



THE chancellor's **REPORT**

APRIL 2019

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Interim
Chancellor-Dean

Retia Walker
Vice Chancellor for
Academic & Student Support
Services/Associate Dean

Andra Johnson
Vice Chancellor for
Research & Technology
Development

Dawn Mellion-Patin
Vice Chancellor for
Extension & Outreach



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FROM THE DESK
of the Interim
Chancellor-Dean:

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center and the College of Agricultural, Family, and Consumer Sciences have been busy throughout the month of March.

I would like to take the time to spotlight the work that our administrative team has been doing.

Vice Chancellor for Extension and Outreach, Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin continues to provide excellent extension programming to the citizens of Louisiana. The “Living Legends Banquet” held during the 9th Annual Louisiana Small Farmers Conference on Friday, March 15, 2019, was marvelous. The banquet honored Mr. Terrance Marshall for his extension service over three decades and Dr. Gary C. Simon for his teaching prowess over the last 25 plus years.

Dr. Retia Walker, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Support Services – Associate Dean, has been named the 2019 recipient of the College of Human Sciences Alumni Achievement Award by Iowa State University. This is the 3rd time that Dr. Walker has been recognized by her alma mater for her stellar career.

Dr. Andra Johnson, Vice Chancellor for Research and Technology Development, is leading the effort to ensure that the campus’ faculty/researchers are primed to submit quality grant proposals for the upcoming 2019 USDA 1890 Capacity Building Grant Program.

Dr. Lynda Batiste, Director of Finance, earned her Ph.D. from Jackson State University this month. Drs. Renita Marshall and Harold Mellieon are constantly bringing about great changes and substance to the growth of the Department of Agricultural Science. I am very proud of them. Dr. Yadong Qi has tirelessly worked to ensure that our Department of Urban Forestry and Natural Resources is the premier Urban Forestry Program in the nation. Dr. Cheryl Atkinson is bringing great leadership to the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences. Dr. Janana Snowden is anchoring our medical marijuana program. Dr. Fatemeh Malekian and Mr. Antonio Harris are doing wonderful activities as well in their respective institutes.

Somberly speaking, we are asking you to continue to pray for the family of Dr. Bridget Udoh, who recently passed away. She was the former Communications Specialist for the SU Ag Center/ CAFCS and Dr. Oscar Udoh’s wife. Oscar is the glue to our compliance connections to the USDA. We loved Bridget and we’ll miss her kind smile and sound wisdom. Heaven truly has gained an angel.

As I walk the hallways of Fisher Hall, I am so excited to see second generation agricultural sciences students such as Sara Dixon and Naila McCartney; I taught their fathers.

The SU Ag Center and the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences (CAFCS) are quietly moving along with a greater purpose. As a servant leader, I am impressed by the high sense of optimism in both the Ag Center and CAFCS in recent weeks. Please view our schedule of events to see the upcoming activities that we want you to be a part of on our journey to continue linking the citizens of Louisiana with opportunities for success. **WE ARE SOUTHERN!!!**

from Dawn Mellion-Patin

Vice Chancellor for Extension and Outreach:

As Vice Chancellor for Extension and Outreach, my primary focus has been making the resources of the university available to all people across the state of Louisiana, with a special interest of reaching those just outside the gates of Southern University. I have always felt, that we needed to engage the residents in East Baton Rouge Parish, just a little more and truly make this their university. We recently celebrated the 76th Annual State Livestock and Poultry Show and hosted over 300 elementary, middle and high school children from Baton Rouge and surrounding areas. For the majority of these kids, this is the first and only opportunity they have had to see farm animals up close and personal and it also serves as an introduction to where food comes from. The petting zoo, featuring farm animals, is always a big hit, and when a chicken lays an egg or a chick is hatched, in front of the kids, lives change forever. As a side note, this year 120 Louisiana youth exhibitors from 31 parishes across the state, showed 204 animals.

The Louisiana Living Legends Award program was started in 2005, when Zanetta Augustine, Extension Associate, and I created an opportunity for the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center to honor those “heroes with ties and connections to Southern University” for their years of selfless service. This recognition is bestowed annually to three outstanding individuals in the areas of teaching, research, and extension, the mission areas of a land-grant university. The 2019 recipients are: Teaching – Dr. Gary C. Simon, Professor in Animal Sciences and Staff Veterinarian and a 30 year Southern University employee; Research – Dr. C. Reuben Walker, Professor in Animal Sciences and Interim Chancellor – Dean of the Agricultural Research and Extension Center and the College of Agricultural, Family, and Consumer Sciences, a 34 year employee; and Extension – Terrence S. Marshall, former Agriculture & Natural Resource agent in

East Baton Rouge Parish, who retired in 2015 after 38 years of service. The legends are nominated by the faculty and staff and selected by a vote of members on the Louisiana Small Farmer Conference committee. Nominations are open to anyone in the agricultural and food sciences with ties to Southern University, not just alums.

