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**Leodrey Williams**

**CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

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# Family and Youth Expo Highlights Academic Excellence

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Since 1982, Southern University's Cooperative Extension has held the Family and Youth Exposition to give Louisiana youth the tools needed to help them excel in academics and life. The 2011 Expo, held June 16-18 on campus, was no exception.

Beginning on Thursday with registration, along with getting acquainted and a basketball game, the Southern University Ag Center hosted an energetic group of 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders. The basketball game was held at Seymour Gym on the Southern University's main campus and lasted till 9:00 p.m.

Ag Center staff, extension agents, students and volunteers were poised for a full day of events on Friday. Activities started with youth competitions on public speaking and illustrated talk in different age categories at the Smith-Brown Memorial Union. The Body Walk activities followed at 10:00 a.m. in Seymour Gym. Educational seminars and workshops ran concurrently until lunch time.

The General Assembly at 2:00 p.m. was the highlight of the day with welcome from Dr. Wanda Burke, the Youth Development Specialist and event coordinator.



**Dr. Burke gathers youth for a session**

Leodrey Williams, Chancellor of the Southern University Ag Center brought greetings and SU System President Ronald Mason, delivered a special message to all participants.

President Mason encouraged the students to consider Southern University when it's time to choose a college. "When you look across the state and country, Southern University stands out as number one among Historically Black Colleges," said Mason. "When you prepare to go to college, where will you go?" Mason asked the audience. "Southern University," the students chanted.



**Keynote Speaker Wilson addresses students**

The Keynote speaker at the assembly was former NBA star, Nikita Wilson, a native of Pineville LA and retired Portland Trailblazers player. Wilson encouraged students to take advantage of the program offered by the SU Ag Center as a foundation to realize their full potential in life. He strongly emphasized the importance of academics.

"Without academics, you're almost doomed. The SU Ag Center has put together this program, take advantage of it and engage in education," said Wilson. He concluded by stating that "we can give you all the tools for academic success, but ultimately, it is up to you as individuals to put them to positive use for a brighter future."

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Grant Henry, a 9<sup>th</sup> grader from Bossier Parish said it was his first time attending the Expo and was excited to compete in Illustrated Talk. Henry also reported that he has learned that “to be successful, you have to have academics.”

Immediately following the general assembly, participants went to their third session of seminars and workshops which included exploring the scent bar, literacy camp, exploring the technology lab, “How it Grows,” secondary smoke and through the eyes of a microscope. The day culminated in a talent show and dance at the M. A. Edmond Livestock Show Arena.

On Saturday, the final day of the Expo, participants began with a Quiz Bowl at the Student Union with Professor Emeritus Owusu Bandele moderating. The awards program followed at 10:30 a.m. where contestants were recognized for various events.

“This year we had 520 participants at the Family and Youth Expo, the largest group ever,” said Wanda Burke, expo coordinator and director of the Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives. “All facets of the Ag Center worked together to make this happen. One person could not have pulled this off.”



L-R: Vice Chancellor Eubanks, Katherine Ervin, extension agent, Bossier Parish, Grant Henry, student illustrated talk winner, Bossier Parish, volunteer parent, and Chancellor Williams

## Beef Cattle Field Day Highly Successful

Producers from across the state converged for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Beef Cattle Field Day at the Southern University Ag Center on Saturday, June 25.

Diverse topics were covered by presenters such as: Natural Disasters, Herd Health and Diseases - Dr. Christine Navarre; Louisiana Cattle Markets - Donnie Ashford; Pasture Management - Wedge Barthe; Louisiana Calf to carcass Program - Terrance Marshall; USDA Drought Relief Programs - Patrick Babineaux; Renewable En-

ergy & Biofuels - Antonio Harris, and Legal Land Issues - Attorney John Pierre.

“The participants were very pleased with the presentations and it keeps getting better every year,” said Renita Marshall, DVM, SU Ag Center.



Cross section of workshop audience

## SU Ag Center Personnel Attend USDA/NIFA Annual Meeting in Alaska

The United States Department of Agriculture/National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA/NIFA) held its 2011 National Extension and Research Administrative Officers' Conference hosted by the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, May 22-26 in Anchorage, Alaska. The conference targeted personnel involved in administering USDA/NIFA funded programs – those who prepare program reports on grants and formula opportunity funds, human resource issues, diversity/civil rights, and those preparing required plans of work and annual report of accomplishments and results on Hatch, Smith-Lever, McIntire-Stennis, and other related funds. This year's conference was really crucial given the projected severe federal budget reductions for the coming fiscal year. All land-grant institutions were represented at the conference which was attended by more than 550 individuals from the United States and the territories. Several officers and staff from various units of the USDA/NIFA were on hand to answer questions from participants.

