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Reversing the Brain Drain

Milan Wall

Heartland Center for Leadership Development, mwall@heartlandcenter.info

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Reversing the Brain Drain

Milan Wall, Co-Director

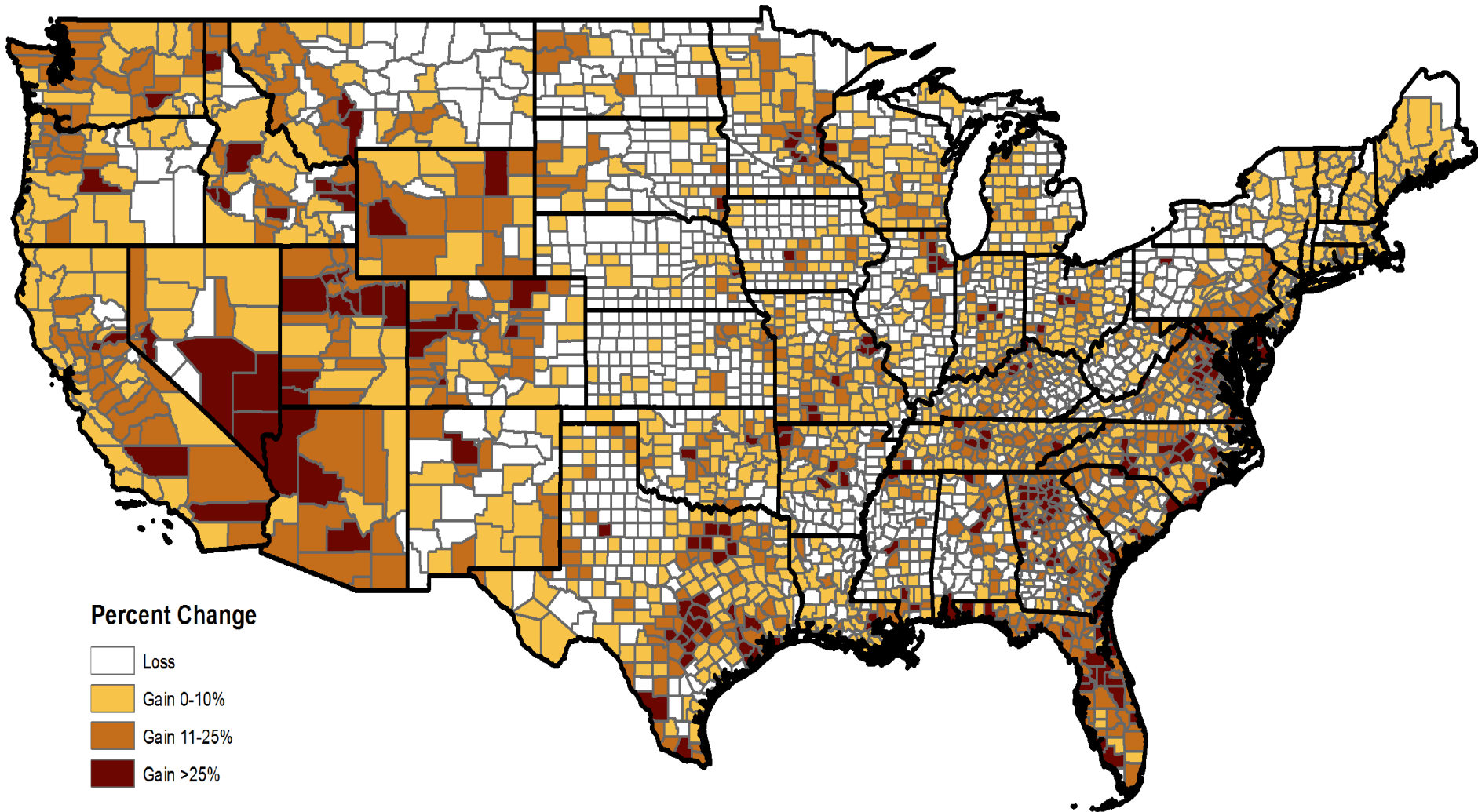


A wide-angle photograph of a small-town street. The street is paved and has white lane markings. On both sides of the street are brick buildings, some with awnings and signs. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The text "SUMMARY OF DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH" is overlaid in the center of the image in a large, bold, red, italicized font.