The Louisiana Living Legends Banquet is held annually as a part of the Louisiana Small Farmer Conference. The theme for this year’s conference was, “Unlocking Your Potential,” and all the sessions and presentations focused on how small farmers could use the resources available to them to create additional opportunities. The banquet speaker was Mrs. Alisa Welsh, Principal of Madison Preparatory Academy, a local charter school and a 2016 National Blue Ribbon School. Mrs. Welsh captivated the audience sharing how she and her team were able to turn this F rated school into a nationally recognized charter school within five years of its existence.

The March 7th issue of County Roads magazine (<https://countryroadsmagazine.com/cuisine/Louisiana-food-ways/thrive-academy-garden/>) featured the work of our very own Stephanie Elwood, Extension Associate (Horticulture) and her efforts with the USDA funded Fast Track Grant Gardening Program at Thrive Academy. This story highlights the impacts of gardening at the school.

Three major events are on the horizon for April. On the 5th, we are hosting the 4th annual Personal Health History Workshop. This year’s workshop will focus on Heart Health and a local cardiologist, Dr. Jay Hollman will serve as the keynote speaker. On the 16th, we host the annual Procurement Conference. We are expecting over 400 local business owners, government contractors and those interested in securing government contracts to attend this conference. We partner with several local and state agencies to offer this opportunity to small business owners. On April 24th, we will partner with the Flowers Lovers Guild of Scotlandville to offer the Spring Garden Workshop.

Additionally, we are continuing to offer free certification training courses in Small Business Development, Sustainable Urban Agriculture, Food / Farm Safety and Small Ruminants. Currently, members of this team are conducting weekly trainings in Alexandria, Folsom, and Greensburg, La. We hope to begin conducting classes in Opelousas and New Roads within the next couple of weeks. Stay tuned!



collaborate

Faculty and students from Alcorn State University visited Southern University on February 1 to discuss and conduct a field study for the upcoming Association of 1890 Research Director (ARD) Conference. Students from both Universities collected soil samples, installed insect traps and tree measurements during the visit. Faculty and students from Southern University also visited Alcorn State University on February 21 to repeat the project. Results from this research will be presented by students at the ARD Conference in Jacksonville, Florida from March 30 – April 3, 2019.

Association of 1890 Research Directors Project



Animal Science Department Receives Donation from

Four Paws Cremation Services

Four Paws
Pet Cremation Service

Four Paws Pet Cremation Service has donated a distal horse limb to the Department of Agricultural Sciences in Southern University's College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences. Lorenzo Bennet, an alum of the College and owner/-CEO of the cremation service, presented the limb to Renita Marshall, DVM, Chair of the Department of Agricultural Sciences. Marshall said the limb will be used for student instruction. "We have a veterinary sciences course that we will use to show the students a real-life picture into how the bones and the limbs of animals work," said Dr. Marshall. "Whether or not the students go into animal science or veterinary medicine they will need to know how the bones work to be able to assist with any type of surgery or anything that has to do with the medical condition of a horse's limb." The department offers Bachelor of Science degrees in Agricultural Sciences with concentrations in Agri-business, Agricultural Economics, Animal Science, Plant and Soil Sciences, or Pre-Veterinary Medicine.

A person in a blue shirt is working in a garden, surrounded by large green leaves. The background is a blurred garden scene.

HAVE YOUR *Face* and Eat It, Too!

At Thrive Academy, students connect, and grow with the garden.

By April Hamilton (This article appeared in March 2019 issue of Country Roads Magazine)

Natural outdoor spaces have supernatural powers. Just ask Stephanie Elwood, a horticulturist wrapping up her Masters in Urban Forestry this spring at Southern University. Since 2008, Elwood has been dedicated to community and school gardens across Louisiana, witnessing the healing power of hands in the soil. Working at Southern University with a USDA Fast Track grant, she started a garden at Thrive Academy, the Baton Rouge boarding school for at-risk youth. “I can help a child obtain mental stability in the garden,” pledges Elwood to prospective students and parents. “My graduate research is on gardening and behavior change,” she added in a recent interview. “I have worked with thousands of kids, and once they touch the soil, they are invested.”

