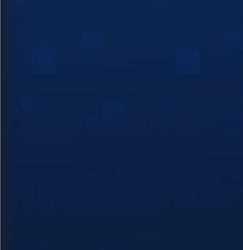


SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AG CENTER'S

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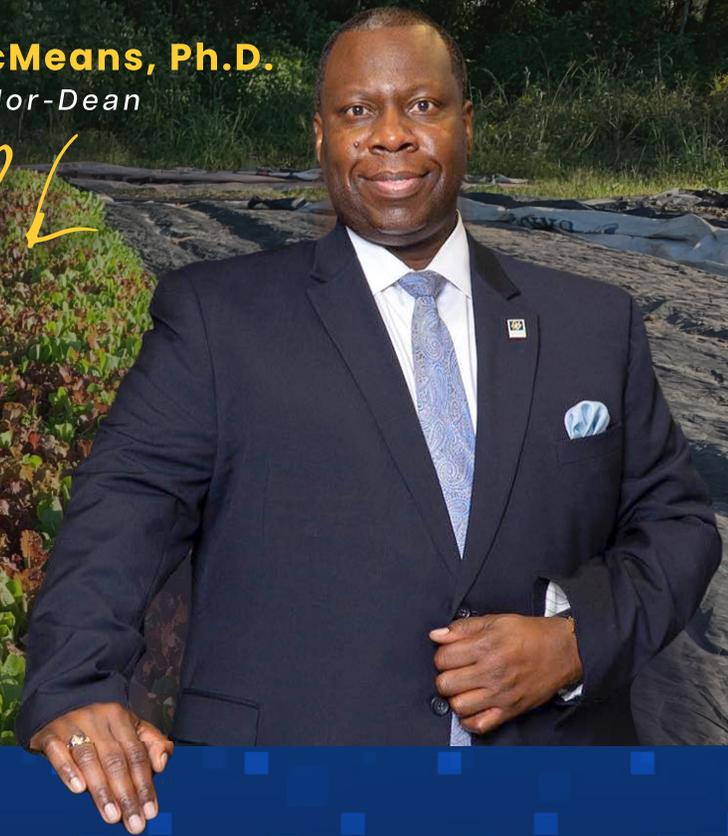
A Monthly Newsletter of the Southern University
Ag Center, College of Ag, and Chancellor's Report

VOLUME 23 | NO. 1 | JANUARY 2025



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

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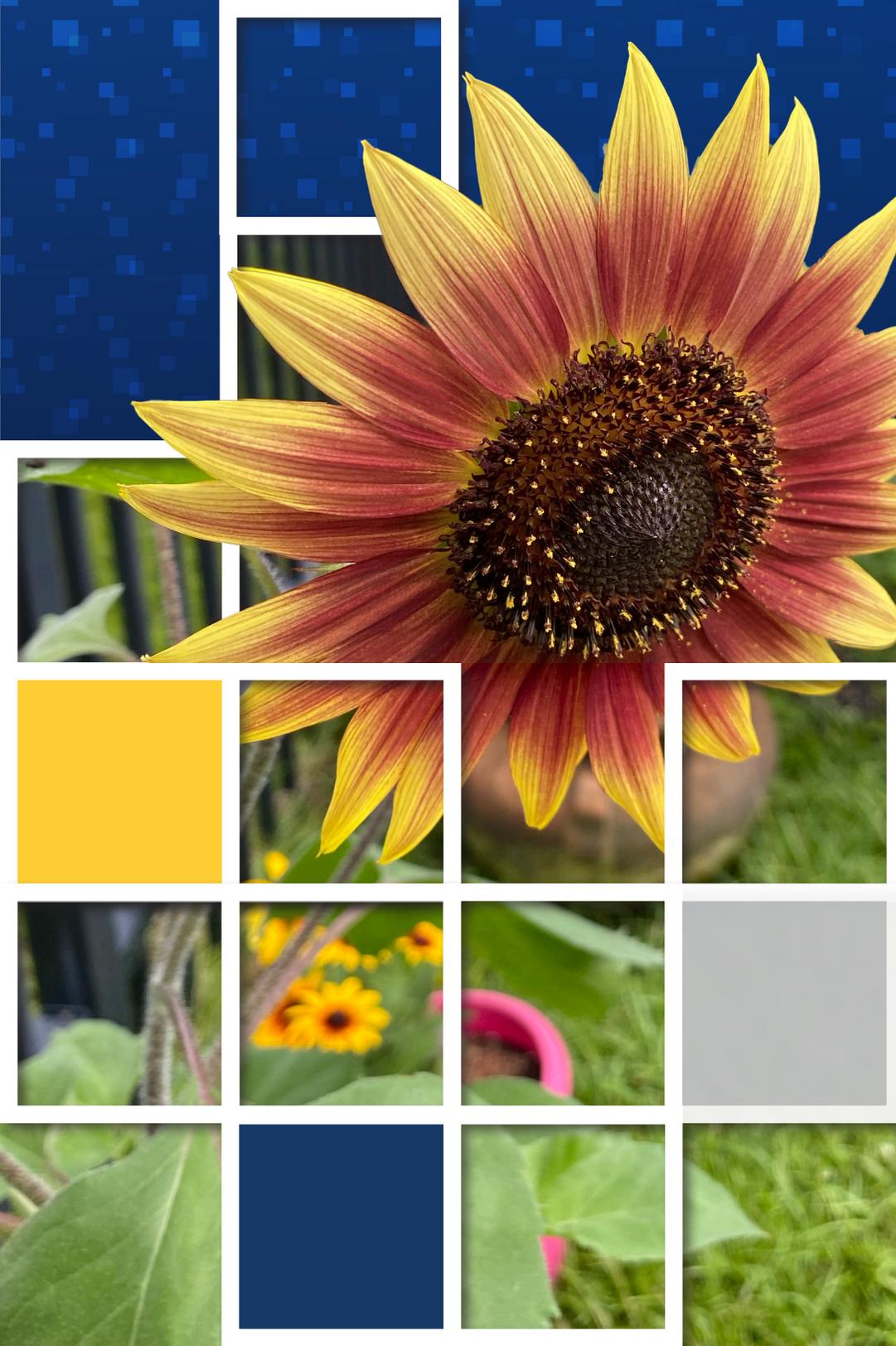


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SU Ag Center Receives \$200,000 For Programming and Research Projects



The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center and the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences (CAHES) received \$200,000 during a special presentation on November 29, 2024, at the Southern University Board of Supervisors annual meeting in New Orleans.

