

THE **AG**CENTER
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McREPORT
2022 | JUNE



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LSU & SU Ag MOU



COMMUNITY
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+MORE



SU and LSU Ag Centers sign the Louisiana Land-Grant Agricultural System MOU

Southern University and LSU Ag Center executive teams met to formally sign a new memorandum of understanding (MOU) named the Louisiana Land-Grant Agricultural System, on May 23, 2022 at the LSU campus.

The agreement solidifies the existing extension partnership between the SU Ag Center and the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences (CAFCS) and the LSU Ag Center and will expand on the two Centers' work in the areas of research and teaching. Specifically, the agreement will develop future leaders needed to solve the local, state, national, and global issues that encompass the agriculture, food, and fiber industries; develop new science and technologies that help to ensure agricultural producers have the tools needed to maintain sustainable production systems and provide citizens, and the global community with a vast array of food, fiber, and fuel; and will bring the land-grant university system to the citizens of Louisiana through comprehensive and diverse, research-based educational programs.

"This is an excellent time to reinforce our collaboration and work for our citizens' common good," stated Orlando F. McMeans, Chancellor of the SU Ag Center and Dean of the CAFCS.

During the meeting, the teams from each campus had the opportunity to share highlights from their programs/units regarding continuing and developing new partnerships in each area.

"This is a very exciting occasion," said Luke Laborde, Interim LSU Vice President for Agriculture and Dean of the College of Agriculture. "We've had a long partnership in extension, and I'm really excited that we have the opportunity to expand this," added Laborde.

The MOU was approved by the Southern University Board of Supervisors during its May 20, 2022 board meeting. [Information for this press release was provided by the LSU Ag Center. A story on the MOU also appeared in the Advocate Newspaper on June 3, 2022.](#)

DR. KATARA WILLIAMS



Katara Williams, Ph.D., has been appointed the Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and External Relations at the Southern University Ag Center. The appointment was approved by the Southern University Board of Supervisors during its May 20, 2022 board meeting.

Williams, who currently serves as the Chief of Staff and Executive Director for Strategic Initiatives at the Southern University and A&M College System, will fill the position on July 1, 2022.

“Dr. Katara A. Williams is an excellent addition to an already outstanding executive team at the Southern University Ag Center,” said Dr. Orlando F. McMeans, Chancellor of the SU Ag Center and Dean of the College of Ag. “Her experiences will greatly contribute to advancing the research, teaching, and extension missions in the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences and the Ag Center. As Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement and External Relations, Dr. Williams is poised to elevate the effectiveness and intentionality of our communications, marketing, development, governmental affairs, and community relation functions of the Ag Center,” added Dr. McMeans.

As the VC for Institutional Advancement and External Relations, Williams will provide leadership and oversight on strategy development to reach, influence, and collaborate with the university's internal and external stakeholders; supervise the units within the respective portfolio; and represent the SU Ag Center and SU College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences throughout the state and nation to advance the Ag Center and College's mission, vision, and strategic initiatives.

Katara brings over 20 years of experience in the areas of public relations and policy, administration leadership, management and engagement of internal and external stakeholders, strategic planning, legislative matters, and crisis management.

Before returning to Southern, Williams served as the Executive Director of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission, Associate Commissioner of Public Affairs and Advisor to the Council of Student Body Presidents at the Louisiana Board of Regents, Manager of Stakeholder Relations for the Louisiana Department of Education, Director of Media Relations for the Southern University System, and Public Relations Specialist and Executive Assistant to the Chancellor for the Southern University Ag Center.

She currently leads the inaugural class of the Southern University Presidential Fellows, the System COVID-19 Task Force, is a member of the Board of Regents' Public Sector COVID Vaccine Advisory Council, and serves as a member of the Louisiana COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force.

In 2020, Katara was recognized by the HBCU Campaign as one of 10 HBCU alumni to watch.

Williams earned a Bachelor's of Arts in Mass Communications, a Master's of Arts in Public Relations, and a Ph.D. in Public Policy, all from Southern University and A & M College.



Calvin R. Walker, Ph.D., Executive Vice-Chancellor and Director of Department: Agriculture, Research and Extension Center Special Projects at the SU Ag Center received the Southern University System's Above and Beyond Award on May 20, 2022 during the Southern University System Board of Supervisors meeting.

The 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.

Dr. Walker has been employed at Southern University for more than 30 years where he has been a Professor of Animal Science, Program Leader of Animal Science, Southern University Baton Rouge campus' Division Leader of Agricultural Sciences, Chair of Agricultural Sciences and Urban Forestry, Chairman of the Department of Agricultural Sciences, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Technology Development, Associate Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives, Auxiliary Services, and External Affairs, and Interim Chancellor- Dean of the Southern University Ag Center and the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences.

Dr. Walker earned a bachelor's degree in animal science from Louisiana Tech University and a Master's and Ph.D. in Animal Science from Oregon State University.

