

# chancellor's *Report*

AUGUST 2020

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## ADJUSTING TO THE NEW NORMAL



## FACULTY/STAFF EXCELLENCE

**ORLANDO F. McMEANS**  
Chancellor-Dean

**RENITA MARSHALL**  
Vice-Chancellor  
for Academic and Student Services  
/Associate Dean

**DAWN MELLION-PATIN**  
Vice Chancellor  
for Extension & Outreach

**CALVIN WALKER**  
Executive Vice-Chancellor and  
Director of SUAREC Special Projects  
Interim Vice-Chancellor  
for Research & Technology Development



COVID-19 brought many challenges, but the SU Ag Center and the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences have upheld the tripartite land-grant mission of research, extension and teaching. We continued to serve our students, clients, community members, and the citizens of Louisiana. We continued to do research and care for our animals.

The Extension team responded quickly to the pandemic by preparing and sharing COVID-19 related resources, workshops, informational sessions, videos, Facebook posts, webinars, and outreach programs. They have done an outstanding job throughout this pandemic by keeping the community updated with important information and best practices.

Since being appointed to several committees, such as the State of Louisiana Governor's Louisiana Health Equity Task Force Executive Committee, the Louisiana Food and Agricultural Task Force, and the Resilient Louisiana Commission Rural Development Task Force, we have been getting first-hand information and are working through our extensive team and others to share information with our clients through the types of programs we have been delivering.

The Office of Technology & Communications Team launched a Coronavirus information page where documents, data, and materials relating to Coronavirus updates, communications, health recommendations, quick links, resources, and other important information is housed and accessible to all. All employees have been encouraged to regularly visit the SUS HR Coronavirus landing page for updates, information, and guidelines. The SU College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences is following the guidelines and protocols set forth by the of the Southern University-Baton Rouge Campus.

As we are making the transitions back to worksites, masks are mandated and social distancing is required. Plans, signage, and guidelines have been put into place for a safe work environment. Communication has been and must continue to be key.

I would like to personally thank the faculty and staff of the SU Ag Center and the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences for not missing a beat in completing tasks and meeting the needs of our clientele, while working remotely. We have been productive and continuous in our work duties and responsibilities.

## CHANCELLOR-DEAN'S

# COVID UPDATE



DR. ORLANDO F.  
MCMEANS



# BEATRICA WILSON

Beatrice Wilson is currently the Assistant Director of Cooperative Forestry and national lead for Urban and Community Forestry at the USDA Forest Service (FS) in Washington, D.C. She oversees program policy, budget, partnership development and strategic delivery of national, regional and state urban and community forestry programs. Wilson, who is a native of Oakdale, Louisiana, received her first experiences from Southern University's College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences (CAFCS) by attending the BAYOU Summer Program during the Summer of 1998. Later, she enrolled in the College of Agriculture and received her Bachelor's Degree in Urban Forestry. Upon graduation, she went to Kennesaw State University earning a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Beatrice began her career in the FS Southern Regional Office as an Urban Forester Trainee and later transitioned to the Washington Office as a Program Analyst in Fire & Aviation Management. Wilson credits her success with her experience at Southern University. She stated, "my experience prepared me for career success, and the community of support at Southern empowered me to be confident, intentional and most of all lead with excellence."

Wilson finds a sense of purpose and responsibility in supporting minority serving institutions, including HBCUs such as her alma mater. Just as she was provided opportunities to grow her career in agriculture and conservation, she has provided opportunities for faculty and students at the Southern University Ag Center and CAFCS. "Mrs. Wilson's leadership at the national level has made a significant impact in the urban forestry field. Her achievement is linked with her dedication in advancing urban and community forestry. Her strong work ethics have resulted in many unparalleled accomplishments.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Her vast knowledge in budgeting and personnel management has won praises from US Forest Service administrators and peers," expressed Dr. Zhu Ning, Chair, Department of Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Program Leader and Wilson's former professor.

Beatrice has served on the Forest Service Environmental Justice Board, co-chaired the USDA 1890 Land Grant Task Force Executive Committee and has built a solid career administering conservation cooperative assistance programs at regional and national offices. She currently serves as agency representative to the Secretary of Agriculture's Office of Customer Experience and has completed White House detail assignments to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB). "Mrs. Wilson is among the best alumni that SU's Urban Forestry Program has produced. She is a shining example for the students to follow. She is instrumental in assisting SU in obtaining funding support from the US Forest Service for education, outreach, and recruitment projects, such as diversity in the wildfire management summit, municipal forestry leadership institute, #I Am Urban Forestry recruitment campaign, and career readiness virtual training modules during COVID-19 challenging times," stated Ning.