The Ag Center and CAHES received \$150,000 from the Joe W. and Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation to support three research projects in Aquaculture, SUN Beef, and Hibiscus.

These initiatives hold significant promise in making strides in improving agricultural practices, enhancing sustainability, and fostering economic development within our communities.

“This marks the second such contribution from the Brown Foundation, underscoring their steadfast commitment to advancing agricultural research, innovation, and youth agricultural literacy with our legendary BAYOU Summer Program,” said Robert Easley, Jr., Director of Advancement at the SU Ag Center.



The Ag Center also received \$50,000 from the Mosaic Company. The funding will empower multiple impactful initiatives, including our Precision Agcademy Drone Certification Program, scholarships for aspiring students in CAHES, and the 82nd Annual State Livestock and Poultry Show.

The Ag Center's Drone Certification Program is paving the way for youth, minority farmers, and others to obtain commercial drone certifications. This initiative opens doors to opportunities in digital media, agriculture and conservation, real estate, and other career opportunities.

The donation will also support the second phase of the Ag Center's transformative Out the Mud Program, which equips at-risk youth with essential skills in landscape horticulture, nutrition, vegetable gardening, and life skills. Over four successful cohorts, 20% of the program's participants have transitioned into agricultural careers, with some expressing a desire to pursue agriculture degrees at Southern University. To support these passionate students, the Out the Mud Roots Scholarship will provide funding to help them achieve their academic and career aspirations in agriculture.

"We are honored to acknowledge the Mosaic Company for their incredible generosity and continued partnership with the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center," expressed Easley. "Mosaic's investment exemplifies their commitment to fostering innovation, education, and community growth," he added.



The SU Ag Center and CAHES are also proud to celebrate Mosaic's recent induction as a Founding Member of the Morrill Society, the Ag Center and College of Agriculture's premier donor and advisory circle. This distinction reflects their leadership in advancing agricultural education and outreach.

"We are grateful to the Joe W. & Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation and the Mosaic Company for their continued support

and partnership in empowering the next generation of agricultural leaders, driving advancements in agriculture, and community well-being. These partnerships continue to inspire innovative research, transform lives, and strengthen our communities," stated Easley.

For information on ways to support the work of the Southern University Ag Center and the College of Ag, contact Robert Easley, Jr., at robert_easley@suagcenter.com.

SU Ag Center Receives \$2 Million Grant To Establish Urban & Community Tree Nursery For Urban Greening in the State's Disadvantaged Communities



The Southern University Ag Center has been awarded a \$2 Million grant to build an “Urban and Community Tree Nursery (UCTN) to Provide Planting Stocks for Urban Greening in Disadvantaged Communities in Louisiana.”

The grant, which began on Aug. 1, 2024, is funded by the USDA Forest Service Investment Recovery Act Grant Program and administered through the 1890 Foundation.

An official announcement of receipt of the grant was made on Nov. 9, 2024, during a check presentation in A.W. Mumford Stadium as a part of the football game’s halftime show. The game was also the concluding event for the Southern University Ag Center’s Ag Week.

Several Southern University and Forest Service officials participated in the check presentation. These individuals included Southern University Ag Center Chancellor and Dean of the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences (CAHES) Dr. Orlando F. McMeans, Southern University System President Dennis Shields, SU Ag Center Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and External Relations Dr. Katara Williams, Ag Center Director of Advancement Robert Easley, Jr., CAHES Professor and Master’s Degree Program Leader of Urban Forestry and SU Ag Center Research Scientist Dr. Yadong Qi, CAHES Professor of Urban Forestry and Ecophysiology and Climate Change Dr. Zhu Ning, and Ag Center Project Coordinator of Urban Forestry, Environment,



and Natural Resources Dr. Christean Smith. The United States Forest Service representatives present were Assistant Director (Acting), Urban & Community Forestry Dr. Quintaniay Holifield, Public Affairs, Recreation, Heritage and Administration Staff Officer at Kisatchie National Forest Jim Caldwell, Supervisory Forester Dr. Brittany Benjamin, and Louisiana Forestry Association Executive Director Buck Vandersteen.

The grant is a collaborative project between the Southern University Ag Center, the 1890 Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service, and various local and state entities. The project will provide job opportunities, community outreach, and student experiences in Urban and Community Forestry. The grant will also support undergraduate and graduate students and community participants by preparing the next generation of professionals and community leaders for urban greening with more resilient tree canopies. This grant will significantly enhance the SU Ag Center's capability to serve its clientele, particularly those residing in disadvantaged communities.

The grant will operate for four years and will include the following tasks:

- Establish a UCTN to provide planting stocks for urban greening in disadvantaged communities in Louisiana. The UCTN will be located within the SU Ag Center's landmass in the northern part of the City of Baton Rouge. According to the Justice40 Tracts Map, this area is classified as a disadvantaged community. The UCNT will occupy about 30 acres of land and cultivate nearly 5,000 trees of more than 30 native urban tree species. The nursery will provide planting stocks for long-term urban and community tree greening projects and grow 500 containerized large trees for short-term and immediate urban planting needs in disadvantaged communities in the state.
- The UCTN will be used as a vehicle to carry out urban and community forestry skill training for Southern University Urban Forestry and Agricultural undergraduate majors and graduate students, minority participants, and volunteers from disadvantaged communities. The skill training will include tree identification, site preparation and maintenance, tree planting, monitoring tree growth and development, pruning and associated arboriculture practices, irrigation, fertilization, weed control, invasive species management, integrated pest management, community outreach, and tree transplanting.
- The SU Ag Center will use the UCTN as an Urban and Community Forestry activity site, to host semi-annual field days, educational field trips for CAHES students and K-12 schools in disadvantaged communities, and Urban Forestry workshops to increase Urban Forestry awareness and availability of planting stocks for urban greening. The project will endeavor to reach out to communities in all 64 parishes of the state to identify and prioritize the most disadvantaged communities, to invite them to visit the UCTN, to learn about the availability of tree planting stocks, the benefit of the trees, and techniques for tree planting and maintenance.

