

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER**



**Leodrey Williams**

**CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

**Presented to:**

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*"Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success"*

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# SU Ag Center Proposals Receive USDA/NIFA Funding

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In the 2012 funding cycle of the 1890 Institution Teaching, Research and Extension Capacity Building Grants Program, the SU Ag Center has received high marks from the USDA/ National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), capturing more than 60% of the proposals submitted. The main goal of this funding program is to build and strengthen the research, teaching and extension capacity at the 1890 institutions. Therefore, the program requires that goals be aligned with NIFA's Challenge areas as well as with the institution's strategic plan as they relate to food and agriculture sciences.

Dr. Kit L. Chin, PD and Yadong Qi, Sebhatu Gebrelul, Renita Marshall, Fatemeh Malekian, Co-PDs, in collaboration with Rutgers University and West Virginia State University have tentatively received a research grant from USDA/NIFA Capacity Building Grants Program in the sum of 500,000 dollars to conduct research which will find alternative utilization for ro-

selle hibiscus as small farm and niche market crop.

The goals of the project are to: continue the screening of roselle hibiscus varieties best suited for small farm production in Louisiana; conduct research to develop high antioxidant functional food products to aid in the development of roselle hibiscus enterprises; and support product development and niche marketing, with emphasis on finished products that have health benefits such as reduction of high blood pressure, and marketability.

In collaborative work with West Virginia State University, the extract from roselle hibiscus will be evaluated for its effects on arresting the proliferation of animal and human cancer cells in vitro. Rutgers University will assist in quality control work with SU Ag Center scientists on developed hibiscus products. The project also strives to develop a roselle hibiscus business incubator by providing training and facility to jump start entrepre-

neurship development.

The funded project will also evaluate the roselle hibiscus foliage as nutritive forage for weight gain of goats as well as a natural dewormer for intestinal parasitic control.

Other recipients of this year's funding include: Zanetta Augustine, PD, - Dawn Mellion-Patin and Calvin R. Walker, Co PDs: Academy for the Academic Enhancement of High School Students in the Food and Agricultural Sciences, **\$243,979.00**; Wanda Burke, PD, - Willie Rawls, Aubrey Williams, Conrad Jones, Christopher Rogers, Edith Harris, and Calvin R. Walker, Co PDs: Development of Learning Modules for Assuring Academic Enrichment Support for Youth in Rural Louisiana, **\$247,737.00**; Tiffany Franklin, PD, - Andra Johnson, and Stephanie Elwood, Co-PDs: Eradicating Food Deserts in Neighborhoods through the Development of School Gardens, **\$250,000**;

*Continued on page 2*

## NIFA Awards continued

Christie Monroe, PD, - Kasundra Cyrus, Yemane Ghebreiyessus, and Calvin R. Walker, Co-PDs: Using Agriculture as a Fast Track Vehicle for Change through Experiential Learning, **249,886.00**; Additionally, Renita Marshall serves as PD, while Willie Rawls, and

Kenyatta Nelson-Smith serve as Co-PDs on a teaching grant, JAGS in AG: Recruitment, Exploration and Retention that attracted **\$150,000.00**. Congratulations are in order.

## SU Ag Center Team Holds Mock Job Interview for Inmates

SU Ag Center's Second Chance 2 Recover team traveled to Elayn Hunt Correctional Center (HCC) in St. Gabriel to conduct mock job interviews with select inmates. The team was asked to conduct these interviews by Amanda Dominique, mental health department staff at the Center. The team has been teaching classes at EHCC since 2007. The purpose of the Second Chance 2 Recover program is to provide self-sufficiency skills to inmates on topics regarding issues they will face upon release from prison. Classes include Addictive Behaviors, Developing Job Skills, Anger Management and Creating a Plan of Action.

Ms. Dominique requested the mock interviews after the team taught their "Developing Job Skills and Plan of Action" class. The class provides information on what to do and what not to do when searching for a job after their release. They are taught that finding employment will likely be a challenge once they return to their communities. The objective is to prepare the mindset of inmates and to teach them that it is not an overnight process to get out and immediately find employment. Not saying it is impossible, but may be unlikely because of their past history of offenses. The class also teaches inmates how and where to find decent, reasonably priced clothes for an inter-

view. They are taught how to utilize their resources and network to find employment.

The interviews were recorded for distribution to the general population to reference as needed to learn what to do during a job interview.

The SU Ag Center team consists of Tiffany Franklin, Program Coordinator and Delores Johnson, parent educator.

## Animal Clinic Enlightens Local Producers

Parasite infestation is one of the biggest threats to the small ruminant producers in the southeastern region of the US. To help local producers tackle this issue, the SU Ag Center hosted a clinic for ruminant producers Saturday, July 28, 2012.

