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BLUE LETTER

September 2021
No. 3833



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Extension Through Credibility & Service

Our long strange COVID trip continues as cases of the Delta variant stubbornly refuse to decline, and our vaccination rate in the state slowly grinds upward. I do feel we are making progress and have learned to navigate meetings, both in-person and online, with some skill now. I thank you for your efforts in keeping us moving forward. I especially want to thank our county agents, many of whom are dealing with issues related to county fairs, fall meetings and COVID. Now is the time for us to be leaders in our communities, and many of you have stepped up.

Speaking of moving forward, this is the time of year for award nominations and, for those eligible, to consider promotion. The calls for both have gone out and we have been busy getting committees in place to handle applications. This is important work for us to do. It is good to recognize our peers who are deserving of our many Extension and Division award opportunities. Likewise, the call for promotion documents is our chance for those

eligible to be elevated within our organization based on their contributions and work output. Thank you to all who are serving on these important committees.

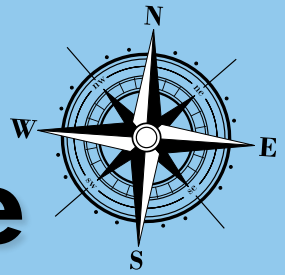
Most of you were as surprised as I was when our Vice President, Dr. Mark Cochran, announced his retirement earlier this month. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Cochran on a great career and for his leadership within the Division of Agriculture. For my part, Mark has always been very supportive, and his experience and wisdom will be sorely missed going forward. I had an excellent conversation with University President Dr. Don Bobbitt about the future of the Division, and he plans to continue visiting with stakeholders in our state's agricultural community as we begin a national search to identify the next division leader. In the meantime, he has appointed Chuck Culver, assistant vice president and director of external relations at UADA, as interim vice president. Chuck has worked with the division since 1990 and has a deep understanding of our mission. ■

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The History of Extension:

How We Got Here



The Arkansas Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists (AACES) August meeting of Beans, Brains and Things featured retired Extension PSD Director, Dr. Richard Poling. Dr. Poling began his extension career in 1976 and joined the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture in 2002, retiring in 2017 with 40 plus years of service to extension. His presentation “Extension History: How We Got Here” took us on a historical journey from the 1800s through current history.

The creation of land grant institutions marked the foundation of Extension’s history; his presentation included the 1916 period when Pulaski County appointed the first black county agents. Dr. Poling also discussed the 1950s, when rule changes allowed female agents to keep their jobs while married, and emphasized the significance of the opening in 1980 of the C. A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center.

He discussed the advancements made today in extension thanks to technology and virtual learning. Additionally, Dr. Poling discussed the challenges we have faced with COVID and that we should be proud

since we were still able to “deliver extension the way it was meant to be delivered.” In closing, he also saluted everyone for their hard work. To see Dr. Poling’s full presentation, visit <https://uada.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=1c266254-8472-4b05-9083-ad82012edb5c>. ■

Animal Science Receives Beef Council Funding

Recently, several Animal Science faculty received funding from the Arkansas Beef Council. We greatly appreciate the Beef Council’s support. The following research proposals were funded:

- *Determining Arkansas consumer preferences for locally produced beef and the implications for certified beef programs and in-state processing capacity* – Drs. James Mitchell (Department of Ag Economics & Agribusiness) and Kelly Vierck
- *Evaluation of freezer type and storage duration on beef quality traits* – Dr. Kelly Vierck
- *Utilizing carcass ultrasound and genomic testing to*

predict quality traits in direct marketed beef from farm to consumer (year 2) – Dr. Charles Looney

- *Evaluating the safety and quality of sous-vide beef products* – Dr. Kelly Vierck
- *Impact of feeding duration on carcass quality and consumer acceptance of locally grown beef* – Dr. Beth Kegley ■



Dr. Kelly Vierck



Dr. James Mitchell

iLEAD Cohort One Check In

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Through a series of activities and exercises invoking skills in communication, team building, and trust, employees at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture have begun to unlock their leadership potential through the new iLEAD program.

iLEAD participants met for the first time face-to-face at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in Little Rock on Aug. 19-20, 2021. The cohort of 15 employees from across the division were welcomed by administration, oriented to the program, and challenged to expand their leadership abilities.