Thrive Academy, the Louisiana State Charter School on Brightside Drive, offers a unique educational model to students who have obstacles in their lives that a boarding school can help them overcome. In addition to small class size and mentor-led dormitory living on weekdays, the students blossom with after school club activities. (I teach weekly cooking classes to both the high-schoolers and middle-schoolers.) From the music room, percussion pulses into the air. If it’s a hip-hop beat, all the better for Elwood, who connects hip-hop with the garden. “There are songs that transition from ‘rap’ into a positive message about food and healthy eating. It’s relatable for the kids. Growing food is empowering,” she said, adding, “If a kid grows kale, they will eat it.”

“This is my first year working in the garden,” said tenth-grader Renauta. “I planted the cabbage and carrots. I love to see everything growing after all the work we put into it, and then we get to eat it!”

The garden club allows a therapeutic outdoor outlet for students with the added bonus of the garden beds beautifying the entrance of the school and the bounty begging “Pick me!” Carrot greens peek up from the soil and celery stalks with vivid green leaves wave in the breeze. Even students who aren’t involved in the garden club learn to identify what’s what. A cascade of lemongrass invites passersby to pick a long leaf and enjoy a little aromatherapy.

Elwood mentally inventories the abundance of the Thrive garden beds: “There’s dinosaur kale, Red Russian kale, and ornamental kale that adds beautiful color to the beds and makes a pretty garnish. I like to grow things they can pick and eat raw, straight from the garden. It will be fun to partner with the cooking club so we can cook up some of our harvest,” she said. The current crop of broccoli and purple cauliflower will make its way to the kitchen where cooks and gardeners will collaborate on a “Mardi Gras Mac and Cheese,” festive with the green and purple vegetables dancing in a golden cheese sauce. Elwood’s devotion to gardening with kids is infectious. “I started the garden at Thrive in their previous location [at the Family Youth Services Center on Government Street] and a seed was planted in each student. A sixth grader from back then is a junior now and continues with the program. Watching them discover the beauty of the garden, it is magic. It’s why I’m here on this earth.” Teachers at Thrive tell Elwood how they value the garden as a calming space for students. “I’ve heard about students getting sent out to the garden to work out their emotions. It’s really beautiful.”

“One of my Thrive students lives with his grandparents. They had a communication gap, as in he would not communicate with them. When he learned to garden, he was able to establish a connection with them and started helping in their home garden.”

In the fall, the first crop of citrus will be ready for picking from the trees that line the courtyard of the residential building. Students can help themselves to a tasty homegrown snack, peeling back the fragrant skin and diving in to juicy segments that can be shared with a friend. As the Thrive campus expands to include a new academic building, Elwood will scale up food production to grow for the cafeteria. “Thrive is very open to growth. Having an onboard administration is a dream! The kids are learning to grow and also eating from the garden. Horticulture and health consciousness go hand in hand.

“Louisiana is a great place for agriculture. We can grow 365 days a year. We would love to see these students come to Southern (University) to study agriculture. There are so many careers—farming, research, veterinarian, ag-economics, horticulture florist, forestry.”

“It’s really interesting how much [agriculture] touches our daily lives,” added Elwood, citing sixty plant varieties that can be used for flood mitigation. “Green infrastructure is the future of our world!”

Elwood’s gusto for gardening spreads easily to other schools and communities. She partners with committed groups to help them implement a flourishing garden. “At Southern, we developed a 14-lesson community garden curriculum, including how to choose a garden site. With the Growing Healthy Nutrition Education Program we contract with selected sites so they realize what it takes to keep it going.”

Sustainability is key in any gardening endeavor. “We will help with a build day and turn it over to them to maintain,” said Elwood. “You can’t start a garden on just an idea, it takes commitment.”

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AG CENTER CONDUCTS

FOOD SAFETY

CERTIFICATION TRAININGS THROUGHOUT THE STATE

The Southern University Ag Center has been conducting Food Safety Certification trainings in several cities throughout the state. The team, consisting of Dr. Fatemeh Malekian, L'Asia George, Emily King, and William Augustine, recently completed a training in Alexandria, and are currently conducting a training in Folsom, La. The five-session training consists of food handling information and a cooking demonstration which provides participants with a visual concept of the five chapters presented during the program. The demonstration also shows participants the proper way of implementing food safety practices while preparing a meal. At the end of the training, each participant is presented with a certificate of completion in Food Safety. Funding for the training is provided through a grant from the Louisiana Office of Community Services titled, "Enhancing Capacity of Louisiana Small Farms and Businesses." In addition to the Food and Farm Safety Certification Program, the SU Ag Center also offers certifications in Sustainable Urban Agriculture, Master Small Ruminant and Small Business Development.

For additional information on our four certification programs, visit <http://www.suagcenter.com/page/food-safety-certification-program>.

