Meet The Team

The staff of the Burruss Institute is comprised of professional researchers who bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to the team. The wide range of staff members’ areas of expertise allows the Institute to design projects that stand up to professional standards and meet the needs of clients.

**Dr. William Baker**
Executive Director

Dr. Baker came to KSU in 2003 following his career in city management. He is also a professor in the MPA program. Dr. Baker oversees research projects and provides leadership direction for the Institute.

**Christy Storey**
Director of Operations

Starting as a researcher, Christy joined the Institute in 1990. She has worked in multiple capacities since, and currently oversees all contracts and works closely with clients to ensure projects meet their needs.

**Terry Sloope**
Assistant Director

Terry came to the Institute in 1992 after teaching political science at Texas A&M. He is responsible for survey design and analyzes data collected by the Institute.

**Kelleigh Trepanier**
Associate Director

Kelleigh joined the Institute in 2000 after working at the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan. She now oversees and conducts program evaluation projects and designs surveys for the Institute’s projects.

**Paul Vaughn**
Assistant Director of Survey Technologies

Paul has over 20 years of survey research experience. Paul joined the Institute in 2008, and develops web and mail surveys.

**Ashley Crawford**
Research Associate

In 2006, Ashley joined the Institute working as an interviewer in the survey lab. She now focuses on program evaluation projects.

**Ryan Falvai**
Research Associate

Ryan joined the Institute in 2011 as an intern. Today, he prepares GIS maps, oversees web and social media assets, and assists in managing the survey lab.

**Monica Stopar**
Administrative Associate

Monica began working in the survey lab as an interviewer and has now transitioned to an administrative assistant.

**Judith Vaughn**
Administrative Associate

Judith joined the Institute after a career as an administrator at Georgia State University. She now assists in business operations.
The Burruss Institute completed a wide range of projects for a variety of organizations during 2015. The projects highlighted in this report are examples of how the staff members of the Institute utilize their varied skills to complete projects with many different requirements in order to meet the needs of our clients.
Burruss Helps Government Organizations at all levels of government. We provide data collection services to furnish government officials with the information needed to make decisions that ensure public services are effective, efficient and meet the needs of the people.
Government Organizations

The Burruss Institute conducted projects on behalf of multiple state and local government agencies. The projects completed by the Institute include surveys utilizing multiple modes of data collection, such as web-based surveys, paper and pencil, and telephone surveys. Government organizations often seek the input of the people they serve and the projects below are examples of how that is accomplished.

Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Metro Atlanta Speaks Survey
The Institute managed a survey of 5,200 randomly selected adults living in the 13 county metro Atlanta region to get their opinions on a host of “quality of life” issues facing the metro area. The survey included respondents with traditional landline telephones as well as those who rely primarily on cellphones. The ARC uses this data to help with future planning initiatives, and the results of the survey are incorporated into numerous online presentations available on the ARC website.

Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Analysis of Point-in-Time Homeless Count
The Institute was part of a team of researchers who analyzed data from the 2015 Georgia Department of Community Affairs Point-in-Time Homeless Count. This program attempts to measure the size of Georgia’s homeless population. The institute processed thousands of paper surveys to compile a database of participants’ responses. The data were analyzed by Dr. Jennifer Priestley of KSU’s statistics department to create a profile of homeless individuals and determine changes in the homeless population since the 2013 Point-in-Time count.

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Survey
The Institute managed a telephone survey of 4,500 adult residents living in the 15 county service area of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District. Participants were reached using a random sample of landline and cellular telephone numbers. The survey examined respondents’ opinions on issues related to water conservation and the extent to which they engage in water saving behaviors in the home.

Muscogee County Needs Assessment
The Columbus Consolidated Government contracted with the Institute to provide a profile of Muscogee County. Using data from the Census, Georgia Department of Education, various health databases, and other sources the Institute developed a profile for several variables ranging from health, economics, education, poverty, to demographic changes within the population of Muscogee County. Maps depicting food desert areas within the county were also created as part of the profile.