On the program evaluation, one participant wrote, “Finally learning what ‘True Colors’ was all about. I had heard of it for years but knew very little. I felt skeptical at first but now I see the value of understanding a different color’s approach to a situation and how that will improve my ability to understand my coworkers and program partners.”



Another participant said, “Implementing the teambuilding activities into our unit will strengthen our work bonds and help us work more cohesively.”

The second iLEAD session was held virtually on Sept. 17, 2021. To learn more about the iLEAD program contact Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu or Lisa Davis, ldavis@uada.edu. ■

Leadership Lunch and Learn:

Managing for Trust

What is trust? Dr. Suzanna Windon, an assistant professor at Pennsylvania State University, shared her thoughts on the topic during the latest Leadership Lunch and Learn webinar held on Aug. 25, 2021.

According to her research, trust is:

- **Willingness to be vulnerable**
- **Willingness to engage cooperative behaviors when interacting with others**
- **A choice behavior, and**
- **An assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.**

Trust is an anchor in every successful collaborative team,

Windon said. She suggested individuals conduct a self-assessment to determine if your actions may be eroding people’s trust in you.

View the recording of the presentation [here](#).

To further develop your trust-building skills, download the [workbook](#) shared by Windon.

The next session in the Leadership Lunch and Learn series will take place at 12:15 p.m. on Sept. 29 and will feature “Working with Gen Z” by Miller County 4-H agent Hanan Douglas. [Register now](#). ■

MANAGING FOR TRUST

DR. SUZANNA WINDON
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
YOUTH AND ADULT LEADERSHIP
PENN STATE EXTENSION

LEADERSHIP LUNCH & LEARN

UVA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE RESEARCH & EXTENSION University of Arkansas System

feed your mind | LeadAR

4-H O-Rama Got Talent



4-H members from across the state had the opportunity to demonstrate their project work by participating in the 2021 Arkansas 4-H O-Rama. This year's theme was 4-H's Got Talent. The hybrid event included virtual and in-person activities and programming. More than 160 4-H members from 42 counties registered for the state event.

Farm Bureau Insurance, Farm Credit, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, and the Arkansas 4-H Foundation sponsored the event. For a list of contest winners, please visit: <https://4h.uada.edu>. Event pictures can be found [here](#). ■

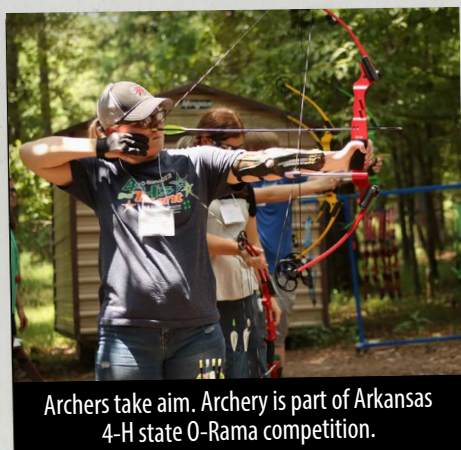
Highlights included the Awards of Excellence Dinner and Ceremony, keynote speaker Kate Garnes, workshops from Bumpers College and the Food Science department. The youth also got to participated in the "HUB" which focused on network and team building.



Arkansas 4-H O-Rama State Officers.



Faith F. won the Arkansas Governor's Award.



Archers take aim. Archery is part of Arkansas 4-H state O-Rama competition.



Tractor competition, part of the Arkansas 4-H State O-Rama.



