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BLUE LETTER

November 2022

No. 3847



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Time for Giving Thanks but also for Future Planning

November was a busy month for the Cooperative Extension Service. Many of us at the State Office are busy planning for our County Agent Conference at the 4-H Center in December. It seems like there is never a perfect time to do a training like this; however, I believe it is much needed. I also believe it will be good for the organization to come back together as a large group again, and this will be our first time doing that really since the pandemic. I want to complement specifically Dr. Stacey McCullough and the rest of those involved in the planning process as we put this event together. It has been a major undertaking, and I am grateful for their efforts.

It is hard to believe that we are closing in on one month away

from a new year. I know that many of you have already begun program planning for the new year. I'm always excited for the new year and the new opportunities. I'm also excited to see what our new faculty will show us that they can do in their first full year of work. I encourage

them to begin building relationships with county agents and their co-workers throughout the organization. We have several other positions yet to be filled. It will be nice to get a complete team in place, and that is one of my goals for 2023.

Although we are busy, I hope that you are starting to take some much-deserved time away from work to spend with family and friends this holiday season. ■



INSIDE SCOOP

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8. Epsilon Sigma Phi Conference...And much more!

Bank On Arkansas+

The Cooperative Extension Service is proud to serve as the first lead community partner for Bank On Arkansas+. In this partnership, Dr. Laura Hendrix and Megan Wells from Family and Consumer Sciences will provide a financial health and well-being curriculum, while Dr. Hunter Goodman and Tabatha Duvall, with Community, Professional and Economic Development, will focus on outreach and partnership building.

Extension will increase awareness of BOA+ services with statewide outreach, complement our investment in the financial health of rural communities, and elevate BOA+'s growth, focusing on community and nonprofit partners.

“This is a great opportunity for extension to collaborate with community leaders in an effort to improve

financial stability for Arkansans,” said Hendrix, extension interim associate department head for Family and Consumer Sciences.

“Within extension, this is a great partnership between CPED and FCS in ways that build on our financial health expertise and community partnerships,” added Goodman, assistant professor for Community, Workforce, and Economic Development.

In the first of three meetings held in the Delta, Phillips County FCS Agent Julie Goings joined BOA+ Delta for a shared conversation with other county leaders about Bank on Arkansas+'s focus and ways the program uplifts those who need access to banking services. Additional meetings will be announced for the first quarter of 2023. ■

Reconnecting and Rejuvenating:

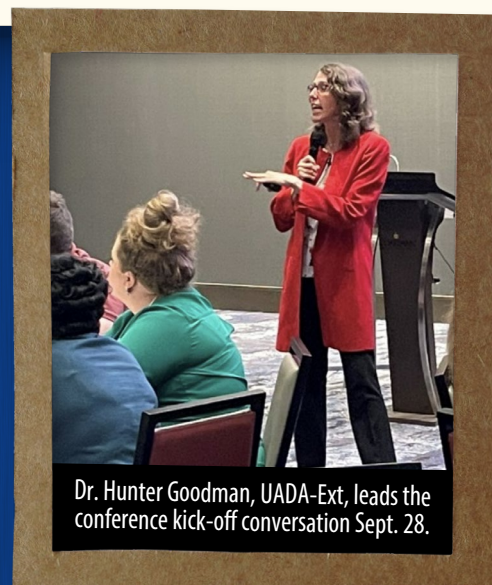
The Power of Relationships

At the Arkansas Association of Development Organizations (AADO) conference in Hot Springs, leaders from planning and development districts across Arkansas gathered on Sept. 28 for the first in-person conference since the pandemic. Leaders, staff and organizers were eager to connect, learn and foster shared conversation about ways to deepen, strengthen and uplift their work and impact in Arkansas communities.

Dr. Hunter Goodman, extension assistant professor of Community, Workforce, and Economic Development, facilitated the opening session through an interactive conversation titled

Reconnecting and Rejuvenating: The power of relationships to strengthen our work in the community for local development and resiliency. Participants used asset-based community development as a lens for understanding how planning districts can connect their work through exploring the passions, strengths and gifts of leaders and community members for greater regional impact and community engagement.

Using the words of John McKnight and Peter Block's *Abundant Community*, Goodman urged leaders to see their community as one “that creates conditions where people can fall in love. It is a place where we can make a fuss about one another. A place where we can ask, ‘how did I ever live without you?’” ■



Dr. Hunter Goodman, UADA-Ext, leads the conference kick-off conversation Sept. 28.

 A photograph showing a group of people seated around a long table in a conference room, engaged in conversation. The photo is partially obscured by a dark text box at the bottom.

