The Urban Difference:
REPORT 2013
Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs
UNP-EX-0001
Special thanks to Extension specialists, agents, program participants, and others who made this publication possible.

Your efforts are helping to make a difference in Alabama!

Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs serves the metropolitan areas of...
Anniston, Gadsden, Birmingham, Decatur, Dothan, Florence, Huntsville, Mobile, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa
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Welcome to the second issue of *The Urban Difference*. In 2012, the nation focused on the economy while the Alabama Cooperative Extension System’s Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs Unit sought to help individuals, families, and communities regardless of what challenges they faced. Urban Affairs always has its mind on the future and its hands on the pulse of the state. **Why?** Because our goal is really simple… we strive to make a positive *difference* in the lives of the people we serve.

We saw that *difference* among small farmers using profitable and sustainable agricultural practices. Or perhaps it was the *difference* we made in the lives of the youth who want to stay in school, improve their grades, and enroll in college. They accomplished these tasks all in the pursuit of a promising future and contrary to the negative reports we hear about urban youth daily.

We made a *difference* in the environment by diverting electronic waste from public landfills, or in helping single and family households and businesses to make better use of rainwater—a *valuable* natural resource.

We made a *difference* by enabling volunteers to use their time and talents to help non-profit organizations serve the needs of their communities.

We made a *difference* by helping individuals find a job that sustained their households and families.

We made a *difference* by reaching more young Hispanic mothers, as well as Hispanic youth—who will someday become adults—to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Yes, *The Urban Difference* reflects what Urban Extension is all about… helping people, organizations, and communities to successfully thrive in Alabama’s most populated cities.
Healthy Animals Equal A Healthy Bottom Line

Small farms are businesses that sell less than $250K in agricultural products each year, yet account for 91% of all farms in the United States. The South, which includes Alabama, is among the top two geographic regions with the highest percentage of small farms. With more than 48,500 farms covering 9 million acres in Alabama, the success of small farmers is vital to the state’s economy.

Urban Extension’s Animal Science team continues to help small farmers through the Alabama Ethnic Food Security Network (AEFSN). The AEFSN team, comprised of agricultural experts from Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University and Auburn University, uses applied research, training programs, and hands-on technical assistance to educate farmers about best management practices designed to enhance profitability and sustainability in their operations. However, without healthy animals, most producers would be unable to balance the bottom line. That’s why in 2012, much of the training provided to small ruminant producers focused on animal health. Developing a health management program for small ruminants is imperative since many animals become susceptible to a number of diseases that not only affect animals, but humans as well.

Alabama Extension’s programming efforts have focused on a holistic approach to health by using:

- High nutrient quality forages to viably meet fundamental nutrition needs;
- Rotational grazing to facilitate year-round grazing options and reduce reliance on hay and costly grain-based feeds;
- Proper medical and biosecurity protocols to ensure healthy stock; and
- Quality minerals with benefits to health, reproduction, and parasite tolerance.

This holistic approach helps to develop hearty livestock for profit gains and greater sustainability in the long run.

Holistic Agriculture

Urban Regional Extension Specialist Robert Spencer has been working with livestock producer J. C. Holt for many years on various on-farm animal projects. Holt has more than 60 acres of farmland in Colbert County that is utilized for grazing and readily supports more than 20 head of beef cattle and 200-400 hair sheep at any given time. Holt initially began implementing a year-round production and grazing system using traditional grasses and legumes and began to see an increase in animal productivity. Next, he implemented rotational grazing techniques involving a combination of permanent woven wire, electric wire, and portable woven electric wire. The portable fencing allowed his animals to move about freely with minimal stress while improving their access to high quality forages. Holt’s animals also grazed on legume-rich forages, including sunn hemp, sodbuster radish, sericea lespedeza, and quail haven soybeans. While legumes are high quality forages, they also add nutrients to the soil, making this foraging technique beneficial to livestock and soil use for other agricultural ventures.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Sustainable agricultural and forestry systems will continue to play key roles in driving Alabama’s agricultural industry. In 2012, Urban Extension’s Animal Science team reached more than 600 goat and sheep producers in the Southeast. In addition, a total of 30 Alabama farmers, 25 Florida farmers, and 164 Haitian farmers learned how to improve operations in meat rabbit production, pasture-raised chickens, and ethnic vegetable production through the Alabama Ethnic Food Security Network.