At the clinic, farmers learned how to test fecal samples collected from their farms for parasites; as well as how to identify and count the parasites present on their farms. Producers were encouraged to bring no more than 10 samples each from cattle, goat and sheep. Participants reported that the exercise was very helpful because it afforded them an opportunity to identify the animals that they may need to get rid of and/or treat aggressively. Participants, Robert and Mary Richard reported the clinic to be “a wonderful process, very educational, hands-on and beneficial.”

In preparation for clinic, produc-

ers were urged to know the names of dewormers used on their farms; refrigerate fresh samples; bring samples on the morning of the clinic; keep samples separate and label each properly; have FAMACHA Scores, which was optional for producers with goat fecal samples.

“I am starting a goat production business and this clinic will benefit my family enterprise in stocking more goats,” said Rintha Simpson.



Shonta Manuel, left, assists farmers



Lisa Gray, right, teaches fecal sample

The clinic was co-sponsored by the Louisiana Goat Cooperative, Louisiana Association of Cooperatives, Mixed Species Grazing Project at Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Participants came from across the south of Louisiana to bring samples for testing, some for the first time. After the clinic, Nic Girgenti of Lagniappe Kikos, Roseland, wrote, “Thanks for hosting the

clinic. I have read a lot about FEC's (fecal egg count) in goats and now know what the "hands-on" process is. FAMACHA is good, but this gives an actual count and the type of infestation.”

“Please keep me on your email list for future goat events,” Girgenti concluded.



Livestock producers busy analyzing fecal samples inside SU Ag Center lab

The clinic was organized and led by Renita Marshall, DVM and Lisa Gray, research associate.

Dr. Marshall plans to use this clinic as a pilot to apply for grants to acquire a diagnostic lab and a mobile clinic that will assist producers across the state.

## C.H.E.F. Program Teaches Youth Healthy Cooking, Eating Habits

The Creating Healthy Enjoyable Foods or C.H.E.F. program engaged youth in experiential learning at the SU Ag Center. De'Shoin York-Friendship, Assistant Specialist, Nutrition and her LSU counterparts, taught kids to cook as a way of giving them power and responsibility. Participants in the second session concluded their week-long cooking experience on July 27, 2012. The camp focused on preparing and eating good, nutritious meals and exercising.

There were 17 participants in the first group and 12 in the second.



Students learn how to measure ingredients

“The best part of the camp for me has been the positive feedback from the parents. They are excited that their kids are now “Chefs” at home and are informing us that their kids are cooking the healthy recipes for their families,” said Friendship, program coordinator.

The second session of the C.H.E.F. program began July 23 for youth ages 12-14. The program creator, De'Shoin York-Friendship, with help from Sharman Charles, Eva Davis, Karen Stevens and Kynisha Francois of the LSU AgCenter, taught participants a wide variety of recipes, exercise and food safety. Students learned how to prepare ingredients, gained



Participants prepare pizza for the oven

experience in the kitchen and knowledge on health and nutrition to share with their family members.

“I learned to wash my hands every time I do something different,” said Kerra Augustine of SU Lab School.

“We learned other ways of cooking than frying, like baking, grilling and also how to do aerobics exercise,” said 13-year old Brianna Williams of Hosanna Christian Academy.

Participants reported learning a wide variety of new things to include keeping food separate to

avoid cross contamination, sources of calcium and daily requirements, [MyPlate](#), the value of fruits and vegetables in the diet.

“This has been a learning experience for me too,” said Eva Davis, LSU AgCenter. “I learned that some of the participants will eat food that they usually would not eat; because they cook it, they will



Teacher/student team pose, bid farewell

eat it.”

Sharman Charles, LSU AgCenter said the program was successful because “kids learned how to eat healthy, exercise and taste new foods.”

The program was conducted in partnership with the LSU AgCenter's East Baton Rouge Parish Extension Office. The staff included Sharman Charles, Area Nutrition Agent; Eva Davis, Associate Area Nutrition Agent; Karen Stevens, Assistant Area Nutrition Agent/Parish Chair; and Kynisha Francois, Nutrition Educator.

## Morehouse Black Farmers & Landowners Association Holds Field Day

Morehouse Black Farmers & Landowners Association, in collaboration with the SU Ag Center and LSU AgCenter had their annual Field Day at Mr. Harper Armstrong's Farm on July 20, 2012. More than 180 farmers from all across the south attended the field day to learn about Louisiana commodities.

