

# BLUE LETTER

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service Monthly Letter

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**DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE**  
**RESEARCH & EXTENSION**

University of Arkansas System

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

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

To say the summer of 2016 has been busy is an understatement. In late July, Arkansas played host to the National Association of County Agricultural Agents meeting, bringing hundreds of agents and their families to Little Rock for nearly a week. I certainly admired our ag agents' efforts about five years ago to bring the conference to our state, but that was nothing compared to the effort I saw day in and day out during the conference. The "red vests," as they came to be known, were everywhere – guiding visitors, directing activities and keeping everything on track and on course. I heard countless compliments from agents and administrators from other states on how well our team hosted the conference. My thanks to all who made this conference a standout in every way.

And there's little chance to catch a breath for some of the agents and specialists who worked NACAA, thanks to State O-Rama. This event on the land grant campus is the largest gathering of 4-H members in the state. O-Rama has its roots in the 4-H camps on campus early in the last century. As it did in those early years, O-Rama enables youth to network, compete and continue making the best better. This event is one of the most rewarding events that I get to attend, and it's great to see our 4-H'ers at their best. I want to wish all our youth the best of luck this summer.

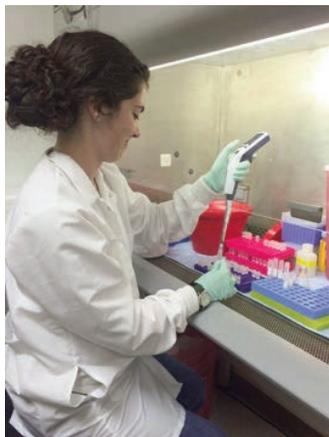
– Tony Windham

## Johnson County 4-H'ers Receive Wallace-Carver Fellowships

Johnson County 4-H members Carley Allen and Abigail Sanders were selected to receive the prestigious Wallace-Carver Fellowship from the United States Department of Agriculture which offers exceptional college students the opportunity to collaborate with world-renowned scientists through paid internships at leading USDA research centers across the United States. Each spent approximately two months completing her internship this summer.



Carley Allen



Abby Sanders

Carley Allen, an upcoming sophomore studying agriculture business and pre-vet at Arkansas Tech, received a paid internship at the Plant Genetic Research Unit in Geneva, New York. While there, she had the opportunity to work on apple tree genetics.

Abigail Sanders, an upcoming freshman studying agriculture business and public relations at Arkansas Tech,

(Continued, page 2)

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

## Arkansas Rice Expo panel to peer into future for rice markets

In 2025, where in the world will Arkansas rice be found? That's a question experts and speakers will ponder Wednesday, Aug. 10, at the 2016 Arkansas Rice Expo.

The Arkansas Rice Expo returns to Stuttgart's Grand Prairie Center, 2807 Highway 165 South. Doors open at 8 a.m. and will finish up with a complementary lunch. The annual half-day event celebrates a crop that in 2013 was valued at nearly \$1.3 billion for Arkansas' economy.

"There are lots of questions about the future for Arkansas rice. Where will Arkansas rice be competitive, what new markets may open up, such as Cuba, how might more rice be utilized in food and beverage products, how will the U.S. table rice consumption develop with changes in the demographics of the country?" said Mark Cochran, vice president - agriculture and head of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. "These are all great questions as we think about where the industry is headed."

This year's general session will feature a panel of industry experts answering "Where will we sell Arkansas rice in 2025?" Panel members include:

- Paul Bolin, Anheuser-Busch InBev
- Keith Glover, President and CEO, Producers Rice Mill
- Eric Wailes, Distinguished Professor, Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, UA System Division of Agriculture

During the Arkansas Rice Expo, visitors will also hear from members of Arkansas' congressional delegation:

- U.S. Senator John Boozman
- Rep. Rick Crawford, First District
- Rep. Bruce Westerman, Fourth District

The Arkansas Rice Expo will also have plenty of activities for the family, thanks to Arkansas 4-H, and field tours for farmers to see research from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture in action. See <http://uaex.edu/rice-expo/> for more information. ■

