



Your Experts for Life

Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs

Summary of Accomplishments 2000

VISION STATEMENT:

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System envisions a comprehensive statewide Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs Unit encompassing traditional, nontraditional, and new and emerging programs and delivery approaches in order to meet the needs of Alabama citizens wherever they live and work. The focus is, however, to meet the needs of urban, ex-urban and suburban communities to improve their quality of life.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs Unit is to provide learning opportunities to meet the needs of all urban and nontraditional audiences with a specific focus on limited resource families, underserved audiences, individuals and small enterprises.

A PROFILE OF THE AUDIENCE:

The US Census Bureau's 2000 estimates place Alabama's urban population at 3,065,673 citizens, comprising over 70% of the state's 4,369,862 residents. There are 572,743 families and 792,583 households. The racial make-up of the metropolitan areas is predominately White (74%); Blacks represent 24%. Marginal percentages are Hispanic, American Indian and Asian, with Hispanics being the fastest growing minority population. The median income for the urban counties in the state is \$31,569. Seventy percent (70.6 1%) of the urban population has attained a high school diploma, and 18.1% has a college degree or higher. In the state, 17.6% live below the poverty level. There are 274,000 working parents below 200% of the poverty level. The majority of the poor are White, and about half are under 18 years of age. Blacks represent about 32% of those below the poverty level. Poor families are more likely to be single parent, female-headed households.

Metropolitan Area Estimates for Alabama's 12 Most Populous Counties, 1999

County	Urban Population	Estimated % Urban
Jefferson	657,422	89%
Mobile	399,652	81%
Montgomery	215,813	91%
Madison	280,381	78%
Tuscaloosa	161,435	71%
Calhoun	116,541	71%
Morgan	109,665	64%
Etowah	103,472	72%
Houston	86,116	69%
Lauderdale	54,327	51%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Population Estimates Division, and University of Alabama, Alabama State Data Center, March 2000.

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SITUATION:

Urbanization and diversification have created an Alabama that is quite different from what it was a decade ago. Today, families and communities must respond to unprecedented changes and challenges. Social, economic, environmental and legal issues surrounding health factors, lifestyles, poverty, violence, abuse, and welfare reform place some urban families at risk for meeting basic core needs and having coping skills necessary for survival. Educational training and support offered through outreach programs like Extension can greatly impact their level of success.

SPECIFIC PROGRAMMATIC OBJECTIVES FOR THE URBAN AFFAIRS AND NEW NONTRADITIONAL PROGRAMS UNIT:

- 1) Create a greater appreciation for the value of diversity.
- 2) Strengthen the resiliency of individuals, youth and families by enhancing coping and survival skills of citizens in Alabama's urban communities.
- 3) Build new supportive institutions, groups and teams that allow families to exercise their power to shape their own communities.
- 4) Facilitate changes to improve urban environments and reduce the impact of environmental situations that threaten the safety and health of individuals, youth and families.
- 5) Expand urban agricultural concepts and understandings to address real issues of urban/rural interdependence.
- 6) Create expanded access to public information through independent systems for information referral and retrieval.

INTRODUCTION:

Extension's philosophy of taking programs to the people wherever they live was exercised as Urban Centers made outreach services available to more of the state's metro areas during the year 2000. Urban contacts for the state nearly doubled with the establishment of Urban Centers. The most recent additions, Morgan and Calhoun Counties, represent two of the eight centers that have developed across the state since 1995. Two satellite offices were also opened through partnership agreements with Huntsville and Decatur municipalities. Tuscaloosa, the last of the proposed nine centers, will open this fall. Urban Centers augment the services offered through the county Extension offices by focusing on family, health, community and consumer needs of urban, new and nontraditional audiences.

THE URBAN FAMILY NETWORK AND FAMILY RESILIENCY

Parenting Education and Families in Divorce Transition

A program enhancement grant supported program expansion in the area of "Parenting Education for Families in Divorce Transition."

The program is designed to educate and prepare parents to guide and support their children through a divorce.

To support program implementation, County Extension Agents in Mobile, Morgan, Jefferson, Houston, and Calhoun Counties received training and/or certifications on internationally acclaimed curricula including Parents Forever, Rainbows Certification Training and Sandcastles (which has been featured in various magazines including People, Time, Parents and Parenting).

