



THE URBAN DIFFERENCE: REPORT 2016

Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs



UNP-2120

Snapshot of Alabama Residents

State Population: 4,863,300
Urban Population: 3,392,865
African Americans: 1,313,091
Hispanics/Latinos: 194,532
White non-Hispanic: 3,355,677
American Indian/Alaskan Native: 34,043
Asian: 68,086
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 4,863
Persons under 18: 1,167,192
Persons 65 and older: 778,128
High School Graduate/Higher (Age 25+): 4,085,172
Bachelor's degree /Higher: 1,167,192
Median household income: \$45-49K
Households: 1,848,325
Average household size: 2.55
Grandparents raising grandchildren: 65,033
Persons in poverty: 875,394

THE BOOKER T. WASHINGTON
AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL ON WHEELS

*Special thanks to program partners, participants, Alabama Extension staff,
and other stakeholders who make our work possible.*

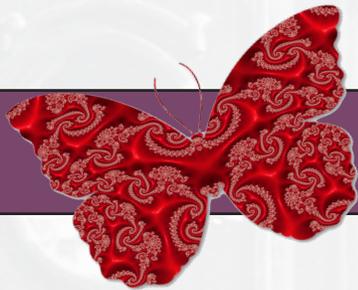
**Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs serves the metropolitan
areas of...**

**Anniston, Gadsden, Birmingham, Decatur, Dothan, Florence, Huntsville,
Mobile, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa.**



Dr. Virginia Caples (center) with Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University's President and First Lady Dr. Andrew & Abigail Hugine at "An Evening of Academia, Achievements, and the Arts" Gala on March 19, 2016. The event marked the fundraising kick-off of the Virginia Caples Lifelong Learning Institute and the formal retirement of Dr. Caples after 38 years of service.

Dr. Caples continued to serve as the 1890 administrator until September 30, 2017. The butterfly, a symbol of rebirth and new beginnings, is a favorite among her collectables.



From the Administrators

We think it's amazing that the Alabama Cooperative Extension System reaches 1 in 4 people across the state of Alabama, which equates to 1.2 million people. Many of those individuals reside in urban areas, which is why we continue to highlight how the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs unit impacts urban residents and the communities in which they live.

In 2016, we helped Alabamians to find jobs, improve their health, resolve family conflicts, strengthen neighborhoods, find a clear career path, reduce environmental hazards, and even save money!

We also partnered with Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University to establish the Virginia Caples Lifelong Learning Institute that delivers "stimulating educational, social, and life-enhancing programs" that meet the needs of Alabama's growing senior population.

As we look to the future, we hope that we can do even more with the help of community partners and people like you. We are learning to change the world right where we are.... one individual, one family, and one community at a time. And that, our dear friends, is *The Urban Difference!*



Dr. Virginia Caples
1890 Administrator



Dr. Celvia Stovall
Administrative Associate

URBAN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEERISM



Volunteers are VIP

VIP Leadership Conference at 4H Center in Columbiana, Alabama.



The Alabama Cooperative Extension System's Urban Affairs and New Nontraditional Programs unit offers excellent opportunities for youth and adults to volunteer. In 2016, 301 new and returning youth were trained through VIP and later served as advisory board members, youth mentors, workshop facilitators, judges, and teen leaders.

Training through the VIP Leadership Conference enabled participants to improve their leadership skills and foster productive community relationships. In addition, these VIPs provided 5,345 hours of service for a savings of \$119,087 in salary costs.

Volunteering provides invaluable benefits to people of all ages, as well as to communities and organizations when funds are limited to retain or to hire new staff.



STEAM Prepares Youth for High-skilled Jobs

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University graduate students conduct poster presentations during STEM Day 2016 activities.

The Georgetown University study *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020* estimates that as many as 55 million jobs may go unfilled because not enough candidates will have the necessary science, technology, engineering, arts/agriculture, or math-related (STEAM/STEM) skills. Urban Affairs hopes to turn that projection around in Alabama by introducing youth to STEAM concepts, skills, and practices.