AADO Participants share dialogue and ideas at the Sept. 28 conference in Hot Springs.

FCS & 4-H Team Members Selected for Public Health Essentials Program

Two employees in Family & Consumer Sciences and one from 4-H Youth Development were selected by the Extension Foundation to participate in a new Fall 2022 Cohort of Cornell University's Public Health Essentials program. They are Heather Wingo, extension program associate for health; Amanda Welch, 4-H youth development associate; and Dr. Josh Phelps, family and

consumer sciences nutrition specialist. The Cornell program will cover hot topics in public health, including public health and COVID-19; Public health foundations; assessing community health; supporting public health behaviors; and public health preparedness.



Heather Wingo

The certificate program is designed for people who work to improve the health and well-being of communities, a key component of FCS programs. Arkansas extension will benefit by



Dr. Josh Phelps

and Wingo to take the Certified Public Health exam, which leads to a CPH credential from the National Board of Public Health Examiners. This credential demonstrates a mastery of knowledge of key public health sciences and a commitment to understanding the most current public health issues. ■

building capacity in public health leadership, increasing knowledge and skills that impact public health in Arkansas, and by improving and increasing public health competency at extension on a national scale. Additionally, participating in this public health certificate program will allow Phelps, Welch



Amanda Welch

AEHC District Rallies Have Big Turnout

Arkansas Extension Homemakers Council (AEHC) hosted its annual district rallies this year with over 320 members attending. During fall, each district hosts a rally for members to gather, enjoy a speaker, fellowship, hold silent auctions, and discuss current organizational matters.

Dr. Brittney Schrick, extension family life specialist, spoke to members about mental health to highlight the new EHC state project, AEHC Cares. AEHC Cares will focus on educating Arkansas communities about mental well-being. ■



AEHC annual District Rallies enjoyed great attendance.



iLEAD

iLEAD-Passion for Research Shines Through in Northeast Arkansas

iLEAD recently visited Northeast Arkansas. Read the blog post by Nicole Nichols, County Extension Agent-Agriculture, Saline County [here](#). ■



Leadership Lunch and Learn

Innovation Focus of Leadership Lunch and Learn

From samurai warriors to Darth Vader, from Slick Rick to Miley Cyrus, the October session of Leadership Lunch and Learn focused on innovation. Taylor Knox, ExCEL program coordinator, provided information and tips regarding the importance of creativity and how to increase opportunities to innovate. Read details or watch the recording [here](#). ■

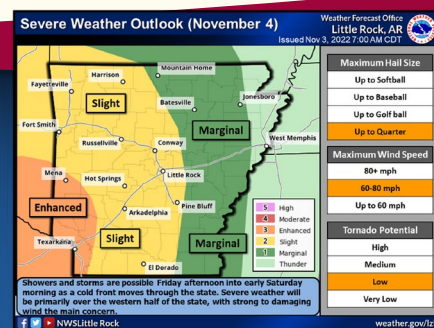
LeadAR

LeadAR Class 19 Graduation Set; Class 20 Applications Open

LeadAR Class 19 has set a graduation date of Jan. 27, 2023. The graduation will take place in Northwest Arkansas, as the class did not have a seminar there due to COVID-related cancellations.

LeadAR Class 20 applications are open. Visit [website](#) for details.

Sign up for Severe Weather Outlooks



Whether it's tornado season or wildfire weather, it's good to have a heads up before the sirens sound. If you'd like to be added to the email distribution list to receive severe weather outlooks from the National Weather Service, please email Mary Hightower at mhightower@uada.edu.

Please note that these emails are NOT severe weather warnings. Monitor your phone or media outlets for warnings and watches.

Faulkner County Master Gardeners

Explore Legacy Gardens



Master Gardener, Mable Everette, talks with a visitor about plants that are beneficial for songbirds.

Faulkner County Master Gardeners hosted a guided tour of their landscape demonstration gardens, known as the legacy gardens, on Oct. 22. While the Legacy Gardens are open daily throughout the year, Master Gardeners were on hand during the tour to provide information and answer questions about

the gardens. Garden visitors learned about different garden styles, plants that perform well in Central Arkansas, how to grow and care for native plants, how to attract and provide habitat for birds, butterflies, and

other pollinators, and how to grow and care for roses. An interactive scavenger hunt was provided for kids. More than 40 people attended the tour, and planning has already begun for other tours and educational demonstrations utilizing the legacy gardens. ■



Master Gardeners (from left to right), Lauren Virden, Robin Trent, Krista Quinn (Agent), and Jeanie White, with Extension gardening publications.