Extension Specialists with the Urban Family Network are working with County Agents and family court judges to create

enhanced opportunities (through mandated parent education courses) for Extension involvement and leadership in delivering educational information to families in divorce transition.

Dr. Wilma Ruffin, Extension Family and Human Development Specialist, gives leadership to this enhancement grant. The program is quite timely, considering statistics that indicate fewer than half of America's children can expect to live with their biological parents until age 18.

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Urban Family Summits

Urban Family Summits were conducted in several Urban Centers targeting families, professionals, caregivers and senior citizens. **The summits have addressed intergenerational lifestyles, technical careers for women and nutritional needs of the elderly, serving an estimated 3500 families.**

The summit series kicked off in April with the "Gaining Years...Shifting Gears" workshop held in the Jefferson County metropolitan area (encompassing Jefferson, Blount, St. Clair, Shelby and Walker Counties). Others were held in Lauderdale, Houston, and Mobile, Counties. Summits were sponsored through Extension program enhancement grant funding under the leadership of Dr. Marquita Davis, Extension Urban Specialist, Family Life.

Electronic Fund Transfer 99 (EFT 99)

The Urban Unit received a \$14,000 contract on behalf of the U.S. Department of Treasury's Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT 99) Campaign. EFT 99's objective is to inform payment recipients, particularly those still receiving a paper check, about their options for receiving payments. The grant required each of the 14 participating counties to conduct a minimum of six in-touch sessions on EFT 99, to reach at least 150 current Federal payment recipients per county. Dr. Bernice Wilson, Resource

Management Specialist, served as principal investigator for the project.

LifeSmarts Consumer Education

LifeSmarts is an on-line consumer education program sponsored by the National Consumer League, with the Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs Unit of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System serving as the lead partner for the state of Alabama.

The program features a unique educational game show competition for youth in grades 9-12. **The Butler High School (Huntsville) LifeSmarts team represented Alabama at the National LifeSmarts Competition in Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 8-11, 2000. The Alabama team competed with approximately thirty-seven other states.**

Dr. Bernice Wilson, Resource Management Specialist, gives leadership to this programming effort. Butler's team coach is Mecia Stapp; she has also been elected to serve on the National Board of LifeSmarts to help develop questions for future competitions.

This participation represented a well deserved opportunity for Alabama's team, and signified what a great program LifeSmarts can become with commitments from additional teams from our local county offices. LifeSmarts continues to seek sponsorships, volunteer support and county involvement.

Strengthening Resiliency

Health and safety issues surrounding domestic violence cost the state millions of dollars annually, making the issue truly everybody's business. Programs like **"Angry John"** that addressed anger management in Fayette County schools; **"Parents and Children Together"** (PACT), to prevent child abuse in Morgan County; **"Brushing With Violence,"** educating cosmetologists in Mobile County; **"Bounce Back"** in Jefferson County; and domestic violence **"Sanity Savers"** in Lawrence County helped to strengthen the resiliency of families across the state. **Over 8,000 citizens were educated on how to respond to situations of abuse and violence in their homes and communities.**

Responding to Domestic Violence: Effective Primary Health Care Approaches

The Family Welfare Specialist, **Mrs. Marilyn Johnson, conducted a plenary session and provided a resource display on "Responding to Domestic Violence: Effective Primary Health Care Approaches" at the annual meeting of the Alabama Primary Health Care Association, held in Gulf Shores on September 6-8, 2000.** Rosalind James, Houston County Urban Agent, supported the program with a display.

The goal was to enhance health care's response to domestic violence by establishing that

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domestic violence presents unique challenges that require specialized responses from health care providers. Providers must understand the nature and etiology of the problem and its impacts on victims, children and the community as a whole. Lawyers, social workers, doctors, nurses, nursing assistants, board members and administrative staff were in attendance.

FOREFRONTING YOUTH: AN URBAN YOUTH INITIATIVE

Urban Youth Farm Day

Madison County held its annual Urban Youth Farm Day at the Winfred Thomas Research Station at Alabama A&M University on May 5, 2000. Over 400 youth enrolled in city school systems and private schools were bused to the research farm for first hand observations of farm operations.