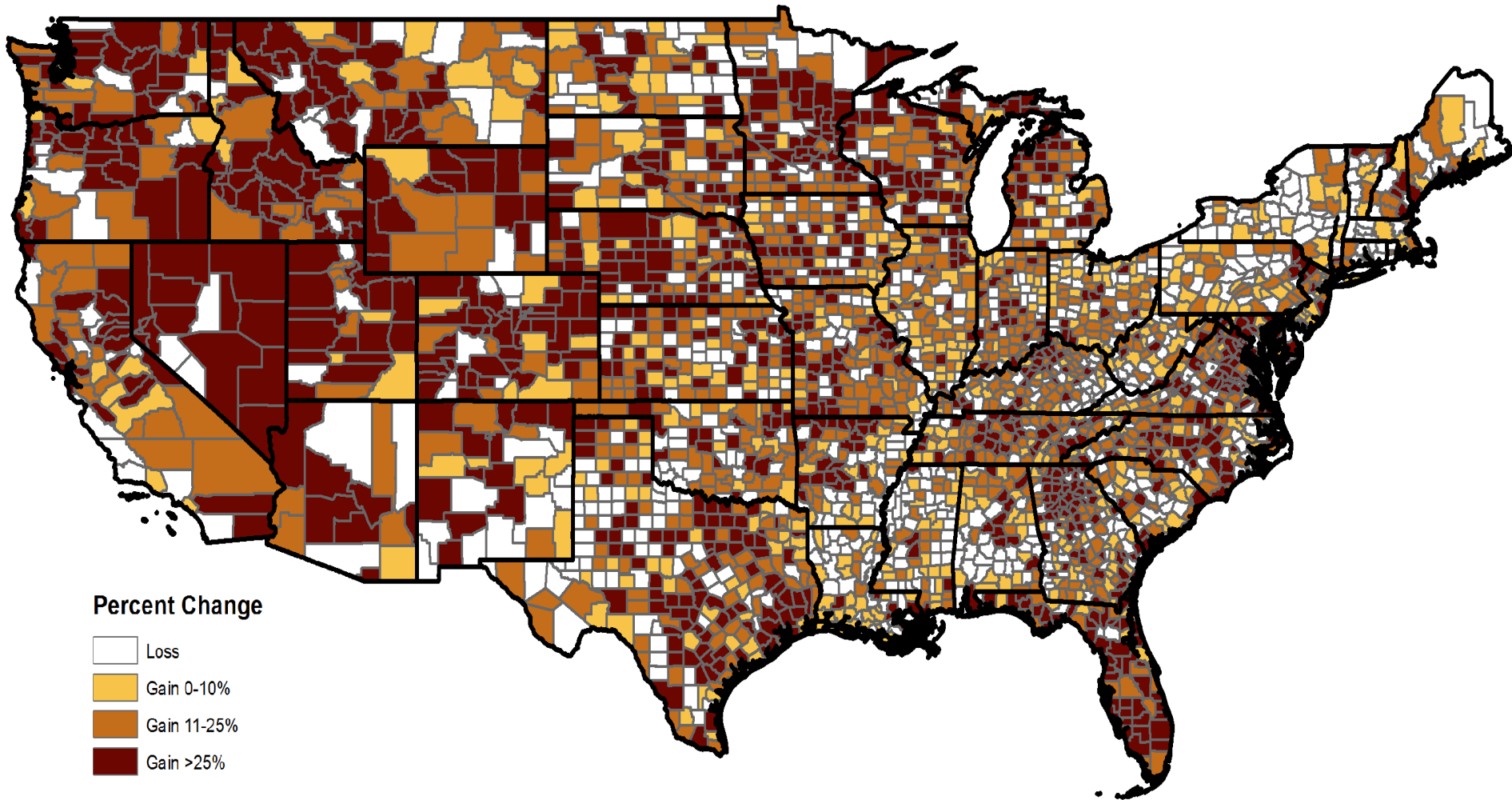
***SUMMARY OF DEMOGRAPHIC
RESEARCH***

***BEN WINCHESTER
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA***

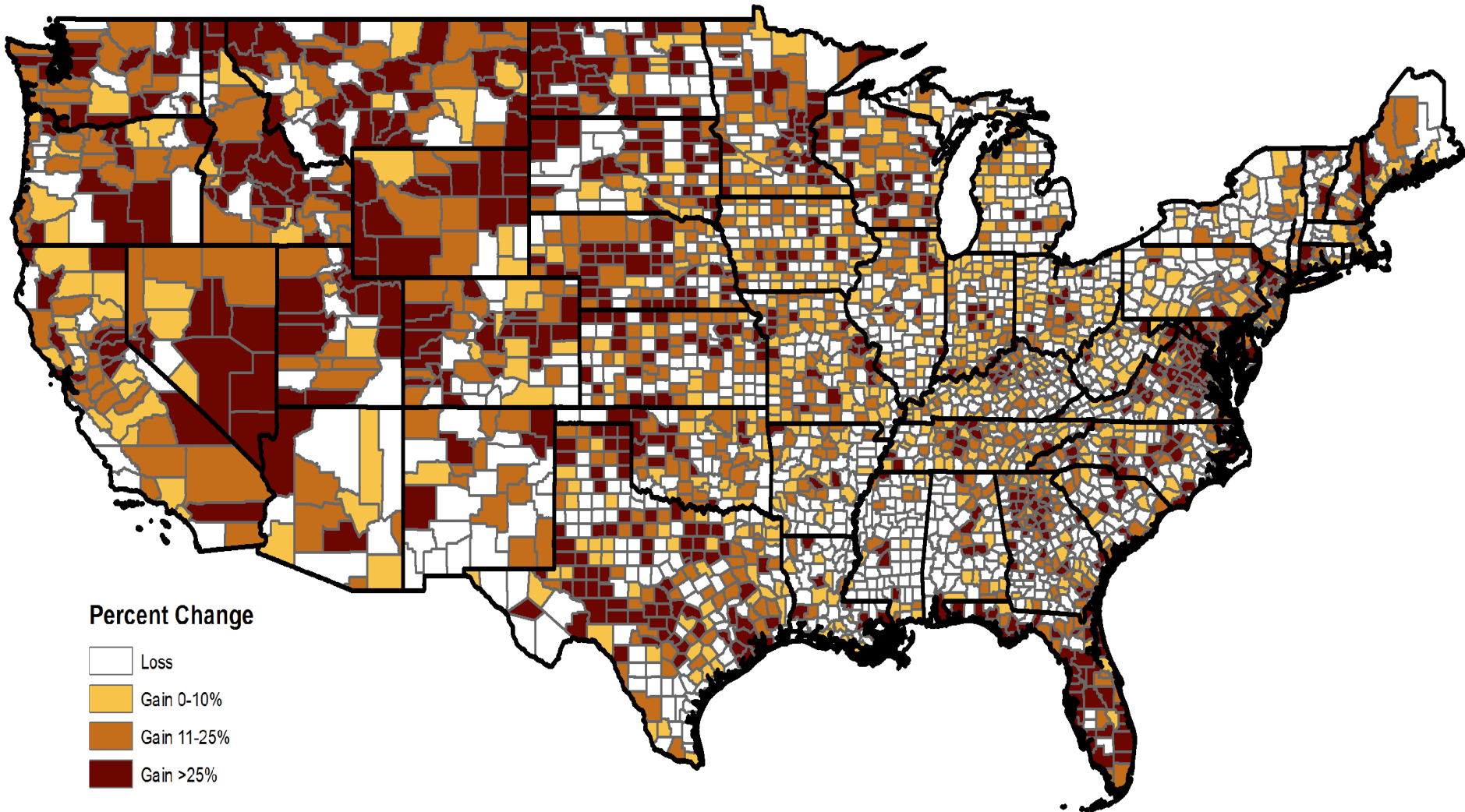
Population Change 2000-2010



Cohort Age 30-34, Percent Change 1990-2000



Cohort Age 30-34, Percent Change 2000-2010



The Newcomer Trend

- The growth is primarily in the 30 to 49 age group – this in-migration into rural communities can be just about equal to that of the out-migration of youth – the “Brain Drain”.
- These people are bringing children aged 10-17 with them.
- There is an interchange between core urban, suburban, and rural places.