Master Gardeners (from left to right), Betty Baxter, Diana Polcar, Sunnie Ruple, and Nancy Halter, provide information about butterfly gardening.

4-H Winners Spotlighted at Annual Banquet



Madison W.

Cross County 4-H welcomed special guest Judge Donnie Sanders along with more than 70 attendees to its 78th annual awards banquet. The Crossroads 4-H Club, led by Cindy Ball, was named Champion Club. Kayli S. was awarded Champion Junior Girl, and Jase P. was awarded Champion Junior Boy. Christopher W. was named Champion Senior Boy, and Madison W. was named Champion Senior Girl. Backstreet Florist provided gifts for Cross County 4-H volunteers. ■



Kayli S.

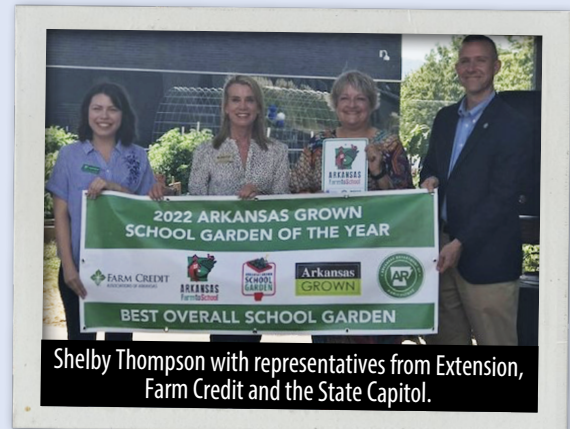


Jase P.

Arkansas Grown School Garden of the Year

On Oct. 12, Diedre Young, Soybean Science Challenge Coordinator, and Dr. Lynn Wilson, extension program manager for Community, Professional and Economic Development, attended the Arkansas School Garden of the Year awards ceremony at Pinnacle View Middle School in Little Rock. Shelby Thompson, agricultural science teacher and coordinator of the Pinnacle View school garden, said the produce grown in the garden is an integral part of her curriculum, and the Soybean Science Challenge's community garden soybeans are a prominent part of her lessons. Thompson also helps the students raise chickens and rabbits. All revenue from the sales of produce and eggs is reinvested into the garden project.

The Soybean Science Challenge is a farmer-funded, state-wide, junior high and high school education program that seeks to increase student knowledge about the value of Arkansas soybeans to the Arkansas economy, to the labor force, and ultimately to feed and fuel the world.



The Soybean Science Challenge is a partnership between the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board and the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service.

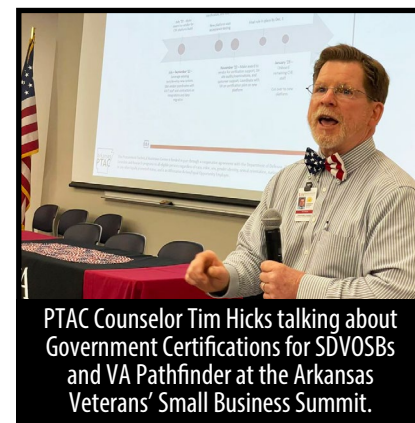
For more info, contact Dr. Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu or Diedre Young dyoung@uada.edu. ■

PTAC Hosts Veterans' Small Business Summit

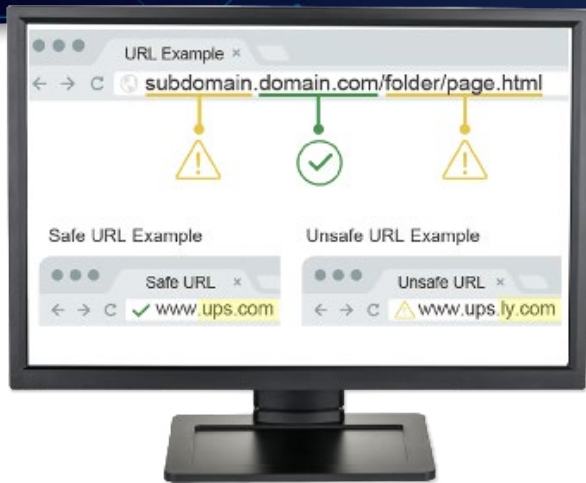
The Arkansas Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) hosted the Arkansas Veterans' Small Business Summit at the Little Rock State Office on Nov. 4. The summit included a small business resource panel, which offered participants a chance to learn about the programs and services that can help small businesses succeed, and a training that focused on how service-disabled veteran small business owners can receive certifications. The summit also included a government contracting panel discussion with federal agency representatives.