The Urban Youth Farm Day is designed to focus on fostering well-rounded, diverse citizens and consumers who understand the role all citizens play in the urban-rural interface and the total agricultural system. The program featured educational workshops and recreational activities.

Mrs. Sylvia Oakes and Mr. Tyrone Smith, Urban Agents, coordinated the event supported by volunteers, the Urban Family Network, and the Urban Program Unit.

Collaborative Alliances with Boy Scouts of America

On May 19-21 a camp activity was held at the Winfred Thomas Agricultural Research Station in support of the Collaborative Alliances with Boy Scouts of America and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. The program works with pilot scouting troops to expose youth to the particulars of animal science and husbandry, and curricula in pre-veterinary medicine. Dr. Jacqueline Johnson, Extension Veterinarian, leads this youth development program which fosters community building and provides increased visibility to the agricultural and environmental sciences.

Urban Tobacco Awareness

An application for funding through the National 4-H Council for continuation of the Urban Tobacco Awareness Project (U-TAP) was submitted (April, 2000). Co-authored by Mrs. Yvonne Thomas, Montgomery County Agent and Dr. Donnie Cook, Health and Nutrition Specialist, **the grant targets youth ages 10-14** in Montgomery County.

U-TAP is an out-of-school and in-school project that demonstrates how students and adults, collaborating with community resources, can work together to empower, educate, reduce, and/or prevent tobacco usage. **The application was funded in the amount of \$10,000 for the 2000-2001 program year.**

Getting Up River: Teen Substance Abuse Strategies for the Year 2000

The Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs Unit of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System has joined a second public radio station in the delivery of social marketing strategies to address a critical public health issue.

Last year, the Extension Team Project, "Trapped in Poverty, Trapped by Abuse and Trapped by Poor Health," worked with Alabama A&M University's WJAB-FM in designing and implementing a \$35,000 domestic violence media campaign over an 18 month period. **The second grant participation project, "Getting Up River: Teen Substance Abuse Strategies for the Year 2000," is with WVAS-FM, Alabama State University in Montgomery.**

This \$35,000 grant targets low-income, teen substance abusers and their families through identifying resources that enable resilient individuals and families to compete in society. Mrs. Marilyn Simpson-Johnson is the Extension contact person for this Sound Partners for Community Health initiative.

Mrs. Marilyn Johnson coordinated with partners the Kick-off activities for the "Getting Up River" grant in Montgomery on June 14. Mr. Mark Sachs, Co-Director for the Sound Partners funding agency (Maryland), was present for the kick-off.

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Urban Youth Leadership Development Institute

Programs such as the **Urban Youth Leadership Development Institute**, lead by Urban Specialist Dr. Grace Kirkman and co-sponsored by the Kettering Foundation, encouraged deliberations and community forums to get youth more involved in discussing problems and making choices together. Practical exercises were designed to foster problem solving, critical thinking skills, and leadership development.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

National Network for Health

More than 100 Extension professionals were in attendance at the National Network for Health Conference that was held in Denver, Colorado, May 6-10, 2000. The conference is sponsored by the Children, Youth and Families at Risk Initiative of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Dr. Donnie Cook, Health and Nutrition Specialist, and Dr. Jannie Carter, State Program Leader, presented at the conference on the topic "A Comprehensive Breast Cancer Awareness Project." The program model being used in Alabama was shared with educators from other states. Thirty two of the state's 67 counties are involved in the Breast Cancer Awareness project.

Youth in Charge: Nutrition and Health

The USDA funded grant project, **"Youth in Charge: Nutrition and Health"** was presented (by Dr. Donnie Cook, principal investigator) at the **Annual Food and Nutrition Summit in Greenbelt, Maryland in July.**

The project impacted an estimated 1,000 youth focusing on providing them with nutrition and health information on the Food Guide Pyramid and healthy fast food choices. A training video and curriculum were end products of the funded grant for expanded statewide use. (Funded by the Agricultural Research Service, USDA).

Training Food Handlers in Elderly Care Facilities

Food safety education is a national issue linking consumers, processors, retailers and food service providers. High incidences of food borne illnesses and death have created increased public concern, particularly among the elderly.

