

**SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY**

***AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER***



**Leodrey Williams**

**CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

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## SU Ag Center holds 3rd Annual Louisiana Small Farmers' Conference

### *Southern University Ag Center*

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Farmer of the year Harper Armstrong, right, receives plaque from Chancellor Williams



Conference group session

Southern University Ag Center held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Louisiana Small Farmer Conference March 14-16, 2013 in A. O Williams Hall. This year's theme was, "Enhancing Opportunities for Louisiana's Small Family Farms." With over 50 Louisiana farmers in attendance, the event showcased the success of not only previous participants but, also the growth and expansion of the conference itself. Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin, Extension Specialist and Conference Organizer humbly spoke about the pride she feels for the annual event saying, "This conference means so much to small farmers around the country."

This year's conference aimed to educate and

expand the awareness of educational opportunities, USDA programs and services and resources to help sustain small farms.

The event motivated many beginning farmers to achieve great feats with the honoring of the [2012 Louisiana Small Farmer of the year](#), Mr. Harper Armstrong, who has farmed approximately 2,500 acres for 47 years, growing corn cotton, soybeans and wheat outside of Bastrop, in Morehouse Parish. His farm has been used for several years as a site for the Black Farmers' Field Day.

The second day of the conference involved intriguing sessions designed to provide an opportunity for all of

Louisiana's small agricultural producers to learn, congregate, and exchange knowledge and best practices in regards to farming.

The conference culminated Saturday March 16 with a tour of the Red Stick Farmers' Market in downtown Baton Rouge.

Special guests at the Small Farmers' Conference included [Louisiana Agriculture Commissioner Michael Strain](#), and James H. Hill, [Southern SARE's](#) 1890 Land-Grant Liaison.

For further detail, contact Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin at:

[dawn\\_patin@suagcenter.com](mailto:dawn_patin@suagcenter.com) or 225-771-3532.

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Story by [Charisma Deberry](#).

Southern University Ag Center's Urban Forestry studies biofuel machine



Butterfield, left, takes students, faculty and staff through the fuel-making process; Abdollahi chimes in with explanation.

Southern University Ag Center's Urban Forestry research scientists led by Dr. Kamran Abdollahi are always seeking different ways to reduce waste in the urban ecosystem in an environmentally friendly way, particularly in the aftermath of hurricanes. Dr. Abdollahi sought a novel and efficient technology to recycle tree debris that had stressed most of the state of Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. In his quest, Abdollahi collaborated with the industry sector and identified a state of the art Micro biofuel system that could produce biofuel from biomass. He obtained funding from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) to enhance bioenergy education, research and outreach in Louisiana and the region. He also secured additional funding to acquire three Micro-Fueler systems from [E-Fuel Corporation](#) in California. Since then, Floyd Butterfield, the inventor of Micro-Fueler System and VP Biofuels, has made several trips to train

research scientists and students on the proper utilization of the system. The Micro-Fueler (a Mini Biofuel Factory) is capable of converting processed waste biomass into biofuels such as diesel and ethanol that can be used to operate vehicles. Butterfield indicated that the company's goal is converting waste and agricultural feedstock such as corn into fuel for vehicles and/or to generate power, further citing this as a more economical approach than transporting debris to landfills.

Energy production is currently controlled by big companies. Making the home ethanol system available to small scale producers through a sustainable self-generated means would boost the local and regional economies while benefiting the environment. "We think that fuel independence is valuable for everyone," said Butterfield.

The company foresees many additions and directions for the machine as well as biofuel production, especially given the constantly rising gas prices.

Abdollahi and Butterfield are collaborating on creating public awareness with the possibility of setting up a training facility at Southern University to benefit the south. Louisiana State University is also a partner in the project and a representative made a presentation on the subject during the recent symposium.

According to the [BioMass Energy Center](#), biomass is biological material derived from living, or recently living organisms. In the context of biomass for energy, this is often used to mean plant based material, but biomass can equally apply to both animal and vegetable derived material.

For more information, contact Dr. Kamran Abdollahi at [Kamran\\_Abdollahi@subr.edu](mailto:Kamran_Abdollahi@subr.edu)

Second Chance 2 Recover Program collaborates with Louisiana Correctional Institute

On the road again, the Second Chance 2 Recover (SC2R) Program has collaborated with Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women (LCIW). On Monday, April 1, 2013 Tiffany Franklin, Delores Johnson and Milissia John-Baptiste discussed “Anger Management: Controlling it Before it Controls You” with 110 female inmates at LCIW in St. Gabriel, LA. The inmates were asked to develop a list of triggers that causes them to get angry. Inmates also took part in a deep breathing activity and found it to be quite relaxing.