The event was held in partnership with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Arkansas Division of Emergency Management – Arkansas Federal Surplus Property, Arkansas Small Business Technology

Development Center, The Conductor / Startup Junkie Foundation, SCORE, and U.S. Small Business Administration - Arkansas District Office. This local network of resources is always available to small business at all stages and offers free confidential business counseling, no or low-cost training programs and other networking opportunities. We included time to hear from the veteran business owners about the needs they face and how we can help their businesses. ■



PTAC Counselor Tim Hicks talking about Government Certifications for SDVOSBs and VA Pathfinder at the Arkansas Veterans' Small Business Summit.



**URLs are not always what they appear to be
Make sure the domain (shown in green) is valid!**

Examples:

First option is NOT the Google domain and could be malicious.

Example 1. google.ly.com/docs/ or ly.google.com/docs/

Example 2. 4-h.org/image/ or 4-h.youth.org/image/

The end of a URL before the first single forward-slash (“/”) is what matters! Bad actors buy generic domains such as “ly.com or youth.org” to create familiar subdomains such as google.ly.com or 4-h.youth.org to trick you into trusting them.

Windows 11 Upgrades

Windows 11, the biggest major Microsoft operating system update since 2015, became available a year ago. With the release of this new operating system, Microsoft will stop support for Windows 10 in October 2025. What does this mean for us? All extension computers will need to be upgraded to Windows 11 or replaced with a new computer with Windows 11 installed by October 2025. There are a few exceptions listed at the bottom.



Some IT computers have made the transition and have passed all testing. With only 3 years remaining, it is time to start our full

migration for all computers. We will do the upgrades in phases:

- Phase 1 – Testing (Completed)
- Phase 2 – Volunteer migration
- Phase 3 – Forced migration

Volunteering for phase 2

We are now entering phase 2 of the migration, which is completely voluntary. For those wanting to move forward with the Windows 11 upgrade, fill out the volunteer request form for each computer.

Exceptions to the forced Windows 11 upgrade (phase 3)

Exceptions will only be approved for the following devices:

- Any device that is used strictly with research\testing\ networking equipment and not connected to the internet.
- Windows tablet devices used with agricultural equipment

Contact the helpdesk if you have any questions or concerns – <https://support.uada.edu>.

Zoom Pro Tip – Zoom on the Go!

Are you using a mobile device for work? If yes, follow these steps to get signed into your UADA Zoom account on your mobile device. Also, watch this 3-minute video to learn more about how to download, install, and update the Zoom app on your mobile device.

1. Download the Zoom app from the app store.
2. Sign in to your UADA Zoom account using SSO.
3. Enable permissions and notifications in your device settings.

Hacks from Hump Day

- Top 3 Tips - OneNote
- Cyber Security Month: File Classification - Box
- Most Used Formulas and Functions - Excel
- Create and Save Custom Themes - PowerPoint
- Introducing Shared Channels - Teams
- Immersive Reader - Word ■

2022 TECH TUESDAYS WEBINARS

Have you missed any past Tech Tuesday webinars or want to join future webinars? Check out the recordings and other resources on the Tech Tuesday Blog page. More Tech Tuesday topics coming soon! Did you miss November Tech Tuesday Winning Ways to Use Qualtrics? Check out the recording and resources.



Epsilon Sigma Phi National Conference Awards

The 2022 Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) National Conference was held in Branson, Missouri. Arkansas' Alpha Iota Chapter was well represented by five attendees: Diana Morian, president; Valerie Turner, treasurer and national award recipient; Susan Pickle, life member; Candace Carrie, life member; and Karen DiCicco.



Epsilon Sigma Phi attendees (from left to right), Valerie Turner, Karen DiCicco, Diana Morian, Susan Pickle and Candace Carrie.

The mission of Epsilon Sigma Phi is to foster standards of excellence in the extension system and to develop

Several recognitions were awarded. Valerie Turner received the Southern Region National Early Career Service award. Diana Morian accepted the Chapter of Merit Gold award for the Alpha Iota chapter.

the extension profession and professional. Since Epsilon Sigma Phi was established in 1927, members have worked to strengthen the impact of the extension system's ability to address the needs of individuals and communities through research-based education.



Valerie Turner receives the Southern Region National Early Career Service Award.



Diana Morian, left, awarded the Chapter of Merit Gold Award.

ESP is one of the oldest and the largest organization of extension professionals. Epsilon Sigma Phi is an equal opportunity/affirmative action organization. The organization values and seeks a diverse membership. For more information, visit <https://uaex.uada.edu/esp>. ■

New Publication Ordering System

Communications has a new new Publications Ordering System that launched Dec. 1. The new system is a major upgrade from our current one.

