

**Southern University and A & M College System**  
**AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER**  
**BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA**



**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**2007-2012**

**LEODREY WILLIAMS, Chancellor**

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## Chancellor's Perspectives

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SUAREC) is proud to present its Strategic Plan for 2007-2012. This plan is reflective of an intensive planning process which involved deliberations and input from all segments of the Center. Administrators, faculty and staff from the research and extension components of the Center were invited to participate in the planning and development of this document. The strategic planning process was driven by the need to bridge the gap between extension and research so that SUAREC can more adequately meet the needs of its diverse clientele. The process was initiated at a retreat at the Center, January 8-10, 2007.

The Strategic Plan is intended to guide the future direction of the research and extension programs. The plan is an embodiment of certain core values that are considered vital to our success as a Center. It consists of programmatic goals, situational statements, objectives and action strategies. These will serve as the broad framework for the conceptualization and implementation of projects over time. The plan also addresses the Southern University System initiatives – the Eleven-As (11-As): Pillars of Success. It is our hope that this plan will serve as the blue print for a brighter tomorrow for Louisiana's food and agricultural industry as we strive to link citizens to opportunities for success.

It must be emphasized that the 2007 Strategic Plan will be a "living document" with the flexibility to change over time based on societal needs. We hope that all readers can benefit from this document and we invite our stakeholders to furnish their input on an ongoing basis. Please be assured that SUAREC is committed to serving its clientele in a manner that is useful in addressing their scientific, technological, social, economic and cultural needs.

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Leodrey Williams  
Chancellor, SU Ag Center

## INTRODUCTION

Southern University and A & M College (SU) opened its doors to the public in 1881 with 12 students. The University was recognized as a land grant institution in 1890. Since its inception, the University has served as a beacon of hope to those who attended, or were touched by its programs. This is especially true for underprivileged citizens with limited economic and social resources.

Research and extension programs in agriculture and the family and consumer sciences have always been integral parts of the university's mission. Until recently, the extension and research programs were maintained as separate units. In July, 2001, the **SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER (SUAREC)**, commonly referred to as the SU Ag Center, officially opened and now includes the Cooperative Extension Program as well as the agricultural and family and consumer sciences research program. (Most researchers in SUAREC continue to serve in academic capacities in the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences). SUAREC serves as the fifth campus in the Southern University System (SUS). SUAREC and the SU Law Center are located in Baton Rouge along with the main SU campus. SUS also maintains campuses in New Orleans and Shreveport.

As a land grant institution, it is imperative that the programs reflect strategic areas outlined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The goals identified in the USDAs (CSREES) FY 2007 – 2012 Strategic plan are as follows:

- Enhance International Competitiveness of American Agriculture
- Enhance the Competitiveness and Sustainability of Rural and Farm Economies
- Support Increased Economic Opportunities and Improved Quality of Life in Rural America
- Enhance Protection and Safety of the Nation's Agriculture and Food Supply
- Improve the Nation's Nutrition and Health
- Protect and Enhance the Nation's Natural Resource Base and Environment

As a campus of the Southern University System, SUAREC's plan will, through its research and extension program also address the System strategic goals (Eleven As: Pillars of Success) which are as follows:

- Ensure academic excellence
- Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders
- Develop an assessment system to evaluate and manage the strengths and weaknesses of the Southern University System
- Ensure quality and accountability in service delivery, performance,

- personnel and results
- Provide a "State of the Art" Technology Infrastructure capable of supporting our Academic, Administrative and Athletic Environments System-wide
  - Strengthen the University's relations and communication outreach to its Alumni
  - Improve athletic functions System-wide by enlarging facilities, increasing scholarships, and adding supporting resources, as needed
  - Increase advertising efforts and public relations to enhance the overall image and national reputation of the Southern University System while increasing its visibility and attraction to students
  - Implement a comprehensive advancement program to ensure adequate development and fundraising for Southern University System
  - Revise and implement a system-wide facilities master plan to comprehensively address accommodations and infrastructure maintenance and improvement
  - Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUAREC has six base program areas, all of which fit well with the USDA goals listed above. Originally, extension and research personnel each outlined separate program areas for their respective units. However, these were synthesized into the six base program areas listed below:

- Sustainable Agricultural Systems
- Urban Forestry and Natural Resource Management
- Nutrition and Health
- Economics and Community Development
- Family and Human Development
- Youth Development

SUAREC has three primary goals:

- To strengthen the productivity, profitability and competitiveness of Louisiana's agriculture, forestry and fisheries while enhancing the environment and wise use of the natural resources.
- To build leaders and good citizens through youth development.
- To implement nutrition, health, family and community development programs to enhance the quality of life of Louisiana's citizens.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To conduct basic and applied research and disseminate information to the citizens of Louisiana in a manner that is useful in addressing their scientific, technological, social, economic and cultural needs.

## VISION STATEMENT

To be recognized and valued as a premier provider for practical new discoveries, outreach education and technical assistance in food, agricultural and human sciences that enhance the quality of life of the diverse urban and rural citizenry of Louisiana.

## CORE VALUES

As a major component of an 1890 Land Grant University, SUAREC was built upon and continues to maintain a set of core values. These values exemplify the land grant mission of service to its clientele through teaching, research and outreach in the areas of food, agricultural and human sciences. Our shared core values should be clearly reflected in the philosophy and work of SUAREC's faculty and staff, and include:

**Accountability.** As a service-providing institution, we must be accountable to the public, our clients, and other stakeholders to ensure that their needs are being addressed.

**Collaboration and Collective Effort.** We must synergize our efforts to make sure our materials, human resources and time are utilized for the good of those whom we serve.

**Commitment.** Improving the quality of life of our citizenry is a full-time endeavor that requires the full commitment of the SUAREC staff. Because of the myriad of problems facing all segments of our society (youth, elderly, poor and disenfranchised), we must take our work seriously and devote the time and effort needed on a consistent basis.

**Courage.** In order to bring about change and improvement in the quality of life for our citizens, it is often necessary to step boldly with them. However, this courage should be grounded in the collective will of the constituents.

**Respect for Diversity.** The people of Louisiana (and the nation and world) reflect a wide range of racial, religious and ethnic backgrounds. This diversity is also reflected within SUAREC, the Southern University System, and in the citizenry that we serve. In order to help solve the problems that our citizens face, we must hear the voice of everyone involved regardless of ethnicity or gender.

**Equity.** Many of the problems that citizens of the state, nation and world are facing are due to an inequitable distribution of land, wealth, resources and education. As an 1890 land grant university, Southern University has always strived to serve those who were put at a disadvantage, either socially, economically or educationally. We strive to do the greatest good for the greatest number.

**Empowerment.** The ultimate objective of SUAREC programs and initiatives is to facilitate the empowerment of citizens in local communities. This empowerment should lead to a greater voice in decision-making concerning issues that affect their lives.

**Excellence.** We strive for excellence in all that we do. We expect this of ourselves, and of others with whom we work. This includes the quality of our research programs, our interaction with the clientele, and our initiatives with youth, and community and leadership development.