Tree planting and equal access to green space are the long-term solutions to healthy and sustainable communities. Tree canopies provide many ecological, environmental, and social benefits to society.

Dr. Yadong Qi is the grant's Project Director. Co-project directors include Dr. Veronica Manrique, CAHES Associate Professor of Entomology and Invasive Species, Dr. Vanessa Ferchaud, SU Ag Center Research Assistant Professor of Urban Forestry, and various faculty and staff in CAHES and the SU Ag Center.

For additional information on the Urban and Community Tree Nursey to Provide Planting Stocks for Urban Greening in Disadvantaged Communities in Louisiana grant contact, Dr. Qi, at yadong.qi@sus.edu.

SU Ag Center
and College
of Ag Holds
Ag Week
Nov. 4-9, 2024



The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SU Ag Center) and the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences (CAHES) partnered with SU Athletics to host an Ag Game on Nov. 9 against Bethune-Cookman College in A.W. Mumford Stadium. The campus also held a week of events for the community and agriculture students leading up to the game.

Jagie's Research Rampage: A Social Media Adventure

Festivities kicked off on Nov. 4 with Jagie's Research Rampage: A Social Media Adventure, which highlighted some of the Ag Center's research projects and was held throughout the day on the SU Ag Center's social media platforms.

Hometown Cuisine Cookoff

The College of Ag's Hometown Cuisine Cookoff was held on Nov. 5 in the lobby of Pinkie Thrift Hall. In its second year, the College decided to make this event more engaging by turning the competition into a fun and lively face-off between CAHES student organizations and faculty and staff. The goal of the event was to strengthen the connections within the CAHES family.

"The cookoff shared talent, love for food, and teamwork that makes the College so special,"





said Keandrys Dalton, CAHES Student Support Coordinator. “Adding faculty and staff to the competition also created a great opportunity to highlight mentorship and build stronger bonds in an inclusive and entertaining way.”

A total of ten teams competed in the competition, which challenged each team to create their best rendition of Jambalaya using mystery ingredients, all while working under strict time constraints. The main ingredients included rice, turkey sausage, bell peppers, and onions. Special items were tofu, vegetable broth, and sweet potatoes. Community items included onion, garlic and chili powders, paprika, sea salt, and olive oil.



Avis O’Bryant-Chaney, Southern University Baton Rouge campus (SUBR) Interim Director for Student Success; Kelwin Williams, SUBR Dean of Students; and Dr. Orlando F. McMeans, Chancellor-Dean of SU Ag Center and the CAHES, served as judges for the cookoff.

Team MANRRS won 1st place, Team Elite Fashion Society placed second, and Team CAHES Ambassadors placed third.

All participating organizations received a stipend to support their funding needs and organizational activities.

Pretty Ag Wednesday

Pretty Ag Wednesday with the Rho Sigma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. was held at noon on Nov. 6 in the courtyard of the Smith-Brown Memorial Union. This fundraising event featured food, crafts, and plants created and grown by the CAHES student organizations and the Plant Production class.



Vet on Wheels

The Vet on Wheels: Free Animal Clinic with the LSU Community Outreach Mobile Unit was also held on Nov. 6 on the lawn of Fisher Hall.

The CAHES Animal Science Pre-Veterinary Medicine Club held the clinic as one of their community outreach events.

“The economy has been hard, and some people can’t afford to get services for their





pets,” expressed Dr. Tyra Davis, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Science and Technology in the College of Ag. “This program gave individuals an opportunity to get their pets healthy without having to accrue an additional cost,” she added.

“We had a great turnout in my opinion for our first time and the students raved about how much they enjoyed the event,” expressed Dr. Davis.

She also stated that the students hope to do a community outreach event every semester.

For additional information on the Vet on Wheels Animal Clinic, contact Dr. Davis at tyra.brown03@sus.edu.



Fifty dogs and cats received their core vaccines including the rabies vaccine during the clinic.

The event also allowed Southern University Pre-Veterinary Medicine students to obtain hands-on experience.

Brunch and Learn Student Forum



The LSU Community Outreach Mobile Unit aims to go out to communities to help provide access to care that some communities cannot afford or have access to.

“We work endlessly with the community outreach program” said Dr. Krista Miller, LSU PetcoLove Community Outreach Veterinarian and Assistant Professor at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. “We provide low or no-cost vaccine care, which is what we are doing by partnering with Southern and we also go to schools, career fairs, and career events to try to promote the knowledge of veterinary medicine and how people can care for their animals properly,” added Miller.

The pet owners expressed their appreciation for the free service with one individual driving from Lafayette to have her dog vaccinated.

A Brunch and Learn Student Forum was held on Nov. 7 in the Leon R. Tarver II Cultural and Heritage Center. The forum provided students enrolled in the CAHES with an opportunity to network and engage with USDA officials during a brunch, along with an informative panel discussion.



Dr. Katara Williams, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and External Relations, provided a greeting for the forum.



Senior Agribusiness major, USDA 1890 National Scholar, and SUBR SGA President Kennedy Orr, and Urban Forestry graduate student Ike Inniss served as the masters' of ceremony for the event.

Panelists for the Brunch and Lunch included Daniel Whitley, Administrator of the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service; Dr. Tiffany Franklin, USDA Liaison and Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement; Robert Seeman, Natural Resource Specialist, Urban & Community Forestry USDA Forest Service, and Bhinu Pillai, USDA Associate Area Director of REE in Agricultural Research Service.

The panelists encouraged the students to use every opportunity to develop their professional skills, practice a healthy work-life balance, and to learn everything they can during internships.

Produce Giveaway

A Produce Giveaway was also held on Nov. 7 at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Scotlandville, La. This event provided the community with fresh greens, cabbage, ground beef, green onions, sweet potatoes, and turnips.

Since 2022, the Southern University Ag Center has fed more than 1,000 families.



Play the Ag Way

Play the Ag Way and the Ag Week "Swag Giveaway" were held on Nov. 8 on the lawn of Fisher Hall and in the Fisher Hall lobby, respectively. Teams of SU Ag Center staff and CAHES students and faculty had to defend their flag from each other during the Play the Ag Way event. Faculty and staff also received Ag t-shirts at the Swag Giveaway.

The SU Ag Center and the College of Ag hosted the "Field to Fork Tailgate" on Nov. 9 before the Ag Game against Bethune-Cookman outside the A. W. Mumford Stadium Fieldhouse.