Registration began at 7:30 along with distribution of goody bags and door prizes. Odis Hill, Extension Agent, Morehouse and Union Parishes, led a discussion on twin-row soybean planting. He demonstrated the difference between twin-row and single-row planting. The twin-row crops serve as better weed control than single-row. However, it produces lower yield.

The field day started with a demonstration by operators of John Deere tractor and sprayer equipment enhanced with auto-steer system.

The tour of Mr. Armstrong's farm consisted of participants riding on two trailers tractors around the facility and making pertinent stops. One of the stops was at a corn test plot during which Dr. John Kruse of LSU AgCenter talked about the production of corn.

After the farm tour, participants visited the Armstrong and Down grain bins. Mr. Downs talked about unloading a trailer of corn

into the grain bins, showing the procedures involved in storing grain for the market. Mr. Charles Bonner and Denim Hill, machine operators, demonstrated how to unload corn into the grain bin.

Both Armstrong and Down jointly own three steel grain silos with a capacity of 15,000 bushels each. They are also constructing three new similar silos, each costing about \$75,000.



Loading corn into the grain silos

Next on the agenda was a Cephas Bus Tour of Mr. Down's soybean plot, a partnership with the SU Ag Center, Monsanto and Terral Seed.

"The crop looked extremely good. There were many compliments about this field being one of the best soybean fields they had seen this year," said Odis Hill.

Dr. Gina Eubanks, Vice Chancellor for Extension, addressed the participants on the partnership of the SU Ag Center and LSU

AgCenter on a successful field day. She thanked those who worked hard in bringing the public a productive field day full of useful information for all attendees. Commissioner of Agriculture Mike Strain spoke to the public about opportunities for agriculture producers in Northeast Louisiana and throughout the state.



Participants on a hayride tour of field plots

After a long hot day in the field, the group returned to the Agriculture Building located at the LSU AgCenter Office for lunch prepared by Mr. Frederick Herrington and Mrs. Tammy Hill. Others volunteered their time in setting up the facility.

Media coverage of the event is available at [http://myarklami.com/fulltext?nxd\\_id=153252](http://myarklami.com/fulltext?nxd_id=153252)

Odis Hills is Extension Agent for Morehouse and Union Parishes.

## SU Ag Center Holds Successful Summer Garden Program

The Southern University Ag Center's 2012 Summer Garden Program ended on July 20 with a graduation ceremony for its 16 participants. The graduation was held at A.O. Williams Hall and featured a welcome address from Chancellor Leodrey Williams.

"We are what we eat," said Williams. "If we eat well, we can live a long time and have a good quality of life with a foundation of healthy eating."

Stephanie Elwood, Extension Associate/Garden Instructor for the SU Ag Center, also gave an introduction to the program by showcasing a slide show, giving those in attendance a first hand opportunity to see the students at work within the summer garden program. Elwood and 2012 summer garden graduate Sariah Rogers also showcased a youth participant video.

"I like it because I learned how to plant," said summer garden participant Amare Coleman.

Learning to plant is one of the many aspects of the summer garden program, which is in its second year and sponsored by the SU Ag Center.

The purpose of the program includes teaching youth how to grow their own fruits and vegetables, utilize the garden for exercise and stress relief and encouraging healthier eating habits.

"In the 1800s, 97% of people grew their own food in this country, now less than 2% of the population is growing their own food," said Chancellor Williams to the graduating class.

With statistics such as this, programs offered at the SU Ag Center like the summer garden program, are increasingly important because it builds the foundation for healthy living that can translate into a healthy and long life.

The program was coordinated by Stephanie Elwood at 225-771-2134 or [stephanie\\_elwood@suagcenter.com](mailto:stephanie_elwood@suagcenter.com)



Students sell their seedlings to the public



Peppers from the summer garden



Participants pose with Elwood and Chancellor Williams, far right, at graduation ceremony

## CRSBD holds “How to Start a Business” training in Hammond

The Center for Rural and Small Business Development partnered with Pastor Lue Russell of the New Jerusalem at the Crossroads Ministries to hold a training on “How to Start a Business” on July 12 in Hammond, Tangipahoa Parish, using the E-Learning Center.

The repeat training was held at the request of Pastor Russell due to the large number of participants interested in starting their own businesses. Pastor Russell opened the training with a prayer and spoke about the impact that the Center for Rural and Small Business Development has made in the community. E-Learning Center Program Director LaKeeshia Giddens spoke to the attendees about the capabilities and services that are provided by the E-Learning Center. The train-

ing was conducted by CRSBD Business Development Outreach Specialist, Eual Hall.

and business cards for CRSBD staff members LaKeeshia Giddens and Eual Hall.



