

BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

No. 3764 • December 2015

FROM THE DIRECTOR

"It's what we do." That's a phrase we hear a lot when people talk about their work, their mission, or even their recreation. Usually it refers to a single action or process. However, when we talk about what WE do, the conversation becomes weighed down by the sheer breadth of our mission.

It's never been easy to explain what we do, but we are working on tools to help you help neighbors and clients understand us better. One of those tools is a video called "What We Do."

This upbeat four-and-a-half minute video, available on the YouTube ARExtension channel (www.youtube.com/watch?v=94IA5mJCUOQ) and for download on our FTP site, features your Extension and Division colleagues helping our friends and neighbors improve their lives.

I would encourage you to use this video at each of your presentations. Even if you're addressing folks you've known for years, this video may offer insights into parts of our work they might never know or see.

This is the first of what we hope will be several videos. We envision short pieces that will tell our story, some with the help of clients willing to share their successes with Extension and the Division.

Until then, please use our video. You'll find it's an easier way to say "it's what we do."

Thank you for all you've done in 2015. Enjoy your holidays, and we look forward to a highly productive 2016.

— Tony Windham

Oliver honored with "Stepping Up for Ouachita" award

Betty Oliver, FCS/AEHC volunteer coordinator, received the Stepping Up for Ouachita award at a luncheon Nov. 20 at the Benton Events Center benefitting scholarships for women.

The award is given annually by Ouachita Baptist University to an outstanding alumna who has shown grace, leadership, integrity and faith over the years.

The University cited Oliver's service to Arkansans through her work with Extension during her 57-year employment, especially her efforts recruiting and organizing volunteers, in awarding this honor. ■



Betty Oliver



**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION**
University of Arkansas System

University of Arkansas,
United States Department of
Agriculture, and County
Governments Cooperating

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DR. TONY WINDHAM
Associate Vice President for
Agriculture - Extension and
Director, Cooperative Extension Service

Extension receives Friend of Arkansas Community Development Society Award

On October 22, 2015, Dr. Tony Windham accepted the Friend of Arkansas Community Development Society Award on behalf of the U of A Cooperative Extension Service. This took place at the 2015 Arkansas Community Development Society conference at UCA in Conway.

The purpose of the Friend of the Arkansas Community Development Society Award is to recognize extraordinary service and support for ACDS and the practice of community development. Nominated by Monieca West of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the nomination states: "During the Great Depression, Extension agents taught farmers about marketing and helped farm groups organize both buying and selling cooperatives. Extension agents also helped organize rural electric cooperatives in areas unserved by private utilities.

The Extension Service has continued its rich development history over the years and has impacted every single county in the State of Arkansas. Three of its most recognizable programs are 4-H clubs, LeadAR and Breakthrough Solutions. ACDS and community development has no stronger friend than the UA Cooperative Extension Service. Its long history and depth of services make it worthy of recognition as a Friend of ACDS." ■



Left to right, ACDS Board Member Whitney Horton, Dr. Tony Windham and Dr. Mark Peterson.

Kickstart Cleveland County blueprint released



Congratulations to Kickstart Cleveland County, a grassroots organization dedicated to improving and revitalizing Cleveland County, on the publication of their 2015 Strategic Blueprint and Action Plan. The blueprint was presented to Kickstart chairman Britt Talent by Mark Peterson, professor of Community and Economic Development, at a Nov. 19 Kickstart meeting.

Since Kickstart Cleveland County was formed in February 2015, five new organizations have been formed in the county, activity has taken place all around the county and four new businesses have opened in downtown Rison, the first in 25 years.

Kickstart Cleveland County was formed when Cleveland County Extension agents Les Walz and Diane Clement invited Peterson to bring Extension's Breakthrough Solutions program to the county. Program activities included a Breakthrough Solutions branding workshop and bringing in architects and a UALR small business specialist to help identify new opportunities in the county.

"This has been a phenomenal journey and a quick race. The ball is rolling, and I'd like to see it continue to roll," stated staff chair Les Walz. "I'm blown away by the number of volunteers who have participated in these activities, and it is exciting for the county." ■

Lonoke and Prairie County 4-H'ers participate in Healthy Living Workshop

Lonoke and Prairie County 4-H recently hosted a healthy lifestyle ambassador training for 4-H teens. Ten youth were trained to become Teen Teachers as a part of the National 4-H Council and Walmart Foundation Youth Voice: Youth Choice Healthy Living Sub-Grant. At the training, youth were divided into groups with the task of planning and then presenting lessons from the Choose Health: Food, Fun, and Fitness curriculum. They will be teaching these lessons during 2016 summer day camps. They also participated in an Iron Chef Challenge and got active with a MyPlate Relay and yoga obstacle course. ■



4-H Teen Leaders completed six hours of healthy living and leadership development training.