Extension Homemakers Care



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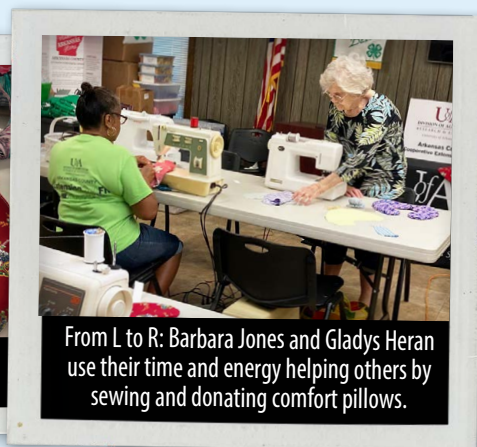
Members of the Arkansas County Extension Homemakers have made it their mission to empower individuals and families to improve their lives through continuing education, leadership development and community service. EH club members donate their time and talent whether in cutting material, sewing, delivering, or simply supporting others to create the projects that enrich our community.

EH members met at the Arkansas County Cooperative Extension Service for a day of fellowship, fun, food and helping others. Thirty-four neck and knee comfort pillows were completed by EH members and delivered to DeWitt City Hospital with more to come. A comfort pillow is small and can

be used as an underarm pillow, incision pillow, arm rest pillow, breast support pillow, knee pillow or neck pillow. They are made of machine-washable fabric and stuffed with fiberfill for easy care. A comfort pillow is just a little thing that can remind others that someone cares. ■



Finished comfort pillows delivered to DeWitt City Hospital.



From L to R: Barbara Jones and Gladys Heran use their time and energy helping others by sewing and donating comfort pillows.

National PTAC Day

PTAC Day is a national campaign designed to celebrate the contracting success of thousands of small businesses who have benefited from training and technical assistance delivered by their local PTACs. The third annual PTAC Day took place on Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2021.

National PTAC Day united the 89 Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) in 49 states (plus Guam and Puerto Rico) and the 54,000 clients they serve by sharing, in real time, small business success stories and

the significant economic impact that PTAC clients have created within their communities.

Arkansas PTAC celebrated this special day by hosting a virtual event and creating a social media campaign. The virtual event included a video showcase of our clients and staff, success stories, client testimonials, and information regarding upcoming big changes in the government contracting world. The celebration was capped off with a tribute to long-time PTAC Counselor Max Franks, who will be retiring soon.

Search the hashtag #PTACDay on social media to experience our social media campaign. Check out our archived monthly success stories [here](#).

If you know of a business in your area that is interested in government contracting, please refer them to us: 501-671-2390 or ptac@uada.edu. ■

Arkansas PTAC staff & clients toasting to success with sparkling cider during the 2019 PTAC Day celebration.





Accessible Word Doc Pro Tip: Never Do This & Always Do That

You are working hard to make sure your Word document is accessible before posting it on the UA website. You saved it as a PDF, but when it posts to the web, it still has accessibility errors. What happened?

The problem may be that you selected the “Save as Adobe PDF” button instead of just using the “Save As” button and selecting the PDF file extension from the drop-down menu box. By using the “Save as Adobe PDF” button, some of the corrections intended to make the document accessible did not translate when the page was posted to the website.

Remember: never use “Save as Adobe PDF” and always use “Save as” then select the “PDF” file extension from the drop-down box to create a clean PDF version of your document.

You may also disable the Microsoft Acrobat PDF Maker Add-in if you do not want to see the “Save as Adobe PDF” button as an option, but you will have to individually do this for each Microsoft Office product like Excel and PowerPoint. Easiest solution? Just never use the add-in.

Check Out Our New UADA Calendar!

The new calendar has some exciting features that you and our clientele will find useful.

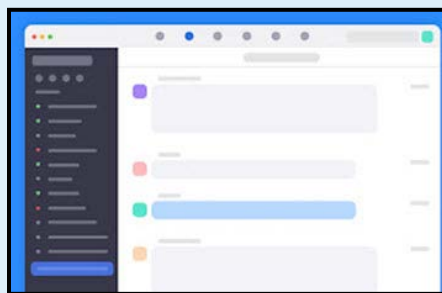
Check it out!! <https://calendar.uada.edu>
Need to add a CES event? Submit CES county, program, regional, or any public events (in person,

hybrid or virtual) using this form: [Add Event to CES Calendar](#).

Examples of events appropriate for the calendar include: Classes, training sessions, courses open to the public (virtual or in-person)

Examples of events NOT appropriate for the calendar include: Club meetings, private or closed events, or classes.