The trend, continued

- The movement of people is consistent and large, it's not all about outmigration.
- Those moving to rural areas are in their prime earning years.
- This movement has occurred without a concerted effort to recruit or attract them.
- Data Sources: Census, School Enrollment, MN Dep't of revenue, IRS Migration Data, UHaul?, Postal Service?

Buffalo Commons Research

Dr. Randy Cantrell
University of Nebraska



Website: cari.unl.edu/buffalo

Newcomers: What are they seeking?





Newcomers Profiled

- 36% lived there previously
- 68%(MN) 40% (NE) attain bachelors degree
- 67% (MN) 48% (NE) household incomes over \$50k
- 51% (MN) 43% (NE) have children in household
- They are generally leaving their career
- Underemployed in current situation
- Yet, Quality of Life is the trump card



Newcomers: Why?

- 77%(MN) 60% (NE) say they will be living there 5 years from now.
- The percentage is lower for younger people.
- Those who rate community as friendly and trusting have higher percentages.
- Expectation of staying related to job opportunities and security, feeling of belonging, suitable housing, opportunities to join local organizations, and others.

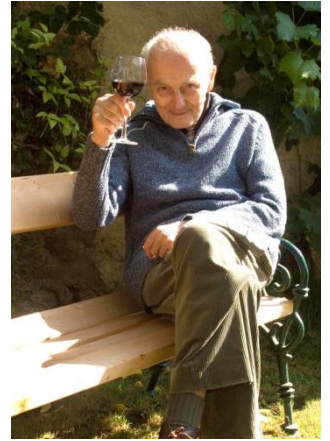
Economic Impact of Newcomers

- The surveyed newcomers reported \$6.6 million in household income in 2009 and 2010. This equates to an average household income of \$66,000.
- New, expanded, or relocated businesses owned by the newcomers reported spending \$108,000 in the region.
- The total economic impact of the surveyed newcomers' business and household spending is \$9.1 million, including 174 jobs and \$7.2 million in labor income (including wages, salaries, and benefits).
- The survey was not random, and therefore the results cannot be generalized beyond the study region, the average newcomer household contributed \$92,000 in economic activity to the region in 2009 and 2010.

The analysis is based on 99 newcomer households that represent 150 working-age adults and 14 newcomer-owned businesses.



Cohort Lifecycle



Reimagine Rural

- National societal preferences to live in small towns and rural places
- Not everyone is leaving small towns
- A new urbanity is found in formerly rural places (Mankato, Willmar)
- The trend is continuing, though it has slowed a bit

“On the Map” Strategies

- Provide avenues for potential residents to learn more about the region
- Provide a resource that allows potential newcomers to establish a personal connection to the region
- Engage with real estate agents to track motivations and interests of newcomers
- Housing is economic development

Employment Strategies

- Build upon existing connections to metro businesses for rural telecommuters
- Identify and exploit auxiliary employment opportunities
- Integrate business succession planning
- Identify entrepreneurial advantages

A white rectangular sign is mounted on a dark, textured metal door frame. The sign is secured by four small, round, brownish metal fasteners at the corners. The text on the sign is in a bold, teal, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines. Above the sign, a portion of a dark metal latch or handle mechanism is visible, featuring a circular white hole.

**PLEASE
RING
THIS BELL**

benw@umn.edu

Activity

- What are your strongest assets that are important to alumni, newcomers and young families?
- What career and business opportunities are available in your community?
- What challenges may be impeding your ability to attract alumni, newcomers and young families?

Impacts of Young Adults and Families to Your Community

- 3:1 positive impact upon population
- Long-term business and career goals
- Educated workforce for expanding businesses
- Substantial consumers of goods and services
- New energy, skills, ideas and resources
- Support and use public institutions
- Retention of local wealth and wealth creation

What are Alumni, Newcomers and Young Families Seeking?

- Quality of Life
- Proximity to Family and Friends
- Young Adult Peer Group (Connections)
- Career and Business Opportunities (Spouse)
- Housing Options
- Education and Health Care Services





3110 N. 40th Street, Suite A
Lincoln, Nebraska 68504
www.heartlandcenter.info