

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AND A&M COLLEGE  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER**



**Leodrey Williams**  
**CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

*Presented to:*

*Southern University and A&M College System*  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

*"Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for Success"*  
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## SU Ag Center Scientist Applauded for best written Board proposal

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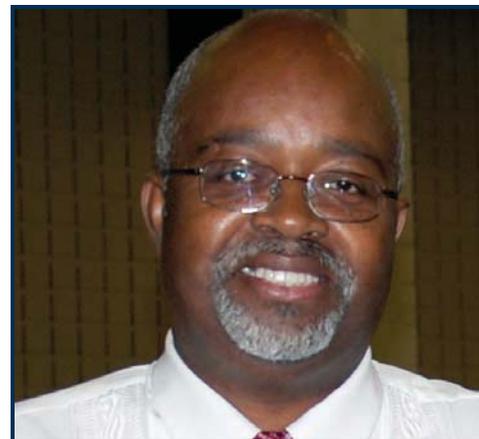
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**D**r. C. Reuben Walker, Professor and Program Leader of Animal Science in the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences, led a Southern University research team that received a research grant from the Louisiana Board of Regents Support Fund within the Industrial Ties Research Subprogram.

The proposal was ranked first among 33 grant proposals submitted in the category from public colleges in Louisiana. The grant was funded for \$135,000 and Walker was the principal investigator. Drs. Patricia McLean-Meynsse, Kit Chin, Aloyce Kaliba, Yemane T. Ghebreyesus and Ghirmay Ghebreyesus were co-investigators.

The proposal is titled, "Production of Niche Marketing Assessment of Aquaculture Waste in Organic Production." The proposed research is a collaboration involving SU-Baton Rouge, SU Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SUAREC), and several industry partners, including Agromen, Inc. of St. Landry Parish, First Harvest Community Gardens of Opelousas, Sancofa Earth Farm of Lafayette, and the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The goal of the research project is to explore the solar drying of raw aquaculture waste of crawfish and crab into meal products. Walker and his team view these products as having a great potential for use as a feed



**Dr. C. Reuben Walker**

and fertilizer in sustainable, organic, and conventional production systems.

Walker said that it expands upon the research efforts of Dr. Samuel Myers (retired professor at LSU). "Finding viable uses of aquaculture waste have a potential to impact Louisiana economy," he said. "Dr. Walker is a joint appointee at the SU AG CENTER where he conducts research as as professor of animal science."

Several years ago, Walker patented an aquaculture waste process. It was SUBR's and SUAREC's first patent. Full story is available at <http://www.subr.edu/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/209>

### SU Ag Center and Pennington Discuss Collaboration

**D**r. Steven Heymsfield, George A. Bray, Jr. Endowed Super Chair in Nutrition, Executive Director at Pennington Biomedical Research Center, paid a courtesy visit to the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center on May 8, 2012.

Researchers at the SU Ag Center are interested in partnering on nutritional studies with Pennington which focuses on chronic disease research. Dr. Heymsfield was invited to see firsthand the ongoing research at the SU Ag Center in the sustainable plant and animal production system. The meeting was an opportunity for researchers to dialogue with Heymsfield on joint project possibilities. The SU Ag Center's scientists have developed value-added products from hibiscus and meat goat, which they displayed and discussed their health benefits. Hibiscus for example, has high anti-oxidant properties that prove beneficial in the treatment of hypertension, which plaques the African American population.



**Dr. Heymsfield samples goat products while research associate, Janet Gager, observes.**

Value-added products display included hibiscus tea, cookies, jelly as well as goat meat balls, sausage, ham, and nuggets.

The discussion was very promising. When asked about the possibility of conducting a study to look into the benefits of hibiscus on diabetic/hypertensive patients, Dr. Heymsfield responded that Pennington can design a study for the SU Ag Center. He also suggested using a post doctoral fellow at Pennington to focus on the study.

## SU Ag Center brings Economic Development Training to Rural Communities

The Center for Rural and Small Business Development (CRSBD) and Building Opportunities through Leadership Development (BOLD) project at the Southern University Ag Center have partnered to bring leadership and business development training to rural communities.