To address the issue, a USDA funded project to train food handlers in elderly care facilities was piloted in four metro areas (Colbert/Lauderdale, Madison, Jefferson, and Montgomery Counties). Dr. Donnie Cook served as principal investigator. The project **"HACCP – Food Safety: It's In Your Hands," has statewide implications. To date, some 600 providers at 47 senior care facilities have been trained using the HACCP approach.**

WORKFORCE, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NONTRADITIONAL AGRICULTURE:

National Workforce Initiative and the Engaged University

Dr. Virginia Caples, 1890 Administrator, and Mrs. Rosalie Lane, Urban Community Development Specialists, hosted meetings (June, July 2000) involving university faculty and community leaders to expand discussions on the **"National Workforce Initiative and the Engaged University."**

These discussions were sparked by downlink activities sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation in December and January that supported the "engaged" concept. Faculty and Extension Specialists were present to discuss programming possibilities and potential partnerships. Highlights were given of existing "engaged" programs.

Workforce preparedness needs, community development, economic needs, diversity issues and others surfaced as a result of a series of **focus group activities** aimed at identifying concerns in urban centers. In response, the Urban Unit has focused on programs designed to help Alabama citizens improve their economic status through resource management, workforce preparation, and nontraditional economic development outreach. Programs like **Job Fairs, job maintenance and job readiness training** were designed to assist unskilled and newly skilled

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workers in obtaining first time employment. An estimated 11,500 citizens have benefited from these programs.

Youth Build Grant

To further work in the area of work force development, with a focus on youth, Mrs. Rosalie Lane is collaborating with District 6, County Commissioner Prince Preyer to develop programs in support of the Youth Build grant. The intent is to train youth in job readiness skills during apprenticeship appointments.

Diversity

Diversity coalitions like the Shoals Diversity Council provided opportunities for citizens, organizations, city officials, law enforcement, community leaders and school systems to work together to address ethnic and cultural differences.

URBAN CENTERS DEVELOPMENT

Decatur Satellite Center Grand Opening

The Decatur Satellite Center held an open house and press conference on May 15th announcing the opening of the Urban Satellite Center at 1802 Central Parkway, Decatur, Alabama. The satellite center supports county Extension office activities that target urban audiences and positions urban staff in closer proximity to the clientele. The facility and planned programs represent a partnership agreement

between the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the city of Decatur. Mrs. Julie Dutton is the CEC; Ms. Clarene Johnson, DEC.

URBAN TASK FORCE

The first in a series of center visits by the Urban Task Force took place at the Madison County Center on June 20. **Dr. John Gibson, AAMU President and other community leaders joined the task force** at a luncheon hosted by the county office where programming activities were highlighted.

Dr. William Muse, AU President, and Dr. Gibson were also in attendance at the Montgomery Center visit in mid July.

The Urban Task Force scheduled and conducted visits at each Urban Center (April - September, 2000) to get grassroots input on program needs and services in inner cities.

The Task Force will develop and issue a set of recommendations that the Alabama Cooperative Extension System may use to help in program development, identifying program needs, establishing appropriate partnerships and collaborative activities and garnering legislative and other financial resources in support of urban programming.

CONFERENCES

The Urban-Rural Interface Conference

The annual Urban-Rural Interface Conference is held each third Thursday in April and is coordinated by Dr. Deny Gapasin, CRD Specialist. Dr. Arnold Foudin, with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA was the keynote speaker for this year's conference. Dr. Foudin addressed the topic "Preparing Generations to Embrace Technological Changes." Agricultural use of "new biology" and biotechnological sciences and the profound impact on consumers (both urban and rural) was discussed.

Within the System's Plan of Work for the year 2001-2004, the Urban Unit has established a state program goal "to expand understandings of urban agricultural concepts to address real issues of urban/rural interdependence."

The Urban-Rural Interface Conference is designed to: 1) convene organizations and individuals addressing urban- rural community needs, 2) identify common understandings of issues and opportunities, 3) develop understandings of reciprocal strengths and potential contributions of participants, and 4) provide training models that will prepare participants to successfully implement partnerships within their communities.