**Innovation.** To accomplish the SUAREC vision requires a high degree of innovation and risk-taking. We cannot be locked into old ways of doing things if those ways are no longer relevant.

**Integrity.** Integrity is the cornerstone of trust. We need to be honest and straightforward with our counterparts and with our clientele, without entertaining hidden and personal agendas. We must strive to insure that our deeds are reflective of our words.

**Investment in People.** SUAREC is fully committed to public service and the empowerment of its clientele.

**Leadership.** Within SUAREC, we must be willing to assert leadership when appropriate, and assist others in leadership positions when necessary.

**Mentoring and Nurturing.** Mentoring and nurturing are crucial in preparing our youth for meaningful, productive lives. Many communities face critical shortages of mentors, particularly for young African-American males. However, mentoring is not restricted to the young. Mentoring programs are also important in developing community leadership. Additionally, veterans or older SUAREC members should help mentor and nurture new staff members.

**Technology.** One of the tenets of our land grant mission is to conduct relevant research and to disseminate appropriate technology to the citizenry. SUAREC views appropriate technology as technology that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable and user friendly.

**Personal and Professional Growth.** We recognize the importance of both personal and professional growth. SUAREC personnel are encouraged to pursue activities that promote growth in these areas.

**Global Perspective.** Understandably, the overwhelming majority of our initiatives and programs fall within the boundaries of Louisiana. However, we recognize that citizens of Louisiana are also world citizens, and are impacted by events of a

regional, national, and global nature. We are encouraged to “think globally but act locally.”

## **INTERNAL ASSESSMENT**

Administrators, faculty and staff (see participants list) of SUAREC met for a three-day retreat to develop this strategic plan after conducting an assessment of the FY 2003-2008 Strategic Plan. Also, an internal assessment using the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis as the primary tool which was conducted during the 2003 retreat were reviewed. Facilitators and recorders (see the list on pages 46-48) within SUAREC assisted with this process. This current plan shows how SUAREC will address the Southern University System’s **Eleven As: Pillars of Success**. It was necessary to use internal facilitators and recorders who were conversant with the New System Plan. Participants were not necessarily assigned to the breakout session for their respective disciplines.

### **Perceived Strengths**

- Highly qualified and experienced faculty
- Extensive formal and informal training for faculty
- State-of-the-art technology center
- Extensive branding campaign
- Existence of the Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives in Opelousas
- A 385-acre Agricultural Experiment Station; 50-acre horticulture farm
- The Center for Rural and Small Business Development
- Existing partnerships

### **Threats / Challenges**

Collectively, the challenges identified during this process were very general in detail and cut across all program areas, and are thusly presented below:

- Low level of public’s awareness of the Ag Center as an entity
- Communication challenges, both internally and externally
- Varied and diverse responsibilities of faculty
- Limited financial resources

### **Opportunities**

- Increased financial resources
- More relevant services/programs for our clientele
- Recognized as leaders in agricultural research and public service
- Enhanced ability to collaborate on a multi-state basis
- Additional staff hired with grant funds

# **Program Area: Sustainable Agricultural Systems (SAS)**

## **Goal 1: Improve agricultural sustainability and profitability**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

**Objective:** To develop research and extension activities designed to improve animal and plant productivity and or profitability.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; Distance Learning

### **Situation**

Sustainable animal and plant productivity and profitability are of paramount importance to the agricultural sector of Louisiana. A wide variation exists in agricultural productivity and profitability. The average farm size in Louisiana increased from 287 acres in 2002 to 291 acres in 2005. Farms vary in size from large commercial operations to small-scale operations. The latter are faced with the greatest challenge to generate sufficient income. Of the 26,800 farms in the state in 2002, slightly more than 75 percent reported sales below \$20,000 annually. Economic opportunities exist for small agricultural producers who adopt or incorporate alternative livestock and crop enterprises and management systems such as goats, rabbits, vegetables, fruits, herbs, and management intensive grazing in their agricultural enterprises. Home gardeners are an example of agricultural stakeholders who would benefit from various aspects of sustainable agriculture. SUAREC is committed to providing relevant research and extension information for our stakeholders.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Hire additional experienced personnel capable of responding to clientele needs.
2. Continue to expand building projects, modernize facilities and acquire adequate land for research/extension programs.
3. Continue to conduct research and outreach activities geared to traditional and non-traditional agricultural stakeholders.

4. Continue to create and enhance marketing opportunities in traditional and alternative outlets, such as farmer's markets, community supported agriculture (CSA), and other outlets.
5. Continue collaborating with Louisiana State University (LSU) Ag Center, other universities/colleges, external agencies, and campuses within the Southern University System.
6. Develop disaster plan including mechanisms for assistance for victims.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of qualified personnel hired

Number of facilities built or modernized

Acres of land acquired

Level of maintenance to A.O. Williams Hall and other campus

Number of Sustainable Agricultural workshops/meetings conducted

Number of extension educational publications (brochures, newsletters, etc.)

disseminated Number of organic producers certified

Number of new adult and youth producers started

Number (or percent) of collaborative projects

Number (or percent) of joint seminars

### **Goal 2: Promote good environmental stewardship.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

**Objective:** To seek ways to utilize our natural resources in an environmentally safe manner.

### **Situation**

Promoting good environmental stewardship is a wise use of our natural resources. Our clientele are often unaware of the dangers of poor stewardship and of the methods that constitute good stewardship. A sustainable agriculture system that deals with organic farming, judicious use of pesticide, waste utilization, composting, etc, would be valuable in assisting these stakeholders. Research dealing with the utilization of local and regional abundant, renewable resources should be helpful in promoting good environmental stewardship.

## Action Strategies

1. Conduct research and develop informational brochures, flyers, pamphlets and handbooks specifically targeting environmental stewardship and the small producer.
2. Conduct field days, demonstrations and tours related to environmental stewardship.
3. Work with youth in communities to develop sustainable and environmental friendly practices early in life.

## Performance Indicators

- Number of research projects conducted
- Number of extension educational publications (brochures, newsletters, etc.) produced
- Number of research publications
- Number of research presentations
- Number of field days conducted
- Number of demonstrations conducted
- Number of tours conducted
- Number of youth gardening workshops conducted
- Number of youth tours of agricultural facilities conducted
- Number of youth participants in Livestock Show compost display and activities

## Goal 3: Promote stable, prosperous farms, families and communities.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

**Objective:** To seek ways to involve youth and community stakeholders in appropriate SUAREC research and outreach programs.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; Distance Learning

## Situation

The average age of an active participant in the farming community in the state of Louisiana is 55. The current trend is such that youth are not being involved or are not interested in being involved in production agriculture. If farm families and

agricultural based communities are to survive, more youth must realize the benefits of rural life and become engaged in maintaining their communities. Additionally, appropriate information and resources must be available for their use in the decision making processes including leadership training and information regarding agriculture as a profession.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Continue developing educational materials to promote, inform and connect stakeholders, research, and extension personnel
2. Enhance the dissemination of information and facilitate feedback to address clientele needs.
3. Increase research scientists' and extension staff participation in various community group functions.
4. Continue to recognize noteworthy stakeholders for their involvement and promotion of the SUAREC mission.
5. Create additional ways to help address the needs of non-traditional stakeholders (urban, suburban and ethnic groups).

