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BLUE LETTER

May 2023

No. 3853



FROM THE DIRECTOR

ICARE & More!

ICARE. How many of you out there know what this stands for or have even heard of it? Be honest, can you name what each letter in the acronym stands for? As my assistant Amy Hedges will tell you, I am not the best with acronyms, but this is one we are going to need to learn to use and live by. It is not new, but it has not been used consistently since its inception years ago. It represents our core values as the Division of Agriculture - Integrity, Collaboration, Accountability, Relevance and Excellence. These are the things that we all should remember as we do our jobs each day. Over the coming months, you will see increased use of this acronym at the Division level as Dr. Fields continues to hone our strategic plan guided by these core values. I challenge each of you to think of examples of these values you should apply to whatever job you do for the Division. You never know if you run into an administrator like me, or Dr. Fields, we might just ask you about them!

What a great past month it has been for the Division and the Cooperative Extension Service. I was so pleased to attend not one but two groundbreaking ceremonies for new facilities. I helped Greene County celebrate the beginning of the construction phase on their new county office that has been decades in the making. Former agent Allen Davis and current staff chair Lance Blythe could

not hide their excitement and joy. This is an awesome example of what great county support looks like, and I cannot wait to see the finished product.

In addition, history was made this past month with the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Northeast Rice Research and Extension Center in Northeast Arkansas. It is not every day that we build a new research station, and this one is going to be outstanding. My congratulations to Dr. Tim Burcham and everyone on his team involved with this event. More than 200 folks attended — a very proud moment for the Division of Ag and the Arkansas Rice Promotion Board, as well as everyone else who is making this station a reality.

In addition, we have set June 9 for the grand opening of the Arkansas Corn and Grain Sorghum Producers Building located at the Jackson County Extension Center. This building has special meaning for me as we look back at all the changes to that facility since the day that Dr. Tony Windham said, “Fine Bob, Extension can take it over, but you’re going to run it!” Gulp... But I could not be more pleased with what we have built and continue to build 10 years later.

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INSIDE SCOOP

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7. Tech Corner...and much more!

Arkansas PTAC Becomes Arkansas APEX-Accelerator



The National Procurement Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) has changed its name to APEX Accelerators.

The program is now under the management of the Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP) and the 90+ centers nationwide, including the Arkansas PTAC, have transitioned its name to Arkansas APEX Accelerator.

As the PTAC name sunsets in 2023, you will notice us slowly start implementing our new name, logo, branding, and contact information.

Located throughout Arkansas, Arkansas PTAC has provided valuable support to small businesses looking to enter the government contracting market. By offering resources and guidance on the procurement process, Arkansas PTAC has helped numerous companies in the state grow and thrive.

The new APEX Accelerators brand reflects the program's focus on driving innovation and helping small businesses reach new heights.

"We are thrilled to embark on this new chapter as APEX Accelerators and are confident that the new brand will be a powerful symbol of our commitment to fostering a strong and vibrant small business community in the state of Arkansas and beyond," said Melanie Berman, director of Arkansas APEX Accelerator (PTAC).

Our assistance will remain the same. We continue to be here for all your government contracting needs. You'll continue to experience exceptional support, just under a new name.

APEX Accelerators is a program of the Department of Defense that helps small businesses secure contracting opportunities with the government through technical assistance and guidance. With locations nationwide, APEX Accelerators are committed to driving innovation and propelling small businesses to new heights. For more information, please visit www.apexaccelerators.us. For more information about the Arkansas APEX Accelerator (PTAC), please visit www.uaex.uada.edu/apex. If your county would like to host an informational meeting on the Arkansas APEX Accelerator's services, contact us at apex@uada.edu. ■

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I am also very excited about the recent salary adjustment program that was announced just a few days ago. I will not repeat all that here, see the memo, but we have made some major headway with increasing some of our entry level salaries. My hope is that those of you who may not benefit as much as others in this process will understand that we had to start somewhere. Otherwise, nothing would get done. These increases were critical to our recruitment process for new employees. Having said that, I do not want to take away from the benefit of a 2% cost of living adjustment (COLA) as well as a merit program that will benefit most everyone. I am proud that

our administrative team was able to do this even though we were not successful in obtaining any new recurring dollars to our budget during this legislative session.

