2008 Program Highlights
Alabama Cooperative Extension System

Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs
Making a Difference in Alabama
This report highlights 2008 programming efforts by Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs staff and partners implemented across the state of Alabama, and the difference we are making in the lives of the people we serve.

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Although Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs was established in 1995, Alabama A&M University has a rich history of providing Extension programs and services to the people of Alabama. We simply picked up the ball and headed in a new direction to capture new and nontraditional audiences. However, our goal remains the same… to bring the best research-based programming efforts to the people we serve, particularly those who may not otherwise have the necessary resources to improve their quality of life and the lives of those they love.

This report provides an overview of our 2008 programs that are evolving as the people we serve evolve. At the end of each year we go back to the drawing board to make a change here and to make a change there based on the feedback we obtain from people like you. Only then can we continue to make invaluable impacts that affect Alabama residents, businesses, and the communities in which we live. In fact, we hope that our impacts will have a rippling affect that is felt around the world.

What we are most proud of is how much we have managed to achieve, but like other organizations, we can always use more resources for new growth and innovation. In 2009, we will access where we are as a unit of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

We hope you will drop us a line and let us know about our successes and yes, where we may have failed. We hope you will even consider partnering with us on any of our endeavors and vice versa. We promise to listen and to change our way of doing things if it means serving you better.

Virginia Caples, Ph.D.
Professor & 1890 Administrator
Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs

In 1995, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Extension) made history by becoming the first Extension program in the United States to unify an 1862 (Auburn University) and an 1890 land-grant institution (Alabama A&M University) into one organization. The landmark decision (Name of decision) issued by United States District Judge Harold Murphy allowed Alabama A&M University to focus on new and nontraditional Extension programs, as well as growing urban and diverse populations through Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs. As its name implies, Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs focuses on creating new and nontraditional Extension programs for underserved populations in 8 of Extension’s 14 Priority Program Areas (PPAs) highlighted below:

- Agronomic Crops
- Animal Science and Forages
- Aquaculture and Recreational Pond Management
- Family and Child Development
- Economic & Community Development
- Consumer Science and Personal Financial Management
- Farm Management and Agricultural Enterprise Analysis
- Food Safety, Preparation and Preservation
- Forestry, Wildlife and Natural Resource Management
- Commercial Horticulture
- Home Grounds, Gardens and Home Pests
- Human Nutrition, Diet and Health
- 4-H and Youth Development
- Poultry Production & Management

These PPAs are designed to enhance the lives of Alabama citizens living in and around Alabama’s Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) and Combined Statistical Areas (CSAs), including Anniston-Oxford, Birmingham (Hoover-Cullman), Columbus-Auburn-Opelika, Dothan-Enterprise-Ozark, Florence-Muscle Shoals, Gadsden, Huntsville-Decatur, Montgomery-Alexander City, Mobile-Daphne-Fairhope, and Tuscaloosa.

Snapshot of Alabama Residents We Serve

- Total population: 4,661,900
- Combined MSA Population: 3,273,860
  - African-Americans: 25.5%
  - Hispanics/Latino: 2.7%
  - White non-Hispanic: 68.6%
  - Persons 65 and older: 625,756
- Median household income: $40,596
- Average household size: 2.48
- Average family size: 3.04
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: 111,591
- Persons below poverty: 16.6%
- Families below poverty: 12.9%

(Figures based on 2007-2008 US census estimates)
Dogs as Companion Animals

The dog’s role has changed as society moves from small rural communities to urban areas. Today, most dogs are good companions and clinical observations show that our canine friends help to reduce stress, blood pressure, loneliness, and the fear of becoming a crime victim. The Dogs as Companion Animals program teaches pet owners how to properly train and care for their companions, preferably throughout the natural life of the dog that averages 8-16 years.

2008 Accomplishments

Annual Contacts
92,531

Note: This report includes both direct and indirect contact information through various forms of media.

Program Highlights

Annual North Alabama Dog Expo
Dog Obedience Training Camp
Pet Safety Workshop

On June 24, 2008, the Lauderdale County Extension Office in Florence held a Doggie Day Camp to help 4-H youth improve their relationship with their dogs. Young dog owners often acquire a companion animal without appreciation for the need to develop a relationship that results in mutual respect. Such efforts are relatively easy with a little bit of quality time between owner and pet, and direction from a dog behavior specialist. By the end of the Doggie Day Camp, each student was able to make their dogs sit, walk on a leash, lie down, and come when called.
• **Goat, Sheep, and Rabbit Production Systems**

Consumer demand for goat meat is rising and some farmers are raising goats as a way to diversify their products and to bring additional income to their operations. The small ruminant industry is one of the fastest growing enterprises of the Alabama agricultural economy. According to the 2007 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) census, the total sales of sheep, goats, and other products in Alabama were more than $3,126,000. Alabama farmers have tremendous potential to expand and meet the rising demand for rabbit, lamb, and goat meat, dairy, and other products.