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of educational materials developed  
Number of leadership workshops conducted  
Number of participants in advisory council meeting  
Number of research scientists and extension staff participating in community group functions  
Number of presentations made by research scientists in community group functions  
Number of awards/incentives given to stakeholders  
Number of recognitions given to stakeholders  
Number of media and marketing promotion materials developed

## **Program Area: Community and Economic Development**

**Goal 1: Provide entrepreneurial management and technical assistance that promote innovative and sustainable businesses with limited resources in Louisiana.**

[SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence](#)

[SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders](#)

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

**Objectives:** To establish active partnerships between businesses, faith-based entities, community-based organizations, public agencies, agro-industries, and elected leadership

To increase the economic performance of small business in poverty stricken areas by supporting and assisting in establishing, retaining and expanding small business.

To offer and facilitate educational venues that advance business development

To network and collaborate with other technical assistance providers

Examine, assess and research barriers to the existence and survival of small business in order to prescribe best practices and models for success.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; Distance Learning

### **Situation**

Effective Community and economic development program is essential to increasing the opportunities for underserved populations both private and community based in the state of Louisiana. One of the key factors impacting urban and rural communities is the lack of skills and adequate resources to build their capacity to compete and or sustain themselves in Louisiana economy.

Unemployment, low education rates, major businesses and industries leaving the state gravely impacting our state, thus creating a need to provide businesses, community based organizations, community leaders and consumers to increase their capacity to sustain themselves.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Develop an interactive database and listserv of businesses and technical assistance providers to encourage the establishment of partnerships and networks.
2. Develop a "How To" resource manual on business financing, plan development, management and marketing strategies (etc.) to create, retain, and expand sustainable businesses.

3. Facilitate and conduct business training that creates and implements certification
4. Pursue and utilize existing incubators that foster business development
5. Convene roundtable discussions to target specific and general issues impacting target communities.
6. Hire a rural economist.
7. Assist established businesses with planning, market assessment, management, and marketing strategies.
8. Recruit aspiring entrepreneurs and assist them with the development of business plans.
9. Assist local farmers and other persons to develop alternative enterprise initiatives for rural businesses.
10. Develop agribusinesses to include utilization of niche markets (vegetables, organic products pasture-raised poultry and beef, etc.) for agricultural producers.

#### **Performance Indicators**

- Number of citizens trained to start new businesses
- Number of leaders trained
- Number of citizens trained to complete loan applications
- Number of new farmers participating in the farmers' markets

### **Goal 2: To assist community-based organizations to build their capacity as they accomplish their mission**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

Objectives: To Provide cost-effective, efficient, relevant, and resourceful information to emerging and existing community-based organizations.

To provide technical assistance based upon organizational assessments

### **Action Strategies**

1. Teach leadership courses to local community leaders
2. Empower community leaders and residents in the targeted areas to develop strategic plans for optimum utilization of natural resources
3. Conduct research and provide impact studies results to local and regional government leaders to aid them in policy formulation and strategies to enhance and sustain the small and minority business sector
4. Promote USDA, Rural Development programs

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of community leaders attending training on community issues  
Number of citizens attending community development seminars  
Number community based leaders participating in training  
Number of community leaders participating in training on urban planning, land use and other environmental issues

**Goal 3: Help local community leaders and residents acquire skills, obtain relevant information/data and build management capacity to successfully manage a community or city, thus developing the policies and strategic plans and alliances needed for this success.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

### **Objective:**

To increase the knowledge base of community leaders, policy makers and low income residents in the use of best practice tools regarding legal, environmental and other policy areas.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; Distance Learning

## **Situation**

Every family and community is routinely faces tough decisions. Without adequate knowledge and skills community leaders, policy makers and low income residents will not make sound choices to addresses critical issues they face on a daily basis. All people, not just those in formal positions of leadership, have the potential for leadership. Empowering people to take action for themselves is necessary for effective leadership. Gaining knowledge of leadership styles and building an understanding of how leadership influences development is essential for the healthy growth of individuals and communities. Well prepared community leaders and residents will possess the ability to frame issues correctly and be empowered to take necessary action in each resolve problems in peaceful ways.

## **Action Strategies:**

1. Teach leadership courses for local community leaders
2. Managing family resources and wealth (wills, taxes, succession, etc.)
3. Empowering communities and residents in the targeted areas in developing strategic plans for optimum utilization of natural resources (air, water and soil)
4. Conducting home ownership and credit management seminars and assisting residents in securing credit for home ownership
5. Assisting residents in resolving conflicts with governmental agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture by coordinating mediation efforts
6. Incorporating sound urban forestry management strategies in impoverished areas in community development and planning in collaboration with SU Urban Forestry faculty
7. Establish a public leadership institute dealing with public policy education, legal, regulatory and environmental issues.

## **Performance Indicators**

Number of community leaders and residents attending training on community issues

Number of citizens attending community development education seminars

Number community based leaders participating in training

## **Program Area: Family and Human Development**

### **Family Structures and Development**

Trends in family structure include grandparents raising grandchildren, stepfamilies, single-parent families, a decreasing number of married couples with children, an increase in households who are separated and cohabiting, a divorce rate of 50% and increasing numbers of single adults living with unmarried partners. The number of grandparents living in households with their own grandchildren under 18 years is 106,463 and those that are responsible for grandchildren 66,592 (62.55%). Characteristics of grandparents responsible for their own grandchildren under 18 years include; females, 64.9% and those who are married, 68.8%. Grandmothers that remain in the labor force is 54% of which 35% live in poverty.

In Louisiana, 16.6% (approximately 275,000 families) of the households were single-parent in 2000, compared with 15.6% in 1990. This single-parent household data is steadily increasing each year. It was reported in 2004 that unmarried women account for 34% of all births in the United States, and 47% of births in Louisiana.

Parenting is a challenge and most parents have received limited training to prepare them for guiding a child's growth and development. Problems are compounded by dysfunctional family relationships, by limited economic resources, and inadequate social support and parenting education. In 2001, Voices for Working Families discovered "Moments in the Life of a Child in Louisiana". A child in Louisiana is abused or neglected every 50 minutes. A child in Louisiana is born into poverty 29 minutes. A child in Louisiana dies before his/her first birthday every 14 hours. A child in Louisiana is killed by gunfire every 4 days. In 2001, the median family income was analyzed by race/ethnicity ....