Finally, I know that you all have seen the announcement of my departure as Extension Director. I hope to make this as smooth and nondisruptive a transition as possible. I plan to stay on as director as long as possible or until a replacement for me is found. Like I said in the announcement, I am doing this for both professional and personal reasons, but my belief in the mission of the Cooperative Extension Service and in you all has not changed or wavered – ICARE. ■

Support Staff Conference

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Appreciation and acknowledgement of the value of our administrative and support staff was the recurring theme for the 2023 Support Staff Conference. More than 200 people attended either in person at the 4-H Center or by Zoom.

Participants at The Vines Center were offered several sessions per time period, while those on Zoom had one session at the same time. Thanks to Brandon Mathews and Rita Watson who served as Zoom hosts. Workday training, Civil Rights Compliance, stress reduction, conflict management, records management, cultural competency, time management, building connections and peer to peer were some of the sessions offered.

A big conference hit was the NearPod Appreciation Station orchestrated by Extension's IT Department. Participants could send shout-outs to each other before, during and after the conference.

Numerous silent auction items were provided for the Chi Epsilon Sigma fundraiser.

Kudos to the core and UADA Planning Committees, Tech Team, Production Crew, session presenters, and volunteers who worked tirelessly to make it happen. Special thanks to Beverly Brown who submitted the theme. To read Appreciation Station Shout-Outs: <https://uada.edu/employees/public/support-staff-conference/>. ■



Rise to the Challenge Session: Presenters Vanessa Lewis, peer panel and participants.

Let Your Inner GPS Guide You to Your Goals

“Your inner GPS (Greatness Positioning System) will guide and take you where you want to go. You may not receive the recognition you need or deserve, but I want to acknowledge you and your work right now,” Support Staff Conference keynote speaker Sericia Nelson said.

Nelson spoke April 19 about her previous career as support staff at KATV and a local radio station in Little Rock and how valuable support staff contributions are to any organization or business. She mentioned the routine tasks support staff often perform, stressing that “little things are BIG things,

which make a BIG difference because support staff are the heart of any division or department.”

Nelson said all of us have a GPS – professional and personal. “Sometimes you have to overcome life to be professional at work, to do the next right thing,” she said, “Some days, just showing up may be the most relevant thing you do.” Nelson said occasionally your GPS may not give you the right directions in the beginning, but you can reset the GPS.

Nelson emphasized that every job plays a role in the larger mission of any institution. ■



Sericia Nelson

4-H Big B Day with a Twist



Perry County hosted a “Big B Day on the Block” on the courthouse square in Perryville on April 3 to showcase 4-H. 4-H members, parents, grandparents, teachers, and elected officials were invited. Because school districts were closed on Monday, the event had a good turn-out; 160 people attended.

The mayor allowed organizers to block off the city street in front of the Perry County Extension Office for activities, which included broiler BBQ, hot buttered popcorn and drinks throughout the day, and lunch. During the afternoon, attendees boarded the USS Perry County for baitcasting, and honed their bicycle safety and BB gun safety skills. More than 77 4-H members competed in

events, and the newly elected county judge and Quorum Court members watched the youth compete. ■



Copeland E. and Gwendolyn W. preparing for bicycle safety.



EGF Makes an Impact in Desha County

The benefits of Extension Get Fit in Desha County have proven to be good for overall health. The participants in this program, which targets midlife and older adults, in weekly exercise sessions, have seen improvements in their everyday life. Their ages range from 50 to 90.

Participants that are involved have expressed these benefits:

- “My doctor has stated that my diabetic number has greatly improved.”
- “Being with friends I hold myself more accountable and I enjoy the fellowship together and sharing life.”
- “Not only keeps me moving but keeps me socially involved.”
- “My pain doctor was impressed with the strength of both my legs considering

the damage to my back. He informed me to keep doing the exercises I was doing.”

- “This exercise class has made my recovery from heart surgery easier.” ■



Desha County Extension Get Fit group in action!

What is Cultural Competence?

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Intercultural competence is an awareness of one's own cultural identity and the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with people from other cultures. The Division is excited to launch tools and resources to aid employees in assessing their own perspectives as well as understanding others. The framework called the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), allows participants to assess their own competency levels as well as its influence on interpersonal communication and relationship development.

