

chancellor's NOVEMBER 2021 Mc *Report*



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National Hispanic Heritage Month

**This article was written by Veronica Manrique and Milagro Berhane*

As part of this diverse Jags community, we would like to highlight the contributions of two Hispanic faculty that are making a difference at the Southern University Ag Center and the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences (CAFCS). Milagro Berhane, originally from El Salvador, has been working as a Senior Research Associate since 1992. With almost 30 years of experience, Milagro has been instrumental in advancing research, extension, and teaching in the areas of vegetable production, pastures, poultry, and small ruminants. And more recently, Dr. Veronica Manrique, originally from Argentina, has developed a new entomology program at the Southern University Ag Center. Her expertise includes ecology of invasive species, integrated pest management, and urban and forest insect pests affecting Louisiana.



We would like to take this opportunity to welcome Dr. Jose U. Toledo, our new Vice-Chancellor for Research at the Southern University Ag Center. Originally from Mexico, Dr. Toledo brings over two decades of administrative expertise serving in leadership capacities within the 1890 Land-grant system. Before joining the SU Ag Center, he served as a Vice President for Research and Dean of Land-Grant Programs at West Virginia State University. His academic acumen includes Agronomy, Food Science (post-harvest physiology) and Engineering, Horticulture, Plant Biotechnology, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, and Agricultural Economics and Business Administration. In his new role, he plans to further elevate Agricultural Research, enhance the integration of research into teaching and extension programs, as well as increase experiential research opportunities for students, among other exciting initiatives.





BERHANE

Milagro Berhane, better known as 'Mila,' has been actively involved in numerous research projects related to sustainable agriculture focusing on improving management practices to underrepresented communities of small farmers in Louisiana. For example, she has established community gardens throughout the state since 1996. Mila is one of the coordinators for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program for the state of Louisiana. In addition to her research and extension contributions, Mila has been actively involved in teaching the public and students at Southern University. She is a Sustainable Urban Agriculture instructor with the Enhancing Capacity of Louisiana's Small Farms and Businesses Program which offers online certifications to the public. She also teaches undergraduate courses in soil sciences, plant propagation, commercial vegetable, and ornamental production as part of the Plant Science Curriculum in the CAFCS. Mila's passion is growing plants and teaching the public has made a huge impact in our community and benefited students, farmers, and plant producers throughout Louisiana and the southern region of the United States.

"Diversity is very important mainly in Agriculture, we know that Hispanics are an integral part of the agriculture economy and here at Southern University we need to recruit more Hispanic students," expressed Berhane. "I am glad we have three Hispanics working at SU Ag Center and hopefully we will encourage more faculty and students to be part of the Southern Family," she added.



MANRIQUE

Veronica Manrique, Ph.D., has been an Assistant Professor at the Department of Urban Forestry and Natural Resources since the Fall of 2017. During the past four years, she has developed strong teaching, research, and extension programs in entomology. Veronica teaches eight undergraduate and graduate-level courses in the areas of entomology, plant pathology, plant health care, and agriculture biosecurity in the CAFCS. Under her leadership, new research has been established on the biological control of invasive species, insect pests of urban and forest settings, and pest management in urban vegetable farms. Dr. Manrique has established collaborative projects with several institutions including Louisiana State University, the USDA Forest Service, the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, and the Baton Roots Community Farm to mention a few. In addition, Veronica and her graduate students are actively engaged with the community providing pest management solutions to stakeholders throughout Louisiana. Veronica is passionate about mentoring students, getting them excited about entomology and related fields, and increasing the representation of African American students in the workforce. More recently, she started a new column 'Entomology for all' published in the American Entomologist Magazine to highlight diversity and inclusion efforts within the entomology field.



Dr. Kenyetta Nelson-Smith has been appointed the Interim Department Chair of Family and Consumer Sciences in the Southern University College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences (CAFCS).

As the interim department chair, Smith is responsible for completing all administrative responsibilities for the department, leading its reaccreditation process, and updating and revising program area curriculums. In addition to this position, Smith continues to serve as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, Executive Director of the Southern University Child Development Laboratory, and Program Leader for Child Development.

Prior to coming to the college, Smith served as the Associate and Assistant Specialist for Community and Economic Development at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center. She has received numerous awards including the Outstanding Extension Faculty Award by the Southern University System and the Five Under 35 Leadership Award.