## Verma makes presentation at ASABE Global Initiative Session in Denmark

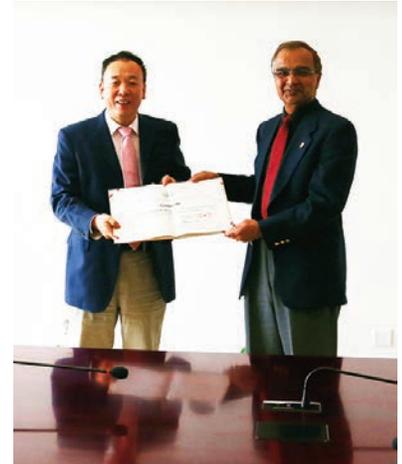
Lalit Verma made the main presentation, "Global Partnerships for Global Solutions: An Agricultural and Biological Engineering Global Initiative," at the ASABE Global Initiative Session in the International Conference of the International Commission of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, CIGR-AgEng2016, in Aarhus, Denmark, on June 27.

The presentation was followed by a panel discussion featuring participants from Africa, Asia and Europe.

Dr. Verma also made special presentations in China May 25-30 at South China Agricultural University in Guangzhou; China National Engineering Research Center for Information Technology in Agriculture; China Academy of Agricultural Mechanization Sciences, Beijing; Zhejiang University in Hangzhou and China Agricultural University in Beijing. He was honored as a Visiting Professor at China National Engineering Research Center for Information Technology in Agriculture on June 1 in Beijing.

Verma is past-president of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers and was instrumental in its Global Engagement Initiative. A white paper has been published under this initiative and is available at <http://www.asabe.org/media/195967/globalinitiative.pdf>.

Also under this initiative, a food security conference entitled "Engineering and Technology Innovation for Global Food Security" is being organized to be held in October in South Africa. See [www.asabe2016.co.za](http://www.asabe2016.co.za) for details. ■



Dr. Lalit Verma (right) accepts Visiting Professorship from Dr. Chunjiang Zhao, director of the China National Engineering Research Center for Information Technology in Agriculture (NERCITA) in Beijing.

### Wallace-Carver Fellowships (cont.)

received a paid internship at the Western Human Nutrition Research Center in Davis, California. She worked in the Obesity and Metabolism Unit.

According to the USDA website, fellows "are stationed at USDA research centers and field offices across the country to analyze agricultural and economic policy; assist in the management of food, nutrition and rural development programs; and take part in groundbreaking field and laboratory-based research." The fellows also participate in a high-level week-long Wallace-Carver Leadership Symposium at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington D.C. ■

## Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day – teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime

On July 22, the Pulaski County 4-H Afterschool Program partnered with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to execute the second annual Pulaski County 4-H Fishing Derby. Thank you to the AGFC for stocking Conner Park's lake in Little Rock with 500 catfish and for donating fishing poles to the youth.



Under the guidance of Rick Fields, Arkansas 4-H science program coordinator, Pulaski County's youth caught approximately 100 fish. More than 75 youth and volunteers participated in the fishing derby. A special thank you to Erica Williams, Pulaski County 4-H agent, for helping to coordinate this event. ■

## 4-H members boost leadership skills and civic engagement at Citizenship Washington Focus

Thirty-nine 4-H members from across Arkansas learned about government processes in the vibrant, living classroom of the nation's capital as part of Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF), an intensive 4-H civic engagement program for high school youth held at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland July 2-9.



Senator John Boozman visited with the CWF group where he answered questions and indicated his support for Arkansas 4-H.

Four adults attended CWF with the 4-H'ers including Angie Freel, State 4-H Office, Richard Klerk, Woodruff County, and volunteer leaders Nikki Tate, Clark County, and Jim Bob Lamb, Howard County. Their 4-H Center program assistant and tour guide during their stay in D.C. was Ashton Yarbrough, a former Arkansas 4-H'er from Benton County.

For more than 50 years, the National 4-H Youth Conference Center has hosted 4-H members who travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in civic workshops, committees and field trips before returning home to make positive changes in their own communities. CWF strengthens young people's understanding of the government's civic process and boosts leadership, communication and overall confidence.