SPRING INTO NUTRITION

SPRING into Nutrition at the Sustainable Agricultural Rural Development Institute (SARDI) was a six-week series that encouraged community members to reach and maintain a healthy lifestyle by becoming knowledgeable about FAD Diets, Behavioral Change, Physical Activity, and Healthy Cooking substitution demonstrations.

Angell C. Jordan, Assistant Area Agent in Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) conducted the program in Opelousas, La. The program began on April 27, 2022 and concluded May 25, 2022. Participants met weekly to discuss their concerns, learning approaches to tackle eating healthy, group walking, and cooking/tasting demonstrations.

Through this six-week series, participants were able to better understand how to incorporate and maintain a healthy lifestyle without backsliding, taking different approaches to learning behavioral changes within themselves, and knowing that just a 10 minute brisk walk is better than no physical activity at all.



For additional information about this program as well as other programs available at SARDI, call 337-943-2410.



Helping the Baton Rouge Community through Meat Donations from the 79th Annual Livestock Show

For years, the Southern University Ag Center's Annual Livestock and Poultry Show Office has encouraged individuals to purchase meat during the event and are given the option to donate their purchase to the Baton Rouge Food Bank.

SU Ag Center Vice Chancellor for Finance, Brunetta Gamble-Dillard, did just that after purchasing two hogs during the 79th Annual Livestock Show. Various cuts of the processed pork meat were donated to the Baton Rouge Food Bank and the SU MANNRS and Animal Science Club student organizations on May 5, 2022.

The student organizations will use the meat during their annual cook out events and the Food Bank will distribute their meat to families in need in the Baton Rouge community.

"This is a timely donation for the food bank because we have almost no meat available right now," said a representative from the Baton Rouge Food Bank.

During the Livestock Show in February, Merrel Porch, Jr. and Torin Horton purchased the Champion and Reserve Champion Goats, respectively. Both Porch and Torin donated the goat meat to the Southern University Meat Laboratory to be sold and used as income for the Ag Center.

For information on how to purchase meat from the Meat Lab call 225-771-2234 or 225-771-2103. For information on how to donate meat to the Baton Rouge Food Bank during upcoming livestock show, contact the Southern University Ag Center's Livestock Show Office at 225-771-6208.

SU Ag Center partners with the St. Helena Cattle Company to host a youth logo design contest

The St. Helena Cattle Company (SHCC) recently held its 2022 Logo Design contest. Youth from St. Helena and Tangipahoa Parishes were encouraged to enter the contest for a chance to win a \$150 cash prize.

Serenity Bryer, a freshman student from St. Helena College and Career Academy in Greensburg, LA was named the winner of contest. In addition to the cash prize, Serenity also received a plaque commemorating her contribution to the cattlemen.

The SHCC's mission is to promote the production, marketing and merchandising of livestock through education, community aid and youth development.

"We appreciate the SHCC's contribution to our youth," said Dr. Charity Schaffer, Assistant Area Extension Agent - Youth Development 4-H for St. Helena and Tangipahoa Parishes.

Dr. Schaffer also oversaw the contest.



WOMEN in Ag



SU Ag Center holds a Women in Ag Summit Luncheon for in Honor of National Women's History Month

In honor of National Women's History Month and National Ag Day, the Southern University Ag Center hosted a luncheon to celebrate women from all walks of life that are connected through agriculture on March 31, 2022 at the SU Ag Center's Multi-Purpose Building.

More than 70 women and men attended the event which was themed, "Agri-Women Growing the Future."

The event was hosted by the SU Ag Center's The Women in Agriculture - Wisteria Alliance program which was created to support all women that are beginners and experienced farmers, gardeners, or ranchers. The program is also open to anyone interested in starting an Ag business or at home garden.



For additional information about the Women in Ag Summit contact L'Asia George at lasia_george@suagcenter.com or Keandrys Dalton at keandrys_dalton@suagcenter.com.

VICE PRESIDENT

University of Arkansas System



SU College of Ag alum Deacue Fields is the New Vice President of the University of Arkansas System

Southern University College of Agriculture alum, Deacue Fields, Ph.D., is the new vice president for agriculture for the University of Arkansas System. The school's board of trustees confirmed Fields on May 25 at the recommendation of Donald R. Bobbitt, Ph.D., University of Arkansas System President, following a national search in April.

Dr. Fields currently serves as the dean of the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. He will begin his new job on July 1.

"I am grateful for the vote of confidence from both the board of trustees and Dr. Bobbitt, and I am excited about this opportunity and look forward to the challenge ahead," said Fields.

Fields has served as dean of Bumpers College since 2017. Prior to coming to Arkansas, he served as a professor, an associate professor with extension duties, and chair of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at Auburn University. He has also served as an assistant professor and director of small farm outreach at Florida A&M University and as a graduate research fellow in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness at Louisiana State University.

Dr. Fields earned a bachelor's degree from Southern University in 1993, a master's degree from the University of Missouri in 1995, and a doctorate from LSU in 2002, all in agricultural economics.

Information for the press release was provided by <https://talkbusiness.net>.



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