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Researchers and Students Share Study Findings at Atlanta Symposium

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Southern University faculty, staff and students presented 30 research projects at the 16th Biennial Association of Research Directors' Symposium. Students, faculty, and staff from the nation's Historically Black Land-grant Universities converged in Atlanta, Georgia, April 9-13.

Ten SU students contested in the oral and poster categories. Laporchia Collins, undergraduate student in Agricultural Economics Program placed first in the student oral competition.



Collins, left, and Meyinsse

Collins was mentored by her academic advisor, Dr. Patricia Meyinsse.

Her research, "An Empirical Analysis of Factors Influencing Students Nutritional Awareness, Food Label

Use, and Perceptions of Health Status," was presented during the family, youth, community and economic development session. The judges were impressed by her presentation style and thoroughness in answering questions. She has been an outstanding student in the agricultural economics program.

Collins was a recipient of the USDA National Scholarship from 2007-2011 and will graduate with a GPA of 3.978 on May 13, 2011.

SU Ag Center Joins the System for Rally at the Capitol

The SU Ag Center joined the petition to "Support Our Southern" at the Louisiana State Capitol on April 26. Displays were set up in the Capitol's Rotunda and open to the public.

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center provided an exhibit at the event. The exhibit portrayed the various research and outreach activities at the SU Ag Center in-

cluding the favorite hibiscus tea, a signature feature of the Ag Center research. Yadong Qi, Professor of Urban Forestry at SU and her graduate students pre-

pared the tea and served the public at the event.

Schedule of activities included, SU rally, committee visits, campus displays, alumni and community assembly at the capitol steps.



Graduate student, Nicholas, explains benefits of hibiscus to booth visitors

Business Procurement Conference Highly Successful

The SU Agriculture Research and Extension's Center for Rural and Small Business Development hosted its 7th Annual "Connecting Businesses with Contracts Procurement Conference" on March 29. The event was a great success and received excellent evaluation ratings from attendees. More than 500 participants attended the conference including exhibitors, visitors, and workers who had opportunities to network, share business and contract information, and receive training. Conference hosts and partners included Southern University System Foundation, Center for Rural and Small Business Development, State and Federal USDA agencies, Rural Business Cooperative Services, Louisiana District Office – U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Louisiana SBDC, and Louisiana Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC).

This annual event continues to offer potential and existing contractors, entrepreneurs and government agencies face-to-face interaction for future growth activities and opportunities for small contractors to meet contracting officers and purchasing agents.

Information shared with conference attendees included sources of assistance, how to register for, and obtain contracting licenses, methods of financing, and securing contracts. Participants also were exposed to techniques on selling products and services to private industries, and federal, state, and local governments.

United States Small Business Administration representatives were also available to discuss SBA programs, guarantees, certification process, bonds and surety, GO Loans, and disaster loans. Likewise, the Louisiana State Contractor Licensing Department answered questions from existing contractors and individuals interested in becoming licensed.

Conference break-out sessions included Developing a Successful Sales Pitch, Getting Down to Business, Bonding and Finance Programs, Contracting with the State of Louisiana, Helping the Deputy Work for You, HUD Contracting Programs for Small Business, and How the Government Buys-Using the GSA Federal Supply Schedule.



Chancellor Williams interacts with conference participant



Participants gather information from exhibitors



Participants in a break out session

41st Annual Trail Ride and Horse Show in Baton Rouge

The Bayou State Trail Riders started their journey to Baton Rouge for the 41st SU Ag Center's Horse Show. Participants saddled up for the 100-mile journey from the Monroe Civic Center on April 3 to arrive in Baton Rouge for the annual show on April 8. Students at Winnsboro Elementary and Franklin Parish Head Start got an afternoon visit from the Bayou State Trail Riders on Monday, April 4.

This is the seventh year that the convoy of horses, buggies and covered wagons has passed through Winnsboro on its way to Southern University in Baton Rouge. Riders from other states joined the group at different stops along the way to participate in the seven-day trip.

The kick off for the Show took place at the M.A. Edmond Livestock Arena located on Hwy 61. This year's event was comprised of the western round-up, Best Dressed Cowboy/Cowgirl Contest, Mechanical Bull Contest and Zydeco Band (J. Paul Jr. and Zydeco Nubreds) on Friday evening.



Riders arrive at the Arena

Saturday began with the Kids Rodeo on stick horses participating in barrel racing, barrel crawl and arena race. The Trail ride began at F. G. Clark Activity Center on the campus of Southern University. Over 900 horses and riders participated. The Gaited Horse Show was a huge success with over 100 gaited riders participating.

The night concluded with Leon Chavis and the Zydeco Flames musical entertainment. The event culminated with the Cowboy Church on Sunday.

Christie Monroe, assistant director, livestock show programs, coordinated the event.