Arkansas members recognized at National 4-H Agents' Conference

Eight members of the Arkansas Association of Extension 4-H Agents were recognized for 4-H programming and service excellence at the annual National Association of Extension 4-H Agents Conference in Portland, Oregon.

During the Southern Region Breakfast on Oct. 27, a team of Arkansas Extension agents received the Southern Region Excellence in Animal Science Team Award. Team members included Jesse Bocksnick, Perry County agriculture agent; Jessica Street, Benton County 4-H agent; Johnny Gunsaulis, Benton County agriculture agent; and Nickie Harding, Crawford County staff chair.

The following Arkansas members received service awards during the Conference Awards Banquet on Oct. 28: Achievement in Service Award – Diane Mashburn, Program and Staff Development; Distinguished Service Award – J.J. Pitman, Vines 4-H Center; Meritorious Service Award – Renee Myers, Marion County staff chair; and 25 Years of Service Award – Nita Cooper, Boone County staff chair. ■



Southern Region Excellence in Animal Science Team Award: Jessica Street and Jesse Bocksnick (Not Pictured: Johnny Gunsaulis and Nickie Harding)



Achievement in Service Award - Diane Mashburn with NAE4-HA President Kim Gressley



Distinguished Service Award - J.J. Pitman with NAE4-HA President Kim Gressley



Meritorious Service Award - Renee Myers with NAE4-HA President Kim Gressley



25 Years of Service Award - Nita Cooper with NAE4-HA President Kim Gressley

UAEX staff members attend Southeast Strawberry Expo

Three Arkansas Extension agents and one program technician from the Southwest Research and Extension Center attended the 2015 Southeast Strawberry Expo in Concord, North Carolina, Nov. 16-18.

There the delegation learned about the latest trends in strawberry production including introduction to plasticulture, row cover management, NCSU breeding update, sustainable soil management practices and the National Strawberry Sustainability Initiative.

Staff members also had the opportunity to tour two area strawberry farms, one of which utilized plastic tunnel technology. They also listened to a representative from Westmoreland Berry Farms speak about effective ways to provide public access to the farm, thus increasing awareness and profitability.

Using knowledge gained at the conference, the Arkansas delegation will be able to better serve their clientele, providing them with the latest horticulture information. ■



The Arkansas delegation to the Southeast Strawberry Expo, left to right, John McFarland, county Extension agent - agriculture, Jackson County; Clay Wingfield, program technician, Southwest Research and Extension Center; Neal Mays, county Extension agent - agriculture, Benton County; and Sherri Sanders, county Extension agent - agriculture, White County.

What's new in publications? Find out at:
<http://www.uaex.edu/publications/new.aspx>

Arkansas state 4-H livestock teams compete in Louisville

The state winning Arkansas 4-H Livestock Judging team from Washington County competed at the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest in Louisville, Kentucky, on Nov. 17. At the contest, the team judged four classes of cattle, three classes of hogs, three classes of sheep and one class of goats. They also had four reasons classes and three questions classes. As a team they placed 6th in swine, 8th in sheep/goat and 10th overall. The top 20 individuals in the contest were named All-Americans. Jeffrey Marley earned this honor by winning 16th overall. Members of the team were Kinder Harlow, Jacob Marley, Jeffrey Marley, and Blayke Rogers.



The Arkansas 4-H Livestock Judging team from Washington County, left to right, Jacob Marley, Blayke Rogers, Kinder Harlow and Jeffrey Marley.



Jeffrey Marley was named an All American at the National 4-H Livestock Judging Contest in Louisville, Kentucky

The state winning Arkansas 4-H Livestock Skillathon team from Washington County competed at the National 4-H Livestock Skillathon Contest in Louisville, Kentucky, on Nov. 16. In the individual portion of the contest, they had to identify equipment, retail meat cuts and livestock breeds. They also had a hay judging class, wool judging class, individual quality assurance exercise and a 30-question quiz. The team portion of the contest consisted of meat and carcass evaluation,



The Arkansas 4-H Livestock Skillathon team from Washington County consisted of Colton Burden, Mesa Kutz, Sagely Burnett and Nick Pohlman (not pictured).

performance and marketing, livestock feeding, animal breeding scenario and a team quality assurance exercise. The team placed 9th in identification. Team members included Sagely Burnett, Colton Burden, Mesa Kutz, and Nick Pohlman. ■

Extension... MEETING OUR CHALLENGES

2016 GALAXY CONFERENCE

WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE ON PETIT JEAN ■ MARCH 16-18

Mark your calendars for March 16-18 for the 2016 Galaxy Conference, the annual professional development activity for Extension employees. Registration for the conference opens January 2016.