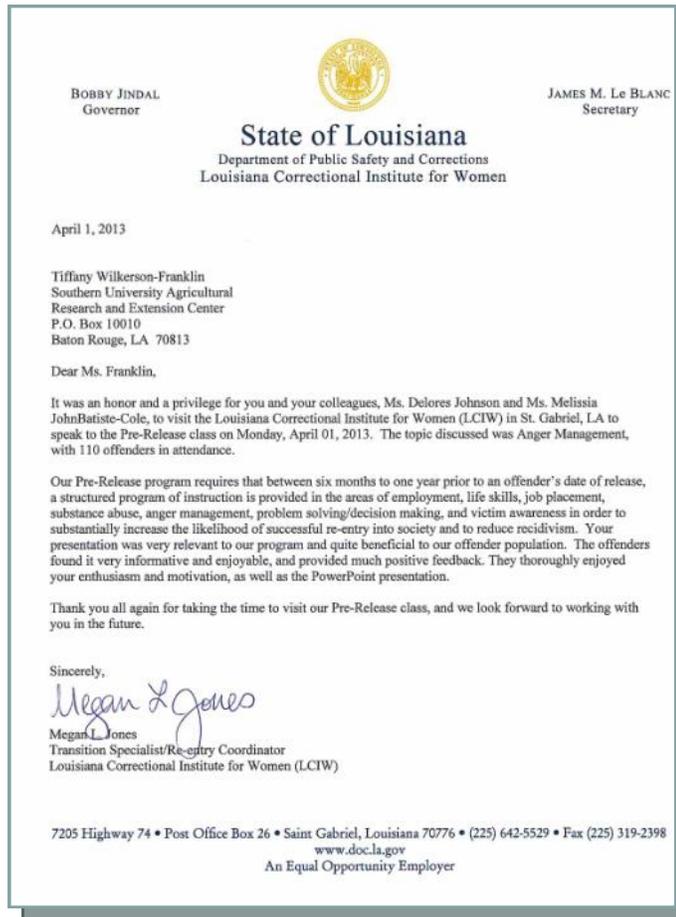
Ms. Megan Jones, Transition Specialist/Re-entry Coordinator at LCIW commented, “Your presentation was relevant to our program and quite beneficial to our offender population. The offenders found it very informative and enjoyable, and provided much positive feedback. They thoroughly enjoyed your enthusiasm and motivation, as well as the PowerPoint presentation.”

One inmate responded to session by stating, “I’ve learned more ways to control my anger.” Another inmate described the SC2R

speakers as being “down to earth and very informative. They spoke to us like we are human beings, not just inmates.”

SC2R classes are taught in Caddo, East Baton Rouge, and St. Gabriel Parishes. For more information, please contact Tiffany Wilkerson-Franklin, Program Coordinator at (225)-771-2775.

Letter of appreciation from LCIW



SU Ag Center, Omega Fraternity Join Forces to Promote Community Gardening



Community gardening activity in Baton Rouge



The Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and the SU Ag Center collaborated to assist four community groups in establishing and maintaining their gardens during the Community Service component of the 76<sup>th</sup> Annual 9<sup>th</sup> District Omega Psi Phi Meeting held recently in Baton Rouge, La.

SU Ag Center County Agent and Omega member Terrence Marshall, Stephanie Ellwood, Extension Associate, and Omega District Community Service Chairman Donald Batiste organized the event with fraternity members participating from the 9<sup>th</sup> District, which is composed of chapters from Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

The fraternity members constructed fences, built container boxes and garden plots, planted vegetables and flowers, mowed grass, and performed other beautification activities. These gardens included: The Garden of Champions; The Stump of Hope; From the Bottom to the Top; and Avira's Rainbow Community Gardens. The Baton Rouge Garden Alliance, Ms. Ollie Doucette, Ms. Sharon Terrace, Ms. Aldremer Smith, and Ms. Marva Coleman, Coordinators, were the recipients of this community service effort.

The host chapters for the Omega District Meeting were Beta Sigma- Southern University; Theta Kappa- LSU; Delta Tau-Plaquemine; Lambda Alpha- Baton Rouge, and Lambda Kappa Kappa - Baton Rouge.

For more information, contact: Terrence Marshall at 225.389.3055.

## Marshall Holds WPS Pesticide Handlers' Workshop for SU Ag Workers

East Baton Rouge Parish County Agent Terrence Marshall held a Worker Protection Standard Pesticide Handlers' Workshop to certify SU Baton Rouge and Ag Center workers in the safe handling and use of "restricted use" pesticides. The training is mandated by The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and was established through the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) in 1996 to ensure workers who handle pesticides are aware of the dangers involved in pesticide handling and the necessary steps to take in the event of an emergency.

SU Ag Center employees who completed the training as certified safe pesticide handlers included: Curtis Chisley, Travis Collins, Arthur Dayton, Lisa Gray, Todd Hill, and Charles Holiday. SU Baton Rouge employees who also completed the workshop were Willie Sensley and Cordell Veal. The certification is valid for five years.

Also, Marshall conducted a Private Pesticide Applicators' Recertification Workshop for clientele in East Baton Rouge Parish. Farmers and homeowners who use restricted-use pesticides must become certified through a testing procedure to enable them purchase those pesticides. Once certified, they must attend a refresher workshop every three years to maintain their certification. The workshop included sessions on Pesticides and Nuisance Animal Control led by Dr. Don Reed, Wildlife Specialist, LSU Ag Center. Marshall conducted the sessions on Pesticide Handlers and the Worker Protection Standard, and Pesticide Spray Drift. A total of 30 participants were re-certified as private pesticide applicators.

