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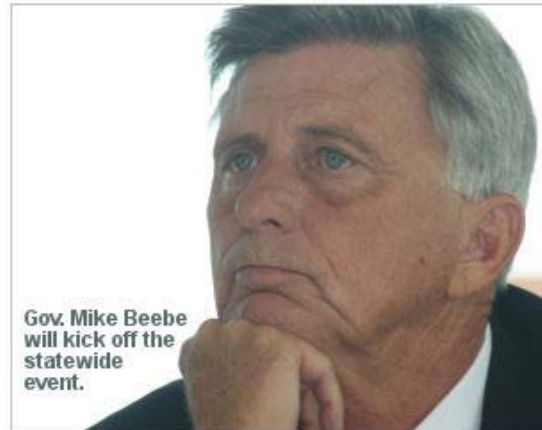
Economic Issues Videoconference on Sept. 30

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The University of Arkansas - Fort Smith is one of seven locations in Arkansas hosting a statewide business and economic discussion via videoconferencing on Wednesday, Sept. 30.

The Arkansas Economic Issues Breakfast Series, slated to begin at 7 a.m. in the Reynolds Room of the Smith-Pendergraft Campus Center, links people from across Arkansas and provides an interactive setting for learning about the latest economic trends that affect businesses in the state.



Gov. Mike Beebe will kick off the two-hour conference, which will include a panel of statewide economic experts providing insights about the functioning of the Arkansas economy and how the regional economies within the state contribute to the overall economic picture. After the panel discussion, attendees will have an opportunity to participate in conversations about unique local and regional economic opportunities and challenges.

Dr. Paul B. Beran, UA Fort Smith chancellor, sees this discussion as beneficial to the future of Arkansas.

"This is a way for the entire state to understand what resources are available and why the future successes in economic development depend on all of us working together toward common goals," said Beran. "Those of us representing UA Fort Smith and the six other institutions involved in this undertaking believe that Arkansas citizens must leverage their resources to compete successfully in the global economy."

The panel of experts includes Dr. Kathy Deck, director of the Center for Business and Economic Research in Fayetteville; Alan McVey, deputy director of the Arkansas Department of Economic Development in Jonesboro; and Dr. Michael Pakko, chief economist and state economic forecaster for the Institute for Economic Advancement in Little Rock.

Dr. Steve Williams, dean of the College of Business at UA Fort Smith, said the local discussion following the state-wide video session will target the Fort Smith region.

"It will focus on the area's economic assets, opportunities for economic development, likely paths for development and avenues for local and regional collaboration, as well as critical factors hampering current conditions and limiting growth and development," said Dr. Williams.

The series is coordinated by the Institute for Economic Advancement at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in cooperation with the College of Business at UA Fort Smith, the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, the Delta Center for Economic Development at Arkansas State University, the Economic Research and Development Center at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, the University of Arkansas at Monticello and Southern Arkansas University.

There is a \$20 fee, and reservations are required by Sept. 28 by calling (479)788-7807 or emailing colbus@uafortsmith.edu.