**2008 Accomplishments**

**Annual Contacts**

217,885

**Program Highlights**

Annual Risk Management & Community Outreach Conference
Annual Spring Small Ruminant Symposium
Annual Conference on Small Ruminants
Farmer to Farmer Program in Haiti
Gastrointestinal Parasite Training
Regional Meat Goat Workshops

Nearly 1000 goat and sheep producers attended small ruminant activities throughout the year. Although 5 percent reported a profit margin reduction as a result of drought, 59 percent reported improvements in herd health and production efficiency and 36 percent reported increases in profitability ranging from 6 to 16 percent.
Family & Child Development

- **Grand RAPP: Grandparents & Relatives as Parents Program**
- **Parenting in Nontraditional & Under Served Urban Families Program**

The landscape of American families is changing. According to the United States Census Bureau, by 2010 families with children will steadily decrease; 1 in 5 households would be considered a traditional family with a mother, father, and children under 18; and single female-headed households will increase from 8 to 9 million, while single male-headed will also increase from 1.5 million to 1.9 million. The number of children raised by grandparents or other relatives is also rising across the nation. These programs offer parents, grandparents, or other relative valuable tips, skills, and the support they need to build strong and supportive family ties.

**2008 Accomplishments**

**Annual Contacts**
422,888

**Program Highlights**
Building Strong Families Workshops
Community Resource Fairs
Principles of Parenting Programs
PRISM Workshops
RAPP Conferences, Respite & Resource Retreats
RAPP Support Groups

As a result of participating in these programs, parents, grandparents, and other relatives have developed better parent-child relationships; learned how to reduce stress in caring for family members; and learned the importance of co-parenting during a divorce or separation.
• **Successful Aging Initiative**

The average life expectancy has risen over the past century resulting in a greater percentage of older Americans. By 2030, individuals aged 65 and older will double to about 71 million older adults, or one in every five Americans and it’s important to create programs and services that serve this growing population. Programs like the Successful Aging Initiative (SAI) make it possible to address legal, health, and financial issues for Alabama’s aging population and their caregivers.

**2008 Accomplishments**

**Annual Contacts**

3,100

**Program Highlights**

Successful Aging Conferences
Seniors Can Curriculum
Senior School

After attending a local Successful Aging Initiative (what city/county), 52 participants contacted their local Area Agency on Aging to draw up a will and/or Power of Attorney that resulted in a saving of $7,800 or $150 a document.
Economic & Community Development

- Welcome to the Real World: Business Preparation & Financial Management
- Cooperatives, Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development
- Workforce Development

Economic and community development programs focus on establishing and strengthening cooperatives and businesses; employment opportunities through job preparation and readiness; and improving economic well-being for Alabama citizens.

2008 Accomplishments
Annual Contacts
92,531

Program Highlights
Cooperatives, Small Business, and Entrepreneurship Training
Welcome to the Real World Simulations
Works for Me & Job Hunting Tips Workshops
Youth Career Summits
WECAN4U.net

In 2008, 638 clients participated in the Welcome to the Real World simulations. Of that group, 272 returned surveys. Sixty-four percent of survey respondents found the program interesting, while 65.8 percent believed the information was useful. What was promising is that of those that experienced economic decline during the simulation exercise, 62 percent were able to identify the root cause and prescribe a solution to their specific problem. More than half of the respondents also learned how to balance their income and expenses.
Consumer Science & Personal Financial Management

- **Consumers Score with Credit in Check through Responsible Spending**
- **LifeSmarts**

Family’s financial practices impact long- and short-term goals, self sufficiency, and family stability. This project focuses on responsible management of resources to avoid financial risks, indebtedness, and bankruptcy in the areas of budgeting, credit management, saving, and investing to help citizens maintain and build credit scores and financial standings for their family’s financial health.