White	\$29,330
African-American	\$11,900
Latino	Insufficient data
Other	Insufficient data

**Goal 1: Assist diverse families in identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in their unique family structures.**

[SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders](#)

[SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success](#)

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

### **Objectives:**

1. To respond to the problematic family issues in urban and rural communities.
2. To develop and expand partnerships with community agencies and organizations which allow the Family and Human Development unit of SUAREC to respond to the needs of diverse families.
3. To encourage, establish and strengthen participation of multi-state and multi-institutional collaboration in order to develop programs that addresses the priorities of diverse families.
4. To develop strategies for building family programs by securing revenue from community, faith-based and private based foundations, and corporations through grants, contracts and in-kind contributions.
5. To develop culturally sensitive programs and materials that stimulate families to identify their strengths, decision making and improve self sufficiency skills.
6. To plan and implement effective programs that are outcome based.
7. To develop user friendly family programs that can be marketed to diverse stakeholders.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

### **Action Strategies**

1. Organize advisory committees that include representatives from all communities and areas of the state where programs are being conducted.
2. Develop a database that identifies community agencies and organizations that can be used to initiate programs and identify challenges and opportunities for working with families.
3. Provide family programs that are multi-state and multi-institutional that are implemented through multi-faceted approaches.
4. To develop an effective approach to secure funding for family programs.
5. Develop and disseminate information that includes research based literature and mass media on diverse families and strengthening families.

6. Foster the integration of research, teaching, and outreach of family programs—social, health, and economic issues which helps to increase the level of work in communities.
7. To strengthen the community responsiveness of family programs to state and local stakeholders.

### **Performance Indicators**

- Number of advisory meetings held per year.
- Number of workshops, training sessions, and meetings conducted.
- Number of publications developed and disseminated (including electronically accessible publications).
- Number of collaborative partnerships with individuals, community based organization, states and institutions.
- Number of internal grant workshops conducted per year.
- Number of innovative fund raising initiatives implemented per year.
- Number of TV segments, Public service announcements produced
- Number of programs and resources for families to aid in literacy and increase high school graduation and workforce development rates.
- Number of programs available to families to aid in the social health and economic issues that affect the families.
- Number or frequency of advisory committees meetings
- Number or frequency of needs assessment conducted to establish baseline data on clientele
- Number of focus group meetings conducted

### **Child Care Situation**

The numbers for women who are in the work force are on the rise. In Louisiana, there are 66.6% of women in the labor force; 69.3% are married with a spouse present. As a result, 78.6% of mothers with children under 6 years of age work; and 64.1% of mothers with children age 6-17 work.

Although the quality of care for young children has a significant impact on their growth and development, only workers in licensed Class A centers must receive 12 hours of training in areas related to child wellbeing. Class B centers are regulated mostly for fire, health and safety standards. Presently, the state is designing a quality rating system that will assess the quality of centers and early care in Louisiana. In an effort to begin this process, the committee has come up with common elements the help to create quality care. These elements include: standards, accountability, program and practitioner outreach and support, financing incentives and parent/consumer education. These common elements cause us to focus more on the quality of care for children, increase parent understanding of high quality care and to increase the amount professional development that may necessary to maintain a high quality rating system in the state.

Additionally, the Welfare Reform Act prompted family home providers to provide care to six or fewer children can be registered and receive benefits through the Louisiana Department of Education to help feed these children.

Three in ten Louisiana children of working families are unsupervised in the afternoons, according to data released by the After-school Alliance. Louisiana-specific sampling finds that just 18 percent of children in working families are in after-school programs, while 30 percent of children in Louisiana working families are “latchkey children” with no adult supervision in the afternoon. Studies have shown that unsupervised children are at increased risk for accidents, delinquency, substance abuse, sexual misconduct and other personal and developmental difficulties. Work-family research shows clearly that problems related to child care lead to increased absenteeism, work disruptions, turnover and stress, which damage productivity and morale.

### **Goal 1:**

**To strengthen and improve the quality of care among child care and after school care providers through the dissemination of information, mass media and literature that allows them to matriculate in curriculum based training.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; Distance Learning

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective XI.5: Increase the number of stakeholders receiving certifications in research and extension programs

### **Objectives:**

1. To develop curricula lessons that include professionalism, healthy and safe learning environments, parent education and community services.

2. Provide child care providers with trainings to help them meet the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential and Quality Rating Scale Requirements.
3. To help child care providers identify an inclusive group of stakeholders that offer academic direction of children in child care.
4. To improve the quality of research projects in child and family development.
5. To encourage the establishment day care and after care school programs

### **Action Strategies**

1. Develop curriculum lessons relative to all CDA areas.
2. Form advisory committees to aid in developing educational programs for children.
3. Organize and conduct training sessions that will enable child care providers to meet the CDA.
4. Organize and conduct trainings sessions that will enable child care providers to offer high quality education, health, nutrition social services and parent involvement for young children and their families
5. To offer collaborative agreements between the S.U. System and SUAREC to support child care providers in their efforts in continuing education.
6. Extension and research will collaborate to conduct research and outreach projects in Family and Human Development that will promote the implementation of programs and publication.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of curriculum lessons relative to all CDA areas developed  
 Number of participants graduating and obtaining the CDA certification  
 Number of advisory committees meetings held per year.  
 Number of CDA workshops, training sessions and seminars conducted  
 Progress of collaborative agreements between the SU System and SUAREC in support of support child care providers and continuing education.  
 Develop an educational curriculum for young children

Number or frequency of health and nutrition services available (ie. Using standards set forth by Head Start).

Number of sessions conducted to actively involve parents in their child's development.

Number of SU System students participating (through internships, work-study, and experiential learning experiences).

Number of programs and publications developed.

**Goal 2. To establish a disaster relief initiative to assist stakeholders and their families during an emergency.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; Distance Learning

**Objectives**

1. To respond effectively in a timely manner to the immediate needs of families.
2. To encourage participation from community based organizations, other states and institutions.
3. Collaborate with technology services to assist in the establishment of family databases.

**Action Strategies**

1. Identify clothes and food distribution sites.
2. Respond to the immediate needs of distressed families (ie, water, meals, first aid, shelter)
3. Link families to the appropriate state and non-profit agencies to assist with family support services.

**Performance Indicators**

Number of emergency relief shelters across the state identified.

Number of volunteers participating in disaster relief organizations.  
Number of families linked to support services.

## **Program Area: Nutrition and Health**

**Goal 1: Enhance the focus on increasing healthy eating and physical activity among Louisiana's citizens, especially the economically disadvantaged.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; Distance Learning

**Objective:** To strengthen current nutrition and health education programs and activities to improve dietary and physical activity patterns of SUAREC's target populations.