**Student Training in Academics, Research & Service**

L'Asisa Smith	Child Dev. & Family Studies Kentwood, LA
Jonathan Perry	Urban Forestry Baton Rouge, LA
Kenndall Bennett	Animal Science Zachary, LA
Tyana Johnson	Child Dev. & Family Studies Winsboro, LA
Amahry Jackson	Agriculture Business Newellton, LA
Massey Jones	Urban Forestry Alabaster, AL
Ireyon Buchanna	Pre-Veterinary New Orleans, LA
Kolin Bilbrew	Urban Forestry Baton Rouge, LA
Jordan Williams	Animal Science Madison, MS
Jasmine Brown	Agriculture Business Las Vegas, NV
Raven Foster	Agriculture Business Baton Rouge, LA
Heaven Britton	Urban Forestry Monroe, LA
Jamir Baptiste	Urban Forestry Gonzales, LA
Cameron Hays	Animal Science Zachary, LA
Timia Freeman	Child Dev. & Family Studies Palmetto, LA
Khaliya Muhammad	Agriculture Economics Chicago, IL
Michaela Rice	Agriculture Business Louisville, KY
Javia Anderson	Child Dev. & Family Studies White Castle, LA
Jefferson Blackmon	Agriculture Business Hutto, TX
Benny Loyd, III	Agriculture Business Chicago, IL
Jiren Thompson	Animal Science Clinton, LA
Shamar Nelson	Urban Forestry Clinton, LA
Destinee Sims	Child Dev. & Family Studies Baton Rouge, LA
Rayvon Hall	Child Dev. & Family Studies Kansas City, KS
LaDaisha Burton	Human Nutrition & Food St. Francisville, LA
Isiah Adams	Agriculture Business Mesa, AZ
Nya Reese	Pre-Veterinary Desoto, TX

The David Scott JAg Star Scholarship Program is a partnership between the USDA and Southern University's 1890 Historically Black Land-Grant Institution. The goal of the JAg Star Scholarship is to increase the number of minorities studying agriculture, animal science, food and natural resources.

Each awardee is provided full tuition and room and board. In addition, students will receive a stipend for books and technology. The amount of the award will vary depending on the financial need of each recipient.

The JAg Star Scholarship is awarded to incoming freshmen fully admitted to Southern University majoring in the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences and who have a minimum high school grade point average of 2.8.

The scholarship will be renewed each year, contingent upon academic performance of a 2.8 GPA or higher and progression towards the bachelor's degree. The term of the scholarship shall not exceed four years and is only available for the Fall and Spring semesters.



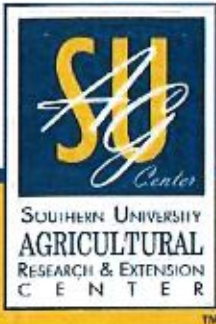
**#GROW  
JAGS**



SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER  
NUTRITION, HEALTH AND WELLNESS DEPARTMENT  
SNAP-ED & EFNEP PROGRAMS

Be sure  
to tune in!

# Facebook Live SERIES



@SUAGNUTRITION

VIRTUAL NUTRITION EDUCATION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LESSONS



USDA  
Supplemental  
Nutrition  
Assistance  
Program



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[WWW.SUAGNUTRITION.COM](http://WWW.SUAGNUTRITION.COM)

The Nutrition, Health and Wellness Department of the Southern University Ag Center conducted a Facebook Live Series with Nutrition Education and Physical Activity lessons through its Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Ed) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). These programs conducted a total of twenty-three lessons, reaching a viewership audience of over fifteen thousand individuals. Topics covered during the series included: eating healthy on a budget, incorporating exercise into your daily schedule, healthy eating snacks for children during summer, preserving and canning, container gardening, food safety and more. Within this series of virtual lessons, these nutrition programs were able to adapt to the need for reaching their audiences during a time that face-to-face interactions are limited. By creating this online programming initiative, these nutrition programs were able to extend beyond their local parish communities and take the lead on teaching the world. Although the first series concluded in mid-July, the nutrition programs are already in the works on continuing its virtual programming beginning this fall and continuing throughout the 2021 fiscal year. One of the many benefits of this virtual platform is that the content can be seen and utilized at the convenience of the viewers. The SNAP-Ed program is under the direction of Dr. De'Shoin A. York and all virtual programming is coordinated by Joshua McDonald, SNAP-Ed Field Coordinator.