During CWF, youth got a behind-the-scenes look at the nation's capital while meeting with all six of Arkansas' members of Congress to learn more about how their government works. At the end of the program, youth drafted step-by-step community action plans to address important issues, such as GMO labeling and hydraulic fracturing. ■

## Lonoke and Prairie County 4-H host 4-H20 Splash Camps for Cloverbuds

This summer's theme for Cloverbud day camps in Lonoke and Prairie Counties was 4-H20 Splash Camp! Summer day camps are utilized in Lonoke and Prairie Counties as a recruitment tool to reach more youth through 4-H. Fifty youth were reached through the two-day camps. Campers learned about water safety and how to properly fit a life jacket from park rangers with the Corps of Engineers, had fun with science by making Oobleck with cornstarch and water and their own lava lamps with oil, water and Alka Seltzer® tablets, used water guns and paint to make works of art, and wrapped up the day with water games! ■



A park ranger with the Corps of Engineers helps a camper make sure her life jacket is the correct size for her.



4-H Teen Leaders Isiah W. and Aleigha S. assist campers making Oobleck.

## Arkansas 4-H attends National SeaPerch Challenge

Ten Arkansas 4-H members had the experience of a lifetime as they competed in the Sixth National SeaPerch Challenge held at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. 1,300 students from across the country, Australia, Cayman Islands and Virgin Islands competed in an underwater robotics championship on Saturday, May 21, 2016. More than 190 teams maneuvered their hand-built remotely operated vehicles through an underwater obstacle course at the LSU natatorium. The national competition was a first-time experience for Arkansas 4-H members. Two teams, The M.C. Tech Sirens senior team from Monroe County and the Johnson County Atlantis junior team from Johnson County, represented our state well. The SeaPerch Challenge is also part of Arkansas 4-H's larger effort to expose kids to STEM. "Attending the National SeaPerch Challenge was a wonderful opportunity for my middle school team," said Jeanie Rowbotham, Johnson County extension agent. "They learned so much by building and competing with their ROV, but more than that, they got to experience college and career readiness by taking a peek inside careers available in engineering. The look on their faces when they spoke to Brittany White, Senior Project Engineer for ExxonMobil, as she explained her occupation was priceless." ■



Sue York and Kira Jefferson running through the orbs course.



ExxonMobil representatives, Monica Frizzell, Abby Frizzell, Ant'Erica Green, Frank Tollison, Logan Johnson, Savannah Loving.



Naval officer, Jeanie Rowbotham, Savannah Loving, Logan Johnson, Karissa Johnson, Frank Tollison, Abby Frizzell, Ant'Erica Green, naval officer.



Pictured left to right: Amanda Free and Kim Free, Lucky Charms 4-H Club leaders.

## Jackson County wins 2016 Delta District 4-H Horse Show High Point Award

The Delta District Horse Show was held June 14, 2016, at the White County Fairgrounds in Searcy. Those participating were Emma Goad, Ellie Goad, Emily Bright, Emily Smith, Zoei Smith, Blake Smith, Maggie Mason, Chancey Grandstaff, Anna Claire Shannon, Laura Buruss and Stephen Toumajan.

## Save the Date

**State Faculty Conference,**  
Little Rock State Office –  
December 5, 2016

**Division of Agriculture Awards Luncheon,**  
Embassy Suites,  
Rogers – January 13, 2017

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

# BENEFITS CORNER

## Tuition Discount

Full-time (100 percent) appointed employees may enroll in undergraduate or graduate courses offered at any University of Arkansas System campus (except Medical or Law School) at 10 percent of the cost of tuition for courses offered by the employee's designated home campus. Attendance is at the discretion of the supervisor. You must designate a "home campus" that will stay with you throughout your career with Extension. Employees will pay 30 percent of the cost of full tuition for courses offered at any University of Arkansas campus other than the designated home campus.

Spouses and unmarried dependent children of full-time (100 percent) appointed employees may enroll in courses offered at any campus in the University of Arkansas System (except Medical, Law or Graduate School). Spouses and unmarried dependent children may take up to 132 undergraduate semester credit hours at 50 percent tuition at a designated "home campus" or at 60 percent of full tuition at any other campus within the University System.

Employees, spouses and/or dependent children will pay the difference between the cost of regular tuition and the discounted tuition charge for all electronically delivered courses such as CIV, Internet, web based or distance education courses.

