



CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

JANUARY 2025



SUNO

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY *at* NEW ORLEANS

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL TOGETHER!

Bayou Classic 2024

Southern University at New Orleans, Strada Scholars and Industry Leaders Driving Change through Collaboration



The 51st Bayou Classic 2024 was a canvas for the advancement of SUNO students. While fans enjoyed the game, SUNO students had the chance to participate in an exclusive, unique experience where industry leaders joined SUNO Strada Scholars. They collaborated with students and university leaders to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion across various industries. The event also served to enhance community outreach in underrepresented areas. In a relaxed environment, students had the opportunity to engage in one-on-one interactions with leaders who can help guide the students in building leadership skills and advancing their career goals.

Ochsner Health Donates Funding for Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) Students to Complete Nursing School

Ochsner Health delivered a special presentation to SUNO during the 2024 Bayou Classic. As part of an expanding partnership between the Southern University System and Ochsner Health, Ochsner will contribute \$2 million over the next decade to support education for students in the Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) School of Nursing who qualify for the Ochsner Nurse Scholars Program. This funding will create more opportunities for students to pursue rewarding careers in healthcare while advancing SUNO's mission to meet the educational needs of the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan community. Through the Ochsner Nurse Scholars Program, Ochsner and SUNO will collaborate to tackle Louisiana's critical workforce challenges while offering local graduates pathways to high-paying careers in healthcare. Additionally, the Ochsner Nurse Scholars funding aligns with SUNO's Nursing Program expansion plans, which include a new facility that will enable SUNO to significantly increase its nursing graduate output.



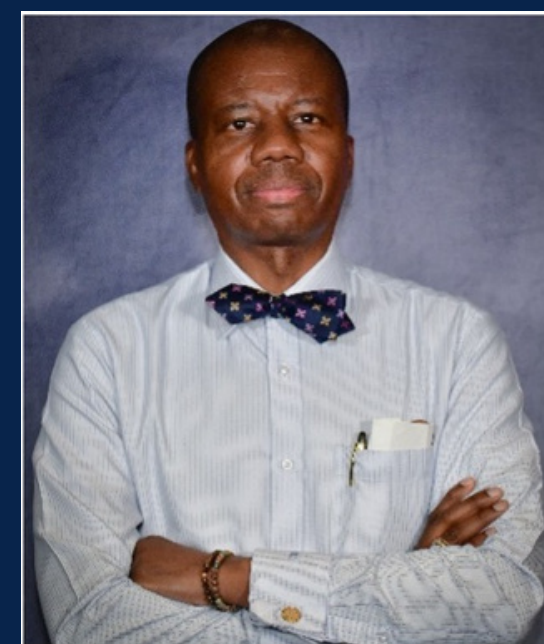
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL SCIENCES



Dr. Christian Clement, Chair of the Department of Natural Sciences and Director/Principal Investigator of LADH/CDC-SUNO Health, under the auspices of Dr. Carl P. Johnson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, hosted a visit from Xavier University of Louisiana's Visiting Faculty and Staff at Southern University of New Orleans (SUNO). The event took place on Thursday, October 24, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Natural Sciences Building, Room 450 (Executive Conference Room).

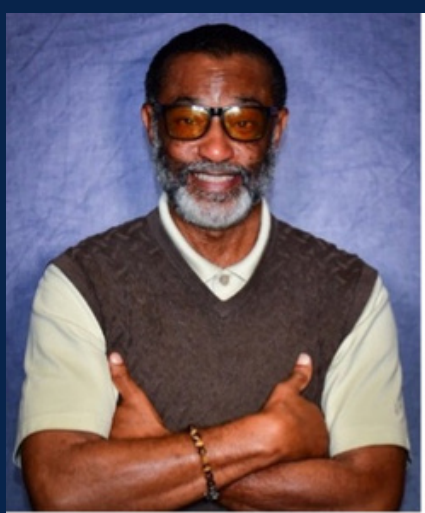
During the meeting, Dr. Bree Cook, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, welcomed the attendees, including faculty and students, and emphasized the importance of the strong relationship between the two sister institutions. The discussion primarily focused on Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), networking opportunities, and collaborative activities. A key area of interest for SUNO is the development of a dual-track program that offers students the opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Science (BS) from SUNO alongside a Master's or Doctorate in Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Sciences, or Physician Assistant studies.