The IDI framework conceptualizes intercultural competency development along a continuum of five distinct stages from monocultural to intercultural worldviews. Along the professional development journey, individuals

will enhance their competencies as well as ways to enhance their skillsets when engaging colleagues and clientele. For intercultural competence to develop, three major domains must be addressed:

- (1) identity development: deep self-awareness focused on biases, stereotypes, privileges, identities, and communities,
- (2) learning about cultural differences, and
- (3) bridging or adapting behavior with different groups.

In closing, the IDI framework supports learning that is both appropriate and challenging based on directed interventions, goals, and support. In the words of Maya Angelou: *"Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better."* ■

2023 FFA Agriscience Fair Awards

The FFA Agriscience Winners were announced at the State FFA Convention held at the Hot Springs Convention Center on April 26.

The \$300 Senior Division Award went to Hannah and Hadleigh Baker. The \$200 Teacher-Mentor award went to Josh Baker and Carson White. The \$200 Junior Division Award went to Holland Stacks. The \$100 Teacher-Mentor Award went to Chad Poindexter.

The Soybean Science Challenge is a farmer-funded, statewide, high school education program that seeks to increase student knowledge about the value of Arkansas soybeans to the Arkansas



JR Division SSC Winner Holland Stacks and FFA Advisor Chad Poindexter.

economy, to the labor force, and ultimately to feed and fuel the world.

The Soybean Science Challenge is a partnership between the Arkansas Soybean Promotion Board and the UADA Cooperative Extension Service.

For more information, contact Dr. Julie Robinson at jrobinson@uada.edu or Diedre Young at dyoung@uada.edu. ■

Soybean
science challenge



SR Division SSC Winners Hadleigh and Hannah Baker and FFA Advisor Carson White.

Tornado Clean Up

When the March 31 tornadoes ripped through parts of central Arkansas, the Pulaski County Extension staff knew it was time for action. Agents picked a day where the majority could attend and headed to the North Little Rock Volunteer station to help. They were sent to the Christopher Homes location, which happens to be a Snap-Ed program location in Pulaski County. After a full day of debris clean-up, the grounds were cleaner and safer than they were at the start of the day. ■



From L to R: Marley Shaddox, Brenna Hyatt, Blanca Hernandez, Alicia Boatwright, Andrew Bolton, and Laura Anne Warren after working hard cleaning the area.

Miller County

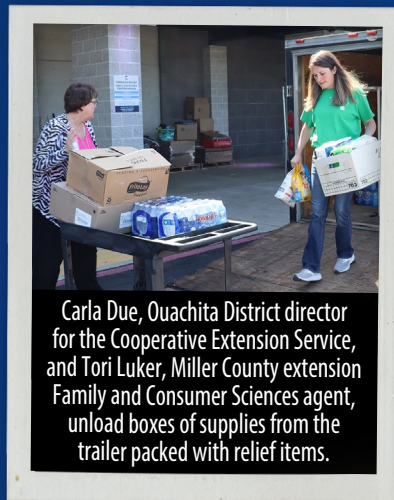
Donation Drive for Little Rock Tornado Victims

For Miller County 4-H agent McKenzie Rigdon, the urge to help people affected by the March 31 tornadoes stemmed from personal experience.

Rigdon lived in Atkins, Arkansas, when a tornado damaged her family's home in 2008. When a tornado came through her hometown of Vilonia in 2014, she said she witnessed widespread destruction to her community.

"I lost my job because of the tornado. My best friend was in a house that got hit, so it's a personal thing for me," Rigdon said. "I can't donate my time to help right now, so I felt like I needed to do the next best thing, which was gathering relief items."

Rigdon cataloged 672 donated items, some from Sevier County, including canned food, hygiene



Carla Due, Ouachita District director for the Cooperative Extension Service, and Tori Luker, Miller County extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent, unload boxes of supplies from the trailer packed with relief items.

and baby products, dozens of cases of bottled water and more.

On April 24, Rigdon along with Miller County FCS Agent Tori Luker and 4-H members Carlie Keahey, MaKenzie Larey and J.D. Martin, drove from Texarkana to Little Rock with the 4-H trailer in tow. They donated all the items to the City Center, a ministry of Immanuel Baptist Church, to be distributed to tornado victims. ■



Mary Hightower, chief communications officer for the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, and Carla Due, Ouachita District Director for extension, and JD Martin, a member of the Miller County 4-H Club, unload relief supplies.



What is 'Juice Jacking' and Tips to Avoid It



Planning to travel? No doubt you'll have your cell phone or another portable device, and you'll need to re-charge it at some point.