### **Situation**

A scientific consensus on the relationship between diet and chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and some forms of cancer has emerged. To reduce chronic disease risk, it is recommended that Americans consume a healthy diet that can be achieved through an increased intake of fruits and vegetables, complex carbohydrates and fiber and a decreased intake of fatty foods. These recommendations also include limiting sugar, alcohol and salt intake and including moderate physical activity. As a result of national and local nutrition education campaigns and programs, substantial improvements have been made in the nation's health profile in the last 20 years. However, many groups have not benefited equally from the advancements in nutrition and health science. According to recent statistics, leading diet related causes of death in Louisiana in 1997 were heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes (Louisiana State Center for Health Statistics, 1997). Results from the Louisiana Behavioral Risk Factors survey revealed that of the adult population: 33 percent are overweight, 35 percent

get no leisure time or physical activity and only 18 percent consume the recommended five fruits and vegetables a day. Similar results are recorded for children. (Chronic Disease Control Program, 1997). There is a need for research that will assist in developing effective interventions that will improve the eating and physical activity behaviors of Louisiana residents.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Conduct a pre need assessment of current nutrition education needs and practices of target populations served by SUAREC.
2. Incorporate research methodology in the evaluation of nutrition programs to monitor results and demonstrate program effectiveness. Disseminate the data from the programs to the researchers and extension agents.
3. Increase use of tested social marketing interventions designed for healthy eating habits and physical activities.
4. Enhance the implementation of obesity research and outreach projects for diverse populations of all age groups in collaboration with SU Family and Consumer Sciences, Psychology and Nursing faculty and other disciplines.
5. Identify existing and develop new nutrition and health research and outreach partnerships.

### **Performance Indicators:**

- 1.a. Number of assessment per year (1 per year)
  - b. Number of questionnaires collected and analyzed
  - c. Number of publications (handouts, flyers, etc)
2. Number of meetings between researchers and extension agents
3. Number of tested social marketing interventions (i.e., from 2 to 10)
4. Number of collaborative projects with the above entities
5. a. Number of scientific organizations meetings and conferences participations
  - b. Number of advisory council meetings discussing nutrition and health problems

### **Goal 2: Promote food security among SUAREC target populations.**

**Objective:** To support existing outreach networks and federal and private organizations that are working to increase food security among Louisiana residents.

[SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence](#)

[SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders](#)

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

### **Situation**

Food security means that people have access, at all times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. At a minimum, this includes availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods and assured ability to acquire personally preferred foods in a socially acceptable way. According to the Food Security Institute, Louisiana has the fourth largest number of food insecure households in the nation with 13.93 percent of households' food insecure. It also ranks number 11 for households insecure with hunger (Hunger and Food Insecurity in the Fifty States: 1998-2000). There are a large number of limited resource families in Louisiana that are found in target areas that SUAREC serves. These families may lack the knowledge, information, or skills to utilize existing resources to improve their quality of life.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Assume active positions in community and statewide food security collaborative activities.
2. Expand home gardening programs to train more residents to improve their diets by growing quality, nutritious fruits and vegetables to supplement their food budgets.
3. Conduct workshops to increase merchant and public knowledge about food security issues in the poor, homeless and elderly.
4. Identify new methods for encouraging poor people to qualify and participate in programs that can help them obtain nutritious food.
5. Pursue USDA Community Food Projects Competitive Grants and other external funding for community food security projects.
6. Survey clients and determine interest in developing other communitywide food security efforts.
7. Provide research assistance to local agencies and organizations addressing hunger and food security.

**Performance Indicators:**

1. a. Number of participants at hunger awareness day and similar activities  
b. Number of household and family members reached to provide food and other needed supplies (such as elderly, children etc..)
2. c. Number of visit to small farms
3. a. Number of workshops  
b. Number of participant in the workshops  
c. Number of pre and post test collected and analyzed to estimate the % knowledge increased

**Goal 3: Expand our research activities in nutrition and health through partnership and collaboration with other USDA agencies, health care systems, research institutions and the Southern University Center of Excellence for Food, Nutrition and Health Promotion.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

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SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective:** To establish a partnership with Pennington Biomedical Research Center (PBRC).

**Situation**

PBRC is conducting research or studies that target nutrition, obesity, hypertension, diabetes and other diseases. Research and outreach activities in these areas at SUAREC will complement ongoing studies. Researchers at both institutions have expressed interest in collaboration. Our joint knowledge and experiences will help in the Center's expansion and improvements.

**Action Strategies**

1. Establish a working group to pursue external funding in the areas of nutrition, food, and health.
2. Create a forum for scientific exchange of ideas among institutions.
3. Initiate collaborative research projects with the PBRC utilizing SUAREC's

metabolic kitchen.

4. Participate in joint nutrition and health activities such as tours, seminars, and conferences.

**Performance Indicators:**

1. - Number of meetings per year between The Ag center chancellor and the PBRC director
2. Number of meetings annually with all the scientists interested in nutrition and health research from the two institutions.
3. Number of Participation in the ongoing seminars, health activities at PBRC (2-3 times annually)

**Objective:** To establish partnerships with USDA agencies, health care systems, research institutions and the Southern University Center of Excellence for Food, Nutrition and Health Promotion.

**Situation**

The incidence of chronic disease burdens low income at-risk populations. These populations would benefit from carefully designed and implemented programs targeting healthy lifestyles and chronic disease risk reduction. This represents a public health challenge facing the nation and state. These trends demonstrate the great need for collaborative basic and applied research activities targeted at eliminating health disparities, food insecurity and problems associated with food safety.

**Action Strategy**

1. Establish partnerships with agencies and institutions to improve health and well-being of low-income at-risk families.

**Performance Indicator:**

1. Percent increase in collaborative partnership (10% collaborating in writing proposals etc)

**Goal 4: Investigate food safety practices in low-income households.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective:** To identify and document food safety behavior among families served by SUAREC.

**Situation**

There are millions of microorganisms called pathogens that can invade our food supply and cause illnesses. Foodborne illnesses are a major public health concern in the United States. Each year approximately 76 million people get sick and 5,000 die because of foodborne illnesses. Low-income families are receptive to food safety messages, but they do not follow the steps most of the time. This causes problems, especially here in the south because of higher temperatures and humidity.

**Action Strategies**

1. Prepare and administer survey questionnaires related to food safety, knowledge, attitudes and practices in the households.
2. Provide families with information on safe food handling practices such as in depth household observation of household kitchen counters and kitchen utensils.
3. Use the above to conceptualize research proposals.

**Performance indicators:**

1. a. Number of surveys collected  
b. Number of information distributed 1-2 times annually by data being analyzed
2. a. Number of training seminars, and presentations per year  
b. Number of participants
3. Number of proposal submitted

**Objective:** To educate household members to follow simple steps to food safety.

**Situation**

There are guidelines to practice food safety but consumers need to know why and how to handle food in order to have a safe and healthy life. Household food safety practices and education are needed to minimize the risk of the foodborne illnesses.

**Action Strategies**

1. Train the trainer. Develop educational classes for head of households, teachers, and local school cafeterias.
2. Conduct educational outreach through seminars, workshops, expositions, etc. to reach all members of target families.

3. Develop simple, practical and easy steps on food safety practices in the form of fact sheets, flyers, and handouts.

**Performance indicators:**

1. a. Number of surveys collected  
b. Number of information distributed 1-2 times annually by data being analyzed
2. a. Number of training classes per year  
b. Number of certified trainers
3. a. 6 to 10 fliers or fact sheets per year  
b. Number of people visiting the website to access the food Safety educational information.