Trainees and Hall pose outside mobile unit



Eual Hall trains Hammond residents

The participants also received information on the registration forms and applications required to legally register a business, the SBA’s Small Business Resource Magazine, the CRSBD’s brochure

All participants expressed an interest in having the E-Learning Center conduct more business development trainings in their community.

## The 4-H LIFE Project marks progress

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center was afforded the opportunity to replicate the 4-H LIFE Grant in December 2010. In December 2011, the project director, Tiffany Franklin was awarded funds to operate for Year 2 activity.

The 4-H LIFE Project operates in two parishes, East Baton Rouge and St. Landry. The project targeted 60 youth of incarcerated in-

mates, ages 8-17. Since inception, the program has strengthened communication ties between 300 youth and 150 inmates.

The issues commonly faced in Louisiana are inmates being released or transferred to other facilities before completing the program and ineligibility to participate. The dilemma is that some inmates have kids who are under the required age limit, thus do not qualify for the program.

During the June 2012 4-H Life Family Visit, families put on their thinking caps as they worked to develop a family tree. One family was able to trace back to a paternal great-great grandmother, born in 1867. Coincidentally, two inmates realized their great grandparents had the same last name and were born in the same area of Mississippi in the early 1900s. This proved to be a rewarding and enlightening activity for all involved.

## Urban Forestry Program Lauds Baton Rouge as Green City

Professor and program leader of the urban forestry at Southern University and researcher at SU Ag Center, Kamran Abdollahi and his graduate students recently completed a scientific study of the more than 1 million trees within Baton Rouge's city limits. Those trees compose a canopy that covers 44 percent of the city — a larger percentage than the professor can find in any other North American city. Atlanta's 36 percent coverage is second, according to data compiled by Abdollahi's urban forestry program.

The six-month study used the urban forestry community's standard method developed by the urban forestry community and software created by the U.S. Forest Service. Last summer, Abdollahi and his graduate students pinpointed 400 locations indicative of the city's forest, each measuring one-tenth of an acre, then counted and measured each tree at the location.

While some of the plots were heavily forested, others were developed and nearly treeless. The counting method resembles a scientific survey, where a percentage of the population can accurately account for the views of the entire country.

These plots will become permanent research locations where Abdollahi can return occasionally to search for changes — whether trees have grown or been cut down.

In his report, Abdollahi has attached a dollar value on Baton Rouge's trees — \$6.2 billion, a number reached using six separate measurements. For example, the urban forest removes 860 tons of pollution per year, he found, which Abdollahi said saves the city and its industry \$6.2 million a year in costs associated with capturing contaminants. Also, he calculated that residents and businesses save \$8 million a year because of shade created by trees — a figure developed by calculating the shade that covers homes and buildings on the survey sites.

These numbers prove that trees offer more than aesthetic value, Abdollahi said.

"It's more than just loving trees," he said.

Baton Rouge's fertile location along the Mississippi River allows for a greener landscape, but Abdollahi credits the city's interested residents with maintaining

and planting trees. And he said he hopes through more education the city can keep what it has.

"Of course we are blessed with the ecology of the land," he said, "but we have to take care of it."

Abdollahi has begun working closely with nonprofit Baton Rouge Green, a tree-planting and education organization that has planted 4,800 trees in a quarter-century. While that number is a small piece of the city's foliage, the organization's projects raise awareness of the positive attributes of trees, he said.

"Baton Rouge Green is doing the right thing by showing that trees are important," Abdollahi said.

"We have to appreciate what we have and build on it," Abdollahi said. "We can't say Baton Rouge Green is going to do it. We don't have to do it. Every citizen should get involved, get organized."

To read the full story, please visit the *Advocate* at <http://theadvocate.com/features/people/3448441-123/green-city>

## CRSBD Takes Entrepreneurship Training to the People

The E-Learning Center in the Center for Rural and Small Business Development in the Southern University Ag Center held a “How to Start a Business” Training in Roseland at the Roseland Town Hall on Tuesday, July 17.

Roseland Mayor Wanda McCoy attended the training and provided a welcome to the participants. The participants toured the E-Learning Center, received a copy of the United States Business Administrations Resource Magazine and information on the USDA’s Rural Housing Loan and Grant Program.

CRSBD Business Outreach Specialist Eual Hall conducted a presentation on the “Major Steps to Starting a Business” and provided one-on-one counseling for current and potential business owners after the presentation. Participants also received information on the registration forms and applications required to legally register a business and learned how to read a cash flow and profit and loss statement.

Mayor McCoy is also interested in have the CRSBD come back in the near future to provide more business development trainings in the rural community.