Review Policy Number C.E.S.P. 3-35, [www.uaex.edu/extension-policies/employee-benefits/fringe/cesp3-35.aspx](http://www.uaex.edu/extension-policies/employee-benefits/fringe/cesp3-35.aspx). ■

## Meet the *new* employees!



**Kristen Dickson**  
Accountant  
Financial Services  
Little Rock State Office

- **What's your background?**

I have a master's degree in business administration from Henderson State University.

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

I have worked for Extension for more than two years in Financial Services, so I am bringing back the knowledge and skills I previously learned.

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

I'm an introvert.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I hope to be an asset to Financial Services.

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

What I value the most are the friendly employees that value what they do.

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

I like to spend time with family and friends. ■



**Christopher Elkins**  
Soybean/ Wheat Verification  
Coordinator  
Northeast Research and  
Extension Center

- **What's your background?**

I grew up on a row crop farm in northeast Arkansas. I am a University of Arkansas alumni and have been working in the ag industry for the past 8 years.

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

Since graduating college I have worked in agriculture research, full-time production agronomist and agricultural sales. These experiences have given me the ability to see production agriculture from several points of view.

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

I have a wife and one daughter. I enjoy working with people and learning new things.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

Have a positive impact with programs and build relationships.

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

I value the ability to help producers with unbiased, research-backed information.

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

I like to be outdoors. ■



**Charla Hammonds**  
County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences  
Logan County

- **What's your background?**

I was in 4-H from ages 5 to 18. I loved entering my animals and home economics exhibits in the county fair and knew that working for Extension

was definitely something I wanted to do. In April 2016, I graduated from the University of Central Arkansas with a bachelor of science in family and consumer sciences.

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

I am bringing the knowledge and leadership skills I gained from 14 years in 4-H, as well as my experience from working for Extension as a SNAP-WOWN in Logan County and a seasonal/intern in Sebastian County. I'm also bringing my love for helping others and my hard work ethic.

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

I am excited to be working for Extension, especially in Logan County because it is my home. I have lived in

Logan County my entire life and love it. The people are good, and the view of Mount Magazine from my house is amazing!

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I plan to take advantage of as many learning opportunities as possible to increase my knowledge and skills as a county agent. I would also like to gain a better understanding of the programming needs in Logan County.

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

I grew up in 4-H and have been involved in Extension programs for as long as I can remember so working for Extension just seemed like the obvious career choice. Something that I value about Extension is how its FCS programs are aimed at helping families and consumers make informed decisions that will enhance their quality of life and well-being. I greatly value working for an organization that has a focus on families and their welfare.

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

I love hanging out with my family and friends! I also like to crochet, cook, ride four-wheelers and work in the garden.



**Ashley Hobbs**  
Program Associate  
Biological and Agricultural Engineering  
Little Rock State Office

- **What's your background?**

I received my bachelor's degree from the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at the

University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. I previously worked as an intern and a program technician in the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at the Extension Service in 2007 and 2010-2011 followed by four and a half years at the Arkansas Department of Health as an engineer in the Drinking Water Branch.

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

I have an educational background in biological and agricultural engineering in addition to work experience in both the water and engineering fields.

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

I received my Professional Engineering license in December 2015, and my husband and I went skydiving on our honeymoon.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I would like to learn as much as possible and make positive contributions on the projects in the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department.

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

I enjoyed my previous work experience at the Extension Service, and I'm excited to be back. I value the people and the opportunity to learn something new every day.

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

I enjoy sewing and spending time with my family and friends. ■



**Allison Howell**  
County Extension Agent - Agriculture  
Clay County - Piggott

- **What's your background?**

I've lived in Piggott all my life. I graduated from ASU with my bachelor's degree in plant and soil science in December 2015 and with my master's in plant and soil science in May 2016.

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

I love learning and trying new things, but I love working with farmers and gardeners to help them better understand what is happening in their fields and gardens.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

I would like to learn as much as possible. I also want to establish a better relationship between the people in the county and assist them with anything they may need.

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

I love that as an Extension agent no two days will ever be exactly the same. It is always something different, and I learn new things with each day. I also love that I get to help people with their problems or questions.

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

I love hunting, fishing, collecting rocks and minerals, and going to the lake. ■



**Darren Neal**  
County Extension Agent - Staff Chair  
Nevada County

- **What's your background?**

I recently retired from the Arkansas State Police. Prior to that, I was employed as a crop management consultant, working primarily with rice.