LifeSmarts is an online educational program that helps teens to increase consumer, financial, and marketplace skills through game-show style competitions. Financial resource management programs such as LifeSmarts help teens and adults to become savvy consumers and to avoid becoming victims of identity theft, predatory lending, and other financial scams.

2008 Accomplishments

Annual Contacts
92,531

Program Highlights
Financial Security in Later Life
Catch-Up Strategies for Late Savers
Investor’s University
Financial Management Training
Money Smarts
High School Financial Planning
Reality Check
Retirement Planning
LifeSmarts

Extension resource management programs like Reality Check & LifeSmarts are important because 29,557 bankruptcy cases were filed in 2008; a 24 percent increase from 2007. Low median income, credit card debt, and the national recession are the root causes.

– R. Gordon, Birmingham News
Saving Towns thru Asset Revitalization incorporates an asset-based community development (STAR) approach, in conjunction with Alabama's Five-Year Urban and Community Forestry Plan, to either establish or revitalize Tree City USA status for selected urban and rural municipalities. It also creates opportunities for humans to enjoy the outdoors, while improving social, emotional, and physical well-being.

2008 Accomplishments
Annual Contacts
211,584

Program Highlights
Aquatic Awareness
Bee Keeping Programs
Emergency Preparedness
Faith Gardens & Landscape Design
Tree City USA Certifications
Outdoor Classrooms
Native Songbird Recovery Project
Street Game Events
World Environmental & Arbour Day Observances

Gordon, Alabama is one of 3,310 communities in the United States that has been granted Tree City USA status by the Arbor Day Foundation. In 2008, the city experienced a 50 percent litter reduction; an 18 percent increase in green space project participation with city residents; a 62 percent increase in the use of the city's green spaces; and a 37 percent effort to cooperate with the town’s tree ordinance. Gordon is up Tree City USA recertification in 2009.
New and Nontraditional Horticulture Enterprises

Urban Horticulture Initiative

These programs explore horticulture enterprises and marketing, community horticulture, horticulture therapy, and water conservation to improve participant income, to enhance job and career skills in urban and nontraditional horticulture, to create food supplies and food security for individuals, families and communities, and to provide educational resources for conserving water and protecting the environment.

2008 Accomplishments

Annual Contacts
712,366

Program Highlights
On-Farm Demonstrations
Horticulture Workshops & Therapy Programs
Community, School & Organic Gardens
Ornamental Greenhouse Production Systems
Agricultural Enterprises (Bee Keeping & Shiitake Mushroom Production)
Farmers Markets
Rainwater Catchment Systems

Plant sales from two horticulture therapy programs generated $9,499.00, which allowed the programs to be self-sustaining. Also, two jobs were created at the Anniston Museum of Natural History because of the program expansion and increased participation in horticulture programs by local residents and tourists.
Human Nutrition, Diet & Health

- **Urban Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program**
- **Urban Nutrition Education Program**

The Urban Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program and the Urban Nutrition Education Program are designed to increase the knowledge, skills, and health of underserved individuals and families by providing education on general nutrition, food selection, food preparation, food safety, and food purchasing and security. Educational services are offered in Alabama’s metropolitan areas in partnership with community and family service agencies such as the Department of Human Resources, food stamp and Women, Infant, & Children (WIC) offices, local farmer markets, and community centers.

**2008 Accomplishments**

Annual Contacts
25,770

Program Highlights
Power of Choice Youth Sessions
Wise Eating for a Lifetime of Health Adult Sessions

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After attending Urban Nutrition Education Program sessions, 31 percent of participants engaged in some type of physical exercise; 35 percent handled leftover food properly; and 34 percent increased hand washing that helps to reduce food borne illnesses and prevent the spread of other infectious viruses such as cold and flu.
The Community Health, Aerobic, and Motivational Program Initiating Optimal Nutrition (CHAMPION) program is designed to improve the overall health of teens, adults, and the elderly how to adopt a healthy lifestyle through safe eating practices, daily physical activity, and improving behavioral habits.

2008 Accomplishments

Annual Contacts
8,719

Program Highlights
CHAMPION Weight Management Training
BETF Summer Camp for Girls

In 2008, the BETF Camp offered 105 girls between the ages of 10-12 an opportunity to learn more about good health and nutrition. After attending the camp, the girls lost a total of 420.3 lbs. Seventy-four percent indicated they would continue exercising and 96 percent vowed to make better food choices when eating out.
• **Teens Making Impact**

Teens Making Impact (TMI) addresses emerging topics to prepare teens to make sound career decisions, engage in effective communication, pursue healthier lifestyles, and to better understand government issues and their role as productive citizens.