To view the nutrition programs Facebook Live Series, you can visit the [SUAGNUTRITION](https://www.facebook.com/suagnutrition) Facebook Page at [www.facebook.com/suagnutrition](http://www.facebook.com/suagnutrition).





# AYO!

## SU Ag Center launches new THC line of Medicinal Cannabis Products



The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center, part of the Southern University System, together with Ilera Holistic Healthcare (Ilera Holistic), became the nation's first historically Black university (HBCU) to launch its own THC medical cannabis products on July 1, 2020. The university holds one of two cannabis licenses in the state of Louisiana. The launch of this historic brand, called AYO, comes on the heels of Louisiana's unprecedented extension in June of its own medical marijuana program.

"This is yet another great and historic day for the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center," said Orlando F. McMeans, chancellor of the Ag Center. "The goal of this program is to provide quality medicine for the citizens of the state of Louisiana through education, research and outreach, all of which are included in the mission of the Ag Center. The release of AYO, along with our CBD products, will enable us to help patients better manage their medical issues and improve their quality of life."



The AYO line joins the ALAFIA product brand, a hemp-derived tincture developed by Southern and Ilera. ALAFIA launched on January 25 in the Louisiana market, making Southern University the first HBCU producer in both cannabis and hemp. ALAFIA will be available online nationwide later this summer.

“With the launch of both CBD and THC medical marijuana products, Southern continues to set precedents in innovation,” said Ray L. Belton, president of the Southern University System. “In addition to providing healthcare options for Louisiana residents, our valued partner, Ilera, is able to hire local talent. All of this impacts our state’s economy directly while expanding the Southern University brand.”

Southern’s medical marijuana program is part of the Ag Center’s Southern Institute for Medicinal Plants, helmed by Janana Snowden, the institute’s director and an assistant professor of agriculture at Southern University Baton Rouge. The institute and Ag Center have long researched plants such as hibiscus in addition to cannabis.

“The very important research we conduct on medicinal plants helps us to address health problems that affect communities,” Snowden said. “Our products derived from medicinal plants offer patients another way to alleviate symptoms. We are proud that we can be part of many potential solutions.”

AYO has been launched at a time that Louisiana has expanded laws to potentially allow more patients to choose medical marijuana for treatment. On June 11, Gov. John Bel Edwards signed into law ACT No 286, allowing any state-licensed physician to recommend medical marijuana to any of their patients to find relief for any condition.

“ACT No 286 makes clear that Louisiana residents want full access to medical cannabis and the right to discuss alternative healthcare options with their doctors,” said Chanda Macias, chief executive officer for Ilera Holistic Healthcare. “We are grateful to the entire state legislature in welcoming our input throughout the long history of this bill and listening to the voices of our patients, advocates, doctors and industry colleagues. We had one common goal, which was to bring greater access to medicine for all patients in our great state.”



The Ag Center also held a press conference on July 27 to mark the release of AYO in the Shreveport area. The press conference was held at The Healing Clinics, LLC.

AYO is scientifically formulated, lab tested, pesticide free, and only available in the state of Louisiana. To learn more about AYO and cannabis medicine, please visit [www.ileraholistichealthcare.com](http://www.ileraholistichealthcare.com).







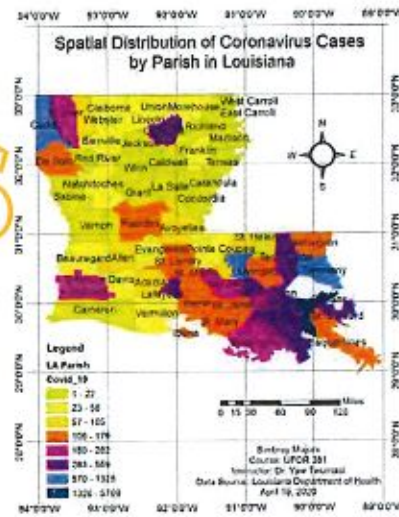
## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

# Simbrey MAJORS

To undertake this project, Majors collected COVID-19 daily outbreak information in mid-April 2020 from the Louisiana Department of Health and Center for Disease Control (CDC) websites covering all the parishes and the entire United States. She inputted the daily tally of these data into the GIS software database. To develop the cartographic maps of COVID-19 outbreak in Louisiana and United States, she used both dot density and graduated color mapping techniques under the symbology feature in Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI) ArcGIS software to show a quantitative difference between mapped features by varying the color of symbols. Data was classified into eight ranges with each assigned a different color from a color scheme to represent the range.