Dr. Kirkland Mellad, vice chancellor for research, led the team from Southern University Ag Center participating in the conference.

The conference provided information on changes in USDA/NIFA policy and procedure, as well as updates for the coming year. With the uncertain budget situation for FY 2012, the restructuring of USDA/NIFA and the appointment of an interim director, this year's conference was particularly essential for the administrators and staff who oversee and report on federal funds appropriated for USDA. NIFA officers and staff, who manage awards, emphasized the need to abide by the terms and conditions of the awards especially by using grant funds for the specific purpose intended, and to advance the mission of the United States Department of Agriculture/National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Partner institutions were urged to be ready for audit whenever required by the Federal Government.

Presenters at the conference clarified some lingering issues about the revised NIFA Priority Areas: Global Food Security; Childhood Obesity; Climate Change; Sustainable Energy; and Food Safety. They also discussed extensively the need for annual reports that are outcome-based; these reports receive a lot of attention from federal authorities such as the Office of the President through the office of Management and Budget, Congress, and the Office of the Inspector General, USDA.

Other presenters shared their knowledge on best practices relating to grants submission through grants.gov, impact reporting, networking for effective performance, management in the midst of dwindling resources, diversity and building cultural competences, and such.

## SU Ag Center Kicks off the MISS-LOU Experiential Learning Garden

The MISS-LOU Experiential Learning Garden Summer Programs began June 1, and concludes on July 21st.

The garden has two locations: The first is located on the Horticultural Farm behind the SU Ag Center main building. This program serves youth ages 5-18, and meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 am until noon. The second location is in Zachary on Rollins Road, behind the Men's Club and is conducted in collaboration with the Zachary Men's Club.

During normal class sessions in the first location, participants pull weeds, plant seeds, water and harvest produce. Youth are taught age-appropriate garden curriculum to encourage development skills associated with community gardening. "The garden can already be tagged a success because the kids ate sautéed Zucchini Thursday ... and LOVED IT!" said Stephanie Elwood, extension associate/Community Gardener.

In the Zachary location, the program meets every Monday and Wednesday. On Mondays, 5-7 pm is harvest time for the food pantry; and Wednesdays, 8 am until noon is spent tending to the garden and participating in lessons from an age-appropriate garden curriculum.

This program reaches out to students in grades 8-12. A cooking class is scheduled and will be taught by Fatemeh Malekian, associate professor, nutrition, and Mila Berhane, senior research associate.

In Louisiana, the program is dubbed "MISS LOU: Connecting Kids and Community Project" because it serves families in Mississippi and Louisiana through partnerships with Mississippi State University, Alcorn State University, and Louisiana State University. The project primarily targets youth of military families, although civilian youth and adults are welcome to join on a voluntary basis. The program is free and continuously open for families and youth to register and participate. Tiffany Franklin and Stephanie Elwood are coordinating the programs.

Both programs are funded by the USDA/NIFA and the Department of Defense through the Military Community, Family and Youth Extension Project.



Participant plants seedling



Project participants nurture plants



Garden in bloom

## Workshop Prepares Mothers to Raise Healthy Babies

A Breastfeeding train-the-trainer workshop themed “Grow and Glow in WIC” was held at the Southern University Ag Center, June 7. The workshop was a collaborative effort between the Southern University Ag Center and Louisiana Department of Welfare of Infants and Children (WIC) and included staff from the SU Ag Center, WIC, and other breastfeeding organizations throughout the state of Louisiana.

The motivational training session provided an overview of successful strategies implemented across the U.S. to create a breastfeeding-friendly community. The training explored the use of social marketing principles to plan an effective breastfeeding promotion campaign, principles behind USDA’s WIC National Breastfeeding Promotion program, Loving Support© Makes Breastfeeding Work, and creative strategies to

support breastfeeding families, including educating clients, gaining buy-in from staff, healthcare providers, and the community, and using public awareness channels.

Studies show that breastfeeding’s protective effects continue well into adult life. SU Ag Center staff will begin collaborating at the local level with WIC agencies to emphasize this important message to our clientele.

The training was organized by De’Shoin York Friendship, assistant specialist, nutrition and Fatemeh Malekian, associate professor, nutrition, with funding from an Ag Center mini grant. The training session was led by a nationwide trainer, Kendal Cox of EveryMother, Inc.



Vice Chancellor Gina E. Eubanks, left and De’Shoin Friendship welcome national trainer Kendal Cox, center.