If your battery is running low, be aware that juicing up your electronic device at free USB port charging stations, such as those found in airports and hotel lobbies, might have unfortunate consequences. You could become a victim of "juice jacking," yet another cyber-theft tactic.

Cybersecurity experts warn that bad actors can load malware onto public USB charging stations to maliciously access electronic devices while they are being charged. Malware installed through a corrupted USB port can lock a device or export personal data and passwords directly to the perpetrator. Criminals can then use that information to access online accounts or sell it to other bad actors.

Although "juice jacking" has been demonstrated to be technically possible as a proof of concept, the FCC is not aware of any confirmed instances of it occurring.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO GUARD AGAINST "JUICE JACKING":

- Using AC power outlets can help you avoid any potential risks, so be sure to pack AC, car chargers, and your own USB cables with you when traveling.
- Carry an external battery.
- Consider carrying a charging-only cable, which prevents data from sending or receiving while charging, from a trusted supplier.
- If you plug your device into a USB port and a prompt appears asking you to select "share data" or "trust this computer" or "charge only," always select "charge only." *Provided by the Federal Trade Commission (FCC)*

Zoom Pro Tip – New Accessibility Feature

Zoom accessibility settings now feature a new setting that will dim the screen when flashing images are detected. To enable this feature, go to your settings in your Zoom desktop client, click on the Accessibility tab, and select the check box to enable the setting. You can read more about this setting and see before and after comparisons on the [Zoom Support page](#) for this feature.



Hump Day Hacks

Hump Day Hacks was on May 24. [Register](#) for the next Hump Day Hacks and join us on June 28.

2023 TECH TUESDAYS WEBINARS

Have you missed any past Tech Tuesday webinars or want to join future webinars? Check out the recordings and other resources on the [Tech Tuesday Blog page](#). More Tech Tuesday topics coming soon! Did you miss the April 2023 Tech Tuesday Webinar? Check out the recording and resources for [PivotTable 101: A Beginner's Guide to Excel's Powerful Tool](#) on the blog page.



Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Class



From L to R, Dr. Trey Malone and Brandon L. Mathews pose for photo at the end of the agribusiness entrepreneurship lecture.

Brandon L. Mathews, a program associate with the Community, Professional, & Economic Development unit, was a guest lecturer for Dr. Trey Malone's Agribusiness Entrepreneurship class at UA Fayetteville. Mathews discussed the Arkansas Business Navigator program and the no-cost

services it provides to small business owners and entrepreneurs across Arkansas, including free business counseling, market research, assistance with financial projections and training. Malone is an assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusinesses. ■

Arkansas Business Navigator Podcast

The most recent episode of the Arkansas Business Navigator (ABN) Podcast features disaster relief resource updates from the March 31 storms, changes at the Arkansas District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and new rule changes expanding access to SBA loan products to minority and marginalized business communities.

Brandon L. Mathews and Kamelle Gomez, program associates in the Community, Professional, & Economic Development unit, started a small business podcast last year as part of the Arkansas Business Navigator Program. The podcast features timely, relevant information about workshops and resources to support business owners around the state, news and program updates from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). It also features interviews from groups like APEX Accelerators and the UA Bowen Law School's Business Innovations Legal

Clinic. Mathews and Gomez release two episodes each month. Each episode runs 5-15 minutes.

UADA is one of seven organizations supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs in partnership with UA Little Rock's Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center (ASMTDC) thanks to funding through from the SBA. You can listen to the episodes on the UADA ABN website, Apple Podcasts or Spotify. ■



2024 Total Solar Eclipse Workshop

The Community, Professional, & Economic Development unit is actively working to help businesses and communities prepare for the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse. The series of workshops covered eclipse safety and viewing, business/retail preparedness, community planning best practices, and hospitality/accommodation/landowner training. These were offered through the CREATE BRIDGES initiative that helps promote and strengthen the retail, accommodations, tourism, and entertainment industries in



rural areas. The workshops were May 9-11 in Fulton, Izard and Sharp Counties and May 16-18 in Sevier, Little River and Howard Counties, respectively. More than 150 people attended the six county workshops collectively.

Brandon L. Mathews, program associate of Economic Development in the Community, Professional, & Economic Development unit promoting a series of community workshops with the help of county agents. ■

SNAP-Ed In-Service

SNAP-Ed held their annual in-service Training at the Little Rock State Office on April 12. Seventy-seven FCS agents, state staff, and SNAP-Ed Educators came together for the collaborative training.



