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Amy Seif

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UNH Media Relations

New Web Site Presents Socio-Economic Data For U.S Regions

Offers Comparisons Between Urban And Rural Areas

Contact: [Amy Seif](#)

603-862-4650

Carsey Institute

[Beth Potier](#)

603-862-1566

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Curious about what people earn in New England versus the Midwest? About the median age of Southern city-dwellers compared to people living in the rural South?

A new Web site launched by the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire, the Regional Indicators Site, allows interactive access to socio-economic indicators for cities, suburban and rural areas of the nation. The site compiles data from two major sources, the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, to provide indicators related to population characteristics, income and poverty, employment, family and kids, and education across nine geographic regions of the nation.

"Social and economic factors vary widely from region to region and from urban to rural areas," says Curt Grimm, coordinator of programs at the Carsey Institute. "We hope policymakers, community development practitioners, and the general public will find this site useful and that it will assist those who use it in better understanding the complexity of the available data by providing a snapshot of some differences seen in important indicators across and within regions of the country."

Some of the variations that the site reveals:

- Child poverty rates are high in the Northeast, especially in the Middle Atlantic cities. Population growth, however, is low. In the Midwest, however, population rates are low but poverty rates are among the lowest in the nation.
- In the South, income levels – both per capita and median – are low and poverty rates are high, particularly in rural areas.
- Nonmetropolitan job growth in the West is higher than in any other region.

The Regional Indicators Site joins a similar site launched by the Carsey Institute in 2005 that provides quick access to socio-economic indicators for the three Northern New England states of New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont, at the county and state level.

"The Carsey Institute developed our regional indicators site to encourage users to gain a better understanding of changes and trends in rural areas across the country," says Cynthia M. Duncan, director of the Institute. "Rural America is changing and its challenges are distinct from urban America; this reality is quickly illustrated during a visit to the site."

The Regional Indicators Site is at <http://regionalindicators.unh.edu>. It is supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire conducts research and analysis on the challenges facing families and communities in New Hampshire, New England, and the nation. The Carsey Institute sponsors independent, interdisciplinary research that documents trends and conditions affecting families and communities, providing valuable information and analysis to policymakers, practitioners, the media, and the general public. Through this work, the Carsey Institute contributes to public dialogue on policies that encourage social mobility and sustain healthy, equitable communities.

The Carsey Institute was established in May 2002 with a generous gift from UNH alumna and noted television producer Marcy Carsey.