Dolls for breastfeeding demonstration

### St. Helena Parish Celebrates Healthy Living Week

Angela Myles, youth agent, St. Helena Parish, prepared students at St. Helena Central Elementary School for the celebration of *Healthy Living Week* in May. The week began with the LSU AgCenter Body Walk, a 35-foot x 45-foot, colorful, walk-through exhibit representing the human body. Students explored nine organs of the body, stopping at each station to participate in activities focused on the effects that different foods

have on each organ. Students also received a take-home activity book to share with their families. Students from St. Helena Central High School manned each of these stations. As part of the celebration, the youth visited the St. Helena Parish Nursing Home to workout with the residents. The week concluded with fitness in the areas of Let’s Get Active: jump rope, jogging/running in place, basketball, sit ups/crunches,

volleyball, digs, bump, pass and rotation.

This program was funded by the Childhood Obesity Grant, a collaboration of community partners, including the St. Helena Parish school system, police jury, sheriff department, Turner Chapel A.M.E. Church, the Council on Aging and the Nursing Home.

## Cupid Performs at Southwest Center's YES Program

National recording artist, Cupid, performed at the Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives' Youth Educational Support (YES) After-School program on May 24.

Bryson Bernard, better known by his stage name "Cupid," is an R&B singer born and raised in Lafayette, Louisiana.

Cupid performed the *Cupid Shuffle* and *Cu Step* with the 33 graduating students between the ages of 6 and 14. He also spoke to the students about the importance of education and making healthy choices.

"Education is the key to success no matter what career path you may choose," said Cupid. "Continue Seeking Knowledge" was the theme for the end of the year program.

Students spoke about what the YES program means to them, and performed by singing "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and "Yes You Can." They were also given the opportunity to speak with Cupid about his career as an entertainer, songwriter, and producer. "It is your responsibility as an individual to seek as much knowledge as possible for you to become the best that you can be," affirmed Cupid.

Edna Lastrapes, youth agent, Aubrey Williams, associate youth agent, and William Augustine, research associate conduct the YES program. The Program is SU Ag Center's signature after-school program which aims to engage students in the areas of math, science, engineering, and technology.

It also fosters the development of life skills through hands-on learning opportunities for youth, and assists them in enhancing competencies that encourage growth into healthy, responsible and caring youth and adults.



Cupid teaches dance step to participants

### St. Helena Parish Shines at Annual Youth Expo

St. Helena Parish was represented at the Southern University Ag Center Family and Youth Exposition with 20 participants, June 16-18. Activities began with youth competitions on public speaking and illustrated talk in different age categories at the Smith-Brown Memorial Union. St. Helena had two contestants, Jamya Watson and Darrell Griffin placing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the competition.



L-R: Gina E. Eubanks, SU Ag Center Vice Chancellor for Extension; Angela Myles, Youth Agent; Darrell Griffin, St. Helena student and Leodrey Williams, SU Ag Center Chancellor.



L-R: Gina E. Eubanks, SU Ag Center Vice Chancellor for Extension; Angela Myles, Youth Agent; Jamya Watson, St. Helena student and Leodrey Williams, SU Ag Center Chancellor.

## Faculty, Staff Activities and Accomplishments

**Aubrey Williams**, associate area youth agent, Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives, taught in the St. Landry Parish School Board Career Pathway Camp, on June 6 and 23. This camp gives students the opportunity to experience different types of careers through field trips, classroom discussions and demonstrations. The students that attend this camp earn a half Carnegie unit credit for high school graduation. Due to the large number of applicants this year, two camps were scheduled. These two camps attracted sixty students. The Camp location was at the T. H. Harris Technical College Campus in Opelousas.

Williams performed a hands-on water quality demonstration at the camp to introduce 8<sup>th</sup> graders to a career in science. This demonstration was chosen because of the current events of opening of the

Morganza and the Bonnie Carrie Spillways creating flood zones that impacted agricultural farmland.

For this particular demonstration, the class was divided into six groups of five. Each group was shown five tests using two techniques, hand-held electrical probe and indicator strips. The tests performed were: pH, salinity, temperature, total solubility of solids, and water hardness. First, each test was demonstrated to the class and then each group performed its own test using assigned water sample. Then, each test result was explained on whether it was good or bad based on the value for that test. After the demonstration, students were surprised to learn that the water they drink is safe even if it smells or tastes bad.