The Alabama Ethnic Food Security Network has secured additional resources to expand collaborative regional Extension programming efforts into the state of Mississippi with a specific focus on women and minority farmers and producers.

Above photo: “Curious Missy” is ready to drive! Missy is a Boer goat on the Tim Ayers farm in Vinemont, Alabama. Boers are popular meat goats in the United States.
Controlling Parasites reduces animal mortalities

Holt’s sustainable foraging techniques are also being adopted by Frank Guthrie in Winston County who owns 400 acres of farmland. Guthrie met Holt at a regional Extension meeting where they shared ideas.

Guthrie initially tried to introduce meat goats and make it profitable, but after several years of learning more about sustainable forage production, he decided to reduce goat stock and introduce beef cattle. His strategy was to introduce a mixed-breed of beef cattle, utilize them with intensive grazing management practices, and reclaim the land that had been abused with excessive applications of fertilizer and weed spray. One year later, he is seeing a reduction in weed presence, an increase in the presence of grass diversity, and is making plans to introduce clovers that “fix” nitrogen into soil. Guthrie believes that intensive grazing management will allow him to produce a significant quantity of beef from healthier animals, and minimize input costs for a greater financial return on beef sales.

Gastrointestinal parasitism is a major health problem that limits the advancement of the small ruminant industry in Southeastern states. Unfortunately, small ruminants are highly susceptible to worms that are further aggravated by environmental factors such as higher temperatures, rainfall levels, and pasture overstocking. Also, over time worms may become resistant to chemical treatments.

An Extension survey among animal producers in Alabama and Tennessee revealed their use of chemicals or dewormers 4 to 8 times per year without conducting a fecal examination to control worm burden in herd and flocks. Recurrent infection by barber pole worms (Haemonchus contortus) in particular caused high economic losses in sheep flocks and goat herds. Funding from the United States Department of Agriculture’s Agriculture and Food Research Initiative secured by Extension Animal Scientist Dr. Maria Browning and partners, allowed these small ruminant experts to offer a series of workshops titled Small Ruminant Health from A to Z. The workshops reached nearly 300 participants and included lectures and hands-on demonstrations on the identification and treatment of parasites and other common diseases among small ruminants. They also included training on how to establish effective biosecurity measures to reduce the incidences of illness among animals.

AEFSN small ruminant workshops continued to be effective in 2012. Post-survey data indicated that approximately 108 producers had attended previous Extension workshops. Among those producers, 50% indicated increased production efficiency and profitability, 63.5% reported improvements in herd health, and 53.5% reported increases in profitability ranging from 1 to 15%.

Visit www.aces.edu/urban/AEFSN/ to learn more about the Alabama Ethnic Food Security Network.

The Haemonchus contortus (barber pole worm) is a common parasite among sheep and goats. It is easily recognized because of its red and white coloration that is similar to a barber pole.

Livestock producer Frank Guthrie explains mob grazing techniques as J. C. Holt and granddaughter Haley listen intently with Extension AEFSN participants.
Consumer Sciences and Personal Financial Management

Edging Out the Competition
Like many states across the nation, Alabama’s unemployment rate increased and job growth was slow in 2012. The good news, however, is that the average unemployment rate in Alabama was 7.1% compared to 8.1% nationally. But when unemployment is high, the competition for jobs becomes fierce and job hunters need to edge out the competition. Programs like Promoting Readiness for Employment Possibilities (PREP) are important when retooling workers to give them an edge over other qualified applicants.

Displaced workers primarily consisting of young mothers and young men in Jefferson County, for example, realized their interviewing and resume writing skills were inadequate for today’s job market. This discovery prompted Urban Regional Extension Agent Cynthia Whittaker to collaborate with Lawson State Community College’s Adult Education Program to offer courses on interviewing techniques. Both PREP and Lawson’s Adult Education Program focused on comprehensive job readiness processes such as resume writing, application procedures, interviewing techniques, wearing appropriate clothing, and job search methods. In addition, the Alabama Department of Human Resources JOBS Program provided job referrals, along with other subsidies to program participants.