For more Galaxy information, go to the webpage at <https://uaex.edu/about-extension/professional-organizations/galaxy/>. ■

BENEFITS CORNER

What can you do with unused, accrued leave? Donate it!

Annual Leave must be earned before it is taken with approval from the appropriate supervisor. Annual leave is cumulative; however, no employee may have an accumulation in excess of 240 hours (30 days) on December 31 of each year. During the calendar year, accrued leave may exceed 30 days, but those days in excess of 30 will be lost if not used before December 31 of each year.

Sick leave must be earned before it is taken and may be taken for your own illness or injury; the illness, injury, or death of the employee's immediate family member; medical, dental or optical treatment for the employee or an immediate family member. Sick leave is cumulative up to a total maximum of 960 hours (120 days).


Immediate family member means your mother, father, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, grandchild, grandparents, in-laws, or any individual who has acted as your parent or guardian.

Donations can be made to the Catastrophic Leave Bank through December 31 in one-hour increments. You must maintain 80 hours of combined annual and sick leave to donate.

To donate, send completed form EBEN-103 to Laverna Waddell/Financial Services.

New CESFCU website

The Cooperative Extension Service Federal Credit Union is pleased to announce the arrival of their new website. Visit them at www.cesfcu.org, or you can go to the footer of the Extension website for the link. ■

Division of Agriculture	State Offices:		County Offices
Agricultural Experiment Station	2301 S. University Avenue Little Rock, AR 72204		Academic Departments
Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food & Life Sciences	Phone: 501-671-2000 Dial 711 for Arkansas Relay		Research & Extension Centers
Employment Opportunities	Giving		Support Services
	CES Federal Credit Union		Social Media
			E-Newsletter Sign up

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Meet the *new* employees!



Rachel Bearden

County Extension Agent -
Agriculture - 4-H
Hot Spring County

What's your background?

My background is focused mainly on horses and beef cattle. I grew up riding barrel horses and working cows on my family's cow/calf operation.

What knowledge, skills and/or experience are you bringing to Extension?

As a college student, my primary goal was to go to veterinary school. I have worked with both large and small animals, mainly in equine medicine. After a semester, I realized it wasn't the right route and came home and began teaching in the classroom. I have a master's degree in teaching and spent two years as a science teacher.

What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?

I am very outgoing and love to try new things. If there are ever opportunities, programs, etc., that you recommend, please let me know!

What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?

My goal is to build the agriculture program in Hot Spring County. I am very excited about working with new areas in the county and cooperative efforts with local FFA programs.

What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?

As a former 4-H'er, I understood the value of what Extension brings to the table. It brings knowledge and skills that individuals not only value, but skills that make them successful. Extension is the blend in education and hands-on skills that I was looking for, and so far it has been the perfect fit.

What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?

When I'm not working I can normally be found on our cattle farm on the Ouachita River or at a barrel race. I enjoy just about anything outdoors, hiking, kayaking, rafting, fishing, etc. Photography is also one of my hobbies that has been an easy tagalong. Mostly I love to travel. Anytime there is an opportunity for a new adventure, count me in! ■



Amy Cofer
County Extension Agent - Family
and Consumer Sciences
Crawford County

• **What's your background?**

I graduated in May 2012 from the U of A with a B.S. in human development and graduated in May 2014 with an M.S. in human environmental sciences.

• **What knowledge, skills and/or experience are you bringing to Extension?**

Prior to working in Extension, I was a preschool teacher. I have a lot of knowledge regarding child development/nutrition and am very comfortable being in the classroom.

• **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

I love watching sports! Live or on TV, doesn't matter. Mostly watch the Razorbacks and the Green Bay Packers but have been known to watch any SEC team if the Hogs aren't playing.

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?**

I'd like to establish at least one program that I can have ready to go at a moment's notice.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

I was looking for a career change. Extension seemed like a good fit with my degree, and I really loved the fact that every day is different. I like that even though some people don't know what Extension is about, the organization still touches their lives in some way, shape or form.