Dr. Smith has authored and co-authored several publications that have been published in the *Journal of Education and Human Development*. She is a member of several professional associations including the Southern Early Childhood Association, the Louisiana Early Childhood Association, and the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators. Smith has earned several certifications and completed continuing education courses including the Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher Certification in Secondary Education from the Louisiana Department of Education, Early Childhood Ancillary, and Teach Stone CLASS Certified Observer with toddler and Pre-K Certifications.

Kenyetta earned a Bachelor's of Science in Family and Consumer Sciences from Southern University, and a Master's of Science and Ph.D. in Human Resource Education and Workforce Development, both from Louisiana State University.



The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences receives support from Amazon to continue its Membership with the National Retail Federation.

La Tavia Roberts, a senior majoring in Apparel Merchandising and Textiles (AMTX) has earned a \$1,000 travel stipend from the National Retail Federation (NRF) student program to participate in the NRF 2022: Retail's Big Show on January 13-18, 2022 in New York City.

The event will provide students with insights and advice from retail professionals and industry executives to assist them in launching a career in the retail industry.

In 2020, Amazon supported the AMTX program in a one-year membership with the NRF Foundation. Amazon has signed on the NRF for another year and will be able to continue supporting Southern University through a complimentary membership until August 2022.

"The NRF foundation membership is a great opportunity for AMTX students and Southern University," said Dr. Jung-Im Seo, AMTX Program Leader and Associate Professor in the CAFCS. "AMTX students continuously have career opportunities in retail, e-commerce, and fashion industries with the NRF foundation membership."

The NRF Foundation is the world's largest retail trade association. The membership will provide the students in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences with additional career opportunities in the retail industries and mentorship experiences.





79th

ANNUAL LIVESTOCK & POULTRY SHOW

February
24-26, 2022

Young farmers from throughout the state will converge on the Maurice A. Edmond Livestock Arena with hopes of having their prized winning animals named champion during the Southern University Ag Center's 79th Annual Livestock and Poultry Show. The event, which will be held from February 24 – 26, 2022, provides an opportunity for youth to showcase their hard work in raising and caring for various breeds of cattle, hogs, sheep, lamb, and goats. Winners will receive premiums, ribbons, rosettes, and trophy belt buckles.

The Livestock Show Office is inviting local schools to come to the show on February 25 to participate in guided tours. The tour will include a mini petting zoo, hands-on plant, tobacco-free living, and nutrition exhibits. Since 1943, Southern University has continued the tradition of providing an opportunity for youth throughout the state to gain valuable knowledge and skills at the Annual State Livestock and Poultry Show. The Livestock Show provides a venue for youth to showcase their animals, develop entrepreneurship skills, build character and receive leadership training.

For more information on the SU Ag Center's Livestock Show, how to purchase meat or register a school for a guided tour, visit <https://www.suagcenter.com/page/2022-livestock-show>, call 225.771.6208 or email decobea_butler@suagcenter.com.

Pre-orders of non-processed choice meats from various livestock are currently being accepted by the Livestock Show Office. All proceeds from meat sales go directly to participating youth as a reward for their hard work and financial investment. The following meat choices and quantities are available:

- One whole beef \$2,000
- One whole pork \$225
- One half beef \$1,000
- One whole lamb \$200
- One-fourth beef \$500
- One whole goat is \$175

There is a processing fee that is not included in the original cost of the meat. All purchases must be paid by money order or check and made payable to the Southern University Ag Center Livestock Show, prior to being picked up from the slaughter house.

Those who don't pre-order their meat are invited to make a purchase during the show's 'Junior Auction Sale' on Saturday, February 26 beginning at 9 a.m. at the Maurice A. Edmond Livestock Arena.

The office will deliver the meat to either Cutrer's Slaughter House in Kentwood (985) 229-2478 or Rouchers in Plaquemine (225) 687-4258.

**Donations to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank are also welcome.*

SU Ag Nutrition Educator Sarah Sims receives Above & Beyond Award for 45 Years of Service

On Friday, October 22, 2021, the Southern University Board of Supervisors presented Sarah Sims with the “Above & Beyond Award.” In recognition of 45 years of service to Southern University, she has served the citizens of Madison Parish through her work as a Family and Consumer Sciences (FSC) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) nutrition educator.

“I have never had a day that I didn’t want to go to work,” recounted Sims. “I enjoy most of everything about my job. Being able to interact with people and learn daily. It’s very rewarding for me,” she expressed.

Sims says her fondest memories working at the Southern University Ag Center are bringing youth to the Southern University campus to participate in the Youth Expo.