Upon completing the course, PREP participant Terri Shamblin was fortunate to land a case aid position. Shamblin reported that PREP helped her to develop self-confidence in her abilities, understand the importance of preparation, respond to interview questions appropriately, maintain positive non-verbal communication, and to dress suitably to make a positive impression during a job interview. As a case aid, Shamblin assists with the JOBS Program, and her involvement helped to awaken a longtime aspiration of returning to college to pursue a degree in social work.

Urban Regional Extension Agent Renee Heard also implements PREP in Morgan County and has partnered with Calhoun Community College’s Adult Program. PREP participant Emily Fagan completed program lessons and successfully secured employment with a local retailer. Fagan is also in the process of completing another program offered within the Adult Program called the Alabama Parenthood Initiative (API). Upon completion of API, she will receive a certification that will allow her to enroll in the Medical Assistance Training Program at Calhoun Community College.

Fagan stated, “Because of the PREP program, I am much more confident in myself, skills... better able to communicate verbally, and assured of my abilities to accomplish the goals I set for me and my family.”

As Alabama’s economic climate changes, so do family dynamics and Urban Affairs is right there to help individuals and families cope amidst life’s many challenges. For example, in the Consumers Score with Credit in Check program, participants learn how to manage their finances. In 2012, post-assessment data indicated that 55% opened a savings account and 74% opened a checking account, while 89% of the participants developed a spending plan, increased their savings, adjusted career plans, and controlled impulsive buying.

However, the biggest challenge in 2012 was undoubtedly the national economic recession that trickled down into the Southeastern states. Yet, in spite of job loss across the state, 10% (71) of the 784 Alabama residents that enrolled in PREP, were able to secure employment.

Above photo: Urban Regional Extension Agent Cynthia Whittaker with PREP participants in Jefferson County.
Economic and Community Development

Preparing Youth for Tomorrow’s Job Market

Urban areas with a well-educated workforce are expected to be the driving force behind America’s economic growth well into the next decade. That’s why it’s important for young workers to be equipped with adequate education and marketable skills to compete for the 55 million expected job openings in the year 2020.

In the career component, young people have an opportunity to learn about educational opportunities based on their interests beyond high school at two- and four-year colleges and universities, as well as vocational and professional certificate programs.

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Many students like Steven Sims, now a senior at Douglas High School in Marshall County, discovered that his life interests actually matched his career goals. Sims has a desire to become a professional chef and is making plans to attend culinary school after graduation.

The program not only motivated him to pursue higher education, but he became more dedicated to his studies and steadily watched his grades improve.

Research has proven that students who stay in school are more likely to be employed; and college graduates on average earn $500 more a week than high school graduates. Also, individuals who earn high school diplomas and college degrees are less likely to end up in the nation’s penal institutions.

Urban Extension programs like Career Countdown provide youth with a realistic glimpse of what it takes to successfully meet monthly financial obligations based on simulated career choices. Students also learn about educational opportunities beyond high school that will allow them to be productive members of society.

Of the 1,350 participants that responded to the Career Countdown post-assessment survey in 2012, 34% made plans to go to college or to receive additional training after high school, 37% created a career plan, 29% reported improvements in school, and 36% reported an improvement in academic performance.

Investing in our Future creates a qualified and skilled workforce.
Are Your Affairs in Order?

In 2012-2013, Urban family and child development specialists conducted the Perception of Estate Plans Questionnaire among older adults. The majority of respondents were between 61 to 70 years of age, and 80% were African Americans while 17% were Caucasian Americans. Approximately, 42% of African-American respondents and 30% of Caucasian respondents had not developed an estate plan. However, one-third of Caucasian respondents indicated they had a will, a power of attorney, and a health care proxy in place compared to only 9% of African-American respondents. Additionally, 54% of African-American respondents never had a power of attorney and 40% never had a will discussed with them. And less than half of the Caucasian respondents (49%) never had anyone to explain a power of attorney, while 36% did not have anyone to discuss a will with them.

