

Community-Based Adjustment to Textile Plant Closure and Downsizing

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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Session 3

Presentation: “Community Response to the Pillowtex Textile Kannapolis Closings: Rapid Response Team as Facilitative Device”, Myra Beatty, Doug Longman and Van Tran

Discussants: Bill Schweke, Research Director, Corporation for Enterprise Development
Jesse White, UNC School of Government

Bill Schweke's comments are linked to the Web page.

Jesse White praised the paper, and made three additional points.

- A next step is necessary, beyond Rapid Response. He gave the example of Davidson County. There was Rapid Response, and then there was Visioning Davidson. The latter was a complete inventory of the assets of the region and the skills of its people, with an eye to identifying future employment opportunities.
- The community college system needs to have a rapid response capacity built into it. He cited individuals in Davidson County who had to wait two years for training programs through the community college system.
- Rapid Response should include programs that facilitate small business creation. Workers need not work for someone else – they could start their own business if given encouragement and support. He mentioned an initiative (similar to the Grameen Bank) used by the Appalachian Regional Commission in Knoxville, TN.

Jim Cook of Cabarrus County also provided comments. His comments are linked to the Web page.