FCS Agents, State Staff, and SNAP-Ed educators attended the SNAP-Ed in service in Little Rock.

Dr. Josh Phelps gave an overview of the guiding principles, history and achievements of SNAP-Ed at the national level. Amber Hairston, Pia Woods, and Pamela Luker presented the first agent panel, which focused on getting started as a

new agent, utilizing 4-H to deliver SNAP-Ed, and creative ways to find partners. The state SNAP-Ed team covered many topics including program evaluation, PEARS reporting system, financial updates, curriculum updates, and FAQs.

Heather Reed and JoAnn Vann provided fun physical activity breaks. Tristin Bolton led a food activity from the Food, Fun & Reading curriculum where agents assembled and tasted the “MyPlate Cracker Stack.” In the second agent panel, Susan Thomason, Caramie Edwards, Ashley Cuzzort and Marla Lane shared their SNAP-Ed Nutrition & Gardening projects.

The SNAP-Ed Team worked hard to put together what we hope was an enjoyable, helpful in-service. The SNAP-Ed Team appreciates the hard work being done by agents and educators to make the program a success. ■



4-H Wildlife Contest Draws a Crowd

Nine junior 4-H teams and three senior teams competed April 28 in the Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) State Contest at Five Oaks Duck Lodge near Humphrey in the Mississippi Alluvial Plain ecoregion. First place awards went to Stone County Junior Team (Trace M., Ava K., Archer, K.) and White County Senior Team (Caitlin C., Madalyn J., Delylia S., and Jonathan W.). The senior team achieved a near-perfect score on their wildlife management plan, a first in the four decades of the Arkansas state contest. The senior team will represent Arkansas at the national invitational this summer in Iowa/Minnesota. The event included educational activities led by 4-H Leader and WHEP graduate Bree Lanthrip of Drew County; Tech Changemakers by Connor H. and Stephen B.; drone demonstration by Arkansas County staff chair Grant Beckwith;

trapping as a wildlife management tool by Wil Hafner with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission; and wildlife careers by Jolene Hammock, University of Arkansas - Monticello. We greatly appreciate Johnny Lockley, manager of operations for Central Region for Summit Utilities and his crew for sponsoring and preparing a fabulous picnic lunch. ■



Wildlife Habitat Education Program (WHEP) State contestants group photo.

4-H Grassland Evaluation Results



Thirty-seven 4-H members from five counties around the state participated in the State 4-H Grassland Evaluation Contest on May 3 in Faulkner County. The contest is divided into four sections: soils interpretation, plant identification, grassland condition and wildlife habitat. The goal of the contest is to educate students in the benefits, use and management of grasslands for livestock production and wildlife habitat. The top senior teams will have the opportunity to represent Arkansas at the Mid-America Grassland Evaluation Contest in Missouri. This contest was made possible by the collaborative efforts of county agents, UADA specialists, and Ryan Parker, Grasslands Coordinating Wildlife Biologist at Quail Forever. Arkansas Forage and Grasslands Council sponsored the awards and t-shirts for the event.

The Champion Senior Team was from Independence County and was coached by County Agent Michelle Mobley. The second-place Senior Team was from Madison

County, and the third-place Senior Team was from Fulton County. The Top 3 individuals in the senior contest were Gabbi M. (Independence), Austin F. (Madison), and Laven F. (Madison). The Champion Junior Team was from Randolph County, coached by Mike Andrews. The second-place Junior Team was from Cleburne County, and the third-place team was from Independence County. The Top 3 Individuals in the Junior Contest were Samantha B. (Cleburne), Camren C. (Randolph), and Jadyn M (Randolph). Congratulations to the winners and all our hard-working 4-H members! ■



Fun on the Farm

Crawford County Extension Office along with several partners and volunteers, recently completed the annual Fun on the Farm Event. More than 700 students from all five school districts participated in the event at Arnolds Family Farm.



Students rotated through eight stations, each focused on different areas of the farm. They learned about poultry, dairy, germination, sheep & goats, beef, bees, forestry and strawberries.

A post event survey was given to both

parents and teachers. One teacher said “I thought this was an excellent field trip and gave the kids a lot of hands-on knowledge that can’t be taught in the classroom.” A parent reported “My son really enjoyed his time there. He came home telling me about everything that he saw and heard!”