The top reasons for not having a will, a health care proxy, or a power of attorney in place were very similar, however, among both Caucasian and African-Americans respondents. Members of both groups believed that family members will make the correct decisions for them, and the lack of knowledge or understanding about the documents were the two major reasons for not doing estate planning. Also, both African-American and Caucasian respondents believed that it is too expensive to get help to develop such documents and did not believe they had enough personal assets. Clearly, the time is ripe to create educational resources that allow older adults, particularly among minority populations, to get their affairs in order!

The Successful Aging Initiative (SAI) has done a good job in educating older adults, family members, and caregivers in Alabama’s urban areas about senior life issues. However, the Perception of Estate Plans Questionnaire is helping to fine tune those efforts. For example, SAI has expanded its partner base with local agencies that provide senior services, intensified its staff training on senior care resources, and has identified five counties in the Black Belt region to concentrate future programming efforts.

Other SAI efforts in 2012 included piloting Life Care Management Plans (LCP) among 206 older adults in Madison and surrounding counties under the direction of Chanda Crutcher, a licensed geriatric specialist. The cost to develop an LCP is $375.00 each, which yielded a savings of $77,250. Also, 476 SAI participants underwent health screenings in 2012 ranging from blood glucose and bone density to memory screenings for a combined savings of $71,250 or $150 per screening. In addition, approximately 50 participants reported contacting their local Area on Aging to draw up their wills and/or a power of attorney at an average savings of $7,200 or $150 a document.

“What an exciting time it is in the world of aging! The Alabama Cooperative Extension System’s Successful Aging Initiative has engaged older adults of Alabama for more than 13 years by providing them with the timely information necessary to make informed decisions from long-term care to quality of life needs. We expectantly look forward to the expansion of this work with the Life-long Learning Institute that will open in the fall of 2014,” said SAI Program Coordinator and Attorney Kevin Crenshaw.
Dothan residents discard e-waste during a local e-waste drive. Learn more about Extension’s environmental and resource management projects at www.aces.edu/urban/forestry/index.php.

Urban Affairs reached more than 10,000 youth through its Urban Environmental Sciences Education Program in 2012. Students in this program consistently showed greater interest in math and science disciplines, as well as renewable energy sources and conservation strategies. Adults showed similar responses when educated about environmental issues. Eighty percent planned to recycle, reuse, or reduce waste and 52% planned to establish wildlife habitats in their backyards. The Urban Home*A*Syst program reached 1,180 adults. After learning about home and environmental risks, 40% of the adults were motivated to map pollution risks in and around their homes, 63% planned to apply recommended amounts of fertilizer on their lawns and to control water usage, 60% planned to water plants and shrubs in the morning to conserve water, 43% planned to take used oil to a collection center, and 50% planned to recycle, reuse, or reduce household waste.

**Diverting E-Waste from Public Landfills**

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Americans purchased 438 million tons of electronics in 2009. Electronic waste (e-waste) is growing at three times the rate of household trash. As much as 5 million tons are currently stored in closets, garages, and stockrooms, while another 2.4 tons are ready to be dumped in landfills across America.

E-waste is just as its name implies. It’s discarded electrical or electronic devices, including cell phones, computers, televisions, refrigerators, or any item that is plugged into an electrical socket. Unfortunately, many of the materials used in these products, such as lead, nickel, cadmium, and mercury, are toxic to humans and the environment. That’s why it’s becoming increasingly important to educate consumers about the issues associated with hazardous waste and to develop environmentally safe solutions to control e-waste.

The E-Waste Institute, led by university researchers and environmental experts, was established in 2008 to educate, train, raise public awareness, and influence public policies about safe environmental e-waste practices. In 2011, it established a small electronics recycling program (SERP) in partnership with Cartridge World, Printer Connection, and the City of Huntsville’s Operation Green Team to properly dispose of small electronics. Then in 2012, the SERP utilized the Funding Factory (www.fundingfactory.com) as a major recycler. The Funding Factory provides free non-profit fundraising options by recycling printer cartridges, cell phones, and personal electronics without any costs to its members for shipping, marketing, postage, or other materials. In addition, approximately $252.00 was raised through the Funding Factory that offset expenses for the Green Living Expo held at AAMU’s Agribition Center in Madison County.