On April 28th, the CRSBD E-Learning Center Program Director, LaKeeshia Giddens spoke to the BOLD project participants about the services and capabilities of the E-Learning Center during their monthly meeting at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Baton Rouge.

After the presentation, CRSBD staff members Wilbert Harris, Eual Hall and Giddens provided the participants with an educational tour of the E-Learning Center.

Several of the participants who are residents of parishes located in the contract coverage area of the E-Learning Center expressed an interest in having it visit their towns.

The CRSBD has made a commitment to collaborate with each BOLD member's parish located in the contract coverage area, to provide business development and technical training in the coming months.

BOLD is a pilot project developed by SU Ag Center's assistant specialist of community and economic development, Dr. Kenyetta Nelson-Smith. It aims to improve the leadership and community development capacity of rural and underserved communities in Louisiana. The project participants meet once a month at the SU Ag Center.

The CRSBD provides technical assistance for business creation in economically challenged rural communities, to conduct educational programs that develop, improve upon the professional skills of rural entrepreneurs, provide outreach and promote USDA Rural Development programs.

The CRSBD's E-Learning Center is equipped with ten internet-linked computer workstations and can travel to any community or location to perform onsite computer or educational training.

This allows many rural working families the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills and resources needed to successfully develop assets, improve their quality of life and aid the state of Louisiana in making strides toward economic parity.

Services provided through the E-Learning Center include: how to start and/or expand a business, how to market a business, proper accounting practices, how to develop a business plan, introduction to QuickBooks, how to gain access to capital, loan packaging assistance, how to manage cash flow, how to brand a business and other topics applicable to entrepreneurship.

Parishes covered by the E-Learning Center include: Acadia, Ouachita, Allen, Pointe Coupee, Assumption, Rapides, Avoyelles, Red River, Bienville, Richland, Caddo, St. Helena, Caldwell, St. Landry, Catahoula, St. Mary, Claiborne, Tangipahoa, Concordia, Tensas, De Soto, Vermilion, East Carroll, Washington, East Feliciana, Webster, Evange-



**Dr. Kenyetta Nelson-Smith, speaks to business development training participants about the BOLD Project.**



**Eual Hall leads project participants in an educational tour of the CRSBD E-Learning Center Mobile Unit.**

line, West Carroll, Franklin, West Feliciana, Iberia, Winn, Iberville, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Natchitoches and Orleans.

## Ag Center Extension Agent helps Revitalize School Garden

An article entitled "Handle with care" featured SU Ag Center Odis Hill, Extension Agent, Morehouse and Union Parishes, working with students to establish a garden at H.V. Adams Elementary School in Morehouse Parish. Thanks to Hill, 3-5th grade students now know how to grow a garden. The *Bastrop Daily Enterprise* covered the news in its May 8, 2012 issue.

The students attempted to start a spring garden in January without success. However, they did not give up. The school contacted Agent Odis Hill, who helped the students prepare the soil and plant pea, tomato, cucumber and watermelon seeds on April 30th. This time the garden is thriving.

"Odis Hill with the Southern University Ag Center brought us the seeds and he's been calling and coming by checking on the garden," said Sharivia Wyatt, fifth grade teacher. The students, coach and several teachers are working hard to maintain the H. V. Adams School garden to ensure that it is sustainable. Their hard work has paid off, and the gardeners will enjoy the taste of their produce at harvest time.

Some teachers are now confident enough about their gardening skills that they may try gardening at home. It has been a learning experience beyond gardening for the team.

To read the full story, please visit the *Bastrop Daily Enterprise*:



**Students spend time working in the garden at H. V. Adams Elementary School.**

<http://www.bastropenterprise.com/news/x43410335/Handle-with-care>

## Southern University Lab School Students Graduate from Garden Program

The 7th grade Life Science class at Southern University Laboratory High School participated in gardening curriculum classes on Wednesdays of each week, for one hour. Approximately 16 students are actively engaged in the classes. The *Community Garden Curriculum*, which is an SU Ag Center publication, addresses subject matter that coincides with the State of Louisiana's teaching goals. Science Instructor Tara Hollins was very instrumental and supportive of the gardening program, and used every opportunity to capitalize on the "learning moments." She created a direct link from garden to classroom, and as a result of working with the students, they established container gardens, which were located in the school near their classroom. They were also responsible for maintaining all of the plants. Students were very energetic and open-minded to learning and that really excited the SU Ag Center staff.