Survey of Columbia County Residents
Columbia County, Georgia, commissioned a telephone survey of its residents in spring 2015 as part of the Vision 2035 Comprehensive Plan update. The purpose of the survey was to gather public input regarding the future development of the county. To this end, members of the Planning Department and Steering Committee developed a survey instrument in conjunction with AMEC Foster Wheeler and the A.L. Burruss Institute. The survey was designed to measure resident ratings of various aspects of quality of life in their community as well as their preferences regarding future development in Columbia County. The Institute obtained 405 completions from a random sample of adult residents in the county.
The Burruss Institute helps nonprofit organizations by providing services they often do not have the capacity to provide internally. Nonprofits must balance the needs of the community they serve with the capacity of the organization to provide services. The Institute is able to provide program evaluation, needs assessments, and survey services that are typically beyond the scope of a nonprofit’s capability. The result of the work conducted by the Institute provides nonprofit organizations with the data needed to ensure programs are meeting their intended purposes and that their community’s needs are being met and have not significantly changed.

The Council on Alcohol and Drugs
The Burruss Institute has served as evaluator for Alcohol Abuse Prevention Initiative programs conducted by The Council on Alcohol and Drugs since 2012. These programs are funded by the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to prevent underage drinking by working in collaboration with local, regional and statewide partners to serve selected target communities in the City of Atlanta and Northwest Georgia.

Drugs Don't Work (DDW)
Since 2007, the Burruss Institute has conducted online and phone surveys, as well as program evaluation, to determine the effectiveness of DDW programs in Georgia, an initiative of the Atlanta-based Council on Alcohol and Drugs. The Institute conducted a web-based survey for area chambers of commerce, and an evaluation of DDW presentations. The project also included a phone survey to ascertain how DDW member companies use information provided by the DDW program, including questions on methods of presenting information to employees, an evaluation of the advantages of joining DDW, and suggestions on program improvements.

Latin American Association
Latino Community Needs Assessment
The Institute collaborated with Dr. Alan Lebaron and Dr. Darlene Rodriguez to implement a multi-mode data collection project that included printed surveys, an online survey, and focus groups to collect information on issues important to the Latino population in metro Atlanta and to identify gaps in service delivery. The paper survey was distributed to over 1,400 members of the Latino population in the 10-county metro area, and the online survey was completed by an additional 240 members of that population. Eight focus group sessions were held with members of targeted groups (i.e., women, men, recent immigrants, working professionals, parents, college students, etc.) in the Latino community.
School Districts

The Burruss Institute helps school districts through projects that enable administrators to go beyond the classroom and collect data on the success of educational programs. The job of educating the nation’s children extends well beyond the classroom. School districts often need outside organizations to provide services to ensure that the needs of the students are met and that employees of the school district have the latest education and training. The Institute worked with multiple school districts to provide evaluation services of programs offered in after-school settings, and provided training to educators and personnel who interact with students.

21st Century Learning Centers (CCLC)
During 2015, the Institute collaborated with Dr. Corrie Theriault and Dr. Scott Ritchie to evaluate progress toward goals set by the Georgia Department of Education as part of its ongoing evaluation of multiple 21st Century Community Learning Center programs in various locations throughout Georgia. Locations and programs that were evaluated during 2015 include three programs in Douglas County, Impact Champs, Factory Transition, and Champs. Other evaluation projects include the Empowered Youth of Columbus program, the Camp Zion: Next Level Community Center Program in Macon, GA and the Moving in a “Pod”Sitve Direction Program at Marietta City Schools.

Columbus Community Schools Personnel Training
The Burruss Institute is currently partnering with KSU faculty Dr. Douglas Bell and Dr. Joya Carter-Hicks from the Bagwell College of Education and Dr. Barbara Blake and Ms. Lola Campbell from the Wellstar College of Health and Human Services to design, coordinate, and provide in-service training to personnel within Columbus Community Schools, a program providing scholastic and recreational activities for children in the Muscogee County school district. The training focuses on child and youth development, safety, health and nutrition, and the reporting and identification of children who may be victims of abuse and neglect.

Muscogee County School District Evaluation of Math and Science Partnership Program
The Burruss Institute contracted with the Muscogee County school district to provide external evaluation services for the Math and Science Partnership Program grant. The goal of this two year grant is to increase math and science content knowledge for special education co-teachers. The Institute conducted quantitative and qualitative analysis to measure program success using assessments of knowledge and attitude.
Research Support

Helping other researchers is one of the ways the Institute assists in the advancement of knowledge. Researchers from other organizations, or who happen to be working independently, often need the resources provided by the institute to reach a population and collect data. The Institute is able to provide services that enable researchers to complete projects that otherwise would not have been possible.

