



## November 2015 News & Updates

### Letter from the President

As I enter into the presidential office of AUBER, I am taken back by the long legacy of the organization. This association has 68 years of aligning research interests and encouraging best practices among some of the finest universities across the nation. I have personally benefited from this organization since my first encounter in 1999 in Little Rock, Arkansas. It has broadened my research scope horizon, helped me build a peer network, and propelled me into my current position as a director.



Jeremy Hill

I am very grateful to AUBER and I wanted to give back, which is why I entered into the presidential track. For each role as an officer (Vice President, President Elect, President, and Past President), I wanted to do more than complete the required tasks. My starting point was first to assess what people have done in the past and to see if those changes had any lasting impact. Unfortunately, I think AUBER looks a lot like the movie "Groundhog Day". For those of you unfamiliar with the movie, Bill Murray repeats the same day over and over. As leaders are elected into this organization, they tend to identify the same problems, implement a variety of different solutions, and then move onto the next role. The problem that occurs is that as a new leader enters, they reassess and implement a slightly different solution. This pattern of investing time and effort without gaining much ground can feel a little daunting to subsequent leaders, giving an almost helpless feeling.

To help solve this memory lapse between officers I did one very simple thing, I wrote everything down into a handbook for the next Vice President. The handbook includes the ideas from previous leaders, an organization of the task list/timeline, and notes of successes and failures during the term. This handbook will allow the next person to spend less time learning everything from scratch and more time implementing and building upon the work done from the previous administrator. This one enhancement will not solve the "Groundhog Day" amnesia problem, but I believe that it is one big step towards that goal.

During the presidential address at the fall conference, I talked about what I wanted to do over the next year. If I were to encapsulate this into two words, it would be to "create value". As our AUBER historian Lorena Akioka has indicated, the association has morphed a few times since the inception. Some of these shifts, as has been told to me, include the following:

- \* Less staunchy and more open to applied research
- \* From only serving large bureaus to embracing small centers
- \* Adding research communicators

It is time for AUBER to think about its value proposition, the membership base, and the services that are provided. Clearly, the fall conference is the core product of the organization. We are at a point where we need to make sure that the structure and content are relevant and valuable. We also need to make sure that there is more consistency between years. I would like to see this organization reinvest in the program by creating a position that helps with the program development and marketing, and reducing some of the "amnesia" issue identified earlier.

Although the fall conference is our core product, the landscape of center work and the value of the conference has shifted. Today, centers have tighter travel budgets, have higher demands for being self-funded, and many centers are looking for a higher return for their investment. This organization, in my opinion, is ready for the next phase. I believe that this organization needs to create more value to the centers throughout the year and for more people within each center.

As president, I am going to invest my time in trying many new things like LinkedIn, webcasts, and perhaps new ways for communicating. If there is a positive response, I will identify ways to make it a permanent part of the organization, even if it means personally committing to it after I exit this position. If there is a low response, I will drop it and move onto the next idea. This is where you come into play. If you like something, participate and engage. Although I want positive and constructive feedback, I am going to measure success and failure based on engagement.

## **Ben McKay appointed to AUBER Board**

During the fall 2015 board meeting the offices and directors decided to broaden the definition of the research communicator to include other research staff. This shift was in response to the lack of potential research communicators available to serve as a director on the board.



Because of the vacant position and broader definition, as the president I had the opportunity to appoint someone to fill that slot. After seeking recommendations and deliberating with the AUBER board, I am pleased to announce that Ben McKay will join as a director for the two year term ending fall of 2017.

Ben has been an active member of AUBER since joining the [Bureau of Business Research and Economic Development](#) at Georgia Southern University in 2007. In my own past experiences with him and based on recent presentations at AUBER, I expect that he will provide the organization a fresh perspective.

The following was his response to the invitation to join as a director of the board:

"I think this organization has a unique and valuable role to play in the economic analysis community going forward. I am looking forward to helping the organization meet the challenges we are currently facing".

## Update on the 2014-2015 AUBER Publications Award

By Eric Thompson, 2014-2015 Publications Committee Chair

The AUBER Publications Committee announced winners at the 2015 AUBER Fall Meeting in Orlando, Florida in all three award categories: Excellence in Print Publication, Excellence in Electronic Publication, and Excellence in Website. The winners were:

**Excellence in Website Award** - Indiana Business Research Center of Indiana University for the website [StatsAmerica](#). The Director is Jerry Conover and the Editor directly responsible for website production is Carol Rogers.

**Excellence in Electronic Publication** - Center for Economic Development and Business Research, Wichita State University for the publication [Wichita in Megapolitan America: An Analysis of Wichita's Potential Export Markets](#). The Director is Jeremy Hill and the Editor directly responsible for publication is Michael Busch, senior research economist.

**Excellence in Print Publications** - Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana for the publication [Montana Business Quarterly](#). The Director is Pat Barkey and Editor directly responsible for the publication is Shannon Furniss.

The AUBER Publications Committee would like to thank each of the AUBER Members who participated in the Publications Award competition. This year's award competition reflected several updates by the Publication Committee. Specifically, the Publications Committee worked to update entry and evaluation forms to provide applicants with more transparency about the judging criteria and also provided the option for applicants to receive feedback from their evaluation forms, if they choose to do so. We encourage members to participate in the upcoming publications award for the 2015-2016 year. Initial announcements of the award competition should come out during the spring of 2016.

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### 2016 AUBER Fall Conference

#### Fayetteville, Arkansas

October 22-25, 2016, the Chancellor Hotel

"Local Heroes: Understanding Regional Supply Chains and Economic Development"

Jim Bullard, St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank President,  
Keynoter



Planning is underway for our 2016 AUBER Fall Conference in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Our host, Kathy Deck, director of the [Center for Business and Economic Research](#), Sam M. Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas, will welcome us to [Fayetteville](#) and has begun preparations for an excursion and dinner reception at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, one of the region's cultural gems.

The program theme will revolve around regional supply chains and their importance to the local economy. Chief economists from large regional firms are being invited to present on panels and in plenary sessions. For research communicators, there will be sessions on the latest software and other tools for print and web-based report publication. And stay tuned

for announcements about a targeted workshop or other hands-on training opportunity before or during the conference.

In the meantime, please take a moment to answer a survey about our recent meeting in Orlando, to help us improve your fall conference experience. [[Fall Conference Survey](#)]

And if you have panel or presentation ideas, I welcome your calls or emails.

Best wishes,

Bruce Kellison

President Elect and 2016 Fall Conference Program Chair

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