The students graduated from the program on May 16, 2012 and per their request, had salad from the garden (cucumbers, greens) along with homemade honey mustard dressing. They took a moment to share their garden experiences and how much they learned from their time in the 'circle garden'. Each youth also took a plant in a 3-gallon container home to care for over the summer.



**Project Coordinator and Instructor serve up a healthy breakfast of fresh produce for SU Lab students at graduation.**

The SU Ag Center Staff are *Project Coordinator*, Tiffany Wilkerson-Franklin and *Garden Instructor*, Stephanie Elwood.



**SU Lab School Students work in their garden as part of the Community Garden Curriculum class.**

## Good News from St. Landry Parish Garden Project

Mission is being accomplished with the first harvest of green beans and peppers from the St. Landry Parish prison garden. On May 22nd, the inmates stood side by side with the SU Ag Center horticultural team to harvest the first crop of green beans and jalapeno peppers from the garden project. The harvest served as a hands-on demonstration in the morning, followed by a training workshop on seedbed preparation, fertilizer and water management; growing, harvesting and marketing vegetable crops and herbs. The workshop was conducted in the St. Landry Airport conference room by Yemane Gheberiyessus, PhD, plant and soil sciences; Mila Berhane, senior research associate; and Stephanie Elwood, garden instructor.

Again, on May 29th, three buckets full of produce were harvested and taken to the dinner table of the parish prisoners. The tomatoes are

bearing fruit and the sweet corn will be ready by the end of June.

The St. Landry Parish Government Work Transition Project is a win-win-win situation where Southern University Ag Center has the opportunity to teach and give hands-on experience on farming techniques to the prisoners who feel some sense of accomplishment and the St. Landry Parish Government saves money. The project is intended to teach farming job skills that could help inmates with employment opportunities post-release. The garden is designed to improve nutritional intake of inmates, reduce violence, and improve physical and mental health.

The major goal of the Ag Center is to equip the inmates with gardening skills for better employment opportunities after their release from



**These green beans and peppers were harvested from the St. Landry prison garden.**

prison. The mission of the Center is to improve the quality of life for citizens of Louisiana.

## CRSBD concludes Business Development Training in New Iberia

The Center for Rural and Small Business Development (CRSBD) at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center and the Hopkins Street Economic Development District concluded their free six-week business development training in New Iberia.

The training, which was held every Monday at the Anderson Middle School from April 16th to May 21st, attracted more than 20 participants.

During the third session of the training, which was held on April 30th, participants were provided with a tour of the CRSBD's E-Learning Center and received information on the services provided through the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center. Katrece Albert, Professor Emeritus in the Southern University College of Business also conducted a training on the topic, 'Marketing Your Business.'

During the May 7th session, CRSBD Director Gloria D. London conducted a training on the topic, "How to Develop a Business Plan."

During the May 14th session, Dr. Kenyetta Smith, Assistant Specialist of Community and Economic Development at the SU Ag Center, provided the Business Development Training attendees with information on the Building Opportunities through Leadership Development (BOLD) Project, which seeks to improve the leadership and community development capacity of rural and underserved communities in Louisiana. Dr. Smith will be working with Joseph Lockwood, with the Hopkins Street Economic Development District, to set-up BOLD trainings in the New Iberia community.



**Katrece Albert discusses marketing a business with training participants.**

Blake Cormier with Capital One Bank also conducted a training on the topic "Securing Finances for Businesses" during the May 14th session.

The final session of the six-week New Iberia Business Development Training was held on May 21st. Wilbert Harris and William Augustine, Technology Specialists for the Center for Rural and Small Business Development, conducted a training on the topic, "Accounting Practices: Introduction to QuickBooks."

Each participant received a trial copy of the QuickBooks software to take home. Many of the participants mentioned how excited they were about learning how to use QuickBooks to assist them in their businesses and to receive a trial copy of the software.

They were also presented with a certificate of completion for taking part in the training.

The CRSBD will continue to work with Joseph Lockwood to schedule additional training classes for potential and current businesses owners in New Iberia area.