Student Spotlight

CAHES Student Takes Home College Football 25 Esports Title at Bayou Classic



CAHES Agricultural major, Antoine Richardson has claimed victory in the College Football 25 Gaming Championship.

Southern University claimed the first-ever College Football 25 Esports championship held during the 51st Annual Bayou Classic, with Richardson leading the charge.

Richardson, a native of Vanndale, Arkansas, bested Grambling in a best-of-three series to bring home the title.

The competition, hosted by Rally Cry, took place at Champions Square on a cutting-edge mobile gaming truck as part of this year's Bayou Classic festivities.

The College Football 25 tournament, a new addition to the Bayou Classic, reflects the event's commitment to innovation and student engagement. The gaming truck, complete with a competition stage and live broadcasts, drew large crowds and showcased the merging of HBCU traditions with the world of esports.

"This partnership allows us to merge the world of esports with the tradition and excitement of this historic HBCU rivalry," said Adam Rosen, founder of Rally Cry.

This story appeared on FOX 8 News in New Orleans.



Student Spotlight

CAHES Student Denim Hill Places Second in the National Rodeo Finals at the Southeastern Rodeo Association



Denim Hill, an Agricultural Business major in the CAHES and professional Tie-Down Roper, placed second at the Southeastern Rodeo Association National Finals on Nov. 2 in Pensacola, FL.

Throughout the rodeo season, Denim showcased his talent and determination as he traveled across several states, competing in Montgomery, AL; Springfield, IL.; St. Louis, MS; and Jackson, MS. Each competition tested his skills as a roper but also enriched his understanding of the agricultural industry, which is a field Denim is deeply passionate about.

Denim is undoubtedly a rising star in the rodeo world and a promising leader in the agricultural community.



Three Urban Forestry Graduate Students Win GIS Licenses During Baton Rouge GIS Day



Photo courtesy of the City of Baton Rouge.

Three doctoral students in the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences' Department of Urban Forestry, Environment and Natural Resources won three of five one-year ArcGIS Personal Use license subscriptions during the City of Baton Rouge's GIS Day on Nov. 20, 2024. Lucinda Kangwana, Priscilla M. Loh, and Jeff D. Osei were among over 100 participants who showed how Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is transforming the world and shaping our future through data-driven insights.

The event, which was held at the East Baton Rouge Parish Main Library, was part of a global day dedicated to spreading awareness about the real-world uses of GIS technology, which is used in everything from city planning to environmental conservation.

The participants were given an equal chance to engage by completing ArcGIS surveys and answering GIS-related questions. The event also featured vendors and presentations by local GIS professionals. "This accomplishment highlights not only the skills and intelligence of Urban Forestry students but also the unwavering dedication to excellence and enthusiasm for learning about GIS," said Dr. Yaw Twumasi, Professor of Urban Forestry/ GIS, Remote Sensing and Hydrology in the Department of Urban Forestry.

For additional information on the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences or the Department of Urban Forestry, Environment and Natural Resources visit, <https://www.suagcenter.com/page/department-of-urban-forestry-and-natural-resources>.



SU Child Development Lab Celebrates Homecoming Week



During the 2024 Homecoming Week, the little jaguars at the Southern University Child Development Laboratory (SUCDL) dove into a world of discovery with the "CUBS in AG" edition! The following events were held during the week.

STEAM into Homecoming

The STEAM into Homecoming events was held on Oct. 15. Led by Dr. Racquel Ayles, Program Leader and Specialist of Youth Development and STEAM from Cooperative Extension, the young students engaged in creating fascinating lava lamps. This activity ignited their interest in science and technology.

Farmyard Fun Day

Felton DeRouen II, Research Associate, led the Farmyard Fun Day event on Oct. 16. Child Development Lab students had the opportunity to interact with friendly goats, chicks, and rabbits, thus enhancing their understanding of animal science in an engaging and accessible manner. The SU Cheerleaders stopped by to lead the children in a spirited cheer and chant. Their energy and enthusiasm were contagious, and the children were thrilled to join in and show their school spirit!



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
**Child Development
LABORATORY**

"Learning Without Limits."



Growing Green Day

Dr. Christean Smith, Urban Forestry Project Coordinator, led our little gardeners in planting their own fruits and vegetables in eco-friendly newspaper pots, on Oct. 17. The event fostered an appreciation for sustainable gardening.

Healthy Habits & School Spirit Day

The children at SUCDL enhanced their knowledge of healthy eating by identifying various fruits and vegetables and preparing ice cream on Oct. 18. This day was coordinated by J'Me Bryant, a student scholar with the 1890 Center of Excellence. Adding to the celebration, members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., initiated through the Alpha Tau Chapter at Southern University, marked their 90th Charter Day Anniversary with nine acts of service. Dr. Renita Marshall ('97), Vice Chancellor for Academics and Student Support and Associate Dean for the CAHES, joined in these activities. A highlight was the generous donation of books from Louisiana Reads. The children from SUCDL received books to take home, fostering a love of reading that extends beyond the classroom.

For additional information on the Southern University Child Development Laboratory email, Alexis Perkins at alexis_perkins@subr.edu or Keisha Dandridge at keisha_dandridge@suagcenter.com.



CAHES Holds a Luncheon For Graduating Seniors



The Southern University College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences (CAHES) fall graduates were honored at a Graduating Seniors Luncheon on December 10 in the Leon R. Tarver II Cultural and Heritage Center.

Saturn Douglas, CAHES Director of Recruitment and Retention, provided greetings for the event and introduced Dr. George E. Robinson, DVM, Animal Science Alumni, and Morrill Society Founding Member, as the luncheon's keynote speaker.



Dr. Robinson encouraged the upcoming graduates to move from failure to success and recounted how he overcame his struggles while attending LSU's School of Veterinary Medicine. He also discussed how he began his own practice, worked in the corporate industry, and now owns a million-dollar company.

A pinning ceremony was also held during the luncheon and each department chair presented the graduates from their area with medals and certificates.

Robert Easley, Jr., Director of Advancement at the Ag Center presented a call to action to the students and Keandry Dalton, Student Support Coordinator of CAHES, provided the closing remarks.