**2008 Accomplishments**

**Annual Contacts**

339,835

**Program Highlights**

TMI Training Sessions

Teens & Tweens Empowerment Conference

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*More than 400 youth completed the TMI training sessions. Based on program evaluations, 90 percent improved their decision-making skills; 71 percent improved their public speaking capabilities; 72 improved their interviewing skills; and 92 percent improved their acceptable social behavior skills.*
• **Youth Leadership & Community Service Learning**

The Points of Light Youth Leadership Institute and other youth development programs are designed to teach leadership, community service, and positive social skills such as problem solving, goal setting, and teamwork to middle and high school students. Young people that participate in these programs learn to “think outside the box.”

**2008 Accomplishments**

**Annual Contacts**
190,683

**Program Highlights**
- Alabama Community Training in Volunteer Education Program
- Points of Light Youth Leadership Institute
- Globalize Me! Professional Development Training
- Urban Teen Leadership Academy

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Since 2005, 150 students have participated in the Urban Teen Leadership Academy. Eight percent went on to graduate from high school, while the other students sought alternate counseling and eventually passed the Alabama High School exam. Ten students from the Academy went on to attend Alabama colleges and universities.
Other Programming Efforts

- Volunteer in Urban Programs
- Service Learning Network

The Volunteer in Urban Programs/VIP project recruits, enrolls, and trains volunteers through a structured program that captures the quantitative and qualitative value of volunteer services provided to the Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs.

VIP also includes the Service Learning Network that is managed by Extension staff and incorporates all student service and volunteer activities on the campus of Alabama A&M University (AAMU). The Network is designed to meet the changing educational, emotional, social, and intellectual needs of nearby communities, as well as underserved and hard-to-reach populations.

2008 Accomplishments
Annual Contacts
106,411

Program Highlights
Recruit & Enroll Volunteers
Volunteer Recognition Program
AAMU Service Learning Network

More than 500 individuals provided 5100 hours of volunteer services to Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs for a total value of nearly $100,000.
The Annual Family Conference was designed to foster partnerships and obtain current information and resources on how to strengthen families and family-centered communities. The Annual Family Conference is an excellent professional development tool for family service providers as they help families positively respond to societal demands that impact their lives, such as a changing economy, physical stress, changing familial roles, managing work and family, divorce, and aging.

As rural farmlands give way to urban environs, events like the Urban-Rural Interface Conference provide a platform to educate citizens on issues where these geographic areas and populations overlap or share common boundaries.

2008 Accomplishments
Annual Contacts
650

One hundred twenty-five people attended the 2008 Urban-Rural Interface Conference. Approximately 58 percent of participants gained greater awareness on how to better serve Hispanic/Latino audiences in the areas of health, education, and community relations.

2008 URIC
Promoting Linguistic and Cultural Competence & Eliminating Ethnic Disparities in Systems of Service

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Guadalupe Quintanilla, Professor & National Hispanic Hall of Famer

2008 Annual Family Conference
Family Preparedness for Current and Emerging Epidemics

Keynote Speaker
Dr. M. Joycelyn Elders, Fifteenth Surgeon General of the United States
Urban Affairs & New Nontraditional Programs is proud of the diversity of partners that help us to better serve Alabama residents.

AARP
Alabama City, County, & State Governments
Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries
Alabama Department of Education/School Systems
Alabama Department of Human Resources
Alabama Department of Public Health
Alabama Music Hall of Fame
Alabama Public Housing
American Diabetes Association
Assisted Living Facilities
Aqua Dom
Areas on Aging
Botanical Gardens
Boys & Girls Clubs
Circle Community Project
Decatur Youth Services Center
Farmers Markets
Hannah Home
Harriman Community Center
Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity
Kroger, Incorporated
Madison County District 6 Commissioner
National Senior Corporation
Northwest Community Learning Center
Pathway Women’s Shelter
Pfizer, Incorporated
Rural Senior Services, Incorporated
St. John AME Church in Huntsville
Save-A-Life Pregnancy Center
Senior Centers
The Links, Incorporated-Greater Huntsville
Top Group
UAB Alzheimer’s Disease Center
United States Department of Agriculture
United Way
United States Department of Housing & Urban Development
WIC Offices
Women’s Christian Job Core

Note: This is just a partial listing.