**CRSBD director, Gloria D. London, speaks to the training participants on how to develop a business plan.**



**Blake Cormier with Capital One Bank conducted a training on the topic "Securing Finances for Businesses".**



**(L-R) Wilbert Harris, CRSBD Technology Specialist, instructs training participants how to use Quickbooks, while William Augustine, CRSBD Technology Specialist, assist them in using the software.**

## E-Learning Center participates in 'Friends and Family Day' at Disciple Baptist Church

The E-Learning Center in the Center for Rural and Small Business Development (CRSBD) at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, participated in 'Friends and Family Day' at Disciples Baptist Church in Ville Platte on Sunday, April 29th.

More than 310 people come out to fellowship with the church during the event. CRSBD staff members Wilbert Harris, Jr. and William Augustine manned

the E-Learning Center and provided information on the services and capabilities available to the community through the Center.

The CRSBD has an ongoing partnership with the church which began with the establishment of a computer lab in 2008. The church recently completed construction on a new educational center next to the church. The computer lab is now housed inside the new center.

Mr. Herman Alfred, Educational Center Founder at the church, stated that because of the commitment of the Center for Rural and Small Business Development, they are now able to do more for the Ville Platte community.

A grand opening for the new educational center is set for June 2012.

## CRSBD's E-Learning Center visits the Town of Maringouin

The E-Learning Center in the Center for Rural and Small Business Development (CRSBD) at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center visited the Town of Maringouin on Saturday, May 19th to introduce the Center's services and capabilities to the community.

During the visit, attendees received a summary on the importance of starting a business, the requirements for the licensing of child day care facilities, information on marketing a business, a copy of the USDA Rural Development Program Summary Guide with annual report and Rural Housing Loan and Grant Program, and a copy of the Small Business Administration's Resource Magazine.

Participants also received one-on-one counseling about their potential businesses with Eual Hall, Business Development Outreach Specialist in the CRSBD.

John F. Overton Sr., Mayor of the Town of Maringouin, along with residents from the Maringouin area were very excited to have the E-Learning Center visit their community. The Center for Rural and Small Business Development is planning to conduct several business development and technology trainings there in the coming months to assist potential and current business owners.



Eual Hall stands with project participants following an educational tour of the CRSBD E-Learning Center Mobile Unit in Maringouin.

## CRSBD Staff speaks to Tangipahoa Village City Council



LaKeeshia Giddens speaks to the Village of Tangipahoa city council about the CRSBD's E-Learning Center.

The Center for Rural and Small Business Development (CRSBD) staff members LaKeeshia Giddens, Wilbert Harris and Eual Hall spoke to the Village of Tangipahoa City Council about providing business development training and other needed services to the rural community during the Village's May 9th Town Hall Meeting.

The Village's Mayor Michael D. Jackson and city council members were very excited about what the CRSBD and the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center has to offer the community.

After the presentation, the council decided to form a focus group within the Village to see

what services the village's residents would like to receive.

The CRSBD will remain in contact with the mayor's office to ensure that trainings and other assistance are provided to the community in the coming months.

## SU Ag Center Enjoys Phelps Family Beef Cattle Field Day

"The afternoon of Monday, April 30, 2012 presented an opportunity for team Rural America to assimilate and advance a collective message of ordinary people making an indelible impact in rural America to preserve Mother Earth's Natural Resources for future generations," said Frank Taylor, Winston County Self Help Cooperative.

More than 35 farmers, landowners and service providers congregated underneath eighty-year old pecan trees on the Phelps Family Farm in Hermanville, MS. Field day activities started with Pastor Johnnie Hughes soliciting grace and hope for rural America. The Phelps Family Farm dates back to 1918 and we owe gratitude

to our grandparents and parents for leaving a fruitful legacy for future generations of the Phelps.

An effort to save rural communities, the Phelps Family's Beef Cattle Field Day reconfirmed Team Save Rural America's efforts to help underserved landowners, farmers and other constituents.

The team consisted of Winston County Self Help Cooperative, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Alcorn State University Extension Program and Black Family Land Trust.

Faculty and staff of the SU Ag Center participated in this event.