SU Ag Center Hosts State and National Rabbit Show

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center hosted the 39th annual State and National Rabbit Show at the M.A. Edmond Livestock Show Arena, April 2. Youth from across the state converged in Baton Rouge for this annual event that teaches leadership skills, character development, and entrepreneurship skills.

The SU Ag Center's Annual Rabbit Show is the largest in the state, with competitions in 16 sanctioned rabbit breeds, and youth from almost every parish in the State.

"We had more than 200 youth exhibitors to participate in this year's Show," said Christie Monroe, Livestock Show Director.



Rabbit show participant

Participating youth represent Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapters, 4-H Clubs, and other school-aged youth.

The SU Ag Center's Rabbit Show is sanctioned by the American Rabbit Breeders Association, and is co-sponsored by the Louisiana Rabbit Breeders Association.

SU Ag Center Leadership Institute Graduate Receives Fellowship



Jenga Mwendo, 2011 Ag Center Leadership Institute Graduate

Jenga Mwendo was among the 14 new Fellows recently selected by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) Food and Community to receive an award. The 2011-2013 class of Fellows is a mix of grassroots advocates, thought leaders, writers and entrepreneurs. Mwendo is a graduate of the SU Ag Center Small Farmer Leadership Institute class of 2011 and director of Backyard Gardeners Network. She is a community organizer based in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward who focuses on strengthening community through urban agriculture.

The award comes with a two-year fellowship that provides an annual stipend of \$35,000 in addition to communications support, trainings, and travel. The program supports leaders working to create a food system that strengthens the

health of communities, particularly children. For this class of Fellows, the selection committee focused on work that creates a just, equitable and healthy food system from its roots up. Over 560 individuals applied for fellowships.

The IATP Food and Society Fellows are innovative change makers who advocate for food and farming systems that are just and healthy for all people. Fellows use multi-media, policy advocacy and community engagement to promote fresh ideas on all aspects of the national food system—supporting culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable farming, safe processing and distribution, fair labor standards, and healthy food accessible to all—especially our most vulnerable children.

“The Food and Community Fellows have always been change agents,” says Jim Harkness, President of IATP.” We invest in individuals that have a vision and plan for bettering the food system. These fellowships aren’t about incremental change; we want big visions that have the potential to provide our children with new opportunities for growing, processing, eating and thinking about food.”

The Food and Community Fellows

program is funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, MI and the Woodcock Foundation, based in New York, New York.

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. To read the full story, please visit <http://www.foodandsocietyfellows.org/>

Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin directs the Small Farmer Agricultural Leadership Training Institute, a two-year course of study specifically designed to guide small, socially disadvantaged, limited resource and minority farmers through the transformative process of becoming successful agricultural entrepreneurs. You can follow the [SU Ag Center Small Farmer Leadership Institute](#) on Facebook.

SET Defines Goals, Assets in North Capital Region

The Zachary Chamber's of Commerce director of economic development, Chip Mills, is hard at work with members of the Stronger Economies Together (SET) program; a program that encourages communities - primarily in rural areas - to work together as a regional team to develop and implement an economic development plan that makes sense for their region.

Louisiana is one of eight national pilot states with the regional economic development program SET, sponsored by USDA Rural Development and the Regional Rural Development Centers.

"We're really excited about the program and how it compliments other programs currently underway," said Mills, referring to the Leadership North program. "A huge thanks is owed to Scott Byrd and other SET members, Kenyetta Nelson-Smith and Justin Egbe, of Southern University Agricultural Research Center. They're doing a wonderful job organizing this program and helping build our team." SET has met five times and brings

together its members: Byrd, Smith, Egbe and Mills, plus Jimmy Bello, Pointe Coupee Parish Manager; Ken Dawson, a West Feliciana Parish Police Juror; Matthew Wiggins, a business counselor with LSU's Business and Technology Center; and Rachel Pierson of Baton Rouge Area Chamber.

The SET group, all leaders in their communities, identified and defined goals at the March 24 meeting, and explored ways to bring assets, people, organizations and businesses together to reach those goals of economic growth.

SET will meet several more times to explore the North Capital Region's assets and barriers that each community representative faces both inside and outside the region.

Read more: ZacharyToday.com - [SET defines goals assets in North Capital Region](#)



SET members meet at the Zachary Chamber of Commerce, clockwise from bottom right, are: Chip Mills, director of economic development/Zachary; Scott Byrd, director of economic development/Pointe Coupee and West Feliciana; Jimmy Bello, parish administrator/Pointe Coupee; Matthew Wiggins, business counselor/LSU's Business and Technology Center; Rachel Pierson/BRAC; Kenyetta Nelson-Smith, assistant specialist of community and economic development/Southern University Agricultural Research & Extension Center; and Justin Egbe, extension and research assistant/Southern University Agricultural Research & Extension Center. Photo by Stacy Gill, editor, Zachary Today)

Faculty, Staff Activities

E. B. R. Parish agent conducts pesticide application workshop

Terrence Marshall, County Agent, East Baton Rouge Parish, held a Private Pesticide Applicators Re-Certification Workshop on March 24 at the Greenwell Springs Library.