“I really loved the Youth Expo,” said Sims. “We live in a very small town and some youth don’t get a chance to travel outside of town. When we would bring the children to the campus you would hear them say wow or awesome! And over the years I have had the opportunity to work with entire families. I worked with the mother, then the mother’s children, and now the grandchildren,” said Sims.

She even created a Wall of Fame which contained the photos of students from the parish that have attended and graduated from Southern University.



Although the pandemic stopped Sims from conducting face-to-face visits with her constituents, she still found creative ways to enjoy her work by reaching them virtually.

“I am 71 years old, but I feel like I’m six inside and I’m going to continue to learn something new every day,” said Sims.

45
YEARS OF
SERVICE

SU Ag Center participated in Ponchatoula Day of Hope

The Southern University Ag Center’s Mobile Education and Technology Center (M-Tech Unit) and Communities of Color Network (CoC) have partnered with the Braveheart Foundation, Councilwoman Roslind McKay Batiste, and singer and actress Andre Day to participate in the Day of Hope event for the residents of Ponchatoula, La.

The event was held on Saturday, October 16, 2021 at the Ponchatoula Community Center, N. 5th Street.

During the event, the M-Tech Unit provided internet access and information on the Ag Center’s Enhancing Capacity of Louisiana’s Small Farms and Businesses (ECP) Certification Program. Hot food, cleaning and hygiene supplies, and tarps were also distributed during the event.

For additional information about the M-Tech Unit or the Enhancing Capacity of Louisiana’s Small Farms and Businesses Certification Programs, visit www.suagcertify.com.



Photo caption: Standing from left are Ponchatoula District B Councilwoman Roslind McKay Batiste, SU Ag Center Project Coordinator of the Enhancing Capacity Certification Programs William Augustine, Oscar-Nominated Artist Andra Day, and SU Ag Center Communities of Color Network Assistant Director Ryan Sugulleh.

BALLOONS & TUNES

SARDI participated in the City of Opelousas' Balloons and Tunes Family Day Event

The staff of the Southern University Ag Center's Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development Institute (SARDI) participated in the Balloons and Tunes Family Day in Opelousas, LA on October 10, 2021. The event was held at the Donald Gardner Stadium and sponsored by Remax and the City of Opelousas. The event was family-friendly and offered the following to attendees:

- Covid-19 Vaccinations
- Voter Registration Assistance
- Youth Services Resources
- Food & Merchandise Vendors
- Live Music
- Balloon Art
- Fire Safety Demonstrations
- Hot Air Balloon Demonstrations



Families visited the SARDI booth and participated in a 4-H Health Habits physical activity inspired by the 4-H "Learn, Grow, Eat & Go" curriculum to promote physical activity. The activities were conducted by Kayla Fontenot, SU Ag Center Assistant Area Agent – Youth Development.

SU Ag Center and 4-H Healthy Habits promotional items were handed out to families that visited the booth as a token of appreciation along with recent issues of the SU Cooperative Extension Magazine. The Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development Institute is a satellite campus of the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center located in Opelousas, LA.

JAGS4Vax

The Southern University Ag Center held a COVID-19 vaccine drive on the Baton Rouge Southern University campus on October 13, 2021. The event was held in the Student Center of the John B. Cade Library as a part of the Ag Center's Jags4Vax program.

Nearly 50 Southern University students, faculty, staff, and members of the public were vaccinated during the two-hour event. Eligible individuals were also able to receive their Shot For \$100 incentive card during the vaccine drive.

The Advocate Newspaper and the local FOX/ NBC affiliate ran stories on the event.

Jags4Vax is funded through an EXCITE (Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement) grant in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to promote the uptake of COVID-19 and other adult vaccines and to combat vaccine hesitancy.

For additional information contact Jasmin Plowe at jasmin.plowe@suagcenter.com.



TRICK OR TRAIL



SARDI Participates in City of Opelousas Trick or Trail

Members of the Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development Institute (SARDI) participated in the City of Opelousas' Trick or Trail Halloween event on October 30, 2021. The event was held at the walking trails of the South City Park in Opelousas.

SARDI staff members Kayla Fontenot, Assistant Area Agent-Youth Development, Chasity Johnson, Outreach Program Assistant, and Landon Auzenne, Assistant Area Agent- Agriculture provided healthy treats to the youth participants and a small animal display. This event was organized by the city to create a safe and enjoyable Halloween experience for the youth of Opelousas.