Zoom Pro Tip “Combat Meeting & Email Fatigue – Use Zoom Chat”



Do you find yourself thinking “this-could-have-been-an-email” meeting or “this-could-have-been-a-chat” email? Do the number of virtual meetings and your email inbox continue to grow? Use your Zoom desktop app and your mobile device’s Zoom app to more efficiently communicate with co-workers through the app Chat feature. Just like they say, “you gotta be in it to win it,” with the Zoom app, “you gotta be signed in it to get it.”

Check out the directions below to get signed in to your UADA Zoom account:

[Signing into Zoom Desktop App](#)
[Mobile Device Sign-In](#)

Read the latest Zoom blog (3 min read) on [“How to Combat Meeting and Email Fatigue with Chat.”](#)

2021 TECH TUESDAYS WEBINARS

Join us for the Oct. 12 Tech Tuesday webinar, “Making Outlook Work for YOU!” Register [here](#).

Did you miss the Tech Tuesday “Data Visualization” webinar? Check out the blog post [here](#).



Livestock Quiz Bowl and Skillathon

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The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture's faculty and staff are still hosting educational events and research.

Chelsey Kimbrough, special livestock and youth education specialist, organized the Livestock Quiz Bowl and the Livestock Skillathon competitions in Little Rock at the Arkansas State Fair Grounds earlier this summer. The contests are designed to increase youth knowledge of cattle, sheep, swine, and goats.

Instructor and youth specialist Bryan Kutz assisted with the competitions. Kutz was excited to resume activities focused on youth development after a tough year.

"I look forward to the education that comes with all aspects of the livestock industry for the youth," said Kutz. Madison County won the junior division in the

livestock skillathon contest. Team members included Vallie Y., Lillian S., Jade E., and McKenna C. Benton County won the senior division in the livestock skillathon contest. Team members included Wyatt J., Emily M. and Jacey S.

The winning junior team in the livestock quiz bowl was Madison County. Team members included Vallie Y., Lillian S., Jade E. and McKenna C.

The winning senior team in the livestock quiz bowl was Hempstead County. Team members included Anna S., Sara S., Sawyer B. and Kiersten P. ■



Chelsey Kimbrough



Bryan Kutz



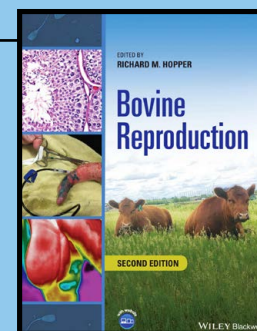
Randi Benefield

ANSC Grad Student Presentation Places Third

Animal Science M.S. student Randi Benefield placed third in the American Society of Animal Science Southern Section's graduate poster competition at this year's annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. Randi's poster was titled: "Influence of prenatal or postnatal exposure to gossypol from cottonseed meal on semen quality in commercial boars: a preliminary study on feral hog control." Congratulations Randi, great job! ■

Textbook Perfect

A huge congratulations to ANSC faculty members Drs. Brittini Littlejohn and Charles Looney and ANSC M.S. student Nicole Noga who have co-authored chapters in the second edition of the textbook "Bovine Reproduction." The book is currently available from Barnes and Noble, Amazon and other textbook retailers. ■



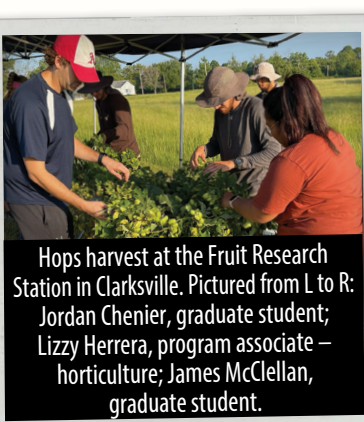
Horticulture Team Hosts Hops Webinar

On Aug. 19, the extension horticulture team held the 2021 Arkansas Hops Webinar. This webinar was the third in a series of workshops focusing on hops research at the Fruit Research Station in Clarksville, and the second that was held in an online format. The 2020 and 2021 hops webinars were a great success with a total of 176 registrants and 75 live attendees between the two.