The workshop which was organized and presented by County Agent Terrence Marshall, featured instructions on the Worker Protection Standard for Private Pesticide Applicators, Spray Drift Management, and Recognizing Heat Stress.



Cross section of workshop

Thirty workshop participants were re-certified in the safe use of pesticides. An evaluation of the program revealed that 95% of the participants agreed that the workshop gave them new knowledge and skills to ensure environmental safety and health.

Officials from the Louisiana Department of Agriculture were on hand to complete the certification process.

Agent in Avoyelles teaches lesson on veggies

Melody R. Coco, nutrition assistant, Southern University Ag Center in Avoyelles Parish discussed the importance of eating vegetables to the Pre-K classes in Avoyelles during a presentation entitled “Veggies, from the Earth to the Tummy.”

This presentation helped the children understand how important it is for them to have a particular number of servings of vegetables each day and what particular vegetables should be in the diet every week: 3 cups of greens; 2 cups of orange; 3 cups of legumes; 3 cups of starchy vegetables; and 6½ cups of other vegetables.

She explained how much fun and how much money is saved when we plant our own vegetable seeds and watch them turn into plants that produce the vegetables we eat.

Melody and the children planted vegetable seeds at the children's schools. By the end of March, about 350 children had planted vegetables at their schools and had seedlings to take home.

Follow up conversations with the children's teachers confirmed that the seeds had sprouted and that the children were excited to take their seedlings home and plant them.



Students plant seeds the right way

Faculty, Staff Activities contd.

SU Ag Center to produce video on Food Security Careers

Hometown Productions was on the campus April 19 to film the second half of a student recruitment video on: Careers in Global Food Security and Plant Biosecurity. This video is to fulfill one of the objectives of a USDA 1890 National Institute for Food and Agriculture Capacity Building Grant. There were about 20 middle and high school students who visited the SU Ag Center lab and campus to participate in the filming of this video.

Various hands-on activities were presented on Plant Biosecurity such as: Sudden Oak Death, information on the Asian Long horned beetle and the emerald ash borer, plant pathology, GIS, and forest ecology.

The students participated in tree planting at the SU Lab School as well as GIS forest measurement on Scott's Bluff.



Students plant tree at SU Lab School



Students engaged in hands-on demonstrations



Dr. Daniel J. Collins, professor, Urban Forestry Program, Southern University Ag Center, project director, coordinated the event.

Southern University Ag Center Celebrates Life

The Southern University Ag Center launched its annual "American Cancer Society Relay For Life," April 8 in A. O. Williams Hall. The SU Ag Center stands tall to support the Communities of Color Network, a tobacco and health initiative, in collaboration with various organizations.

The SU Center also joined the Relay for Life event on Southern University campus on April 8. This activity offered everyone in the community an opportunity to participate in the fight against cancer.

Linda E. Brown, director, Communities of Color Network coordinated the Ag Center event.



SU Ag Center employees

Faculty, Staff Activities contd.

Poultry Production Class Travels to Pinegrove

Renita Marshall, assistant professor/DVM, and instructor assistants: Curtis Chisley and Authur Danzler accompanied the Poultry Production Class on a trip to Pinegrove, LA to visit Cal-Maine, Foods Inc. Poultry Facility. Cal-Maine Foods, Inc. operates farms, processing plants, hatcheries, feed mills, warehouses, offices and other properties located in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Utah. Cal-Maine is the largest

producer and marketer of shell eggs in the United States. In 2010, they sold approximately 805 million dozen shell eggs, which represented about 18% of domestic shell egg consumption in the United States.

Student participants were Sahvon Brown, Tiffany Foster, William Head, Esha Johnson, Zippora Marcell, Jeremy Morrison, Lilian Profit, Delane Ross, Wilbert Thomas, Kimberly Tolbert, and Dwayla Wilson.



Students at Cal-Maine

Upcoming Events

May 17, parenting class on Family Stress - La JET, Baton Rouge. Contact: Delores Johnson, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

May 24, parenting class on Family Stress - La JET, Baton Rouge. Contact: Delores Johnson, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

May 25, seminar on Developing a Strong Winning Proposal at SU Ag Center, A.O. Williams Hall. For more information, contact: Gloria London at (225) 771-2242

May 31, parenting class on Family Stress - La JET, Baton Rouge. Contact: Delores Johnson, (225) 771-2242 ext. 237

June 16-18, Family & Youth Exposition, Southern University Ag Center, Ashford O. Williams Hall, Baton Rouge, LA. Contact: Wanda Burke (225)-771-2242 ext 325

June 25, Beef Cattle Field Day at Southern University Ag Center, A.O. Williams Hall, 8:00 am – 1:30 pm. For more information, contact Renita Marshall at (225)771-2242.