Fort Valley State University Economic Agriculture Surveys
Researchers at Fort Valley State University partnered with the Institute to conduct two separate surveys examining the economic impact of different agricultural practices on meat processing facilities and dairy farmers. The first survey was conducted using a multi-mode method utilizing online, paper, and telephone surveys. Meat processing facilities in Georgia were asked to answer questions pertaining to the economic impact of adhering to food safety regulations. In particular, policies related to compliance with public regulation and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Systems while processing goats were analyzed. The second survey also employed a multi-mode methodology utilizing online, paper, and telephone surveys. This survey examined the economic impact of grazing on dairy farmers in the Southeast, as well as their interest in grazing dairy cows on their farm.

Marshall European Center for Security Studies Survey
The Burruss Institute assisted faculty member Dr. Eliza Markley with the analysis and reporting of a survey of alumni from the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies. The purpose of the impact analysis was to examine the long-term effects of the Marshall Center experience on the professional, social, and personal developments of its alumni, and to analyze the relationship between various components of the experience, on the one hand, and alumni’s attitudinal change toward social values and norms, trust development, and network formation and use, on the other hand.

National Study of Financial Lifestyles
In preparation for a follow up of the best-selling books, The Millionaire Next Door and The Millionaire Mind, written by Dr. Thomas J. Stanley, the Burruss Institute worked with the Affluent Market Institute to conduct a multimodal study consisting of paper and online surveys. Over 10,000 residents and small business owners across the nation were randomly selected to participate in the survey, based upon high concentrations of college graduates, executives, professionals, and business owners. The survey covered financial, economic, and success topics.
Private Organizations

The Institute also helps private organizations when the goals of a project serve a public good. There are a wide range of private organizations whose mission extends beyond the bottom line. The Institute is able to provide services to help these organizations often by providing data collection services of target populations via surveys.

Atlanta Journal Constitution Middle Class Survey in Metro Atlanta
The Institute managed a telephone survey of 625 adults living in the 10 county metro Atlanta region on behalf of The Atlanta Journal Constitution (AJC). Participants were reached via landline and cellular telephones to increase the representativeness of the sample. Participants were asked their opinions on what it means to be middle class in America today and about issues the middle class faces. The Atlanta Journal Constitution used the results from the survey to create the four-part series, entitled “The Riddle of the Middle”, which appeared in the AJC and on its website in the winter of 2015.

Griffin and Strong Disparity Studies
The Institute conducted several disparity studies on behalf of Griffin and Strong P.C. throughout 2015. Staff oversaw the development and implementation of several online surveys of vendors who provide products and services to public organizations to determine whether or not there are perceptions of racial or gender disparities in public contracting. The Institute conducted surveys of these vendors in a number of localities including Savannah (GA), Memphis (TN), as well as vendors working with the Georgia Department of Transportation.
At the heart of every project the Burruss Institute undertakes is our commitment to serving the public. The excellent example set by the late A.L. Burruss in his work as a Georgia legislator infuses the Institute with the same energy and dedication when conducting projects that lead to information that can be used to improve the lives of those we serve.
Public Service

The Burruss Institute provides public service through the execution of projects that otherwise may not have been feasible. Through this process, the Institute is able to provide results and information that would normally not be available, and gives the public a chance to voice their opinions on topics of concern.

Burruss Current Issues Poll

During the summer of 2015, the Institute conducted a survey of Georgia residents to measure opinions on current events and legislative issues. The survey compiled results from 1,256 respondents from across the state to obtain a representative sample of Georgia’s residents. Participants were reached via landline telephone and cellular phone in order to ensure a representative sample. Participation in the survey was distributed among 39.9% of respondents who indicated they lived in metro Atlanta and 60.1% who indicated they lived outside the metro area. Below are some of the highlights of the results obtained from the survey.

Participant Responses to Select Questions on the Burruss Current Issues Poll

- Are race relations in Georgia better today than they were 10 years ago?
- Do law enforcement officials in your area treat everyone fairly?
- Should gay marriage be legal in the state of Georgia?
- Should Georgia build high-speed rail lines that connect major cities around the state?
- Would you support the legalization of casino style gambling in Georgia?
- Should undocumented immigrants be allowed to stay in the United States?
- Are there too many restrictions on guns, a need for more, or already enough restrictions?
- Should marijuana for personal use be legal in the State of Georgia?
The mission of the Burruss Institute is to enhance the ability of governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations to make informed decisions for the public good by providing relevant data, technical resources and skill development.