American Farmland Trust selects L'Asia George as 1 of 48 Leading Experts to Help Transition Land to the Next Generation

Southern University Agricultural Research & Extension Center, Nutrition/Extension Associate L'Asia George has been selected by the American Farmland Trust (AFT) for a new national cohort of 48 leading experts in land transfer as partners in creating Transitioning Land to a New Generation.

The project will build an adaptable, skills-based curriculum to help a new generation of farmers and ranchers navigate the legal, financial, and interpersonal issues in accessing and transferring land. The cohort will be trained to field test the curriculum in their communities and provide feedback from producers they work with. The project will foster a service provider network and provide trainers with the necessary skills to support farm and ranch transition, meeting growing demands for succession facilitation resources.

The successful transfer of land to the next generation of farmers and ranchers will require a transfer of knowledge and skills. More than 40 percent of American farmland is owned by seniors aged 65 and older who are likely to retire in the next decade or so. Given the demographics, AFT estimates, 371 million acres or one-third of the U.S. farmland will likely transition to new ownership in the next 15 years.

Keeping land in farming — out of the path of development — and helping the next generation of farmers and ranchers access it are critical issues for the future of food production in this country. Acquisition of affordable land with appropriate housing and infrastructure is the biggest hurdle facing new farmers and ranchers. There are multiple reasons accessing land is challenging, including farm consolidation, rising land values, and conversion of farmland to development, all of which lead to a tight supply of land to purchase or rent.

These issues are made more complex by the fact that New Gen producers are more diverse than prior generations and much more so than agricultural landowners, 98 percent of whom are white.

Nationally, farmers of color are more likely to be new and beginning than white farmers — while roughly a quarter of white farmers are new and beginning, that figure is nearly a third for all farmers of color. Notably, nearly 40 percent of Asian and 36 percent of all Hispanic/Latino/a producers are new and beginning.



L'Asia GEORGE

Transitioning LAND TO THE NEXT Generation

American Farmland Trust
SAVING THE LAND THAT SUSTAINS US

Transitioning is funded by a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (grant #2020-49400-33257) from the USDA/National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The three-year project builds on AFT's previous BFRDP grant project, Farmland for the Next Generation.

Even as the Census of Agriculture expands to include more producers, the data shows that the proportion of new and beginning farmers continues to rise. Between 2012 and 2017, the proportion of farmers of color that are new and beginning jumped multiple percentage points – notably, Black and African American producers jumped from 23 percent to 28 percent of the population being new and beginning in just five years. African American, Asian American, Black, Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic farmers are more likely to be tenants and own less land, although many want to be independent operators and are qualified to manage their own operations. Heirs' property and fractionated property rights further impede inheritance, especially for African American and Native American producers. Yet, few available farm transfer resources address these thorny issues.

Land transfer can be challenging within agricultural families, with competing interests and family dynamics to navigate. Families spend decades managing their farms and ranches with the hope of keeping future generations on the land. However, many operations are not profitable enough to transfer. In other cases, heirs want to manage their own—or a different kind of operation, or do not want to continue in agriculture.

At the same time, the types of agricultural landowners also are increasingly varied—from individuals to institutions. Institutional landowners often have available farmland but do not know how to find or negotiate suitable arrangements with qualified New Gen producers. Additionally, 544,000 Women Non-Operating Landowners play an increasingly important role in farm transfer. They own about 25 percent of the 354 million acres rented out for farming and are especially committed to farm families and farm communities. Yet, few resources are available to engage and support them in transitioning their land to New Gen producers.

The cohort of trainers selected for Transitioning Land to the Next Generation were chosen for their expertise and the educational services they provide to farmers and ranchers. Collectively they represent regional, agricultural and demographic diversity. They bring voices and experiences of farmers, ranchers, and landholders from across the country who face a range of unique challenges in either accessing or transferring land.

“Transitioning” will incorporate learning circles to advance peer-to-peer learning, include social events to bring land seekers and landowners together and develop multi-media teaching aids such as plug-and-play audio and video clips of interviews and conversations between landowners and land seekers.

“With a seismic transition of land on the horizon, professionals will be trained to address major barriers for young, beginning, and underserved farmers and ranchers – land access and land transfer,” said Julia Freedgood, AFT Director of Farms for a New Generation. “Our guiding theory of change is ‘to know is not enough.’ We believe adult learners need to practice and apply knowledge for it to stick. In that spirit, all our resources will include action-oriented activities for trainers and their training participants.”