Last year the STEAM Exploration program reached 1,427 urban youth. On average, nearly 1,141 (80%) of these students were able to learn and use scientific research methods like transforming data into graphs. Approximately 400 (28%) of the youth indicated they would pursue a STEAM career, while 714 (50%) indicated maybe. However, 82% of the youth indicated they would become involved in additional STEAM activities conducted by Urban Affairs and New Non-traditional Programs.

In today's job market, employers appreciate the soft skills, but also look for critical thinking and problem-solving skills that are often developed through STEAM disciplines.



Urban Extension youth are always invited to campus to engage in STEM Day activities with AAMU faculty, students, staff, and guests.



Become a Health Champion

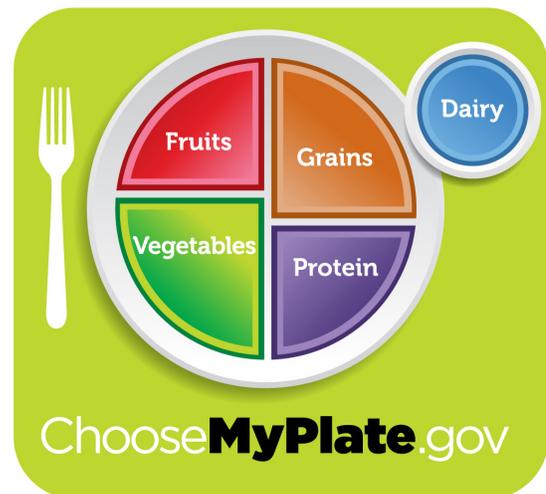
Obesity continues to plague the South with Alabama and Arkansas now tied as third in the nation for the highest obesity rates. Urban Extension remains on the front lines in addressing this health concern with programs like Community Health Aerobic Motivational Program Initiating Optimal Nutrition, better known as CHAMPION.

In 2016, CHAMPION helped 963 youth and adults to improve their eating habits and increase their levels of physical activity. In fact a 3-month post-delayed survey among 378 adults indicated that on average, 205 (54%) consumed fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and low-fat dairy products 1-2 times a day; 163 (43%) drank 40 or more ounces of water daily; and 178 (47%) exercised for at least 30 minutes 3-5 times a week.

A post-delayed survey among 227 youth participants further indicated that on average 140 (62%) youth consumed more fruits and vegetables and 109 (48%) engaged in at least 60 minutes of physical activity.

Today, Alabama Extension is committed to building a culture of health and improving quality of life for all residents in the state of Alabama.

Exercise is a vital component of CHAMPION as shown here by Jefferson County youth.



According to the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, a healthy diet combined with regular physical activity can help individuals to achieve and maintain good health and reduce the onset of chronic, diet-related diseases throughout their lives.

UEFNEP Reduces Food Waste & Costs

More and more Americans are eating out, which is not an economical option for low-income families on a tight budget. But, whether we eat at home or away, the "Save the Food" campaign ran by the Ad Council and the Natural Resources Defense Council, reported that Americans waste 40% of our food, which equates to \$1,500 for a family of four. National Extension programs like the Urban Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (Urban EFNEP) not only helps individuals and families to stretch their food dollars, but it helps individuals and families to prepare safe and healthy meals by applying practical money management tips and food safety strategies.

For example, 67% (110 of 165) of Urban UEFNEP adult participants increased their use of a grocery shopping list; 73% (120 of 164) compared prices when shopping; 78% (130 of 166) used the "Nutrition Facts" labels to make food selections/choices; 51% (84 of 165) followed the recommended practices of not thawing foods at room temperature; 41% (67 of 164) followed the recommended practices of not allowing meat and dairy foods to sit out more than two hours; and 19% (32 of 165) ran out of food before the end of the month less often.



By reducing food costs and food waste, which is the largest waste component in public landfills, citizens can also reduce their carbon footprint, preserve natural resources, and save money each month.

