bylaws are in place, a new Executive Director began in August 2017, and new board officers have been elected.



The primary benefit of *Feeding the Carolinas* is that more people will be provided with better food across the two states. Efficiencies in sourcing more and better produce as well as sharing resources, such as the large commercial kitchen of the Lowcountry Food Bank, can now be realized. Additionally, other benefits anticipated include: reduced waste; enhanced buying power with better pricing; joint fundraising opportunities; and, more effective local, state and federal

lobbying on behalf of hungry Carolinians. To ensure these benefits are realized, the Riley Center and the Lowcountry Food Bank will co-host, facilitate and report on the proceedings of a multi-day strategic planning retreat to set the course for Feeding the Carolinas during the next three to five years.

YOUth Count

The Charleston YOUth Count is an initiative of the Riley Center and key community partners to count and understand the needs and assets of people under age 25 who are housing and/or food insecure. By documenting the size of this vulnerable population and scoping the nature of the services they need, it is anticipated that local, state and national service providers will be better informed to act on their behalf.

As a first step in the process, the Riley Center completed a survey of College of Charleston students to understand their nutrition and housing needs. More than 2,000 students responded to the 70-question online-survey. Student responses were encouraged during high-visibility *CougarPalooza* and *Cougar Countdown* events.

Findings suggest that 30 percent of students are food insecure with half of that segment being *very* food insecure. These students, estimated at more than 1,500, are neither eating enough to be healthy nor getting enough nutrition to maximize their academic performance.

Thirty percent of the student population report being housing insecure. For most of these, the housing insecurity stems from missing a rent payment or fear they will miss a payment as a result of increased housing costs. Though small numbers, College of Charleston students report sleeping in their cars, public places, couch surfing and taking other measures to find safe places to sleep. It is estimated that 70-90 students are truly homeless, actively trying but being unable to gain entry to a shelter. Like with food insecurity, housing insecurity results in the inability of students to maximize their academic potential, with symptoms like missing class, failing to buy required texts and not participating in key student academic and co-curricular activities.

A task force was formed by the Executive Vice President of Student Affairs to help address the concerns uncovered and documented in this report. The Riley Center plans to continue to use data to drive action from students, faculty, staff and administrators to ensure all students have access to the food and housing they need.



Our Team

The Riley Center operates with a small team of full-time employees, undergraduate and graduate students. We supplement our core team with faculty and staff from other areas of the College. Other seasoned professionals are Riley Center Fellows who assist with various projects and grants. The work of the Riley Center is inspired each day by the legacy, exemplary leadership and continuing counsel of Mayor Joe Riley.



***Kendra B. Stewart, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science
Director of the Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities***

Dr. Stewart's research interests include South Carolina government, non-profit management, state and local government, and women and politics. She is co-editor of *The Practice of Government Public Relations*. Articles she authored have appeared in *The Practice of Strategic Collaboration: From Silos to Actions*, *Urban Affairs Review*, *Public Finance and Management*, *Perspective in Politics*, and various scholarly books. Dr. Stewart teaches courses in the undergraduate political science and graduate public administration program. She regularly provides political analysis for a variety of print, radio and television media, including the BBC, the Associated Press, National Public Radio, Good Morning America, Fox News channel, the Post and Courier, among other media outlets.

Prior to her current position, Professor Stewart was a faculty member at Eastern Kentucky University and worked for the state of South Carolina Budget and Control Board. In addition, she has conducted program evaluations and strategic planning assistance for a variety of public and nonprofit organizations. Kendra is very involved in the community as well, serving on the boards of several professional and non-profit organizations. She has two bachelor's degrees from the University of Central Florida and a Master of Public Administration and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of South Carolina.



Olivia Thompson, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Public Health

Dr. Thompson has more than 15 years of experience working at local, state, and federal levels of public health. Dr. Thompson earned her MPH degree in Behavioral Sciences and Health Education from Emory University and her PhD in Nutritional Sciences with specialization in Epidemiology and Public Health Policy from the University of Washington. Additionally, she has completed research fellowships at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Thompson currently serves as a public health professor with the College of Charleston, her alma mater, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate

public health courses and conducts research in the area of public health systems science. Prior to her arrival at the College of Charleston, Dr. Thompson worked as a consultant in government subcontract to the NIH where she directed data analyses of Early Childhood Longitudinal Study and National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey data to explore the intersection between childhood obesity and hunger; and to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) where she directed all survey operations (i.e., formative research, survey development and fielding, and data analyses and reporting) for the USDA in leading a national, cross-site evaluation of environmental- and policy-level factors associated with farmers' market manager participation in nutrition assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.



Robert W. Kahle, Ph.D., Director of Research & Planning
Assistant Director, Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities

Dr. Kahle's passion is researching issues affecting vulnerable populations, especially those experiencing homelessness or hunger. In his role at the Riley Center, he designs, implements and supervises research, evaluation and strategic planning for non-profit and local government organizations. Current work includes the YOUth Count, consulting with North Carolina and South Carolina food bank associations and supporting faculty research. He is known nationally as an expert trainer of advanced qualitative research methods. Prior to joining the Riley Center in November 2016, he operated his own research and planning consultancy, Kahle Research Solutions, for 23 years. Previously, Kahle was the co-founder and co-director of the Urban Safety Program at Wayne State University's Center for Urban Studies, a program that thrives to this day. Dr. Kahle received his Doctorate in sociology from Wayne State University in 1994 and his Bachelors and Masters in sociology from Ohio University (Athens, Ohio).