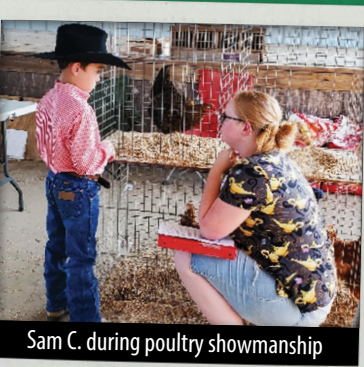
Rock. Megan spoke to attendees about the brewing process, the growth in local craft beer in Arkansas, and the importance of community for local businesses.

The full agenda of the 2021 Arkansas Hops Webinar can be found [here](#) and a playlist of all recorded talks can be found [here](#).

The hops research project is funded by a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant from the Arkansas Department of Agriculture. ■



The 2021 Arkansas Hops Webinar included talks from the project's leaders and topics focused on current production and pest management recommendations for growing hops in Arkansas, as well as post-harvest handling and analysis. Also featured was a brewer highlight with Megan Wylie from Stone's Throw Brewing in Little



Drew County Fair and Livestock Show

The 2021 Drew County Fair and Livestock Show saw one of the largest youth showings in years, with 31 exhibitors, 24 of whom were active

With so much interest in livestock, Drew County is starting a livestock club with two new volunteer leaders. We are excited about the growth happening in Drew County with 4-H members and love watching them learn more about raising and showing quality livestock.

4-H members showing cattle, sheep, goats, poultry and rabbits. We had eight exhibitors new to 4-H to show livestock.

Local businesses donated money for the premium sale that was given back to the students to help further their livestock projects. Many of these students will go on to attend district fairs and the state fair later this year.



All 31 Drew County exhibitors and their premium sale animals.

CREATE BRIDGES

Announcing Award Recipients

The Ozark Foothills region of CREATE BRIDGES is in the process of reviewing and announcing award recipients for CREATE PROJECTS (Celebration REtail, Accommodation, Tourism, and Entertainment with Project Resources for Optimizing and Jumpstarting Effective, Collaborative, and Timely Strategies).

Applications spanned from localized beautification efforts to clean, restore and enhance the Main Street corridor of a town to developing a “Feature Article” through the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism’s Co-Op Marketing program, highlighting the community cohesively as a leisure and travel destination on Arkansas.com



for an entire year. Each applicant could request up to \$2,000 in expenses. Applicants included local community foundations, chambers of commerce, banks, innovation hubs and a local advertising and promotion commission. PROJECTS was an opportunity for the Ozark Foothills’ community to catalyze change or promote their region in a way that would benefit the retail, accommodation, tourism, or entertainment sectors in the community. Applicants will coordinate with the CREATE BRIDGES team on execution once recipients are announced. More information about CREATE BRIDGES and can be found at www.uaex.uada.edu/createbridgesresources. ■

LeadAR Class 19 Prepares for National Study Tour

The National Study Tour for LeadAR Class 19 commenced in Washington D.C. the week of Sept. 19, 2021.

Participants met with Arkansas’ Congressional Delegation and staff, learn about policy from agencies

and trade groups, and network with agriculture leadership groups from other states.

“The UADA Community, Professional, and Economic Development leadership team is working diligently to coordinate a robust educational experience that affords unique opportunities for LeadAR participants to learn more about current issues, understand the formation of policy and impact on the state, and create a valuable network of contacts and resources that can continue development of communities in Arkansas,” said Dr. Julie Robinson, program director and an associate professor.

LeadAR is a program designed to help Arkansans broaden their understanding of issues and opportunities facing our state and strengthen their ability to make a difference. For more information about LeadAR, visit the website or contact Robinson at jrobinson@uada.edu, or Lisa Davis at ldavis@uada.edu. ■



4-H Families Helping 4-H Families



Columbia County 4-H families and friends sent an entire SUV loaded with water, soft drinks, individually wrapped drink mixes and snacks, canned goods (with can openers), first aid kits and cleaning supplies to Lafourche Parish, Louisiana 4-H families. All five of the 4-H clubs in Columbia County participated including: Bethlehem, Community Kids, Shiloh-Lamartine, Taylor Roaring Tigers, Teen Leaders and Unity 4-H clubs. Liberty Baptist Church, Stamps and various individuals also contributed. It is estimated that approximately \$750 worth of supplies were collected in less than a week.