Reduce Environmental Risks at Home

Indoor air quality refers to the air quality within and around buildings, structures, and homes as it impacts the health of human occupants. By understanding and controlling indoor air pollution, individuals can help to reduce health concerns that are derived from common pollutants such as wood and tobacco smoke, gas-burning furnaces and appliances, radon gas, mold, and other allergens. These substances can trigger allergies, asthma attacks, and/or cause chronic heart and lung problems, including cancer.

The Alabama Urban Home*A*Syst program helps renters and property owners to not only identify indoor air pollution and other environmental risks, but it encourages them to take action. In 2016, Urban Extension educated more than 3,611 participants that learned how to complete action checklists, perform environmental risk assessments, and implement best management practices.

Post-survey data among 154 participants indicated the program enabled them to achieve a social (hazard free, securer home), environmental (protecting the environment from poor home site management practices) or economic (saving money) expectation.

Self-help environmental programs enable citizens to become active environmental stewards, thus preserving the environment and natural resources.

Participants at the Family Guidance Center in Montgomery County use houseplants as a simple and pleasant way to improve indoor air quality.



Urban Regional Extension Agent Phillip Carter conducting a Home*A*Syst session in Houston County.

The Value of E-Waste Drives

The discarding of electronics or e-waste is a tremendous threat to our environment. One of America's watchdogs, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), estimates that Americans discard millions of tons of e-waste each year. Electronics are made of highly toxic materials such as mercury, lead, cadmium, beryllium, and chromium that can damage bodily organs or cause death. Because of these substances, e-waste should be kept out of public landfills and water systems.

EWASTE

The Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System's E-Waste Institute continues to disseminate information, raise public awareness, and positively influence public policies regarding e-waste across Alabama and the nation. Annual waste drives have become one of its biggest initiatives.

In 2016, two agents partnered with local recyclers to conduct 5 e-waste drives, reaching 313 participants. As a result of these efforts, 11,025 pounds of e-waste was diverted from public landfills. The e-waste drives also deferred 33,761 lbs. of carbon emissions from entering the atmosphere.

According to the EPA's Waste Reduction Model, this equates to 5,727 gallons of gasoline conserved @ \$2.748 per gal. or \$15,737.79 or 225,074 recycled aluminum cans @ 0.85 per lb. for a total cost of \$6,171.38.

Recycling e-waste not only helps to save the environment, but it can help to create new jobs for professional recyclers and refurbishers in the green industry.



E-waste drives were held in Houston and Morgan counties with assistance from student volunteer Dominique Moore.

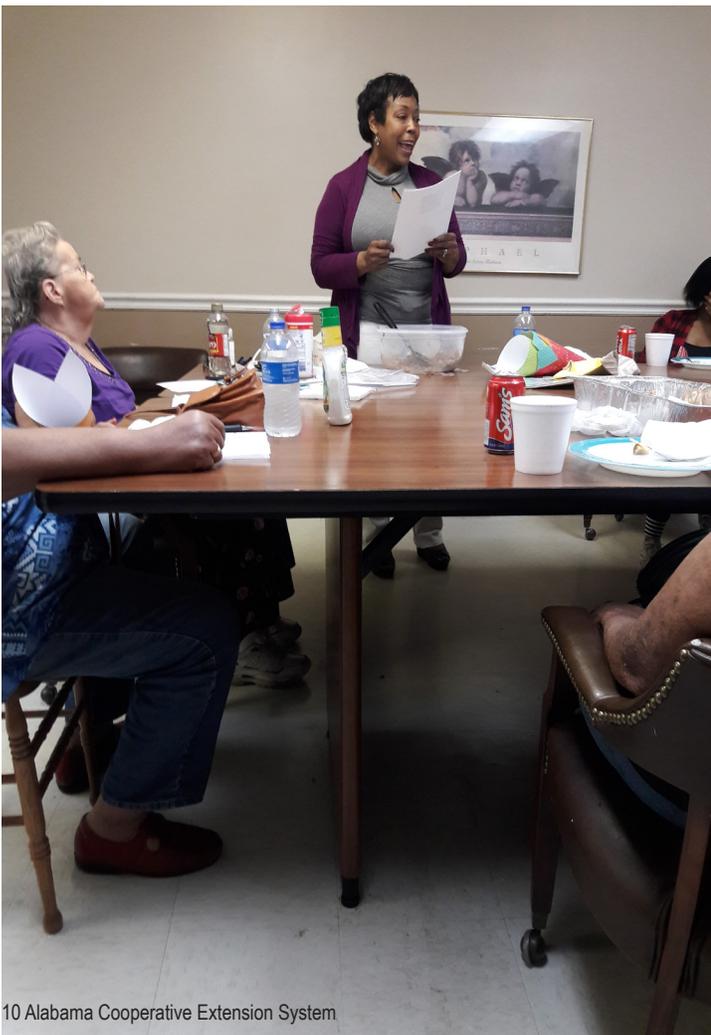
Building Strong Family Relations & Communities