Forty Students Receive Degrees From the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences



Students in M.P.A. and Nutritional Sciences and Dietetics Program earned degrees.

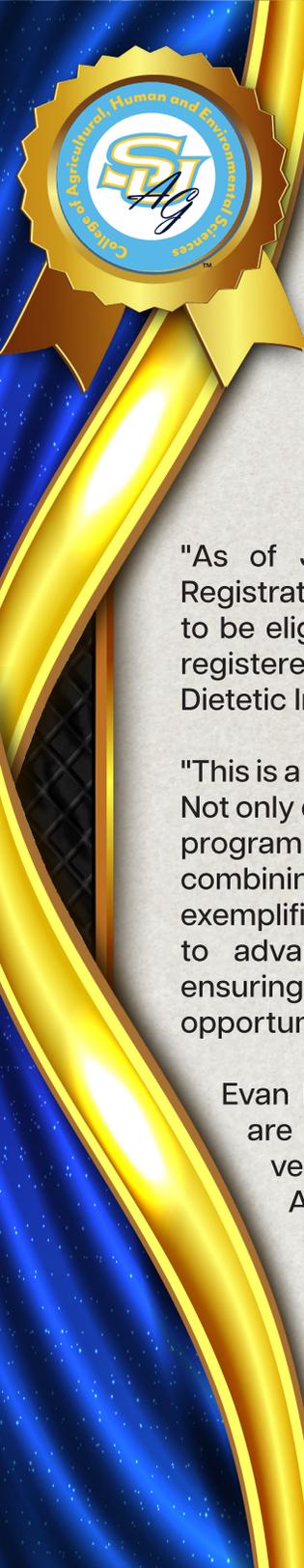
Forty students in the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences (CAHES) received their degrees during the Southern University and A&M College's commencement ceremonies for the graduating class of fall 2024. Graduate students obtained their degrees on December 12, 2024 and undergraduate students obtained theirs on December 13, 2024. Both ceremonies were held in the F.G. Clark Activity Center along with more than 400 graduates from the university.

Rodney Ellis, Harris County Commissioner, served as the keynote speaker for the graduate commencement. Marcus Brown, Executive Vice President and General Counsel for Entergy Corporation, was the keynote speaker for the undergraduate commencement.

The graduation ceremony also marked a historic moment for the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences Dietetic Internship program. Cohort 23-24 was the first Dietetic Internship cohort at Southern University to complete the program while earning a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree through the M.P.A. and Nutritional Sciences and Dietetics program.

The program is a collaboration between the CAHES and the Nelson Mandela College of Government & Social Sciences (NMC). It allows Family and Consumer Science graduate students to receive concurrent credit for coursework completed in both colleges. The course of study involves the student earning both a degree and certificate in 18 months by completing 39 hours; 18 hours of graduate-level coursework through the CAHES and 21 hours of public administration graduate-level coursework through the Public Administration program in the NMC.





Congratulations

GRADUATING SENIORS!



"As of January 1, 2024, the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) requires a minimum of a master's degree to be eligible to take the credentialing exam to become a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN), said Alexis D. Motley, Dietetic Internship Director/Instructor in CAHES.

"This is a monumental achievement for Southern University. Not only does Southern University offer a dietetic internship program, but it has also taken the significant step of combining the internship with a master's degree. This move exemplifies Southern University's ongoing commitment to advancing diversity in the field of dietetics and ensuring equitable access to education and professional opportunities," she added.

Evan Egana, Michael Henderson, and Brittany Howard are the first three students of the new joint college venture to receive both their Master of Public Administration degree and complete their Dietetic Internship Program, which grants a certificate that upon completion allows students to be eligible to take the National Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Exam.

Southern University A&M College is one of only five Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the nation that offers a Dietetic Internship Program. Notably, African Americans make up just 3% of all registered dietitians in the United States.

Below is a list of the students who received degrees from the College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences:

- **Mackenzie Chatman** from Baker, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Kristina Clark** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Jordan Johnson** from LaVergne, TN earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Tanner Marceaux** from New Iberia, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Makalia Scott** from Jacksonville, FL earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Kalea Brown** from Mission Hills, CA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences



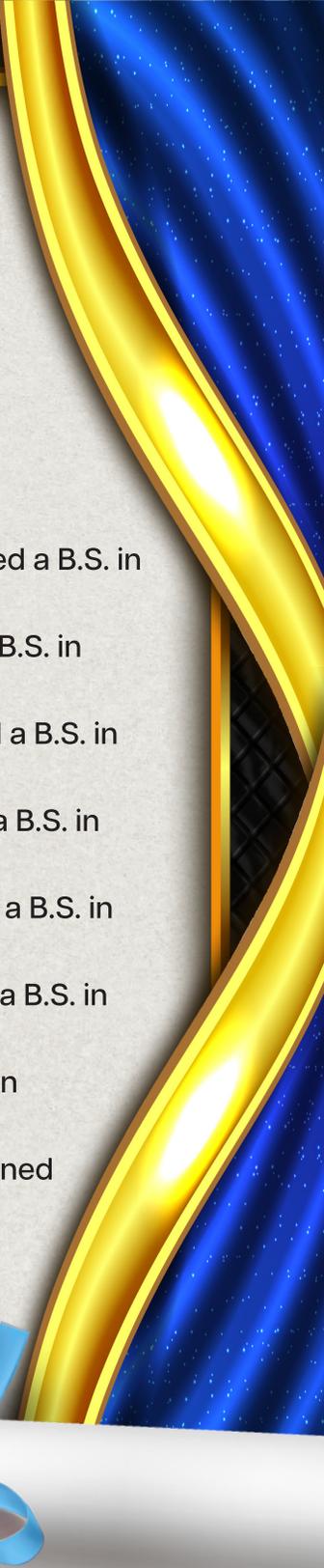


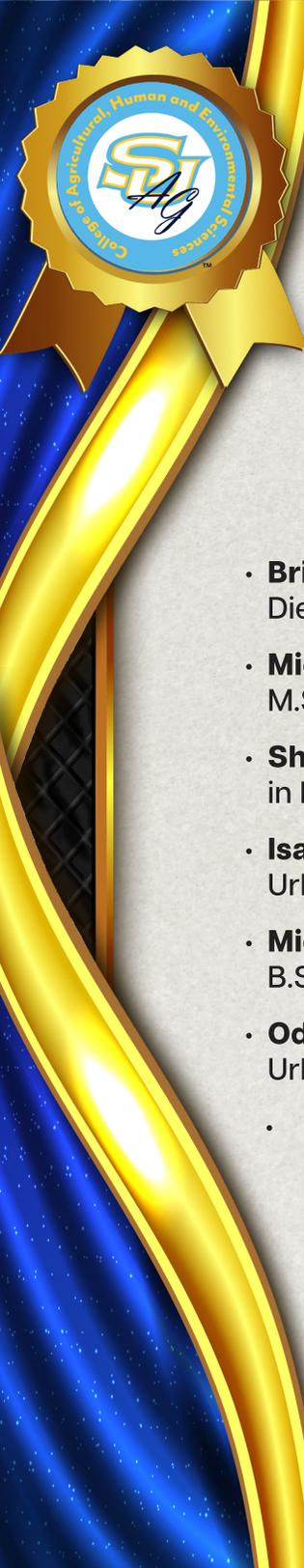
Congratulations

GRADUATING SENIORS!



- **Jada Chevalier** from Houston, TX earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Jordan Williams** from Madison, MS earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Brian Thomas** from Opelousas, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Cameron Hays** from Zachary, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Massey Jones** from Helena, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Breonna Brown** from Houston, TX earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Christian Jacobs** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
 - **Yazmine Pleasant** from Winnsboro, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
 - **Madeline Boyd** from Houston, TX earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
 - **Nickolas Lawrence** from Hammond, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Caleb Washington** from New Iberia, LA earned a B.S. in Agricultural Sciences
- **Aliyah D. Payne** from Memphis, TN earned a B.S. in Human Sciences
- **Darlynn Marks** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a B.S. in Human Sciences
- **Erynn Robinson** from Cincinnati, OH earned a B.S. in Human Sciences
- **Destinee Sims** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a B.S. in Human Sciences
- **Trinity Broussard** from Lafayette, LA earned a B.S. in Human Sciences
- **Kelsie Rodgers** from Mobil, AL earned a B.S. in Human Sciences
- **James E. Hines, III** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a Ph.D. in Human Sciences
- **Tashonda B. Vaughn** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a Ph.D. in Human Sciences
- **Evan Egana** from New Orleans, LA earned an M.S. in Dietetic Internship





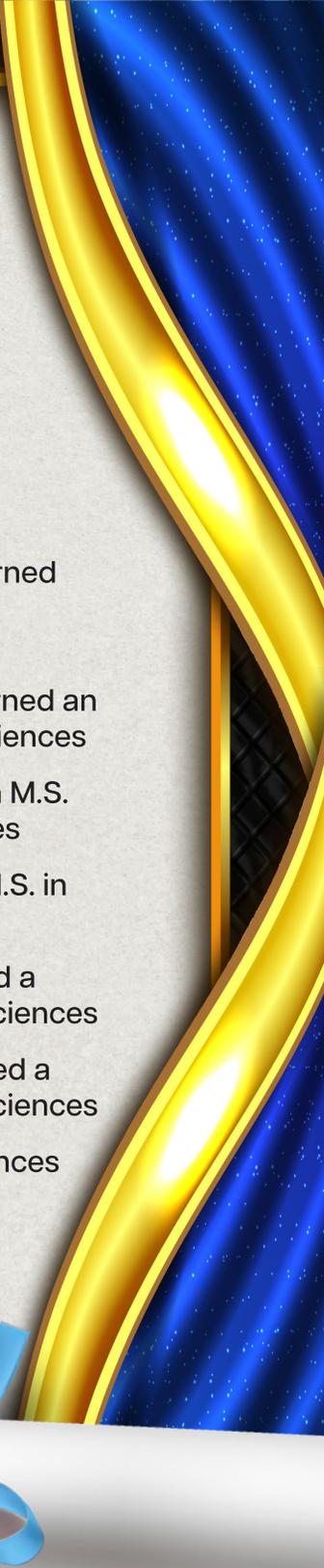
Congratulations

GRADUATING SENIORS!



- **Brittany Howard** from Dallas, TX earned an M.S. in Dietetic Internship
- **Michael Henderson** from Albany, NY earned an M.S. in Dietetic Internship
- **Shareen Mathew** from Baldwin, LA earned an M.S. in Dietetic Internship
- **Isaiah White** from Winnsboro, LA earned a B.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Michael Boudreaux** from New Roads, LA earned a B.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Odell Kimble** from Gonzales, LA earned a B.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Aaliyah Royston** from Opelousas, LA earned an M.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences

- **Chikaosoro P. Ugwu** from Enugu, Nigeria earned an M.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Christine M. Karugu** from Nairobi, Kenya earned an M.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Nicholaus Pryor** from Ferriday, LA earned an M.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Sarah Neal** from Winnsboro, LA earned an M.S. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Gabriel Ahoma** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a Ph.D. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Jacob B. Annan** from Baton Rouge, LA earned a Ph.D. in Urban Forestry and Environmental Sciences
- **Lauren Stakley** earned a B.S. in Human Sciences



SU Ag Center Extension Agent Cornelius Jackson Receives Above and Beyond Award



Cornelius Jackson, Extension Agent at the SU Ag Center, received the Southern University System's Above and Beyond Award during the Southern University System Board of Supervisors meeting on November 29, 2024, in New Orleans.

"I am deeply honored and humbled to be recognized as a leader in advancing positive agricultural initiatives," stated Jackson. "I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my peers who are always there to help and the leadership of the Southern University Ag Center for this incredible recognition," he added. Jackson also serves as Director of the JAGFresh Farmers Market, Garden Specialist for the 1890 Center of Excellence for Nutrition, Health, Wellness and Quality of Life, and Director of the Small Farmer Academy.

He received a B.S. in Urban Forestry from Southern University and is currently working towards a M.S. also from Southern University.

The "Above and Beyond Award" was established to help inspire and motivate Southern employees to reach their maximum performance. It honors outstanding achievements in the workplace, exceptional contributions toward efficiency and effectiveness of operations, special efforts in promoting workforce excellence, or outstanding service to the University community and constituents. One award is to be presented at the SU Board of Supervisors meetings each month. Recipients of the award are nominated by their peers and the top three nominations are then selected by the Board of Supervisors chair and vice chairs.