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Annual Family Conference

The 2nd Annual Family Conference was held October 18, 2000, on the campus of Alabama A&M University. Family Specialists from the Urban Family Network (Dr. Marquita Davis, Dr. Wilma Ruffin, Dr. Bernice Wilson) organized the conference of over 150 participants. The conference provided educational and networking opportunities for parents, social workers, daycare providers and educators. P.K. Beville, the keynote speaker, is a Geriatric Specialist who specializes in teaching, programming and consulting in all facets of care of the elderly.

Brushing with Violence Conference

The Mobile County Office and Urban Center conducted the "Brushing With Violence" Conference on September 18, 2000. The goal was to provide training for an estimated 200 cosmetologists on identifying the signs of physical abuse and to teach them how to talk to their clients about the resources (hot lines, counseling services, safe houses, shelters, law enforcement agencies and other organizations) available for help.

The concept of asking cosmetologists to help share information and distribute referral literature to victims of domestic violence is innovative in that hair stylists may be able to offer alternatives to victims long before law enforcement or the community of shelters.

Elizabeth Phillips and Amanda Outlaw, County Extension Agents, and Marilyn Johnson, State Specialist, were coordinators of this event. **Keynote Speaker Susan O'Toole,**

Director of the Women's Center of Southeast Connecticut, New London, Connecticut addressed the group on "Understanding the Dynamics of Domestic Violence."

Teen Leadership Connection Conference

The campus of Alabama A&M University was the host site for the **Teen Leadership Connection (TLC) Conference sponsored by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System – Urban Affairs Unit. Attending the multi-state conference were Extension youth leaders from New Mexico, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama and representation from local youth serving agencies.**

The two-day conference (August 22-23) provided Extension training on the TLC curriculum developed by the Prairie View A&M Cooperative Extension Program. The curriculum training focused on strengthening youth capacity in the areas of life skills and leadership. Originally adapted for youth in inner city Houston, the curriculum is being used nationwide with 4-H groups, school-based prevention programs, and other community based youth programs. Partnerships with local and state youth agencies have been initiated as a result of this training including the Board of Education for the State of Alabama, Youth at Risk Division and the State Independent Living Program (ILP).

According to the conference coordinators, Mrs. Edna Coleman, Youth Specialist, and Mrs. Mary Hurt, Children, Youth and Family Specialist, the TLC model is a new and exciting program for youth development and

uses innovative approaches to involve youth in positive activities.

Other youth prevention and intervention programs like "Youth Challenge," "Yes I Can," the "Collaborative Alliances with Boy Scouts of America," "Fostering Achievement Through Mentoring Education" (FAME), the "Urban Tobacco Awareness Project" (U-TAP) and Youth Elderly Services (YES), reached thousands of youth in educational progress centers, upward bound programs, juvenile facilities, foster homes, community centers and parenting laboratories.

URBAN/RURAL INTERFACE:

Agricultural programs offered through the urban/rural interface educated consumers and producers on alternative and **niche crops**, nontraditional adaptations, and viable partnerships to sustain animal health and production.

The **Small Ruminant Animal Health Care Delivery Systems** project focused its 2000 programmatic priorities on issues related to the development of the planned Buck Test Facility at the Winfred Thomas Agricultural Research Station at Alabama A&M University.

The Buck Test Facility will support enhanced production of small ruminant breeding herds and flocks through effective demonstrations, systematic integration and utilization of proven reproductive technologies. The facility will also strengthen the linkages between Extension and research activities.

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MULTI-STATE AGREEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Dr. Bernice Wilson and Ms. Marilyn Johnson have **finalized a multi-state agreement with New Mexico State University**. The purpose of the agreement is to provide educational programs (through shared resources) in consumer education and personal finance to limited English proficient families and children. Specifically, the programs will provide information to Spanish-speaking audiences in selected counties of north Alabama, commencing during the 2000-2001 program year.

Additionally, Marilyn Johnson and Mary Hurt have established an **agreement with the University of Illinois Extension in Chicago** to promote educational programming in the areas of youth development and family violence.

Dr. Donnie Cook has established a **multi-state agreement with Mississippi State University and Alcorn State University** to increase public awareness of breast cancer, and Ms. Rosalie Lane is collaborating with **West Virginia State College** to create Internet linkages in the area of workforce preparation.

SUBMITTED BY

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