Dr. Christopher Gillard presented on pre-pharmacy and pharmacy requirements, Dr. Varsha Gusman on the Physician Assistant program, and Dr. Dinithia Sampson on the Pharmaceutical Science Graduate program. Participants and attendees asked questions about our Biology Majors program, and generally, graduates of our institutions continued into desirable postgraduate and professional programs. The meeting also strategized in engaging our degree programs as pathways programs for successful careers to attract more students for enrollment, retention, and graduation. The meeting resolved to explore and/or strengthen areas, including Ambulatory Services, Nursing, Physician Assistant, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and PharmD.



Participants: Dr. Christopher Gillard-Associate Dean of Student Affairs for Xavier University College of Pharmacy; Dr. Varsha Gusman, Director of Xavier University Physician Assistant Program; Dr. Dinithia Sampson, Program Coordinator for Xavier University Pharmaceutical Sciences Program; Aryanna Demery, SUNO Science alumna & current graduate student, Master's in Pharmaceutical Science Graduate Program; and Xavier University faculty and students in Natural Sciences and Nursing.

ARTS & HUMANITIES



DR. CLYDE C. ROBERTSON

In November 2024, Dr. Clyde C. Robertson, Associate Professor and Director of the Center for African and African American Studies (CAAAS), accomplished the following:

Dr. Robertson was highlighted and cited in a US NEWS & WORLD REPORT article titled: A civil rights icon's childhood home will not be converted into a museum due to opposition from her descendants.

This article discusses the ongoing debate regarding the transformation of Oretha Castle Haley's childhood home, a key figure from the civil rights movement, into a museum.

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF THE CARIBBEAN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE (AUC) HOSTS MINI-MED CAMP AT SUNO

The American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine (AUC) held its Mini-Med camp at Southern University at New Orleans on Thursday, November 21, 2024. This event provided an opportunity for students from a variety of institutions to engage with AUC and learn more about the Memorandum of Understanding between the two universities. Over 120 participants attended the event, which included a Stop the Bleed Workshop, a suture workshop, a visit to the simulation lab, and open dialogues with AUC faculty, staff, and students.

The highlight of the day was the announcement that five SUNO students had been accepted into either the Doctor of Medicine (MD) program or the Medical Education Readiness Program (MERP). Four of the five students who were accepted are parents, which demonstrates SUNO's commitment to serving diverse learners from all walks of life.

Accepted SUNO students include: Diamond Evans, Brittney Sylvester, G'Von Sargent, Richard Stepney, and Latavia Williams

Dr. Mims-Devezin would like to thank the following faculty/staff of Knight Nation for helping with making this event a success: Dr. Bree Cook, Dr. Attia Washington and her team, Dr. Camacia Smith-Ross, Mr. Peter Bonee', Mr. Delwin Davis, Ms. Ruth Carter and the Facilities Management and Maintenance team, Ms. Kendal Coulon, Coach James Matthews, Mrs. Shatiqua Mosby-Wilson and the entire Library staff, Ms. Mikki Cornin and the Aramark Food Service Team, Chief Bruce Adams and the SUNO Police Dept., Dr. Kelly Smith and the School of Nursing, Ms. Polly Richter, Mr. Raj Pathak and Ms. Tiffany Aperwhite, Ms. Dana Bailey, Mr. Carron Andrews, Dr. Meiko Tompson, Dr. Carl P. Johnson, Dr. Christian Clement and Dr. Mostafa Elaasar.



HEALTH INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



SHARON MCGEE

On October 27-29, 2024, Mrs. Sharon McGee and Mr. Jairus Ballard participated in the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) Conference held in Salt Lake City, Utah. This conference focused on the latest trends and innovations in healthcare information management, featuring esteemed experts and leaders who provided valuable insights to help attendees remain at the forefront of the industry.