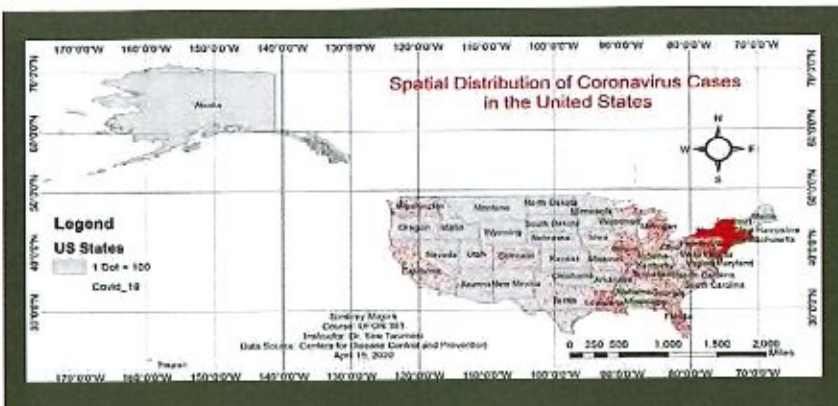
Majors is a native of Winnsboro, LA. She received her bachelor's degree in Environmental Science with a concentration in soil and water from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She is currently pursuing her master's degree in Urban Forestry and Natural Resources.

Simbrey Majors, an Urban Forestry Graduate student in the College of Agricultural Family and Consumer Sciences, used GIS technology to map the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in Louisiana and across the United States by using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technique. This study was part of the Spring 2020 final project requirements for Cartographic Design and Modeling course (UFOR 381) taught by Dr. Yaw Twumasi in the Department of Urban Forestry and Natural Resources.



Her master's thesis is focused on below-ground carbon storage, nitrogen, and phosphorous in wetland soils of Barataria Bay and Wax Lake Delta in Louisiana. This research is a NASA funded project in partnership with Louisiana State University.

The Southern University GIS laboratory is located in the Pinchback Engineering Building. The laboratory is equipped with 20 computer workstations, printers and large format plotters capable of printing large posters. The laboratory is excellent for conducting both short and long-term introductory and advanced training courses in Statistics and the applications of remote sensing and GIS for managing forest resources, agricultural lands, environmental quality and natural resources. The laboratory also hosts research projects involving both faculty and students.



*\*Results from the color symbol scheme shown in the map show areas ranging from low to high COVID-19 outbreak in the Louisiana during April 2020.*





Dr. Kit L. Chin was invited to be a book chapter reviewer for the ACS (American Chemical Society) book entitled "African Natural Plant products" Volume III. The title of the chapter reviewed was "5-HTP (5-Hydroxy-L-tryptophan) content and antioxidant capacities of wide Griffonia simplicifolia seed population in Ghana and Liberia."

### 75k New Fund from US FS to support two new projects at the Urban Forestry



Dr. Christopher Chappell, Assistant Professor in Urban Forestry had a proposal titled, "UF Career Readiness Campaign - Virtual/Onsite Speaker Series," funded for \$75,000 by the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forest Cooperative Forestry. The new fund will support two new projects at the Urban Forestry Department: "UF Career Readiness Campaign - Virtual/Onsite Speaker Series" led by Dr. Christopher Chappell and "Career Readiness through Urban Forest Management and Leadership Skills Training" led by Drs. Zhu Hua Ning, Department Chair, and Renita Marshall, Vice Chancellor and Associate Dean.

### \$750,000 Awarded for Joint NASA EPSCoR Program

Dr. Yaw Twumasi, Associate Professor in Urban Forestry, was selected for federal funding in the amount of \$750,000 for a SU-LSU joint project entitled, "Satellite-Assisted Forecasting Environment for Improving Oyster Safety (SAFE Oyster)." The sub-award of \$239,169 will be led by Dr. Yaw and was made possible by the NASA EPSCoR Program.





# WELCOME!

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center and the College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences would like to send a warm welcome to our new hires over the past few months!

## RESEARCH

- Dr. La Shonda Hodges, Associate Research Professor
- Dr. Linda Schweitzer, Research Scientist
- Dr. James Obuya, Assistant Research Professor

## COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

- Mr. Michael Polite, Extension Aide, Gardening in East Baton Rouge Parish.

## COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES

- Ms. Saturn Douglas Recruitment/Retention Counselor
- Dr. Jodi Morton, Assistant professor in Animal Science
- Dr. Sungpo Yi, Assistant Professor, Human Nutrition and Food (tenure-track) in Animal Science



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