SU Ag Center Holds Its 2024 Fall Garden Workshop



Approximately 125 small-scale gardeners, teachers, and garden enthusiasts attended the SU Ag Center's Annual Fall Garden Workshop on Nov. 26, 2024 at the M. A. Edmond Livestock Arena Multi-purpose Bldg.

The workshop, themed SUMthin's Growing!!, focused on ethnic vegetables grown in Louisiana such as mirliton, cactus, bitter melon, turmeric, and Chinese Cabbage, and how the vegetables can be cooked and eaten.

Many attendees said they enjoyed the information shared during the workshop and planned to incorporate it in their fall gardens.

"I have a lot of the plants they were talking about but I never know what to do with them," said first-time workshop attendee Angela Dunn. "She showed the corn cobs and that you can make jelly from that, I had never heard of that. So, things like that, which I normally would take when I'm through with it and throw it in the compact bin. I'm finding other ways to use it now to be more sustainable," she expressed.





The workshop also included a food demonstration on how to make tomatillo salsa verde, which was presented by SU Ag Center’s SNAP-Ed and EFNEP staff members Evan Egana and Joshua McDonald.

A special award was also presented to Mila Berhane, SU Ag Center Senior Research Associate, for her hard work and dedication to sustainable agriculture and co-authoring the Ethnic Vegetable Planting Guide. The SU Ag Center officially released the guide during the workshop and provided each attendee with a copy.

The Southern University Ag Center, its Wisteria Alliance Program, the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program, LSU AgCenter, and the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service were co-sponsors of the workshop.

For additional information on the 2024 Fall Garden Workshop, contact Stephanie Elwood at stephanie_elwood@suagcenter.com, Mila Berhane at milagro_berhane@suagcenter.com, or Zanetta Augustine at zanetta_augustine@suagcenter.com.

SU Ag Center Continues Its Partnership With the NMSDC Acres Program



The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center (SU Ag Center) and the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) have continued their partnership to enhance NMSDC's 2025 Acres: Cultivating Equity in Black Agriculture program.

In its second year as NMSDC's educational partner, the Southern University Ag Center will continue to provide instructors and course material for the Acres 12-week learning curriculum focused on growing program participants' capacity to take on major national contracts with NMSDC corporate members.

Upon completion of the course, the Ag Center will conduct participant assessments to enhance the learning content provided to the cohort.

NMSDC established the Acres program, formerly known as the Black Farmers Equity Initiative, in 2022 in partnership with Cargill. The program is designed to help Black minority business enterprises (MBEs) in the agriculture industry. NMSDC also welcomed The Compass Food Foundation, Suntory Global Spirits, Bayer, and Papa Johns as new sponsors for the program.

To learn more about the program visit, nmsdc.org/acres-cultivating-equity-in-black-agriculture.



COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

SU Ag Center Holds Great American Smokeout Event



The Southern University Ag Center's Communities of Color Network (CoC) hosted a Great American Smokeout event on Nov. 21, 2024 at the Exxon Mobil YMCA in Baton Rouge, LA.

Nearly 50 individuals were provided with educational tips and resources to help them successfully quit smoking during the event which also included a display with lungs depicting a smoker's lung and a non-smoker's lung.

"The Great American Smokeout was established by the American Cancer Society almost 50 years ago. It highlights a day to encourage individuals to quit smoking, or to make a plan to quit on that day," said Angell Jordan, Assistant Area Agent of Family and Consumer Sciences and CoC Regional Coordinator.

Each year the Great American Smokeout is observed on the third Thursday of November.

According to the American Cancer Society, cigarette smoking is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States, accounting for 3 out of every 10 cancer deaths.

The Communities of Color Network provides support and technical assistance to African-American communities to ensure they are well-informed about the dangers of tobacco and understand how to protect themselves from unhealthy exposure.

Its mission is to eliminate health inequalities caused by or related to tobacco use among Louisiana communities of color by building coalitions, increasing awareness of the dangers of tobacco, and reducing tobacco consumption and secondhand smoke exposure.

For additional information about the SU Ag Center's Great American Smokeout event contact, Angell Jordan at angell_jordan@suagcenter.com. For information on the Communities of Color Network visit, <https://www.suagcenter.com/page/communities-of-color-network>.



COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

The SU Ag Center Is Now Accepting Meat Pre-orders For the 2025 Annual Livestock Show



82ND ANNUAL LIVESTOCK & POULTRY SHOW



MEAT SALE!

www.suagcenter.com



The Southern University Ag Center will host its 82nd Annual Livestock and Poultry Show from Feb. 27 – March 1, 2025, at the Maurice A. Edmond Livestock Arena. In preparation for the show, the Livestock Show Office is now accepting pre-orders of non-processed choice meats from various livestock. All proceeds from the meat sales go directly to the participating youth as a reward for their hard work and financial investment.

The following choices and quantities of meat are available:

- Whole Beef - \$2,000
- Half Beef - \$1,000
- Fourth Beef - \$500
- Whole Pork - \$225
- Whole Lamb - \$200
- Whole Goat - \$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, before picking up the meat from the slaughterhouse.

The office will deliver the meat to three locations. Cutrer Slaughterhouse in Kentwood, La., the Butcher's Block in Kentwood, La., or Rouchers in Plaquemine, La.

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

For additional information on the SU Ag Center's Livestock Show or to purchase meat visit, <https://bit.ly/4eACq6p> or email Meguna Johnson, SU Ag Center's Livestock Show Director at meguna_johnson@suagcenter.com.



Building Better Business Symposium



The Sustainable Agriculture & Rural Development Institute (SARDI) hosted its 2nd quarter Building Better Business Symposium in Opelousas, La. on Thursday, December 5, 2024.

Participants were provided with information on marketing and branding, separating your business and personal finances, and personal testimonies from Dewayne Williams, CEO of M.A.C. Enterprise Consulting; Cliff Roy, Jr., CEO of PEN Business Solutions; Lena Charles, Chairwoman of the Opelousas Downtown Development District (ODDD), and Corey McCoy, part owner of Kitchen on Klinton, better known as KoK Wings. This was the second of four meetings. The next meeting(s) will be held at the end of every quarter with information to build on the information received at the previous meeting.