MR. JOHN BARRILLEAUX

As a current board member, Mr. Barrilleaux attended the Health Sciences Advisory Board Meeting at River Parishes Community College (RPCC) on November 6, 2024.

The RPCC Health Sciences Advisory Board Meeting highlighted programs in Healthcare Access and Medical Coding, with the Medical Coding program accredited by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).

MUSEUM STUDIES



Dr. Haitham Eid

Haitham Eid received the 2024 Elizabeth McLundie Bolton Award from the Louisiana Association of Museums (LAM) for his commitment to improving the museum sector. He was honored on October 21, 2024, at Louisiana's Old State Capitol in Baton Rouge during the LAM's annual meeting and luncheon, in collaboration with the Southeastern Museums Conference.



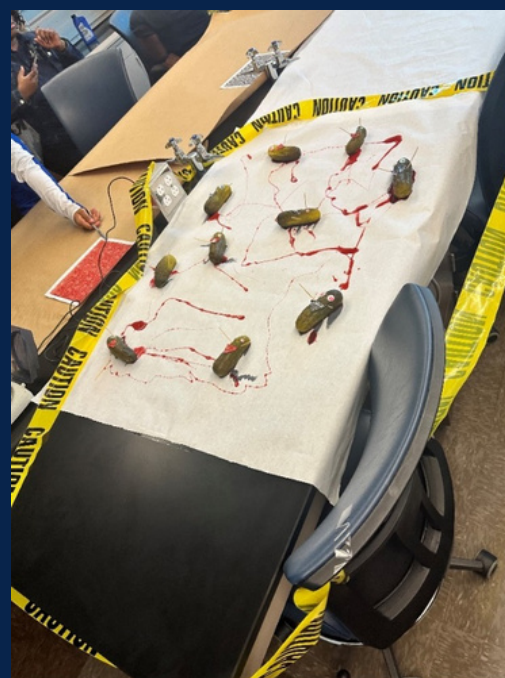
FORENSIC SCIENCE AND SCHOOL OF NURSING

GIRLS IN STEM: Scientists and Nurses

On November 1, 2024, the Forensic Science Program's Interim Chair and Assistant Professor, Ms. Brooklynn Johnson, along with the Forensic Science Club students and Forensic Science Lab Technician Ms. Tiffany Aperwhite collaborated with Dr. Kelly Smith, Dean of the School of Nursing and Assistant Professor, as well as Nursing faculty Ms. Nakia Anderson and Dr. Kimberly Beecher Nursing Coordinator-Simulation Lab, to host the "Girls in STEM: Scientists & Nurses" event. This initiative provided young girls with hands-on experiences in forensic science and nursing, aiming to inspire them to consider careers in STEM by highlighting the critical roles these fields play in addressing real-world challenges and delivering essential care.

During the Forensic Science session, students engaged with Ms. Johnson, exploring the various specialties within forensic science. They then participated in an interactive lab activity led by members of the Forensic Science Club. The scenario presented involved a mock mass casualty incident, where students were called upon to perform "medical examinations" on pickles, acting as victims. Through this activity, students learned about autopsy procedures and how to determine both the manner and cause of death.

In the Nursing session, Dr. Beecher shared insights into the diverse roles and impact of nurses within healthcare. She explained the essential skills, dedication, and compassion that nurses bring to patient care and how nurses serve as advocates for patients' well-being. The young participants were encouraged to ask questions in an engaging Q&A lunch session, where Dr. Beecher provided valuable information about the different nursing specialties, the educational pathways to becoming a nurse, and the various career opportunities available in the field. Following the Q&A, students were taken on an interactive tour of the Nursing Labs, where they could see the simulation rooms, high-fidelity mannequins, and other advanced training equipment used by nursing students. This experience allowed them to witness firsthand the practical, hands-on training nursing students undergo to prepare for real-life medical scenarios. The young ladies of Capdau were excited and inspired by the facilities and the prospect of pursuing a rewarding career in nursing and forensic science. They recognized both careers' vital roles and envisioned themselves in similar roles at SUNO.