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

Outside of work, I like to cook/bake, read and binge watch TV on Netflix. ■



Terrell Davis
County Extension Agent - Agriculture
Pike County

• **What's your background?**

I have a B.S. in agricultural education, M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction and M.Ed. in school counseling and guidance, all from Southern Arkansas University. I am also an NCDA-certified career development facilitator. I taught agricultural education for eight years and served as a school counselor/career

coach for six years. I was raised on a broiler and cow/calf operation in Lodi in northern Pike County.

• **What knowledge, skills and/or experience are you bringing to Extension?**

I bring my content knowledge of agriculture from the classroom, my interpersonal skills from the counseling office and my love of Pike County from my heritage.

• **What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?**

I would like my colleagues to know 1) I love being a part of extension, and 2) I want to be a world traveler, but I am poor.

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?**

During my first year at Extension, I want to meet the people I serve. I believe the relationships and contacts we make in our line of work are the catalysts to being successful. I place a high value on understanding what my clientele needs and then working hard to provide meaningful solutions to their problems.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

I feel that Extension utilizes the best of me. All my past occupations and experiences have led me to this position. As a young 4-H'er, I learned the value of our programs. I love being a part of the future of agriculture. Extension utilizes time-tested, scientifically proven techniques while searching for better ways to support our food and fiber industry.

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

I am a family man! I love road trips with my kids (Thomas, 9, and Gracie, 6) and my wife, Jeri Beth. I enjoy working cattle with my dad and raising the sixth generation on our family farm. ■



Jacqueline Hamilton
4-H Program Assistant
Jefferson County

• **What's your background?**

I come to Extension from the Dollarway School District where I worked as a paraprofessional. I was previously involved in 4-H for five years.

• **What knowledge, skills and experience are you bringing to Extension?**

I am bringing enthusiasm and love of kids to the Extension office.

What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?

I prefer to be called Jackie. I take my work seriously, and I am dedicated to serving kids.

• **What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?**

My first year I would like my knowledge of computers and nutrition to expand.

• **What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?**

It has a lot to offer kids and adults.

• **What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?**

Outside of work my hobbies are flea marketing and rummaging. Financially, it has been a struggle to get things for my home, so I started this hobby. ■



Taylor Hastings
County Extension Agent - Family
and Consumer Sciences
Johnson County

What's your background?

I graduated from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro with a Bachelor of Science degree in dietetics. I fell in love with nutrition as a high

school student in my family and consumer science class.

What knowledge, skills and/or experience are you bringing to Extension?

I am knowledgeable in nutrition, teaching, fundraising and public speaking. I am excited to bring a fresh face and a hard-working ethic to Extension.

What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?

I love to offer a fresh perspective or bring new ideas to the table. I can always offer a helping hand if needed!

What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?

My first year at Extension I would like to accomplish an understanding of everything I have to offer to the public. I would like to complete a few programs myself and learn what my community needs in the way of programs and education.

What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?

When I was in college, I was privileged to complete a rotation in Extension with Debbie DeRossitte in

Craighead County. I learned what it meant to be a county agent and what it was that we were able to do for the public. I value the education and help that we are able to provide to the community as a way of growing the knowledge of each person and aiding them in becoming a more well-rounded, healthful person.

What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?

Outside of work, I am a nature loving gal. I like to hike, bike, kayak and run. I also like to craft, scrapbook, read and spend time with friends and family. ■



Armenta Lockhart
Instructional Design Specialist
Program and Staff Development

What's your background?

I worked at UALR for 11 years and was an accountant/trainer in Financial Services for eight of those years. I have a bachelor's degree in business administration management from UALR. I also have a master's in educational technology with a graduate certificate for online learning and teaching from Webster University. Currently, I am a doctoral student seeking a doctorate in educational leadership and management from Capella University.

What knowledge, skills and/or experience are you bringing to Extension?

I have more than 11 years of experience in higher education from UALR with a strong background in training and have knowledge in creating face-to-face and online tutorials for Banner Prod. I also have experience with creating online courses for higher education and professional development.

What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?

I am excited about working at Cooperative Extension and working with faculty and staff with instructional design needs. I look forward to learning and growing here.

What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?

I would like to learn all that I possibly can about Cooperative Extension and master my skills in instructional design.

What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?