Alison Littke-Smith, MPA, Director of Community Outreach

Alison Littke-Smith graduated with her Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Charleston in 2014, and holds an undergraduate degree in Political Science from the College of Charleston in 2012. At the Riley Center she is responsible for administrative support for SCCMA and its conferences. She has worked for the Riley Center in various roles for seven years prior to her current position as Director of Community Outreach.



Elizabeth B. Symon, MES, MPA, Program Manager
Public Health Initiatives

Elizabeth B. Symon, M.E.S., M.P.A., C.S.M., has more than 12 years of experience working as a researcher at local, state, federal and non-profit levels of environmental and public health. She earned her M.E.S. and M.P.A. degrees in Environmental Science and Public Administration from the College of Charleston with a specialization in Harmful Algal Blooms in relation to South Carolina's coastal and human health. Additionally, she has completed research assistantships with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Cooperative Institute for Ocean Exploration, Research, and Technology as well as the City of Charleston. At the Riley Center she conducts research in the area of public health systems science.

Riley Center Fellows *have distinguished careers, offer perspectives and insights on local governmental issues and assist the Riley Center by providing expertise on various issues and projects. Their network of contacts is instrumental in connecting the Riley Center with various local and state government associations and leaders.*

Robert O'Neill



Robert (Bob) O'Neill is Senior Vice President, Public Finance, Davenport & Company where he works with local governments on issues of finance, strategic leadership and management. Mr. O'Neill also is an adjunct professor in the Center for Regional Excellence at Old Dominion University. He is the former executive director of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), which advances professional local government worldwide, and also served as president of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). He held a temporary assignment at the Office of Management and Budget as counselor to the director and deputy director on management issues. Mr. O'Neill earned his B.S. in political science from Old Dominion University and his M.P.A. from the Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Administration, Syracuse University. He completed Executive Program at Colgate Darden School of Business, University of Virginia, and holds an honorary doctorate of laws from Old Dominion University.

Jon B. Pierce, Ph.D.



Jon B. Pierce has worked with state, local and non-profit agencies across the Southeast for more than 35 years as a university-based facilitator, consultant and trainer. Dr. Pierce has assisted a large number of organizations in the design and conduct of strategic planning and goal-setting efforts. He is recognized as an authority on state and local

government in South Carolina. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science with a concentration in public administration from the University of Tennessee and Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts degrees in Political Science from Appalachian State University. Dr. Pierce retired from full-time service as the Director of Governmental Services for the University of South Carolina's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research. He was a Research Associate Professor and taught in the joint MPA programs at USC, Clemson and the College of Charleston. He previously has served as Director of the Governmental Services Institute and the Office of Professional Development and Community Education of Northern Kentucky University, and as Executive Director of the Appalachian Regional Bureau of Government at Appalachian State University.

William E. (Bill) Tomes



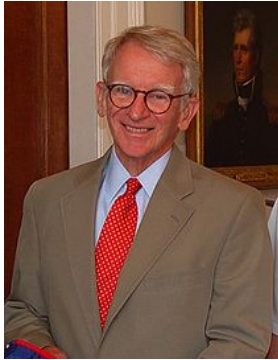
Bill Tomes is a Fellow at the Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities at the College of Charleston and is the former Director of Governmental Research and Service at the Institute for Public Service and Policy Research at the University of South Carolina. Through his consulting firm, Bill works with public and non-profit organizations in South Carolina. Bill has a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Human Resources. During the past 30 years, he has worked as an organizational development consultant specializing in both the private and public sectors in the United States and Canada. He has conducted training programs and written book chapters and articles on various human resource and governance topics. Bill currently serves on the faculty of the Local Government Leadership Institute, the Non-Profit Leadership Institute at Francis Marion University, and the Institute of Government for County Officials.

Riley Center Faculty Fellows 2016-2017

The following College of Charleston faculty worked with the Riley Center during the past year on various projects:

- ❖ **Dr. Hollis France** <http://polisci.cofc.edu/about/faculty-staff-listing/france-hollis.php>
- ❖ **Dr. Phil Jos** <http://polisci.cofc.edu/about/faculty-staff-listing/jos-phil.php>
- ❖ **Dr. Kevin Keenan** <http://polisci.cofc.edu/about/faculty-staff-listing/keenan-kevin.php>
- ❖ **Dr. Matt Nowlin** <http://polisci.cofc.edu/about/faculty-staff-listing/nowlin-matthew.php>
- ❖ **Dr. Jordan Ragusa** <http://polisci.cofc.edu/about/faculty-staff-listing/ragusa-jordan.php>

Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Chief Inspiration Officer



The former Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. worked with the Riley Center by speaking to classes, meeting with students and faculty, and giving talks on behalf of the Center to local governments and nonprofits. He also has donated his personal and political papers and memorabilia to the College to archive and make available to the public. Mayor Riley is widely considered one of the most visionary and highly effective governmental leaders in America.

First elected Mayor in December 1975, Mayor Riley completed an unprecedented ten terms in January of 2016. Under his leadership, Charleston has increased its commitment to racial harmony and progress, achieved a substantial decrease in crime, experienced a remarkable revitalization of its historic downtown business district, seen the creation and growth of Spoleto Festival U.S.A., built the beautiful Waterfront Park, developed nationally-acclaimed affordable housing, and experienced unprecedented growth in Charleston's size and population.



Mayor Riley led a city government with an impressive record of innovation in public safety, housing, arts and culture, children's issues, the creation of park and other public spaces, and economic revitalization and development. The City of Charleston is recognized as one of the most livable and progressive cities in the United States.

The Riley Center's New Location

In July 2017, The Riley Center moved to a new location at 176 Lockwood Boulevard. Our new offices are configured to encourage collaboration, leverage technology and feature meeting spaces that allow us to host various coalitions, forums and partners as we work towards the betterment of our community.