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

In 21 years with the State Police, I learned to communicate with people. Being a resident and cattle producer in Nevada County for more than two decades, I have had the opportunity to establish relationships with a lot of folks. The friendships that have been built with the cattle and poultry producers, men selling their produce at the farmer's market, as well as members of Master Gardeners will prove to be a beneficial venue to distribute the research-based data collected from Extension specialists.

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

I can't help you get out of a ticket.

- **What would you like to accomplish your first year with Extension?**

A couple of goals for my first year are 1) identify new 4-H leaders within the community to start clubs for youth who are not interested in animal projects and 2) promote and enlist additional local livestock producers to adopt the 300 Days of Grazing program.

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

The thing that I value most about Extension is they offer today's youth opportunity for positive growth and passing on the agricultural way of life.

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

Supporting my kids in their activities and Prescott Curley Wolf Football. ■



**Meredith Wayman**  
County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences  
Crittenden County

• **What's your background?**

I have a bachelor of science degree in food science and technology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Before Extension, I worked

in research and development for a frozen food company.

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

I am bringing my knowledge of food safety and nutrition to Extension. Both my educational and professional backgrounds have prepared me to help inform others on how to safely feed their families.

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

I enjoy traveling and seeing new places.

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

In my first year, I hope to learn from my fellow county agents and create meaningful relationships with others within the community. I hope to attend many training sessions and programs across the state in order to be equipped to better serve the needs of Crittenden County.

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

I have a desire to help others gain the knowledge needed to live a healthy life. I feel it is my responsibility to learn something new every day and then share what I learn with others. Extension provides so many great resources and tools to help me succeed. I am thankful for the warm welcomes I have received since starting this new job.

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

I am an avid runner. I am currently training for my fifth full-marathon. I also enjoy hiking, cooking and being outside with my husband and yellow lab, Ellie. ■

## Personnel changes

Please welcome the following:

**Christopher Elkins**

Soybean/Wheat Verification Coordinator, Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences, effective July 5, 2016.

**Allison Howell**

County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Clay County - Piggott, effective June 16, 2016.

**Allison Munn**

EFNEP Program Assistant, Miller County, effective July 1, 2016.

**Darren Neal**

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Nevada County, effective July 1, 2016.

**Missy Turnage**

EFNEP Program Assistant, Miller County, effective July 1, 2016.

**Meredith Wayman**

County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Crittenden County, effective June 16, 2016.

Extension says goodbye to:

**Krishna Ellington**

Program Technician, Community and Economic Development, effective July 8, 2016.

**Jackie Hamilton**

4-H Program Assistant, Jefferson County, effective July 8, 2016.

**Sharon High**

Administrative Specialist, Lonoke County, effective July 29, 2016.

**Kevin Quinn**

Video Specialist, Office of Communications, effective July 21, 2016.

**Lindsey Sexton**

Program Associate - Social Media, Family and Consumer Sciences, effective July 29, 2016.

**Leigh Anne Shapard**

Administrative Specialist, Faulkner County, effective July 19, 2016.

**Jackie Smith**

Administrative Specialist, Mississippi County, effective July 14, 2016.

**Terrie Treadway**

County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Lafayette County, effective July 1, 2016.

**LaVerna Waddell**

Payroll Services Specialist, Financial Services, effective July 5, 2016.

# Grants and contracts

for Month Ending July 31, 2016

Project Title	Award Amount	Principal Investigator	Granting Agency
UACES Early Care and Education Projects (Best Care, Best Care Connected, Guiding Children Successfully and 4-H Afterschool) CCDF	\$322,500	Brittney Schrick	DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
UACES Early Care and Education Projects (Best Care, Best Care Connected, Guiding Children Successfully and 4-H Afterschool) ABC	237,500	Brittney Schrick	Arkansas Department of Education
Financial Support for Alfalfa Interseeding Study	1,824	Dirk Philipp	Barenbrug
Financial Support for Fescue Conversion Study	2,000	Dirk Philipp	Barenbrug
2016 Sugarcane Aphid (SCA) Research - Best Management Practices	11,675	Gus Lorenz	United Sorghum Checkoff Program Board
<b>TOTAL AWARDS FOR JULY 2016</b>	<b>\$575,499</b>		