The E-Waste Institute, continues to raise awareness about electronic waste across Alabama. The most successful activities are community e-waste drives conducted in partnership with organizations like Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center’s Assured Data Destruction and the Keep Mobile Beautiful Recycling Center. In 2012, residents in Houston and Mobile counties discarded 174 tons of electronic waste, for an estimated savings of $21,988 in landfill and manpower costs.

Providing individuals with access to drop-off containers, in addition to school- and community-sponsored electronic recycling events, help to reduce landfill waste, minimize the leaching of hazardous chemicals into municipal water resources, and provide an opportunity to reclaim precious metals.
Turn the Water Off!

In Alabama and across America, all we have to do is turn on a faucet to enjoy a supply of free flowing water. In fact, it’s one of the resources that most of us probably take for granted. But while much of the Earth is covered in water, did you know that only 1% is available for human use? The other 99% comes in the form of salt water, an iceberg, or water that cannot be easily accessed. So, water conservation is essential to clean and fresh water sustainability for humans and wildlife. In other words, it’s time to turn the water off!

Urban Affairs uses educational resources such as rain barrel workshops, rain catchment systems, and a 36-foot mobile lab to educate audiences about the importance of water conservation. In 2012, the Home Grounds team educated more than 18,520 adults about the importance of water conservation. Due to these efforts, approximately 50,825 gallons of water was collected from rainwater saving more than $50K. In addition, 5,439 pounds of produce was harvested from rainwater dependency, and 475 adults adopted xeriscaping management practices by incorporating desert landscapes or drought tolerant plants like the rainwater project on the Jack-O-Lantern Farms.

Jack-O-Lantern Farms located in Muscle Shoals, Alabama needed an alternative and cost-effective water source to provide water for their hydroponic production houses. Water is the limiting factor for success when growing vegetables under hydroponic conditions. It can be very expensive especially if the water source comes from the city. That’s when Steve Carpenter, owner and manager of Jack-O-Lantern Farms, approached Urban Extension’s Home Grounds team for assistance.

The Home Grounds team provided training and resource materials that aided in the installation of two 5,000 gallon above-ground cisterns, plumbing, and rainwater collection conduits to one of their hydroponic production houses. Today, the system collects approximately 55,000 gallons of rainwater a year for an annual savings of $80K.

Visit http://www.aces.edu/urban/RainwaterCollection/# to learn more about rainwater collection systems.

The Jack-O-Lantern Farms production house now has the capability to fill hydroponic beds with chlorine and fluoride free rainwater with the help of two 5,000 gallon cisterns.
Reaching Hispanic Audiences

Alabama’s Hispanic population grew 145% between 2000 and 2010, making it the second highest percentage growth in the United States. While Hispanic (Latino) population growth was due primarily to immigration in the past, this is no longer the case. Today, Hispanic population growth is primarily due to birth, which means that community service organizations must develop programs that appeal to this audience.

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System has several nutrition education resources for Hispanic audiences, such as the Urban Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (UEFNEP) that targets Hispanic mothers with children 0-5 years old and Hispanic youth ages 6-16 in Limestone, Madison, Marshall, and Morgan counties. But while implementing the program, the UEFNEP team discovered that their target audience sometimes had difficulty getting to program delivery sites. To help alleviate this concern, Urban Affairs was awarded a grant by the United States Department of Agriculture that enabled them to refurbish a mobile bus and take health education directly to the people. The Nutrition Education on the Move bus seats 12 people and comes equipped with a mini kitchen complete with countertop space, a sink with running water, and a refrigerator. There is also an electronic outlet for heating or cooking food. It is ideal for health fairs, on-site nutrition education classes, and cooking demonstrations.

Since its inception, participation in UEFNEP has increased among youth, adults, and other family members in all communities served. Furthermore, pre- and post-UEFNEP data indicates increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, increased purchasing of healthier foods, and increased physical activity among participants. The Alabama Hispanic Association leaders are also very happy to see the mobile unit come and teach nutrition education in Hispanic communities.

“The UEFNEP team is really glad to have the mobile bus that allows us to reach participants in Hispanic communities. Now, when the mobile unit shows up in communities, the kids run to us as if we are the ice cream truck,” said UEFNEP Coordinator Terence Martin.