This service project was a tag-team effort with Union County 4-H. The Union County 4-H has coordinated with Lafourche Parish 4-H to distribute these supplies to 4-H families there. The supplies were taken to the Union County Extension Office where they were loaded on a trailer traveling to Raceland.

Lafourche Parish was one of the hardest hit by Hurricane Ida. Many there remain without power, water and cell service. Schools are closed as the cleanup and recovery effort continues.

For information on Columbia County 4-H, contact the Columbia County Extension Office at (870) 235-3720. The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture offers all its Extension and Research programs and services without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. ■



Lisa Lynn, Administrative Specialist; Jamie Collier, CEA-FCS & 4-H and Aletta Smith, 4-H parent, taking a breather after loading an SUV with supplies donated by Columbia County 4-H and friends.

Grants and Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
Blackberry Sampling	500	Amanda L McWhirt	Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium
Produce Safety Prog PSRFY21-1A	158,527	Amanda Philyaw Perez	Arkansas Agriculture Department
AR 4-H Shooting Sports	10,000	Jesse R. Bocksnick	National Rifle Association Foundation (NRA)
Farmer Leadership Cleaning Water & Soil in Miss & Atchaf River Basins	198,980	Mike Daniels	University of Wisconsin System
TOTAL AWARDS FOR AUGUST 2021: \$368,007			

Benefits Corner

Benefits Open Enrollment will occur early this year!

October 25 – November 12, 2021

Open Enrollment is your once-a-year chance to add, drop or change your benefits coverage. Elections made during open enrollment will be effective Jan. 1, 2022. Be sure you and your family have the coverage you need for the coming year.

Open Enrollment is also your once-a-year chance to elect contributions to a Healthcare and/or Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account — your contribution elections don't roll over year to year.

Considering retirement at the end of the year?

Keep in mind Winter Break 2021 will begin Friday, Dec. 24, 2021 and continue through Friday, Dec. 31, 2021. Christmas Day will be observed on Monday, Dec. 27th and New Year's Day will be observed on Friday, Dec. 31. To receive holiday pay, employees

must be in a paid status (not on leave without pay) on the employee's normally scheduled workday before the holiday and the normally scheduled workday after the holiday. Therefore, if you elect to retire at the end of the year, in order to receive holiday pay for the winter break, you must work on or be on annual leave Dec. 23, 2021 and Jan. 3, 2022.

For more information, review: <https://uada.edu/employees/public/holiday-schedule.aspx> and reach out to yourbenefits@uada.edu prior to submitting a retirement election in Workday. ■



Personnel Changes

Welcome Aboard:

Blake Davis – County Extension Agent - Agriculture, Greene County Office
Kamella Neeley – County Extension Agent - 4-H, Mississippi County Office
Holly Dunn – Administrative Specialist III, Chicot County Office
Lauren Cheevers – Administrative Specialist II, Washington County Office
Makesha Thomas – 4-H Program Assistant, Washington County Office
Alicia Boatwright – County Extension Agent - Family and Consumer Sciences, Pulaski County Office
Katrina Owens – County Extension Agent - 4-H/Agriculture, Crittenden County Office
Auburn Mullins – Administrative Specialist II, Family & Consumer Science, Little Rock

Farewell to:

Michael Freyaldenhoven – Crop Soil & Environmental Science, Program Technician - Water Quality, Little Rock
Diane Clement – County Extension Agent - FCS, Cleveland County Office
Karley Mishler – County Extension Agent - Staff Chair, St. Francis County Office
Danielle Johnson – Administrative Specialist III, Horticulture, Little Rock
Shelby Gilmore – Administrative Specialist III, Family & Consumer Science, Little Rock