FORENSIC SCIENCE

Community Engagement with Forensic Science

On October 19th, 2024, President Lauryn Broadnax and Vice President Amanda Atkins of the Forensic Science Club recently led a team-building activity by participating in a tree-planting event with SOUL NOLA in the Gentilly Woods neighborhood. This initiative aimed to foster camaraderie among club members while contributing to the local environment. The club officers emphasized the importance of hands-on experiences outside the classroom, which aligns with the club's mission to cultivate a sense of community responsibility and stewardship.

During the event, the President and Vice President worked closely with club members, guiding the tree-planting process and encouraging collaboration. The activity strengthened their teamwork and highlighted the value of giving back to the Gentilly Woods area, a neighborhood with deep historical and cultural roots. The student leaders shared that they were inspired to make this an annual event, hoping to continue fostering environmental awareness and community involvement. The tree-planting initiative had a lasting impact on the students and the local community, symbolizing growth, unity, and the shared responsibility of caring for the environment.



Forensic Fridays: THE NET

On October 25, 2024, Ms. Brooklynn Johnson, Interim Chair and Assistant Professor of the Forensic Science Program, along with members of the Forensic Science Club, organized a "Forensic Friday" event for students from The Net High School. The event kicked off with lively discussions about the various specialties within forensic science, igniting curiosity and enthusiasm among the high school participants. They explored different forensic fields and showed particular interest in the application of forensic science in current events and investigations highlighted in the news. This connection to real-world scenarios helped students envision how their interests could lead to fulfilling careers.

After the discussions, The Net students engaged in an interactive murder mystery lab facilitated by the Forensic Science Club. This hands-on activity involved investigating a mock crime scene, where students learned about fingerprint analysis and DNA profiling. Each lab demonstrated the importance of DNA and fingerprint evidence in forensic investigations, allowing students to witness firsthand how these elements play a crucial role in solving cases. The event left a memorable impact, illustrating how forensic science serves as a powerful instrument for justice and truth-seeking, while highlighting the potential influence they could have by pursuing careers in this field. By the end of the session, The Net High School students departed not only with a greater understanding of forensic science but also with a renewed enthusiasm for the opportunities it presents.



FORENSIC SCIENCE CONTINUED



A senior forensic science and mathematics double major, Sylvester was part of a team from Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO), who came to Northern Virginia this past summer for a program that paired aspiring scientists from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other minority-serving institutions with George Mason experts in Criminal Investigations and Network Analysis (CINA) Center.

This 10-week program, DHS Summer Research Team Program for Minority Serving Institutions, ran from June through August and was funded by a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grant to meet critical research needs in the national security realm, while also diversifying the criminal justice system.

“My work on George Mason’s body farm allowed me to see firsthand how a body decomposes based on the environment, as well as the effects of nudity, clothing, or other covering,” Sylvester said. “This unique research experience has given me the confidence to push past my comfort zone and fully immerse myself in forensics.”

The research project, titled *“DECOMPOSITION IMPACT ON MICROBIAL COMMUNITIES: COULD PETROLEUM PLAY A ROLE?”* received funding from the Department of Homeland Security, and the research team has been granted follow-on funding for the 2025 calendar year.

Furthermore, both students were offered provisional admission to the American University of the Caribbean Medical School on Thursday, November 21, 2024, thanks to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established between SUNO and AUC, along with Ross University Schools of Medicine, led by Drs. Lisa Mims-Devezin and Ibrahim Ekaidi.

LaTavia Williams, a SUNO senior double majoring in forensic science and biology, also went to George Mason to deepen her knowledge and hands-on experience in forensic science.

“We are actively learning to build skills and learn more—not only about forensics and decomposition, but the environmental, entomological, microbiological, and anthropological aspects, which are crucial to our research,” added Williams, who wants to become a forensic pathologist.



**WE LOOK
FOWARD TO
NEXT MONTH'S
UPDATES!**

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