With it, you'll be able to:

- Find publications quickly and more easily. The search option lets you search 1,400+ publications by category, topics, author, publication name or number.
- Order fact sheets, MPs, 2023 calendar, and more.
- Order business cards. You can create and order business cards directly from the Print Shop.

Communications will offer a Zoom training on Friday, Dec. 9, at 2:30 p.m. on using the new system. You can register [here](#). The training will be recorded, and additional training opportunities are being planned.

This transition to a new ordering system has been a collaborative project involving Communications, IT, Print Media Services, Financial Services and Facilities Management.

The system can be accessed [here](#).

Grants & Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
Management of Melonworm in Pumpkin	57,993	Aaron Joseph Cato	Arkansas Agriculture Department
Expansion of Strawberry & Blackberry Industries	67,000	Amanda L McWhirt	Arkansas Agriculture Department
Produce Safety Program - Year 7	164,764	Amanda Perez	Arkansas Agriculture Department
Arkansas Cotton Research Verification/Sustainability Program	50,000	Bill Robertson	Cotton Inc.
Increasing Profitability by Reducing Input Costs by Improving Soil Health	30,000	Bill Robertson	Cotton Inc.
SeaPerch Underwater Robotics	5,000	Brad Christopher McGinley	Arkansas Farm Bureau & Federation
Community Mobility Design Challenge	25,000	Bryan Mader	Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)
Delta Obesity Project - Year 5	589,687	Bryan Mader	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
Arkansas 4-H Camping Project	150,000	Creenna Bocksnick	Arkansas State University - Jonesboro
Heart of United Way - Drew County	1,500	Hazelene McCray	Heart of Arkansas United Way
Bank on Arkansas	20,000	Hunter P. Goodman	Asset Funders Network
Little River Watershed Outreach Education and Watershed Management Plan Implementation	193,652	John H Pennington	Arkansas Natural Resources Commission
Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture	445,692	Mike Daniels	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
On Farm Locally Made Inoculants	74,879	Mike Daniels	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Cool Season Forage Cover Crops	63,710	Mike Daniels	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Biochar as a Soil	73,899	Mike Daniels	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
SRMEC Meat and Poultry Processing	600,000	Ron L Rainey	National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA)
Service Order #147 Amendment	1,470	Thomas Butts	Bayer CropScience
Beltway Study: Managing Herbicide-Resistant Ryegrass	5,000	Tom Barber	Cotton Inc.
Identifying Herbicide-Resistant Italian Ryegrass	23,785	Tom Barber	Cotton Inc.
Integrating Multiple Tactics into Weed Management	31,359	Tom Barber	Cotton Inc.
Development of Disease Management Strategies	35,605	Travis Faske	Arkansas Peanut Growers Association
TOTAL AWARDS FOR NOVEMBER 2022: \$2,709,995			

Benefits Corner

Have questions? Need guidance? Reach out to yourbenefits@uada.edu or call 501-671-2219.

Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) supports **benefits-eligible** employees and immediate family members through difficult times. It offers confidential, no-cost individual, family and work-related counseling. Assistance areas include marital relationships, family relationships, finances, health issues, substance abuse disorder (e.g., alcohol and/or drug abuse), legal concerns, emotional- and stress-related concerns, and more.

The Employee Assistance Program is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call 800.452.6021 / 501.686.2588 / eap-elink.uams.edu any time, even at night, on weekends and during holidays.

Member Assistance Program

More than 20% of employees lose 5+ hours on the clock each

week to stress and worry. Whether it's concerns over work, family, medical issues, or your mental health, the UMR Member Assistance Program (MAP) provides employees enrolled in a University medical plan and their enrolled family members personal and confidential support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call 877.660.3806 (TTY: 711) for personal and confidential assistance. Translators are available for non-English speakers. Visit liveandworkwell.com. There are 2 ways to access the site:

- Sign in using your HealthSafe ID® (found on the back of your medical ID card) to securely access your personal benefit information.
- Enter anonymously.

Visit the U of A System benefit site below to learn more about EAP and MAP: <https://benefits.uasys.edu/other-benefits/member-assistance-program/>. ■

Personnel Changes



Welcome Aboard:

Bronc Finch – Soils Extension Specialist, Crop Soil & Environmental Science, Little Rock

Lisa Lynn – Administrative Specialist III, Lafayette County

Stewart Farquhar – Computer Support Coordinator, Information Technology CES, Little Rock

Farewell to:

Scott Stiles – Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness Instructor - ASU Campus

Crystal Bowne – Associate Professor - Nutrition, SNAP Policy, Systems & Environmental (PSE) Change Interventions Coordinator, Family & Consumer Science, Little Rock