“It takes extra skill to bridge cultural, demographic, and production system differences. And it also takes extra effort to connect new generations of producers with nonoperator landowners, local governments, land trusts, churches, and other institutions who have land and are willing to make it available to them,” said Suzanna Denison, program manager of Farms for a New Generation. “AFT will focus on how to build relationships that foster productive communication skills and help a diverse new generation of producers find secure land options to grow their agricultural businesses, feeding their communities and stewarding the land.”

Transitioning is funded by a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program grant from the USDA/National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The three-year project builds on AFT's previous BFRDP grant project, Farmland for the Next Generation. Both projects are part of AFT's ongoing, multi-faceted partnerships with organizations committed to helping beginning producers succeed.

AFT's Farmland Information Center, a national clearinghouse for agricultural land resources and technical assistance, is a key resource in this project. It will house and promote resources developed through Transitioning and provide ongoing technical support. Information for this story was provided by: the Pacific Northwest Ag Network.

<https://www.pnwag.net/2021/10/26/aft-selects-land-transfer-expert-s-to-help-new-farmer-generation/>

HIBISCUS



Hibiscus Sorrel at Southern University- Outreach and Extension

Hibiscus Roselle is was originally growing in area from India to Malaysia, where it is commonly cultivated, and was carried to Africa. It has been widely distributed in the Tropics and Subtropics of both hemispheres, and in many areas of the West Indies and Latin America. Since 2005, the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SU Ag Center) has introduced this crop and its many uses to farmers and gardeners from Louisiana and throughout the South. The Ag Center has hosted many hands-on workshops and worked with several groups of farmers, community gardens, schools, homeless shelters, prisons, and other organizations around Louisiana on everything from preparing seedlings to processing the calyx.

Currently, the Center assists farmers and growers with the preparation of seedlings, farmers and gardeners provide their own seed, pots and soil and start their own trays of hibiscus; Southern University provides greenhouse space. When these seedlings are ready for planting the Ag Center provides technical advice on how to plant (timing, spacing, light requirements, fertilizer and pest, and disease control.” During harvest season, the Center’s staff provides advice on when and how to harvest, ie. maturity of fruit, storage, and harvest tool options. Additionally, the Ag Center provides advice on post-harvest and value-added product information (such as drying the calyx, making tea, jams, jellies, etc.).

What has SUAREC done with Hibiscus?

The Ag Center has developed, distributed, and taught hands-on recipes for Hibiscus jelly, jam, chutney, and cookies. Printed resource recipe cards for hibiscus chutney and jelly have been created, printed, and distributed throughout Louisiana. Ag Center staff are continuing to conduct farm visits to current or prospective Hibiscus growers. Staff members are also testing drying calyxes in drying ovens to determine the optimum and most economic post-harvest of calyxes. Even during the pandemic, Ag Center specialists have been able to and still provide remote advice via phone or video meetings.

Examples of farmers and organizations growing and marketing hibiscus and hibiscus products are Muhaimin Family, Lena Farms, and Baton Roots Community Farm.





YAW ADU
Twumasi



Dr. Yaw Twumasi, an Associate Professor in the Department of Urban Forestry, his graduate students, and Dr. Zhu Ning, Chair of the Department of Urban Forestry have published three peer-reviewed research papers in the Open Journal of Statistics, the Journal of Sustainable Bioenergy Systems, and Advances in Remote Sensing. The research papers are as follows:

Yaw A. Twumasi, Jacob B. Annan, Edmund C. Merem, John B. Namwamba, Tomas Ayala-Silva, Zhu H. Ning, Abena B. Asare-Ansah, Judith Oppong, Diana B. Frimpong, Priscilla M. Loh, Faustina Owusu, Lucinda A. Kangwana, Olipa S. Mwakimi, Brilliant M. Petja, Ronald Okwemba, Caroline O. Akinrinwoye, Hermeshia J. Mosby, Joyce McClendon-Peralta (2021). Time Series Analysis on Selected Rainfall Stations Data in Louisiana Using ARIMA Approach. Open Journal of Statistics. (Vol.II No.5). Page 655-672. **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojs.2021.115039>

Website of the Journal:

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/ojs/>

HTML link of the Paper:

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=112299>

Yaw Adu Twumasi, Edmund Chukwudi Merem, John Bosco Namwamba, Jacob Banafo Annan, Tomas Ayala-Silva, Abena Boatemaa Asare-Ansah, Zhu Hua Ning, Judith Oppong, Priscilla Mawuena Loh, Diana Botchway Frimpong, Faustina Owusu, Janeth Ernest Mjema, Ronald Okwemba, Olipa Simon Mwakimi, Brilliant Mareme Petja, Caroline Olufunke Akinrinwoye, Joyce McClendon-Peralta, Hermeshia Jonee Mosby (2021). Land Resource Areas and Spatial Analysis of Potential Location of Bioenergy Crops Production in Mississippi. Journal of Sustainable Bioenergy Systems, (Vol.II No.4). Page 187-214. **DOI:**