**Williams interacts with students during water quality lesson.**



**Angela Myles** accompanied 24 participants in the Youth Educational Support program on a Science Enrichment trip to the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) in Livingston Parish, June 29. LIGO

is a facility dedicated to the detection of cosmic gravitational waves and the harnessing of these waves for scientific research. It consists of two widely separated installations within the United States, operated in unison as a single obser-

vatory. When fully established, this observatory will be open for use by the national community and will become part of a planned worldwide network of gravitational-wave observatories.



# Faculty, staff activities and accomplishments contd.

**Angela Myles**, Toni Melton, St. Helena Parish 4-H'ers along with their parents, and 4-H agents participated in the Annual 4-H Day at the Capitol activities beginning with an assembly on the steps of the Capitol building on June 1.

This event brought together 1,400 participants from across Louisiana and provided an opportunity for 4-H members to learn about the legislative process. Following the assembly, the group toured the Capitol and experienced the legislature at work. They also viewed the 4-H exhibits and displays set up in the lobby featuring Louisiana 4-H programs.

**Myles** chaperoned 30 youth from St. Helena Parish in grades 4-6 to the 4-H Louisiana Summer Camp. The camp strives to develop a variety of life skills related to Head, Heart, Hands and Health. One of the most important skills children learn from the camp is self-sufficiency. That means they learn how to survive four whole days on their own.

At the 4-H University, Louisiana 4-H'ers competed for best in the state in more than 40 events ranging from plant identification, photography and computer simulation to speechmaking and fashion design. In addition, 300 students took part in the non-competitive learning event called "Clover College," which included seven hours of instruction over the three days. Participants were introduced to aspects of life that college students experience on a daily basis.

4-H members who were 13 years old before January 1 were eligible to attend 4-H University held on the campus of LSU in Baton Rouge. 4-H U gives youth the opportunity to meet 4-H'ers from different parts of the state and compete for trips and prizes through a variety of project-area contests.

Myles also led a group to the Southeast Region 4-H Challenge Camp designed for 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade club members from across the state. The camp was located at Tickfaw State Park in Livingston Parish.



Campers experienced an exciting adventure.

TEAM Challenge camp was a unique experience that led youth through team-building activities and exhilarating games. In the process, youth improved their communication and leadership skills, practiced teamwork and made memories to last a lifetime! At TEAM Camp, youth are guaranteed to have fun, make friends and find their hidden strengths. Activities included: Outdoor Challenge; Personal Development Sessions; Self-Concept Workshops; and Goal-Setting Sessions.

## Faculty, staff activities and accomplishments contd.

**Carol Sensley**, assistant extension agent, Calcasieu Parish, accompanied youth in the Y.E.S. Club along with retired Ag Center volunteer Donna Jones to the “How it Grows” workshop during the SU Ag Center Youth Expo.



Workshop in the garden during Youth Expo

Kendall Sweet won first place in the illustrated talk contest among the students who attended the Youth Expo with Carol Sensley from Calcasieu Parish.



L-R: Vice Chancellor Eubanks, Carol Sensley, Kendall Sweet, illustrated talk winner, Calcasieu Parish, and Chancellor Williams

Sensley also presented Nutrition Bingo to residents of Abraham’s Tent, a homeless shelter in the parish. Calcasieu Parish youth, under the supervision of Carol Sensley, assisted in a beautification project at Abraham’s Tent with painting, refurbishing, and organizing the food pantry closet at the shelter as a community development project.



Youth paint homeless shelter

## Upcoming Events

**July 22:** Morehouse Parish Black Farmers 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Field Day. For more information, contact: Odis Hill, Assistant County Agent, Morehouse & Union Parishes at 318/ 281-5741 or 318/ 281-5742.

**July 26:** Training on Family Stress, JET, Baton Rouge. For more information, contact: Delores Johnson, parent educator, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

**August 2:** Training on Family Stress, JET, Baton Rouge. For more information, contact: Delores Johnson, parent educator, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

**August 9:** Training on Family Stress, JET, Baton Rouge. For more information, contact: Delores Johnson, parent educator, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

**August 12:** SW LA Livestock Enterprise, Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives, Opelousas, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm. For more information, contact: Wilbert Harris or William Augustine at 225-771-2242 or Aubrey Williams at 337-943-2410.

**August 16:** Training on Family Stress, JET, Baton Rouge. For more information, contact: Delores Johnson, parent educator, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

**August 19:** SU Alumni Association, Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives, Opelousas. For more information, contact: Edna Lastrapes at 337-943-2410.

**August 23:** Training on Family Stress, JET, Baton Rouge. For more information, contact: Delores Johnson, parent educator, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

**August 30:** Training on Family Stress, JET, Baton Rouge. For more information, contact: Delores Johnson, parent educator, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237