## **Program Area: Youth Development**

### **Goal 1: Conduct an after school educational program designed to improve Standardized test scores and GPA for Louisiana youth.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

### **Objectives**

1. To decrease the number of youth failing standardized tests.
2. To identify and train youth groups on test taking skills
3. To improve grades of under-achievers

### **Situation**

During the past six years much has happened in education. There have been increasing demands for higher standards and accountability systems to ensure that standards are attained. While many still condemn the ills of American education, there is also greater optimism among some in the ability of American school/community programs to prepare youth for the future. After-school programs are implemented largely in an effort to improve education. However, a recent study found that an astronomical sum of young people is not participating in after-school or community-based programs. One national study found that 60 percent of youth

were not involved in any form of community-based activity. A second study indicated that approximately 80 percent of youth had not participated in a structured out-of-school activity. A survey sponsored by the YMCA revealed that more than half of the youth surveyed indicated they would be interested in more after-school programs in their community.

### **Action Strategies:**

1. Develop the total youth program by:
  - Designing innovative curricula that fit the needs and interest of youth
  - Targeting different skill levels through experiential learning
  - Testing new curricula with intended audiences
  - Implementing continuous evaluation of program

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of educational curriculum developed per year (one per year)  
Number of new curricula introduced to respective audiences in each parish (three per year)  
Frequency of evaluation of each program conducted

### **Goal 2: Increase volunteer/parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

### **Objectives**

1. To train agents and existing volunteers to work with and teach potential volunteers about working with youth.
2. To train staff how to recruit and support volunteers and parents.
3. To train staff to recognize and evaluate volunteers and parents' success.

### **Situation**

Volunteers and parental involvement are the keys to success of any youth program implemented by SUAREC. When community groups team with volunteers and parents to support learning, children are inclined to succeed not only in school, but throughout life. Researches have shown that volunteer/parental

participation in extra curricula activities improve students' behavior and learning. Such participation is critical in the early stages of the educational process and throughout a child's entire academic career.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Develop a plan for engaging volunteers/parents in parish programs.
2. Design a volunteer/parents development curriculum and educate youth development agents and other community-based programs who have youth development responsibilities.
3. Organize a volunteer/parent development committee in each parish.
4. Conduct a volunteer/parent conference for volunteers.
5. Develop a collaborative volunteer/parent education program with other organizations.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of state-wide training conference conducted annually (one per year)

Number of volunteers certified

Number of training workshops for existing volunteers per year per parish (three per parish per year)

Number of new volunteers per parish recruited per year (seven per parish per year)

Number of focus group per parish formed (one per parish per year)

Number of collaborative relationships per parish formed each year (one per parish per year)

**Goal 3: Focus on innovative youth development activities that allow youth from various communities to gain competencies in life skills and develop their full potential.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: [Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence](#)

SUS Strategic Plan Link: [Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders](#)

SUS Strategic Plan Link: [Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success](#)

SUS Strategic Plan Link: [Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.](#)

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective:** To implement and/or enhance innovative programs for rural and urban youth with emphasis on youth from underprivileged environments.

### **Situation**

An increasing proportion of American children are at substantially higher risks for negative outcomes such as undernourishment, child abuse and neglect, poor health, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, violence and academic underachievement, due to conditions out of their control. Current statistics indicate that 16.2 percent of U.S. children live in poverty. The percentage of children living in poverty is even greater in the state of Louisiana. The poverty rates of youth in Louisiana totals 247,970 accounting for 23 percent of youth under age 18. Most experts agree that 30 percent of youth in school now will drop out prior to graduating.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Conduct innovative programs that will enhance social for rural and urban Youth
2. Focus the learning experience on children, youth, and families in communities from at risk environments to increase self-reliance, self-esteem, and confidence.
3. Organize and monitor community clubs and interest groups.
4. Develop a promotional packet for the youth's development program and train extension agents and volunteer leaders to use the packet.
5. Design and disseminate an instrument that can be used to access the skills and performance of youth

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of innovative programs per parish conducted (two per parish per year)

Increase in the number of Youth participants (10% annually)

Number of comprehensive promotional package developed and disseminated annually (one per year)

### **Goal 4: Develop a youth entrepreneurship program that meets the needs of community participants**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

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SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective:** To enhance the professional and business skills of young community members by increasing the number of successful entrepreneurs.

### **Situation**

Much research has been conducted on the effects of adolescent employment. Some positive effects of adolescent employment include increased personal responsibility and earning power; development of social skills; improved grades and participation in school-related activities; higher self-esteem; and increased self-direction and independence. Further, research suggests that youth who work in non-structured work environments have higher grades than those who did not work or worked in a structured work environment. Youth are our nation's future. It is important that they are advised that self employment is another option to financial freedom.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Teach youth the theoretical aspects of entrepreneurship.
2. Offer self-esteem training as preparation for self-employment.
3. Teach business ethics and business etiquette as prerequisite to business start-up.
4. Teach professional image skills for traditional employment and self employment.
5. Provide general business education training.
6. Increase the level of awareness of available funding.
7. Assist entrepreneurs in achieving funding.
8. Show aspiring entrepreneurs how to identify potential business opportunities.

### **Performance Indicator**

Number of entrepreneur workshops conducted per year (four per year)  
Number of aspiring entrepreneurs participating in workshops

**Goal 5: Provide educational information to rural and urban youth about the consequences of engaging in risky behaviors (i.e., tobacco and other substance use/abuse, sexual activity, poor eating habits, violence)**

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SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective:** To reduce the number of youth engaging in risky behavior

**Situation**

Youth should be encouraged, equipped, and empowered to make safe decisions as a way of preventing and reducing risky behaviors that contribute to the increase of poverty in Louisiana. While most teenagers do not seek to create trouble, children and youth engage in risky and unhealthy behaviors that lead to negative and life-altering consequences such as drug and alcohol abuse, anti social behavior, sexually transmitted diseases (STDS) and teen pregnancy. The 2002 Communities that Care Survey compiled composite data for all Louisiana students combined as an initial indicator for two risk factors: Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs (ATOD) and Peer/Individual Risk and Protective Factors. Louisiana adolescents, aged 10 to 19, are still the most underserved population in health education and health services (DHH/OPH). Drug experimentation among youth abound. Moreover, studies have shown the younger a person is when he or she begins smoking, the less likely he or she will be able to quit later. A 2003 Louisiana youth risk behavior survey revealed that 25 percent of the participants smoked cigarettes during the past month and 12 percent smoked cigarettes on 20 or more days during the past month. Violence continues to permeate neighborhoods and communities. Nevertheless, teen pregnancy and STD's are two additional important issues locally, state-wide, and nationally that warrant attention. The percentage of teenage STD's has continued to escalate over the past years. Many teenagers have risked engaging in pre-marital sex and are now living with the reality of parenthood or a STD. Early childbearing reduces the overall number of school years completed by almost three years (Family Planning Perspectives, 1995). Nationally, the poverty rate for children born to teen mothers who have not married and did not graduate from high school is 78 percent while the child poverty rate for children born to married high school graduates over 20 is only 9 percent (Kids Count, 2004).