## SU Ag Center Airs Focus Show

The Southern University Ag Center's Focus Show "Focus: Insight on the SU Ag Center" aired on Cable Channel 21, May 10th and 13th in Baton Rouge.

The show is an insightful 30-minute program with information about what is going on at the SU Ag Center, from research to community development. This edition of the Focus Show reports on the Small Farmer Leadership Conference held in Baton Rouge; the 2012 Livestock Show; and Bio Fuel featuring pro basketball great, Dr. Shaquille O'Neal. Watch the show to learn more about making fuel at home.

The SU Ag Center continues "Linking Citizens of Louisiana with Opportunities for SUccess."

NBC 33 News picked up The Focus Show announcement. It is available at

<http://www.nbc33tv.com/news/your-stories/focus-insight-on-the-su-ag-center-to-air-tonight>

## Louisianan Youth Inspired by Cooperative Leadership Conference

Angela Myles, extension agent, St Helena Parish coordinated youth from St. Helena Parish and Toni Melton, parish youth coordinator, accompanied 11 youth to participate in Youth Co-op Leadership Conference held April 27—29 at Grant Walker Educational Center, Pollock, LA. This event was sponsored by the Louisiana Council of Farmer Cooperatives and presented by LCFC, LSU AgCenter, FFA & FCCLA. These youth along with other teen leaders and professional businessmen and women joined in learning about the cooperative form of business. They learned how to enhance their teamwork, leadership and communication skills. Topics included What is the Co-op & Who Makes it Work? They also participated in cooperative team-building activities.



Louisiana youth from across the state attended the Cooperative Leadership Conference at Grant Walker Educational Center in Pollock, LA.

Attendees from St. Helena Parish were Melanie Carter, LaJarius Floyd, Nioka Gordon, Bre'Aynna Jacque, Infinity Myles,

Justin Phillips, Derrion Robbins, Devin Robbins, Javier Smith, Trent Tanner, Genesis Whitley and Toni Melton, Youth Coordinator.

## Ag Centers Collaborate on Regina Coeli Head Start Family Garden Project

A Family Garden was established at the Regina Coeli Head Start on April 24 with the first planting in the Spring. The garden was developed using containers donated from various organizations. The garden, collaboration between the LSU and SU Ag Centers will provide garden-based education and nutrition for Head Start children and their families. Junior Leaders from St. Helena High School and St. Helena Middle School helped make this experience possible.

In addition to the numerous businesses and volunteers that helped develop this garden, special thanks go to Wal-Mart Centers in Hammond and Bracy's Nursery in Amite for their financial support. Angela Myles, St. Helena Parish Agent, coordinated the project.



HeadStart Gardening team from St. Helena Parish participated in a joint gardening project held in Amite, LA.

## SU Ag Center adds Content to Teen Leadership Community of Practice

A content development team at the Southwest Center for Rural Initiatives has added new content to the Teen Leadership Community of Practice available on the eXtension website at <http://www.extension.org/>. This community of practice consists of educators from Land

Grant Institutions for improving teen leadership competencies and skills.

eXtension is an educational partnership of 74 universities in the United States, which provides objective and research-based infor-

mation and learning opportunities that help people improve their lives. It is accessible directly at <http://www.extension.org/> or via the Southern University Ag Center website at [www.suagcenter.com](http://www.suagcenter.com)

## SU Ag Center Trains Extension Agents on Economic Development

The Community and Economic Development Program at the SU Ag Center organized training for Extension Agents across the state on May 10, 2012. The training was organized by Dr. Kenyetta Smith, economic development specialist, and attracted 15 agents. Smith invited Author Michael Jacoby Brown to conduct the training. Brown, author of the 2007 book entitled *Building Powerful Community Organizations*, has worked as a community organizer for more than 30 years. He has recruited and trained hundreds of volunteers and professional community organizers, conducted dozens of workshops, and worked as a staff organizer for several community organizations.

“The purpose of the training is to teach how to effectively recruit and develop leaders in organizations,” said Brown.

Participant Carol Sensley, extension agent, Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis Parishes, said,



Author and trainer Michael Jacoby Brown poses with Ag Center agents after training session.

“This training has changed my mindset; from today, I’m going to recruit differently.”