The meetings are facilitated by Stacey Nevills, SARDI Extension Educator, through a partnership with Chase Bank and Julia Castle, Vice President and Community Manager of Chase Bank. The bank has allocated \$30 billion towards closing the racial equity wealth gap. This partnership is crucial in providing businesses and entrepreneurs with information important to the success of their businesses.

For additional information on this program contact Stacey Nevills, at stacey_nevills@suagcenter.com.



COOPERATIVE
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**SU Ag Center
Researcher
Espinosa-Solares
Co-authors' Paper
on the Potential
Utilization of
Cocoa Pod Husk
Varieties**



Dr. Teodora Espinosa-Solares, Senior Research Professor of Food Science and Bioprocessing at the SU Ag Center, has recently co-authored the paper *Antioxidant activity, mineral and lignocellulosic profile of Theobroma cacao L. Carmelo variety cocoa pod husk, for their potential utilization with researchers in Mexico.*

Espinosa along with Edna E. Suárez-Patlán, José E. Herbert-Pucheta, Emanuel Hernández-Núñez, and Holber Zuleta-Prada from the Universidad Autónoma Chapingo, Instituto Politécnico Nacional, Escuela Nacional de Ciencias Biológicas, and the Instituto Tecnológico Superior de Calkiní, respectively, researched the antioxidant activity, mineral profile and main chemical constituents of cocoa pod husks.

The study's result showed that the *Theobroma cacao L. var. Carmelo* variety of cocoa pod husks showed high polyphenol content and antioxidant capacity which positions it as a promising source for use in food or the pharmaceutical industry.

The paper was published in the *Revista Chapingo Serie Ciencias Forestales y del Ambiente*. To read the full article in English visit, file:///C:/Users/lakeeshia_giddens/Downloads/2024_Antioxidant%20activity_%20mineral%20and%20lignocellulosic.pdf.



Faculty & Staff Highlight

Dr. Renita Marshall has been appointed to the LSU Healthcare and Medical Education Advisory Council



Dr. Renita Marshall, Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Services in the CAHES/ Associate Dean of the Southern University Ag Center has been appointed to the LSU Board of Supervisors Healthcare and Medical Education Advisory Council. She was also recently named as the Vice Chair of the Advisory Council for the LSU Veterinary School.

“Your selection for this prestigious role reflects your exceptional expertise, leadership, prominence in your profession, and commitment to advancing healthcare and medical education,” stated Jimmie M. Woods, Sr., Chairman of the LSU Board of Supervisors. “As a valued member of the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine Advisory Council and community, your insights and guidance will be instrumental in achieving our shared mission to elevate healthcare education, enhance service delivery, and expand LSU’s impact across Louisiana and beyond,” added Woods.

The LSU Healthcare and Medical Education Advisory Council provides supporting efforts to:

- Shape the future of LSU’s veterinary medical programs and health sciences by advising on strategic goals, research priorities, and impactful partnerships.
- Strengthen resource development efforts, ensuring support for scholarships, infrastructure, and groundbreaking research.
- Build bridges between academia and industry, fostering opportunities for students, faculty, and the broader community.
- Advocate for LSU’s healthcare initiatives and mission in public, professional, and governmental spheres.



DR. RENITA MARSHALL

Dr. Marshall has served in her current position since November 2019.

Outside of her work at the SU Ag Center and in the CAHES, Marshall has served as the Charter president of the National Association for Black Veterinarians and Committee Chair of the Southern University Baton Rouge Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. She is the Coordinator for the National Animal Identification Systems, a member of the Southern University Baton Rouge Institutional Review Board for the Use of Human Subjects in Research, the contact veterinarian for state agricultural emergencies for the Louisiana Department of Agriculture, and a member of the Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge Zoo Advisory Committee.

Dr. Marshall earned a B.S. from Southern University and A & M College in Baton Rouge, LA, a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine, and an M.S. degree in Biomedical Sciences with a residency completion and Post-Doc in Comparative Animal Medicine from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her research there focused on reproductive physiology.

Faculty & Staff Highlight

Dr. Renita Marshall Is Among the Food Systems Leadership Institute Fellows Honored by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Dr. Renita Marshall, Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Services in the CAHES/Associate Dean of the Southern University Ag Center was among twenty-six fellows of the Food Systems Leadership Institute (FSLI) who were honored during a ceremony at the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) annual meeting. The Fellows were recognized for their accomplishments in completing the FSLI executive leadership development program and for their contributions to their organizations and the broader higher education and food systems.

The FSLI is a two-year program designed for experienced leaders in academia, government, and industry. The Institute seeks to enhance personal leadership ability, develop skills and knowledge for organizational change, and broaden perspectives on integrated food systems.

FSLI is a program of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities. It was created with financial support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and is operated in a partnership between North Carolina State University, The Ohio State University, and California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.



USDA Nutrition Hub & SU Ag Center Hold Action Team & Impact Champion Launch



The USDA Nutrition Hub and the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center hosted the inaugural Action Team and Impact Champion Launch on Oct. 30, 2024 at the Greater Allen Chapel AME Church in Baton Rouge, La.

The event empowered business leaders to use their resources to address issues in the community. Several community members also shared their success stories on how they utilized their resources to assist the community in the area of food and nutrition insecurity by establishing urban farms and providing fresh fruit and vegetables in food disasters. High-ranking officials from the United States Department of Health and Human Services as well as other high-ranking leaders of the public health community were also in attendance.

This state-wide challenge will provide networking opportunities, better resources, and overall health in neighborhoods and communities.

The USDA announced the opening of the first Nutrition Hub under the Agricultural Science Center of Excellence for Nutrition and Diet for Better Health (ASCEND for Better Health) initiative at the Southern University Ag Center in September 2023. The Hub is a statewide program that assists residents in the state's 64 parishes. The USDA is planning to establish three additional Nutrition Hubs in communities across the country.

For additional information on the USDA Nutrition Hub Action Team and Impact Champion Launch contact, Dr. Joynetta Bell Kelly, USDA Nutrition Hub Co-Director and Nutrition and Health Outreach Specialist at the SU Ag Center at joynetta_kelly@suagcenter.com.



USDA Nutrition Hub
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



SU AG PODCAST

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P.O. Box 10010
Baton Rouge, LA 70813



(225) 771-2242



www.suagcenter.com



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