On July 25, the Center co-sponsored a “Marketing Your Business” Seminar with the Franklinton Louisiana Chamber of Commerce in Franklinton at the Franklinton Town Hall.

Franklinton Mayor Wayne Fleming, and several town council members were present to greet the seminar participants.

Center for Rural and Small Business Development Outreach Business Specialist Eual Hall provided greetings and an introduction to the group while the E-Learning Center Program Director



**Lakeeshia Giddens conducts training in Franklinton**

LaKeeshia Giddens provided the group with a tour of the E-Learning Center.

Desiree H. Young, Venture Walk Business Partners, LLC conducted a dynamic presentation on marketing a business.

“This was the best presentation that we have ever had,” said Linda Crain, Director of the Franklinton Chamber of Commerce.

The Center for Rural and Small Business Development and the Franklinton Chamber of Commerce are planning to co-sponsor more business development events together in the town within the coming months.



**Lakeeshia Giddens, left, trains Roseland residents**

FACULTY AND STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Qi co-authors journal article



Dr. Yadong Qi, professor of urban forestry, has co-authored a refereed journal article entitled "Copper /

carbon core shell nanoparticles as additive for natural fiber/wood plastic blends," published in the August issue of *BioResources* 7 (3), 3213-3222.

The online version of the paper is

available at [http://www.ncsu.edu/bioresources/BioRes\\_07/BioRes\\_07\\_3\\_3213\\_Wu\\_LLQ\\_Cu\\_C\\_CoreShell\\_NP\\_Wood\\_Plast\\_Compos\\_2766.pdf](http://www.ncsu.edu/bioresources/BioRes_07/BioRes_07_3_3213_Wu_LLQ_Cu_C_CoreShell_NP_Wood_Plast_Compos_2766.pdf).

This paper a result of the USDA-NIFA funded joint research project on nanotechnology application in forestry health.

Dr. Qi serves as Principal Investigator while Dr. Qinglin Wu (LSU) and Dr. Kun Lian (SUBR) are Co-PIs on the project.

*Bio Resources* (ISSN: 1930-2126) is a peer-reviewed online journal devoted to the science and engineering of lignocellulosic materials, chemicals, and their applications for new uses and new capabilities.



**Dr. Fatemeh Malekian**, Food Scientist, has been promoted from Associ-

ate Professor to Professor by the Board of Supervisors for Southern University.



**Dr. Kit Chin**, professor, horticulture, has been invited to serve as a peer review panelist for the "European Journal of Medicinal Plants."

**Terrence Marshall**, East Baton Rouge Parish County Agent received the Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of County Agriculture Agents during the 2012 Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference held recently in Charleston, SC. Marshall was one of several honorees who represent

the top two percent of the membership selected by their peers and the Director of Extension. Marshall was one of 59 state winners from across the United States who received the award.



L-r: Paul Wigley, association president, Terrence, and Sharon Marshall

**FACULTY AND STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES CONTD.**

**Carol F. Sensley**, Calcasieu Parish FCS Agent mentored students who emerged winners in two categories at the 2012 Youth and Family Exposition. The first win came from the Junior Quiz Bowl contestants who took 1<sup>st</sup> place. The team comprised of Lincoln Chambers, Laykin Chambers, D'Anthony Butler, Camryn Sensley, Alexia Charles. Alisa Stevens served as volunteer to assist Sensley. The other prize was in the public speaking category where Ariel Chapman placed first in the senior division.



L-r: Carol Sensley, Alisa Stevens, Ariel Chapman, and Wanda Burke.



Junior Quiz Bowl 1st place winners pose with Carol Sensley, Owusu Bandele and Wanda Burke.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**August 7, 14, 21, and 28:** Second Chance training, 1pm – 3pm at the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison. For further details, please contact Tiffany Franklin at (225) 771-2775 or [tiffany\\_franklin@suagcenter.com](mailto:tiffany_franklin@suagcenter.com)

**September 4, 11, 18, 25:** Second Chance training, 1pm – 3pm at the East Baton Rouge Parish Prison. For further details, please contact Tiffany Franklin at (225) 771-2775 or [tiffany\\_franklin@suagcenter.com](mailto:tiffany_franklin@suagcenter.com)

**September 18-22:** National Small Farm Conference. Memphis, Tennessee. For further detail, please contact Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin at 225-771-3532.

**October 24 – 27:** Session 5 Small Farmer Ag Leadership Institute, South Carolina State University, Orangeburg, SC. Contact Dawn Mellion Patin at 225-771-3532.

**December 1 – 5:** Session 6 Small Farmer Ag Leadership Institute, PAWC / Tuskegee, AL, Contact Dawn Mellion Patin at 225-771-3532.