<https://doi.org/10.4236/jsbs.2021.114013>

Website of the Journal:

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/JSBS/>

HTML link to the Paper:

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=112495>

Yaw A. Twumasi, Edmund C. Merem, John B. Namwamba, Olipa S. Mwakimi, Tomas Ayala-Silva, Diana B. Frimpong, Zhu H. Ning, Abena B. Asare-Ansah, Jacob B. Annan, Judith Oppong, Priscilla M. Loh, Faustina Owusu, Valentine Jeruto, Brilliant M. Petja, Ronald Okwemba, Joyce McClendon-Peralta, Caroline O. Akinrinwoye, Hermeshia J. Mosby. (2021). Estimation of Land Surface Temperature from Landsat-8 OLI Thermal Infrared Satellite Data. A Comparative Analysis of Two Cities in Ghana. Advances in Remote Sensing, (Vol.10 No.4). Page 131-149. **DOI:**

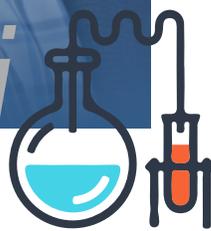
<https://doi.org/10.4236/ars.2021.104009>

Website of the Journal:

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/ars>

HTML link to the Paper:

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation.aspx?paperid=112476>



Southern University College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences alum, Andra Johnson, is the newly appointed dean of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) Extension and director of the Florida Cooperative Extension Service. He assumed the role on November 1, 2021.

Johnson will lead UF/IFAS' statewide network of more than 650 faculty educators and scientists, whose programs and expertise support economic, environmental, and community health. These programs range from field days for new crops to youth leadership experiences.

"Dr. Johnson brings energy and vitality to raising the profile of Extension. Our goal is to make an even greater impact on the millions of Floridians served by UF/IFAS outreach every year," said J. Scott Angle, UF vice president for agriculture and natural resources and leader of UF/IFAS.

"His experience in administration, Extension, teaching, research, and service, at both large land-grant and historically Black universities, his upbringing on a farm and his engagement in so many national coalitions have contributed to his development as an emerging national leader who will take UF/IFAS Extension to the next level," Angle said.

Elaine Turner, dean of the UF/IFAS College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, led the nationwide search for the next dean of Extension. *"Dr. Johnson's career has woven the three components of the land-grant mission — teaching, research, and Extension — together. He brings a collaborative spirit and passion for service to UF/IFAS and our stakeholders across Florida," Turner said. "In the college, we are especially excited about his ideas for engaging more undergraduate and graduate students in Extension and working together to meet the talent needs of Florida's agriculture and natural resource industries."*



Johnson grew up on a farm in rural Louisiana. His family raised cattle and grew cotton, corn, and wheat, and his aunt has worked for the USDA Forest Service for more than 30 years. Those early experiences motivated him to pursue a career in Extension where he could bring the knowledge of the land-grant university to families like his who produce our food, fuel, and fiber.

"I'm extremely excited and humbled about the opportunity to work with the amazing faculty, staff, and administrators here at UF/IFAS. This position is really about what we can do together to help improve the lives of all Floridians," Johnson said.

After earning a bachelor's degree in urban forest management from Southern University and A&M College, and a master's degree and doctorate in forest resources from The Pennsylvania State University, Johnson worked his way up the ranks in academia to a tenured associate professor of urban forestry at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he conducted research and taught classes in urban forestry and natural resource management.

After more than a decade at Southern University, Johnson took on roles in university leadership, first as the assistant director of research and graduate research at Alcorn State University, then as Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center's vice chancellor for research and technology development, and finally at Penn State as the associate director of Extension.



UF | IFAS

UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Johnson succeeds Nick Place, who served as UF/IFAS Extension dean from 2012 through 2020.

Nationwide, Extension is a partnership between state, federal and county governments to extend the scientific knowledge and expertise of land-grant universities to the public. The University of Florida, together with Florida A&M University, administers the Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

At UF, Extension is housed in the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), along with the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station.

This article was written by Samantha Murray, Senior Public Relations Specialist at UF/IFAS and edited by the SU Ag Center's Office of Technology and Communications Services.

**Photo courtesy of Penn State.*



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