“We love having this event for students. It is great to see them on the farm and asking questions while learning about things we find valuable.”

Crawford County Extension Agent Tristin Bolton said. ■

Chi Epsilon Sigma Awards & Fundraising



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Every year during the Support Staff Conference, Chi Epsilon Sigma hosts several fundraising events to support our scholarship and community outreach programs. During the conference, we also hold our annual meeting, consisting of awarding scholarships and membership recognition awards.

2023 Employee Recognition Awards:

- Employee of the Year —
Jo Ann Fish, LRSO
- Rookie of the Year —
Nancy Morehead, Washington County, Ozark District

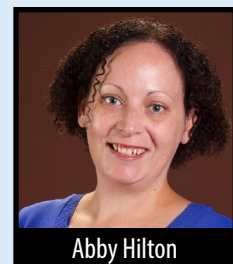


2023 Scholarships were awarded to:

- Abby Hilton, Division Business Office
- Jack Berryhill, son of Angela Berryhill,

(Hot Spring County)

- Eva Berryhill, daughter of Angela Berryhill (Hot Spring County)



This year, our combined fundraising activities raised \$2,600. Of that, half will go to our scholarship funds and half will be donated to the Credit Union fund for employees affected by the tornados. We would like to thank everyone for their continued support of our organization – from donations to bidding, we couldn't do it without you!

For more details about Chi Epsilon Sigma, including how to join, please visit: <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/about-extension/professional-organizations/chi-epsilon-sigma/>. ■

Grants & Contracts

| PROJECT TITLE | AWARD AMOUNT | PI | GRANTING AGENCY |
|---|--------------|----------------|---|
| Rice Insect Management (Year 2) | 28,413 | Ben Thrash | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Mid-South Entomology Working Group Insect Management in Mid-South Cotton | 42,500 | Ben Thrash | Cotton, Inc. |
| Statement of Work # 2023-01 | 26,000 | Ben Thrash | Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc. |
| Biotech Cotton_NA_All_LYG_BUG/OF_External_REG (Protocol No. 24289) | 45,000 | Ben Thrash | Bayer CropScience LP |
| Rice Enterprise Budgets and Production Economic Analysis | 7,500 | Breana Watkins | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Rice Breeding and Pathology Technical Support (Year 2) | 62,921 | Camila Nicolli | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Monitoring and Management of Fungicide Resistance of Sheath Blight in Arkansas | 16,383 | Camila Nicolli | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Engage Arkansas AmeriCorps Planning Grant | 62,119 | Hunter Goodman | Arkansas Department of Education |
| Agronomic Production Practices for Rice (Year 2) | 99,500 | Jarrod Hardke | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| DD50 Thermal Unit Thresholds and Seeding Date Effects for New Rice Cultivars (Year 2) | 63,000 | Jarrod Hardke | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Nitrogen Recommendations for New Rice Cultivars (Year 2) | 59,000 | Jarrod Hardke | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Arkansas Rice Variety Advancement Trials (Year 2) | 94,000 | Jarrod Hardke | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Arkansas Rice Performance Trials (Year 2) | 100,000 | Jarrod Hardke | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Rice Research Verification Program (Year 2) | 104,756 | Jarrod Hardke | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| 2023 NRA Greene County 4-H Shooting Sports | 1,986 | Lance Blythe | National Rifle Association Foundation (NRA) |
| Rice Insect Management (Year 2) | 99,516 | Nick Bateman | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| A Team Approach to Improved Weed Management in Rice (Year 2) | 86,625 | Thomas Butts | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| A Team Approach to Improved Weed Management in Rice (Year 2) | 76,340 | Tom Barber | Rice Research Promotion Board |
| Southern Root-Knot Nematode (YR 2) | 75,000 | Travis Faske | Mid-South Soybean Board |
| Evaluation of Seed Drop Rates in County Large Plot Variety Testing Program | 30,000 | Vic Ford | Cotton, Inc. |
| Assessing Susceptibility of Insect Pests of Corn in Storage to Selected Insecticides | 7,438 | Nick Bateman | Corn & Grain Promotion Board |
| TOTAL AWARDS FOR APRIL 2023: 1,180,559 | | | |

4-H Animal Science Contest Winners

4-H Animal Science contests have been in full-swing this spring! On April 21, 133 4-H members representing 16 counties around the state participated in the State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest. The next day, 24 members representing four counties participated in the State 4-H Meats Evaluation Contest. Winning senior teams from each contest will represent Arkansas at various national contests. These 4-H contests were made possible with the assistance of the faculty and students in the UA Animal Science Department who volunteered their time and expertise. Additionally, the Arkansas Beef Council, Arkansas Pork Producers Association, Arkansas State Sheep Council, Natural State Show Goat Association, and the Arkansas Cattlemen’s Association sponsored various awards for the contests.