The Urban Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program reached approximately 206 adults and 219 youth in Alabama’s northern counties in 2012. Nearly 70% of program participants improved nutrition practices such as planning meals, eating more fruits and vegetables, and reading nutrition labels on food products. Research studies further revealed that individuals and families that enrolled in UEFNEP classes were healthier and spent less money on junk food and healthcare.

The Nutrition Education on the Move bus helps to make nutrition education more accessible to clients living in North Alabama.

Alabama has seen a steady decline in overweight and obesity cases. Urban Extension programs like UEFNEP, Families United in Fun, and the Urban Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) are vital to helping Alabamians develop healthier lifestyles. In 2012, the Urban SNAP-Ed program educated 7,633 youth and adults, including nearly 2% of Alabama’s food stamp eligible recipients in 20 counties. For 1,633 adults, the data indicated improvement in all five categories: knowledge, dietary quality, physical activity, food resource management, and food safety. For 3,499 youth the data showed improvement in dietary quality and physical activity.
Human Nutrition, Diet and Health

Making Childhood Obesity a Thing of the Past

Childhood obesity has more than doubled in children and tripled in adolescents in the past 30 years in the United States. The obesity rate in Alabama is 24% among youth 18 to 25, and 18% for children 10 to 17 years of age. Unfortunately, obese children and youth are more likely to become obese adults and are at risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke, cancer, and other chronic diseases.

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, developing a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating and physical exercise can help to lower the risk of being overweight or obese. That’s why Extension and organizations across the country are helping adults and young people to become healthier citizens through programs like Community Health, Aerobic and Motivational Program Initiating Optimal Nutrition (CHAMPION).

CHAMPION not only focuses on adults, but targets youth 5-18 years old in Calhoun, Houston, Jefferson, Lauderdale, Madison, Mobile, Montgomery, Morgan, and Tuscaloosa counties. The program is designed to improve the overall health of participants through lifestyle changes by adopting obtainable behavioral habits such as healthier eating practices and engaging in daily physical activities.

Since its inception, youth participation in CHAMPION has increased by 37%. In 2012, approximately, 294 youth became more knowledgeable about good nutrition practices and 52% engaged in some type of physical exercise or sport before the end of the six-week class session.

The exciting news is that Urban Affairs is using enhanced technology to make health education and aerobic exercises more accessible and fun to younger audiences.

Urban Extension is truly helping to make childhood obesity a thing of the past!

The USDA recommends that half our plates contain fruits and vegetables. Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.
Urban Youth Development and Volunteerism

Leading by Example

Too often we hear about the negative behavior of teens and rarely about the good. But Extension’s 4-H and urban youth development programs are helping to change the way we look at young people today.

Health Rocks!® is a national healthy living program that targets youth ages 8 to 14. Through interactive activities youth learn the consequences of tobacco, alcohol, and drug use while developing life skills that are beneficial to every aspect of their lives.

According to the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States 2011, report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 50% of Alabama youth have smoked cigarettes, 23% drank an alcoholic beverage before the age of 13, and 20% took a prescription drug without a doctor’s consent. Programs like Health Rocks!® are critical to not only curtail drug and alcohol use among teens in Alabama, but to help young people to build skills that will have a positive effect on their lives, including leadership and community service.

Among the nearly 48,000 youth that participated in the Health Rocks!® program in 2012:

- Over 90% of youth participants demonstrated social competency, volunteerism, self-confidence, and strong values.
- 9 in 10 youth were confident they would be able to say “no” if other people like their peers offered them cigarettes or drugs, and they would not choose smoking to deal with stress. In addition, more than 80% of youth participants were confident that they would be able to deal with stress by using stress management skills, such as “talking” about a situation with someone they trust.

Students like Mariah Gullatte enroll in the program and progress to team leader.

“Health Rocks!® has greatly impacted how I look at my surroundings, my friends, my decisions, and my future. I believe that by knowing the consequences of drugs, tobacco and alcohol I am able to say ‘No’ to peer pressure. For example, I went to a friend’s party and I smelled marijuana. I knew what could potentially happen not only to the smoker, but innocent people if they were caught with it or if they really got high and things got out of hand—not to mention if there were other drugs there that I didn’t see. Drugs directly affect the mind. They can distort the user’s perception of what is happening around him or her,” said Mariah.