**Action Strategies:**

1. Conduct visual-effect educational programs in schools and community centers for 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders
2. Update educational fact sheets and brochures on tobacco use.
3. Disseminate age- appropriate educational fact sheets and brochures on risky behaviors
4. Organize a youth summit addressing risky behaviors and healthy lifestyles
5. Provide linkage to existing social programs who offer related support groups addressing risky behaviors

**Performance Indicators**

Percent decrease in the number of youth engaging in risky behaviors (10% per year)

Number of youth summit facilitated per year (one per year)

Number of youth summit participants per year

## **Program Area: Urban Forestry and Natural Resource Management**

**Goal 1: Enhance the understanding of urban forest ecosystem and improve the management of urban forests and natural resources worldwide.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

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**Objective 1:** To conduct urban forest ecosystem analyses to provide quantified, compelling evidence of urban forest benefits and costs and to help develop sound urban forest management practices.

**Situation**

Urban forests and their effects on society and the environment are becoming increasingly recognized and important, yet little is known about this resource. In order to have a comprehensive and integrated urban forest resource management system, urban planners need to utilize the full range of technological resources at their disposal to mitigate the effects of declining air quality, enhanced ultraviolet (UV) radiation loads, elevated carbon dioxide levels leading to the “urban heat islands” phenomenon, loss of green space and habitat for urban wildlife, urban pest, storm water runoff, as well as rising utility costs for urban dwellers.

To better understand the full impact of urban forestry management choices on the urban forest benefits, we must trace the effects of management options step by step - from their effects on urban forestry processes and structure, to the resulting functions, to the final value of the urban forest.

It is essential to have quantified, compelling evidence of urban forest benefits and costs (functions) to support the sound urban forest management practice. Therefore, the scientists and extension specialists at Southern University have proposed the following strategies:

#### **Action Strategies**

1. Use Geographic Information System (GIS) and other appropriate tools to quantify the urban forest structure and function.
2. Quantify the environmental benefits of urban forests, carbon sequestration and the urban forest effects on air, water and soil quality.
3. Quantify urban forest effects on ultraviolet (UV) exposure in relation to proper vegetation design.
4. Conduct advanced tree biology and arboricultural research.
5. Assist agencies, cities, and local communities in developing sound management plans.
6. Establish collaborative studies with federal, state, and other agencies to address urban sprawl, heat island, air quality improvement and species rating pertaining to urban forest and urban ecosystems.
7. Employ qualified researchers to augment research programs in urban forestry management.

#### **Performance Indicators**

Number of workshops conducted  
Number of participants attending workshops,  
Number of certifications issued,  
Number of Compact-Discs (CDs), website and other publications developed

Number of extension agents trained in GIS and related technologies, I  
Number of laboratories established  
Number of species studied  
Number of recommendations of species used for UV protection  
Number of publications

**Objective 2:** To conduct education, research and extension activities in plant biosecurity and disaster response

### **Situation**

Exotic plant pathogens and insect pests whether introduced intentionally or unintentionally are a threat to the health and sustainability of urban and community forests. There are several examples of plant pathogens that have caused devastating impact on our urban forest such as chestnut blight and Dutch Elm disease of which almost caused the extinction of Elm trees in the United States. There are several emerging pests that are of concern to our nation's forests such as sudden oak death, plum pox virus and citrus greening. Protection of our urban forests and related vegetation from exotic pests is important to the nation's homeland security. Education, research and extension activities in this area is needed to train our clientele to recognize plant pests that are of a plant biosecurity concern and how to respond appropriately.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Conduct plant biosecurity workshops.
2. Conduct research in the identification of plant pests.
3. Graduate student recruitment and training in plant biosecurity.
4. Form partnerships and network with USDA agencies involved in plant biosecurity such as ARS-Foreign Disease and Weed Laboratory, APHIS, PPQ and Homeland Security and Border Protection and with Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry-Horticulture and Quarantine Office.
5. Form partnerships with other universities to conduct research and extension activities in plant biosecurity.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of workshops conducted  
Number of participants attending workshops,  
Number of certifications issued,  
Number of Compact-Discs (CDs), website and other publications developed  
Number of extension agents trained in plant biosecurity  
Number of laboratories established  
Number of Positive feedback from community-based organizations  
Number of publications

**Objective 3:** To increase dissemination of urban forestry technology and community outreach locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

### **Situation**

Urban and community forestry is no longer just basic street tree planting. It is an essential and highly valued component of numerous large-scale, long-term environmental and community sustainability projects. Urban and community forests improve environmental quality, enhance individual and community well being, provide a range of services to communities, and produce a healthier environment for the majority of the U.S. population.

Our knowledge of the significance of urban and community forests is expanding rapidly as research continues to demonstrate the important role these forests play in improving the quality of urban life. By sharing more effective information and state-of-the-art technologies, urban and community forestry technology transfer provides a mechanism for continuous improvement of our urban ecosystems.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Enhance collaboration between research and extension personnel to identify and prioritize research and information needs of customers.
2. Communicate research results and other information with customers through publications, conferences, workshops, and other educational resources.
3. Communicate to the public the benefits and costs of urban forest.
4. Facilitate international scientific and technical exchange in urban forestry and natural resources on a long-term and short-term basis with mutually interested countries.
5. Facilitate the exchange of information among researchers, practitioners, and others involved with urban forestry.
6. Provide technical assistance in urban forest management.

### **Performance Indicators**

- Number of workshops conducted with extension agents
- Number of participants attending workshops,
- Number of extension agents trained in GIS and related technologies
- Number of positive feedback from community-based organizations
- Number of publications
- Number of clientele and extension agents surveyed
- Number of Compact-discs (CDs), website and other publications developed
- Number of extension curriculum developed

## **Goal 2: Utilize cutting edge spatial technologies and environmental simulation to address the role of urban forest ecosystem in urban water quality and urban hydrology**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

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SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective:** To use the application of GIS, Global Positioning System (GPS) and computer-based mathematical simulation to quantify water quality and flood prediction in relation to urban forest ecosystems.

### **Situation**

Urban forests have a direct impact on water quality and flood mitigation. In order to capitalize on comprehensive and integrated urban forest resource management system, urban planners need to utilize the full range of technological resources at their disposal to mitigate the effects of floods, non-point source pollution and stormwater runoff. It is essential to have quantified, compelling evidence of urban forestry benefits and costs (functions) to support the sound urban planning. Therefore, the scientists at Southern University have proposed the following strategies to quantify, characterize, and document urban hydrology and water quality, in relation to the urban forest ecosystems in the state of Louisiana.

### **Action Strategies:**

1. Quantify the urban forest distribution and inventories by utilizing GIS and GPS.
2. Establish a Geospatial Extension Specialist position for GIS and GPS education, training and workforce development.
3. Quantify urban forest effects on water quality and quantity.
4. Integrate collaborative studies with federal, state, and other agencies to address water issues within the urban green infrastructure.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of workshops conducted with extension agents

Number of participants attending workshops,  
Number of extension agents trained in GIS and related technologies  
Number of positive feedback from community-based organizations  
Number of publications  
Number of clientele and extension agents surveyed  
Number of Compact-Discs (CDs), website and other publications developed

**Goal 3: Strengthen the knowledge base of Louisiana’s citizens in the utilization and profitability of urban wood waste and other bio-based materials.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective 1:** To enhance socially disadvantaged participation in the profitability of urban wood waste.