THANK YOU

for your years of service, dedication and expertise!

Dr. Bernestine McGee

40
YEARS
of Service

Endowed Professor and Program Leader in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences

Terry Washington

40
YEARS
of Service

County Agent for the Southern University Ag Center in Rapides Parish

Dr. Gary Simon

30
YEARS
of Service

University Veterinarian and Professor in the Department of Animal Science

Angell Jordan

10
YEARS
of Service

Assistant Area Agent for the Southern University Ag Center in Acadia and Lafayette Parishes

Nearly 200 Small Farmers attend



LOUISIANA
S M A L L
F A R M E R S
CONFERENCE 2019

UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL

Grant Writing, Backyard Birds for the 21st Century, Value Added Products, Small Ruminant Reproduction, and Ag Technology...There's an App for That: Staying Connected were among the topics covered during the 9th Annual Louisiana Small Farmer Conference. One hundred and seventy-three small farmers from throughout Louisiana attended the three-day conference themed, "Unlocking Your Potential." The event was held March 14-16, at the Felton G. Clark Activity Center on Southern University's campus.

The first day of the conference provided small farmers with information on grant opportunities available to them through the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, as well as information on the Southern University Ag Center's four certification courses. The second day of the conference began with an address from Louisiana's Department of Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, DVM. The conference's keynote address was delivered by Randolph Joseph, Jr., the Assistant State Conservationists for the United States Department of Agriculture's National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The day's session included Aquaponics and Vertical Gardening, Raised Beds and Conventional Soil Amendments, Sustainability: Self-Sufficient Farming Practices, and Soil Health for Better Crops and Livestock. There was also a USDA Round Table Discussion which provided small farmers an opportunity to ask questions and learn about the programs available through the USDA.

The Louisiana Living Legends Banquet was held on the evening of March 15 following the conference's sessions. This banquet honors individuals who have made significant contributions to Southern University in the areas of teaching, research, and extension. The 2019 honorees were Dr. Gary C. Simon, Southern University Veterinarian and Professor of Animal Science (Teaching); Dr. Calvin Reuben Walker, Interim Chancellor-Dean of the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center and the College of Agricultural, Family, and Consumer Sciences and Professor of Animal Science (Research); and Terrence S. Marshall, retired County Agent for the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (Extension). The three join 27 others who have been honored with this recognition since 2005. Alisa Welsh, Principal of Madison Preparatory Academy, served as the speaker for the banquet.

The conference concluded with a Pasture Walk at Redwood Creek Cattle Farm in Ethel, La. During the walk, participants learned about electric fencing with a combination of barb wire, pasture management, cattle handling, cattle health and vaccination, record keeping, and toured the farmer's calf daycare.



ALUMNISPOTLIGHT

Terani Dillahunty is in her second semester pursuing her MBA in the College of Business at Southern University (May 2018)

Xavier Robinson is a Visual Merchandiser for Forever 21 in Atlanta, GA (December 2018)

Autumn Taylor is Co-Manager of Ann Taylor Loft in Towne Center at Cedar Lodge in Baton Rouge (December 2018). Autumn has already begun to give back to the program by donating a number of mannequin dress forms which will be used in several of the classes.

UPCOMING EVENTS



15th Annual
BUSINESS
PROCUREMENT
& DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE

APR
16TH 2019

F.G. Clark Activity Center
Southern University

CONNECTING BUSINESSES WITH CONTRACTS

For more information on being an exhibitor or attendee, please contact **Eual Hall** at 225.771.4105,
Krystle Washington at 225.771.3902 or email jo.lawrence3@sba.gov • www.suagcenter.com



PERSONAL HEALTH *History* Workshop

Southern University Agricultural Land-Grant Campus

April 5, 2019 / 9:00am-2:30pm

Southern University Smith-Brown Memorial Union
500 Jesse Stone Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70813

General Session: Understand Your Risks to Prevent a Heart Attack

*Warning Signs of a Heart Attack in Men and Women

*Exercise for a Healthy Heart

Breakout Sessions:



**Mental Health
& Well-Being**



**Eating for a
Healthy Heart**



**Harmful Effects
of Smoking**



**Medicaid
& Medicare**



**Healthy Tactics for
Personal Safety
& Security**



**Power of Attorney
& Living Wills**

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SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL LAND-GRANT CAMPUS



Jaguar

HOWLLED

& trailride

APR 12-13, 2019



FEATURING **Lil NATE**

M.A. EDMOND LIVESTOCK ARENA
14600 Scenic Highway, Baton Rouge, LA 70807

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
C. REUBEN WALKER 225-771-2242 OR VISIT SUAGCENTER.COM





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