Because of this incident Mariah was able to educate her friends about the consequences of drug use and to safely leave the party.

When teens are aware of the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse and are deterred from engaging in these substances, they are more likely to abstain from using tobacco, alcohol, and drugs as they age and enter adulthood.
Extension Volunteers at Work in Alabama

More than half of American teens and young adults volunteered in 2011. Programs like Volunteer in Urban Programs (VIP), which includes the Extension-managed Serving Learning Network at Alabama A&M University, help to prepare young people for a lifetime of community service with agencies that provide health, GED preparation, tutorial, consumer education, mentoring, job preparedness, single parenting, leadership development, and disaster preparedness assistance in Alabama communities.

In 2012, a total of 3,091 student volunteers enrolled in the Service Learning Network in the fall and spring semesters. This pool of volunteers rendered 61,820 of the total 71,120 VIP hours of service recorded among 56 community agencies and companies. Based on the national value of volunteer time at a rate of $22.14 per hour, the financial impact for the Service Learning Network totaled $1,347,058 compared to an estimated $1.6 million statewide. Furthermore, the Service Learning Network benefits both the community and the students. Students not only gain a better understanding of themselves, but come to understand the socioeconomic issues that impact their community and how to resolve these complex issues.

Even adults that work with youth in VIP grasp the value of the program as well.

“As a VIP, I have been inspired. The constant society changes that youth face today are in no comparison to my younger days. There is so much peer pressure. VIP has prepared me to be able to share knowledge and history with youth through casual interactions and conversation. It is my hope and prayer that as the youth inspire me to be a better mentor; I will inspire them to go far beyond their greatest dreams and imagination,” said Synethea Anderson, volunteer and AAMU residence hall director.

The United States has a long and rich history of volunteerism. Today, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and its Urban Affairs unit are proud to stand alongside such organizations like the Peace Corp, the YMCA/YWCA, and the United Way to serve disadvantaged populations.

Youth Busy at Work
reaching underserved populations
2012-2013 Urban Extension Programs

**Animal Sciences and Forages**
Alabama Ethnic Food Security Network
Small Ruminant Outreach Center

**Consumer Sciences and Personal Financial Management**
Consumers Score with Credit in Check
Promoting Readiness for Employment Possibilities

**Economic and Community Development**
Virtual Entrepreneurship Development (Economic Development Conference)
Career Countdown

**Family and Child Development**
Family Advocacy through Caring Engagement Strategies
Grand RAPP: Grandparents and Relatives as Parents Program
LegalEase: A Comprehensive Legal Education Program
  - Successful Aging Initiative
  - Youth & the Law

**Forestry, Wildlife, and Natural Resource Management**
AAMU/ACES E-Waste Institute (Green Living Expo)
Alabama Urban Home*A*Syst Program
Synergistic Efforts to Reduce Pharmaceutical Impacts on the Environment
Urban Environmental Science Education Program
  - Engaging Citizens Through Environmental Education
  - Youth Exploring Environmental Science

**Urban Youth Development and Volunteerism**
Alabama 4-H Living Interactive Family Education
Health Rocks!®
Ready? GET SET to Explore Forensics
Service Learning Network
Teens Making Impact (Teens and Tweens Empowerment Conference)
Volunteers in Urban Programs

**Home Grounds, Gardens, and Home Pests**
Water Wheels Outdoor Water Conservation Laboratory
Urban Gardens and Sustainable Landscapes

**Human Nutrition, Diet and Health**
Community Health Aerobic Motivational Program Initiating Optimal Nutrition
Families United Through Nutrition
ServSafe (Food Safety Certification Training Program in Spanish)
Urban Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program
Urban Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education

Urban Affairs is proud of the education it provides to Alabama’s urban families. In 2012, it piloted the Family Advocacy through Caring Engagement Strategies program that has been widely received. Early pilot results among 1,150 adult participants indicated that they expected to improve their family dynamics in the areas of communication, money management, stress management, and conflict resolution.