In Livestock Judging, the Champion Senior Team was from Greene County and was coached by Greene County 4-H Agent Blake Davis. The second-place Senior Team was from Benton County and the 3rd Place Senior Team was from Polk County. The Champion Junior Livestock Judging Team was from Benton County, coached by Jessica Street. The second-place Junior Team was from Washington County, and the third-place team was from Madison County.

In Meats Evaluation, the Champion Senior Team was from Madison County, and their team members represented 4 of the top 5 scores in the contest. Madison County 4-H/FCS agent Caramie Edwards coached them. The Champion Junior Meats Evaluation Team was from Washington County and was coached by Lauren Cheevers. The second-place Junior Team was from Madison County, and the third-place Junior Team was from Benton County.

Congratulations to the winners and all our hard-working 4-H members! ■

LEADERSHIP LOG

LeadAR

LeadAR, the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture’s leadership program, has selected 21 Arkansans from around the state as members of Class 20. Read the full article [here](#). ■



LeadAR Class 20

iLEAD

iLEAD II participant Shaw nee Tichenor reflects on the iLEAD seminar held in Hope. Read the full article [here](#). ■

Leadership Lunch and Learn

The April 2023 Leadership Lunch and Learn book review featured “*Triggers: Creating Behavior that Lasts—Becoming the Person You Want to Be*,” written by Marshall Goldsmith and reviewed by Tia Gregory, extension instructor from Mississippi State University. Read details [here](#). Watch recording [here](#). ■



Leadership Lunch and Learn

Benefits Corner

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Mental Health Resources

Signs of Crisis

Here are some key indicators to watch for—in yourself and others—that could signal an emotional crisis:

- A clear and abrupt change in behavior.
- A loss of interest in activities that were previously enjoyed.
- Withdrawal from social activities and relationships.
- A marked decline in work product quality.
- An abrupt change in routine, such as someone who was always early or on time becomes habitually late.
- An abrupt change in appearance, such as weight loss, weight gain, or lack of hygiene.
- Dramatic mood swings, like anger, confusion, sadness, depression, or anxiety.
- Frequent substance use, often to the point where it interferes with daily life.

Helping Someone in Crisis

If you see someone struggling, consider taking these actions:

- Check on them.
- Just listen.
- Encourage them.

- Direct them to crisis resources.

Resources to Help

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP), available 24/7, offers confidential individual, family, and work-related counseling. Appointments are available at no cost to you during and after work hours.

Telehealth allows you to meet, at your convenience, with a board-certified doctor through confidential, secure video chat or over the phone. Learn more about telehealth benefits, including what you'll pay, on the telehealth page.

Detailed Information: <https://benefits.uasys.edu/health-wellness/mental-health-resources/>.

Questions: yourbenefits@uada.edu. ■



Personnel Changes



Welcome Aboard:

Sarah Sky Cato – ANR Communications Specialist - Office of Communications, Little Rock
Ashi Franke – Accessibility Manager - Office of Communications, Little Rock
Maggie Justice – Assistant Professor - Beef Cattle Specialist - Animal Science, Little Rock
Tiana Scurry – Navigator Project Specialist - Ag Economics and Ag Business, Little Rock
John Wesson – County Extension Agent - Water Quality, Sevier County
David Nistler – Program Associate - Horticulture Weed Management - Horticulture, Little Rock
Marcia Smith – Administrative Specialist III - Ag Economics and Ag Business, Little Rock
Debra Carter – Administrative Specialist III, Polk County
Emily Trennepohl – 4-H Program Assistant, Carroll County
Amanda Crane – 4-H Program Assistant, Montgomery County

Farewell to:

John Marcy – Poultry Science - Extension Poultry Specialist, John W Tyson Building
Brett L Gordon – County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, Woodruff County