During this hard economic time, we need to recruit more community volunteers to help sustain the rural economy in Louisiana.

## Gardening from Baton Rouge to Mer Rouge, Louisiana

Odis Hill, Morehouse Parish, invited Stephanie Elwood and Tiffany Franklin to Mer Rouge, LA to assist with planning seed trays with youth at Delta Junior High School. Hill was offered an opportunity to utilize a new greenhouse on the school grounds. Under the supervision and guidance of the SU Ag Center team, students planted summer squash, watermelons, sunflowers, and tomatoes seeds. The youth learned about seeds and what is safe to eat directly from the garden. They now

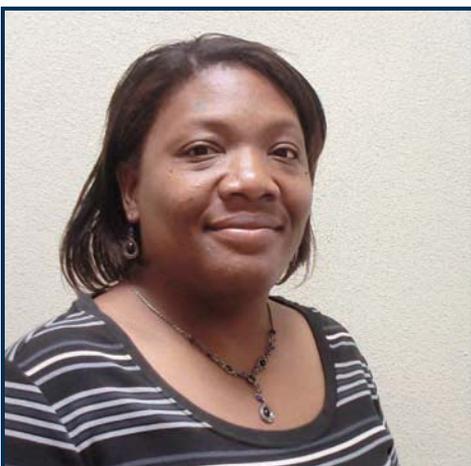
know to ask, "do you spray chemicals on your plants?" before eating right out of the garden.

When the seedlings are mature enough for transplanting, the plants will be donated to a local farmer at a Field Day event hosted by Odis Hill.

Stephanie Elwood and Odis Hill help students from Delta Junior High School prepare seed trays for their new greenhouse.



## SU Ag Center Welcomes New Employee



Dana Diane Isaac

The SU Ag Center is pleased to welcome Dana Diane Isaac, employed in the capacity of Grant Assistant for the Building Opportunities through Leadership Development (BOLD) Project. Her responsibilities include providing data analysis of project activities; ensuring that project goals are met as directives from PD; keeping records of all budget spending; keeping all program records inclusive of data collected throughout the project duration. The BOLD Project is under the Cooperative Extension Services with Dr. Kenyetta Smith serving as Project Director.

Ms. Isaac is native of New Roads, LA, previ-

ously employed by the Pointe Coupee Community Resource Center, in New Roads where she served in the capacity of summer camp youth leader. Her responsibilities included teaching healthy living and eating; assisting with math and financial literacy; and administrative assistant to the executive director.

## SU Ag Faculty and Staff Accomplishments and Activities

Bridget Udoh, Oscar Udoh and Candace Semien, attended a follow-up meeting on May 11th, for the nine participants in St. Landry Parish at 6:00 pm. One additional participant joined to bring the parish total to 10. The majority of the participants reported that they did not benefit from the poultry package of information (print, DVD and CD) presented to them six months earlier because they are engaged in cattle farming. The rest of the

group reported that they could not view the DVD information because it did not play on their home player and they had no access to computer.

The goal of the project is to meet the information needs of our clientele by collecting related data.

Also, Bridget Udoh, Candace Semien, Andra Johnson, Eual Hall, Allison, Johnson and

Chris Robichaux attended a follow-up meeting on Tuesday, May 22, in Iberia Parish. The meeting turned into another recruitment of additional two project participants. The original two participants could not attend the follow up meeting because of family matters. The new participants signed up, completed the survey and received their gas cards.

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**July 9—13** Youth Cooking School, Session 1. The registration fee is \$15.00 per student. For further detail, contact De'Shoin York Friendship at 225-771-2582 or via email [deshoin\\_york@suagcenter.com](mailto:deshoin_york@suagcenter.com)

**July 18—22** Small Farmer Agricultural Leadership Training Institute. Kentucky State University, Frankfort, Kentucky. For more information, please contact Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin at 225-771-3532.

**July 23—7** Youth Cooking School, Session 2. The registration fee is \$15.00 per student. For further detail, contact De'Shoin York Friendship at 225-771-2582 or via email [deshoin\\_york@suagcenter.com](mailto:deshoin_york@suagcenter.com)

**July 24** Louisiana Small Farm Tour. Small farmers tour the state. For more information, please contact Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin at 225-771-3532.