Issues such as divorce, job changes, financial hardships, death, or health problems can negatively impact family dynamics. There may be times when families are not equipped to deal with the discord or dysfunction and it may be necessary to seek help from licensed and costly marital or family counselors. The Family Advocacy through Caring Engagement Strategies (FACES) program teaches individuals with family units to effectively communicate, resolve conflict, manage stress, and identify spending habits that could disrupt family harmony.

Among the 368 participants in 2016, 162 (44%) reported practicing what they had learned in the FACES program three to four months after training, such as deliberately trying to make their family relationships stronger and healthier, having open discussions with family members, paying closer attention to nonverbal messages, actively listening, resolving family conflicts, practicing stress management techniques, and using negotiation skills.

Relationship dynamics training helps family members to develop the skills they need to function in an emotionally healthy environment where children, families, and communities can thrive.



Seniors engaged in FACES activities in Madison County.

Urban Regional Extension Agent Donna Gullatte leads a FACES session in Jackson County with grandparent Marie Akery looking on.

Empowering Youth with Career Readiness Skills

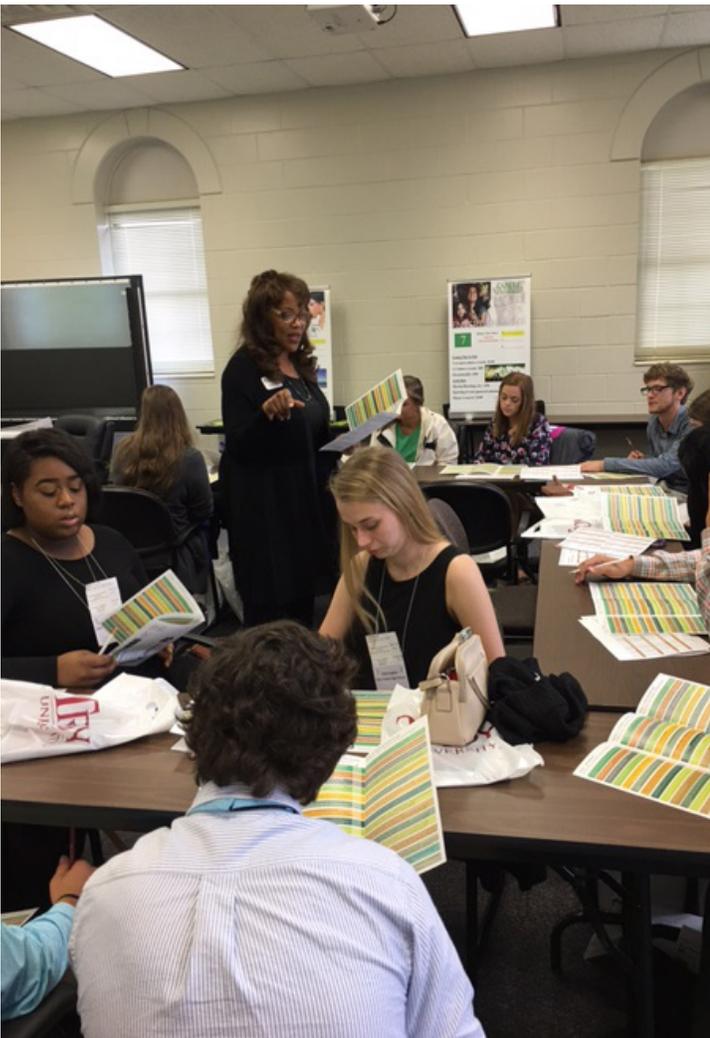


High schools across America are being advised to redesign their academic programs to include hands-on learning, college credit, and quality career and college exploration counseling. Such learning opportunities are designed to encourage students to pursue college and to prepare for future careers or vocations.

Alabama Extension programs like Career Countdown educates participants on the causes of economic deterioration, education planning, career planning, and career exploration techniques. In 2016, Career Countdown reached more than 39,109 individuals.

Based on the post-test results among 1,995 youth participants: 1,204 (60%) students learned how to explore career possibilities; 1,175 (58%) youth learned how to develop a career plan; 1,082 (54%) youth learned how to develop an education plan; 1,412 (70%) youth learned about career clusters; and 1,336 (66%) youth learned how to balance monthly income and household expenses.

Individuals that go on to pursue a college degree or vocation not only earn more money, but they find jobs that offer greater benefits, including health care and retirement options.



Urban Regional Extension Agents Cynthia Whittaker (top) and Rosalind James conduct Career Countdown sessions at an Economic and Community Development Open House in Jefferson County and the Business Summit at Troy University-Dothan in Houston County.