For more information, contact: Terrence Marshall at 225.389.3055



WPS Pesticide Handler Training



EBR PPA Recertification Workshop

## Caddo Correctional Center benefits from financial planning workshops

Katherine Ervin, parent educator, Bossier Parish, conducted four financial planning workshops at the Caddo Correctional Center on February 7, 20, 21 and 27<sup>th</sup>. The workshops attracted 160 inmate participants. The purpose of classes was to prepare inmates for release by enhancing their understanding, knowledge, and skills that will enable them to assume economic roles and make financial decisions with confidence and competence.

They learned that managing their finances is a decision, a determination, a mindset and focus that must remain throughout their life time.

The inmates also learned that they need to “earn it, manage it, oversee it, and take care of it” like a “Rock Star.” Ms. Ervin shared with the participants that it is not how much money you make, but what you save versus what you spend that determines your wealth. She emphasized the importance of knowing how much income to expect over a period of time and to budget accordingly.



Financial planning workshop session at

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Ervin also conducted nutrition workshops at Hooter Park A. Head Start Center on February 6, 7, & 13. She visited 12 classes and read from several books on nutrition. Workshops aimed at motivating youth to adopt healthy eating practices and active physical lifestyles consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

It encourages them to eat more fruits and vegetables at an early age. The new model of proper nutrition from the USDA, “MyPlate” was also introduced to the youth. Educational activities books and a box of colors and “Fuel Up with Healthy Foods” activities books were presented to 135 youth to take home and continue the learning experience with their parents. These books are developed by the state office (Fuel up with healthy Foods).



Ervin conducts nutrition workshop at

**FACULTY AND STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

**Fatemeh Malekian**, associate professor, nutrition, SU Ag Center was recently named Alumnus of the year by Louisiana State University. Malekian was honored with the award on March 20. Malekian serves as adjunct faculty in LSU Department of Food Science.



Malekian with Ruth Patrick, LSU Professor Emeritus, nutrition



L-r: Adell Brown, Ruth Patrick, Fatemeh Malekian, Kenneth Koonce and Donnie Miller

**Mr. Odis Hill**, Assistant Area Agent, Morehouse and Union Parishes, and **Mrs. Carolyn Robinson**, Associate Area Extension Agent, East and West Carroll Parishes provided educational workshops on gardening practices and nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables at HV Adams Elementary School in Bastrop, LA.

Fifth grade students, administrators, teachers and volunteers participated in the showing of the school garden. On March 7, Dr. Gina E. Eubanks, Vice chancellor for Extension, and Kasundra Cyrus, Specialist, Family and Consumer Sciences, traveled from Baton Rouge for the event, which featured five student presenta-

tions on their “garden to table” experiential learning.



Participants in the garden

**Fatemeh Malekian**, Nutrition Professor, conducted training on new dietary guidelines/MyPlate, nutrition and food safety in Crowley, Louisiana on February 7. There were 30 participants from surrounding childcare/head starts.

Malekian is a member of Mayor’s Healthy City Initiative. In August

2012, the Fresh Beginnings Program, developed through Mayor-President Kip Holden’s Healthy City Initiative, was awarded a \$1 million grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation’s Challenge for a Healthier Louisiana Grant Program. Fresh Beginnings leverages high-impact partnerships which promote food access, healthy eat-

ing, & active lifestyles in North & Old South Baton Rouge, with a focus on zip codes 70807, 70805, and part of 70802. Fresh Beginnings has the potential to reach over 61,000 residents.

**FACULTY AND STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES CONTD.**

**Patricia Lee**, Assistant Area Agent, DeSoto & Caddo Parishes attended the spring advisory meeting, held in the Dave Means Extension Office in Grand Cane, DeSoto Parish on March 14. Joining Lee from DeSoto and Caddo Parishes were 16 participants. Louise McDonald, Retired LSU 4-H Agent facilitated the meeting, and Mrs. Cheryl Gray from DeSoto Health Unit served as recorder.



**Participants at the advisory meeting**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**April 27:** Louisiana Small Farmer Ag Leadership Institute. Contact: [Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin](#) at 225-771-3532.

**May 4:** Small ruminant field day, Ag Center, 8 am-5 pm. For further details, please contact Lisa Gray at 225-771-3843 or via email at [lisa.gray@suagcenter.com](mailto:lisa.gray@suagcenter.com)

**May 18:** Louisiana Small Farmer Ag Leadership Institute. Contact: [Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin](#) at 225-771-3532.

**June 1-30:** La. Food & Ag Sciences Academy Residential Program. Contact: [Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin](#) at 225-771-3532.

**June 13-15:** La. Food & Ag Sciences Academy Urban Garden & Gulf Coast Tour, New Orleans. Contact: [Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin](#) at 225-771-3532.

**June 13-15:** Annual Family and Youth Exposition. For further detail, contact Dr. Wanda Burke at 225-771-2242.

**June 29:** Louisiana Small Farmer Ag Leadership Institute. Contact: [Dr. Dawn Mellion-Patin](#) at 225-771-3532.