I am here because Extension provided me the opportunity to do what I love to do, and I was told that

it is a great place to work. I value all the great services Extension provides for the state of Arkansas, and I want to be a part of the great things that this organization will do in the future.

What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?

I love to read, travel, dance, go out to eat and spend time with my family, especially my four-year-old son, Jaden. ■



Brittany Singleton
Program Associate - Environmental
Science/Crop Management
Crop, Soil and Environmental
Sciences

What's your background?

I grew up on a farm in Conway County. The six years that I was a 4-H member helped me develop many useful skills and experience many once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. I was fortunate to be a state 4-H record book winner in environmental stewardship. This helped me decide to major in environmental science for my bachelor's and master's degrees.

What knowledge, skills and/or experience are you bringing to Extension?

I have the following experience with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): one summer volunteering, five summers interning and four years working as a soil scientist. I have two years volunteering at the Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Conservation Nature Center, two years working on a grant at the Johnson

County Conservation District and two years collecting edge-of-field water samples from one of the Arkansas Discovery Farms.

What are one or two things you would like your colleagues to know about you?

The position that I am working on is funded by both Extension and the Arkansas Natural Resources Conservation Service.

My husband and I met at ASU-Beebe my freshman year 12 years ago. This summer my husband became one of the hall directors at ASU-Beebe. We live in a two-bedroom apartment in the residence hall that can hold up to 124 college students.

What would you like to accomplish your first year at Extension?

My first year at Extension I would like to continue learning new things and work with others to improve water quality in the state of Arkansas.

What brought you to Extension? What was it about Extension that you value?

I have always learned new things from Extension employees either by reading the fact sheets on every topic imaginable or listening to their presentations at conferences that I attended. It is impressive how many people Extension is able to help each year. My awareness of how many activities Extension is involved in has only increased in the past ten years that my mom, Sherry Kaufman, has worked as an administrative specialist at the Morrilton office.

What are your interests or hobbies outside of work?

Reading and spending time with family. ■

REMEMBER

Division Awards Luncheon
January 8, 2016
Arkansas 4-H Center, Ferndale

Grants and contracts

for the month ended November 30, 2015

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
LeadAR Class 17 Seminar 5: Natural Resource Issues (Monticello, Arkansas)	\$ 300	Bobby Hall	Ross Foundation
2014 Arkansas Extension Implementation Program	72,128	Glenn Studebaker	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
2014 Arkansas Extension Implementation Program	3,000	Glenn Studebaker	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
2014 Arkansas Extension Implementation Program	4,000	Glenn Studebaker	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
BASF/Polymer Seed Coating/Lorenz	5,000	Gus Lorenz	BASF Corporation
Effects of the Introduction of Feed Grains Into Mid-South Soybean Production Systems	41,601	Jeremy Ross	Mississippi State University
2014 Arkansas Extension Implementation Program	2,250	Kelly Loftin	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
County-Based Projects to Reduce Obesity in Arkansas	624,978	Lisa Washburn	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
2014 Arkansas Extension Implementation Program	24,622	Sherrie Smith	National Institute of Food and Agriculture
Evaluating the Role of Small and Mid-Size Farms and Their Impacts: Petroleum Production on Agri Lands	2,656	Stacey McCullough	Agriculture Experiment Station
Evaluating the Role of Small and Mid-Size Farms and Their Impacts: Environmental Regulatory Compliance for Farmers/Ranchers	3,586	Stacey McCullough	Agriculture Experiment Station
Economic and Fiscal Contribution of Hot Springs Village 2015	20,543	Wayne Miller	Hot Springs Village Property Owner Association
Total New Awards for November 2015	\$804,664		

Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

Rachel Bearden

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Hot Spring County, effective October 16, 2015.

Jacqueline Hamilton

4-H Program Assistant, Jefferson County, effective October 16, 2015.

Taylor Hastings

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Johnson County, effective October 16, 2015.

Taylor Knox

Program Technician - 4-H Center Programs, 4-H and Youth Development, effective October 16, 2015.

Armenta Lockhart

Instructional Design Specialist, Program and Staff Development, effective November 4, 2015.

Brittany Singleton

Program Associate - Environmental Science/Crop Management, Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, effective October 16, 2015.

Extension says goodbye to:

Lucas Blalack

Administrative Specialist, 4-H and Youth Development, effective November 6, 2015.

Tejaswini Mirji Lakkundi

SnapEd Program Technician, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective November 13, 2015.

LeVeda Tate

Administrative Specialist, Izard County, effective November 30, 2015.