PREP participants at Day Reporting Center in Mobile County.

Get Ready for Employment Possibilities

In December 2016, the Alabama Department of Labor reported Alabama's unemployment rate at 6.3%, which was significantly higher than the national average of 4.7%. Research studies have proven that unemployed individuals are naturally more likely to experience financial hardship, which can also lead to family conflict and stress. To help alleviate the strains of unemployment, Urban Extension staff conducted eight Promoting Readiness for Employment Possibilities (PREP) classes for 388 individuals that desired to improve their job search strategies.

Based on pre- and post-test data collected among the 388 participants, 35 (9%) individuals were able to secure employment. In addition, participants increased their knowledge of creating a quality resume, completing a job application by hand or computer, and participating in technology-assisted interviews by 30% to 73%.

Within 1 to 2 months after participating in the program, 369 (95%) of the participants had completed a job application, 260 (67%) completed an online job application, 155 (40%) participated in a face-to-face interview, and 349 (90%) used skills learned in the program to select an appropriate interview wardrobe.

Effective job search strategies can lead to gainful employment that helps to alleviate financial hardship, conflicts, and stress on individual and family relations.

AEFSN Helps Farmers Improve Animal Health

Internal parasites continue to be a major health concern affecting sheep and goats, particularly in the South where a hot and damp climate produces ideal conditions for worm larvae to thrive. Without treatment such diseases can lead to high animal mortality rates. An integrated parasite management approach is recommended to mitigate parasite diseases.

In 2016, 359 post surveys indicated that 94% (337) of the respondents gained knowledge about goat and sheep nutrition, genetics, reproduction, and health management practices. The Animal Science and Forages Team also sought to decrease reliance on chemical dewormers by providing comprehensive educational products that focused on the use of FAMACHA, nematode fecal egg counts, biosecurity measures, and other integrated parasite control strategies.

Based on 359 post-surveys: 128 (35.6%) of the respondents reported improvements in sheep and goat health; 170 (47.3%) reported increases in production efficiency; and 129 (36%) of the respondents reported increases in profitability ranging from 5 to 20%.

Educating landowners and farmers about best animal health practices helps to ensure the sustainability and success of farm and business operations.



Animal producers demonstrating the use of the FAMACHA system when treating gastrointestinal worms in goats and sheep.

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