Urban Regional Extension Agent Nkenge Hyter exercising with youth in Jefferson County.
## The Urban Difference in Numbers

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Animal Sciences and Forages</th>
<th>Direct Contact: 752</th>
<th>Indirect Contacts: 8,062,000</th>
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<td>Forestry, Wildlife, &amp; Natural Resource Management</td>
<td>17,824</td>
<td>2,104,979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Grounds, Gardens &amp; Home Pests</td>
<td>3,816</td>
<td>3,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Nutrition, Diet &amp; Health</td>
<td>54,875</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Youth Development &amp; Volunteerism</td>
<td>25,250</td>
<td>255,132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total reported program contacts for 2012-2013**: 114,004 | 10,669,437

Direct contacts occur when program participants are actively engaged in a research-based learning process. Indirect contacts involve the distribution of educational information via print or electronic media such as publications, the Internet, or materials that are distributed at public events.

Youth fulfilling community service project by creating container gardens for older adults at the (Commissioner) Robert “Bob” Harrison Senior Wellness and Advocacy Center in Huntsville.
## 2012-2013 Urban Affairs Staff

### Urban Administrators
- Virginia Caples, 1890 Administrator
- Celvia Stovall, Associate Director
- Jannie Carter, Assistant Director
- Constance Wilson, Assistant to 1890 Administrator

### Extension Specialists
- Dorothy Brandon
- Maria Leite-Browning
- Edna Coleman
- Donnie Cook
- Julio Correa
- Kevin Crenshaw
- Jean Dwyer
- Karnita Garner
- Patricia Henderson
- Kimberly Burgess-Neloms
- Rudy Pacumbaba
- Roger Richardson
- Robert Spencer
- Tamara Warren
- Wendi Williams

### Professional Staff
- James Childress
- Nikkya Moore-Coleman
- Oliver Dillard
- Patrick Farier
- Girma Kebede
- LaKeisha Johnson
- Carolyn Reedus
- Mia Smith
- Ron Williams

### Administrative Support Staff
- Jackie Collier
- Juanesta Green
- Erica James
- Pam Jude
- Nancy McCrary
- Debra Scruggs

### Research Associate
- Rhonda Britton

### Program Assistant
- Andrea Crayton

### SNAP-Ed Educators
- Adriane Langham
- Andrea Morris

### UNEP Agent Assistants
- Gigi Akiwunmi
- Shirley Brown
- Shonna Carranza
- Jeanette Dancy
- Michelle Elston
- Alfreda Coleman-Hendericks
- Aisha Martin
- Gloria Maxie
- Hazel Meadows
- Della Miller
- Christina Parker
- Bernadine Ransom
- Deta Wright
- Shonda Wright

### UEFNEP Coordinator
- Terence Martin

### UEFNEP Program Assistants
- Jose Guerrero
- Carmen Carolina Hurtado
- Carmen Martinez
- Susana Rodriguez

### Family Life Program Assistant
- Cynarra Fuller

### Community Programs Assistant
- Manuela Febles
- Darry Madden
- Trina Walker
- Melinda Smith

### County Extension Coordinator
- Tyrone Smith

### County Support Staff
- Karen Bixler
- LaTanga Charley
- Deborah Crawford
- Francine Crecy
- Celia Fabery
- Patricia Killian
- Elaine King
- Angelet Moore
- Shannon Murray
- Cheryl Stevens

### Urban Regional Extension Agents
- Metara Austin
- Apriliell Burgess
- Marchale Burton
- Phillip Carter
- Judy Edmond
- Marcus Garner
- Ciji Griffin
- Donna Gullatte
- A. Renee Heard
- Denise Heubach
- Nkenge Hyter
- Hayes Jackson
- Rosalind James
- Patricia Jones
- Sallie M. Lee
- Juana Macias
- Darlene Minniefield
- Chante K. Myles
- Sylvia Oakes
- Taynetta B. O'Neal
- Amanda Outlaw
- J. Elizabeth Phillips
- Anthony Preyer
- Roosevelt Robinson
- Walter Rodgers
- Danielle D. Rudolph
- Tommie Teacher
- Eddie Wheeler
- Cynthia Whittaker
References