**Situation**

With the ever increasing development of forested lands into urban areas, trees are becoming more susceptible to removal for development and construction purposes. Additionally, storm blowdowns, natural mortality, severe insects and disease damage all contribute to the loss of woody plants. In the United States over 200 million cubic yards of urban tree and landscape residue are generated every year. This leads to a higher demand for wood and wood products, which places more of a demand on forestlands, and imported forest products. The use of recycled wood in our urban area could potentially contribute to the conservation of forestland resources by generating wood products from trees that need to be removed. A community-based education program on waste reduction and recycling and an effort to educate citizens and small minority tree care businesses on how to utilize wood from their removals would greatly enhance Louisiana’s economy and reduce pollution from landfills and space.

**Action Strategies**

1. Provide education and training for minorities and the underserved in the practice of using urban wood from municipal tree removals for traditional wood products.

2. Provide training to empower minorities through ownership and pollution reduction from landfills.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of workshops conducted with extension agents  
Number of participants attending workshops,  
Number of positive feedback from community-based organizations  
Number of publications  
Number of clientele and extension agents surveyed  
Number of compact-Discs (CDs), website and other publications developed  
Number of extension curriculum developed

**Objective 2:** To determine the effects of several urban tree wood waste mulch on the dynamics of growth and development (physiology, morphology, and anatomy) of urban trees.

### **Situation**

Mulching is an agricultural (including urban forestry and arboricultural) practice in which a layer of organic or inorganic materials is placed on the soil surface or mixed into the top few inches of soil. In the past, organic mulches were used to produce ornamental, fruit, and forest trees, but with the advent of modern agrochemicals this soil management system was largely displaced. Increased availability of organic residues from cities are renewing interest in the use of organic mulches, not only in the traditional application of crop residues, but also in the use of composted and uncomposted urban wastes. Urban wood waste is the portion of the wood waste stream that can include sawn lumber, pruned branches, stumps, and whole trees from street and park maintenance. The primary constituents of urban wood waste are used lumber, trim, shipping pallets, trees, branches, and other wood debris from construction and demolition clearing and grubbing activities.

### **Action Strategies:**

The scientists at Southern will employ the following strategies to address urban tree waste:

1. Determine the effect of mulch chemical composition on the availability of organic nutrients.
2. Estimate N mineralization rates under field and laboratory conditions.
3. Determine the effects of several urban tree wood waste mulch on the dynamics of growth and development of young live oak trees.
4. Determine carbon cycling, sequestration, disease and rhizosphere dynamics.
5. Disseminate findings to Louisiana's citizens through workshops, brochures, pamphlets, and articles.

## Performance Indicators

- Number of workshops conducted
- Number of participants attending workshops,
- Number of positive feedback from community-based organizations
- Number of publications
- Number of clientele and extension agents surveyed
- Number of Compact-Discs (CDs), website and other publications
- Number of extension curriculum developed
- Amount or quantity of usage of wood waste
- Types of formulation developed and adopted

## Goal 4: Enhance minority and youth participation in urban forestry and natural resource management

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

**Objective:** Increase minority awareness and participation in urban forestry and natural resource management through extension education and outreach.

## Situation

Increasing the involvement of minority and underserved populations in urban and community forestry programs has been a crucial issue. How to educate minority sectors in the care and stewardship of urban forests where they live, work, and play is an important task at the national level. Creating a strong network of minority communities, non-profit urban and community forestry organizations, federal agencies, and private industries to better target the needs of the communities is an urgent task. Information on management of urban and community forestry need to be given to the minority communities.

## Action Strategies

1. Develop and disseminate extension education packages pertaining to the virtues of urban forestry.
2. Prioritize technical training to a multi-cultural community.

3. Conduct outreach programs to inform people about the social, economic, and ecological values of the urban and community forests.
4. Establish a national network of minority leaders in urban and community forestry.
5. Conduct educational programs in urban forestry.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of individuals participating in educational programs  
 Number of community leaders in database  
 Number of workshops conducted with extension agents  
 Number of participants attending workshops,  
 Number of educational outreach materials  
 Number of clientele and extension agents surveyed  
 Number of Compact-Discs (CDs), website and other publications developed  
 Number of students recruited for urban forestry program  
 Number of grants funded and the amount funded

### **Goal 5: Enhance the understanding of climate change and its impact on the natural resources and the society through research, education, and outreach.**

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal I: Ensure Academic Excellence

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal II: Increase opportunities for access to students and other stakeholders

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Goal XI: Increase opportunities for student and other stakeholder success

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective I.4. Pursue comprehensive programs for each Southern University System institution that provides for collaboration with other state and federal agencies and increased funding opportunities through the Southern University System Land Grant Initiatives.

SUS Strategic Plan Link: Objective II.5: Increase the number of citizens participating in Land-Grant Initiatives: Cooperative Extension; Agricultural Research; Continuing Education and Certification; and Distance Learning

### **Objectives**

1. To assess the current environmental stresses and determine their relationship to climate change.
2. To determine the effect of climate variability on the natural resource base.

### **Situation**

Changes in greenhouse gases and aerosols constitute key factors in global and regional changes in temperature, precipitation, and other climate variables,

resulting in local and regional changes in soil moisture, an increase in global mean sea level, and prospects for more severe extreme high temperature events, floods, and droughts in some places. Present global CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the atmosphere are 130 percent of pre-industrial levels. The global surface temperature this century is warmer than any other century in the past millennium. The global average temperature has increased by about 1° F over the last century and is projected to raise another 2-6.5°F by year 2100. The last two decades have been the warmest this century. Average global sea level has risen about 4 to 10 inches in the last hundred years, and is projected to rise another 6-38 inches by the year 2100.

### **Action Strategies**

1. Conduct assessment of climate changes and its impact on society.
2. Use ecological models to predict the effects of climate change on the urban forests.
3. Evaluate the impact of climate change on the incidence of extreme events such as hurricanes, tornadoes and forest fires.

### **Performance Indicators**

Number of workshops conducted with extension agents  
Number of participants attending workshops,  
Number of positive feedback from community-based organizations  
Number of publications  
Number of clientele and extension agents surveyed  
Number of Compact-Discs (CDs), website and other publications developed

### **Conclusion**

This strategic plan is a living document that the faculty and staff have fully embraced. This plan addresses some of the Southern University System Strategic Plan Goals - **Eleven As: Pillars of Success**, an indication that SUAREC is an integral part of the SU System.

Implementation will occur immediately and the programming efforts will continue over the next several years. An implementation team will be appointed for each program area. The implementation teams will be monitored and evaluated by the administration.

It is the intent of SUAREC's administration, faculty and staff to use this plan in *"Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success."*

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Kirkland Mellad	Vice Chancellor for Research
Gina E. Eubanks	Vice Chancellor for Extension
Willie Rawls	Associate Research Director
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