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BLUE LETTER

November 2024

No. 3871



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Turkeys Pardoned

Last week, I had the opportunity to attend the annual turkey pardon ceremony at the Governor's Mansion. I don't know how you feel about pardoning turkeys as opposed to meting out rough justice that puts them at the center of the Thanksgiving table – I could go either way on the question, to be honest – but the pardon ceremony is a lighthearted way to draw attention to the state's ag/food industry. The agriculture community was well represented at the event, with a focus, appropriate to the occasion, on the state's poultry industry.

Turkeys have played a rather important role in my career. For several years, I managed American Farm Bureau's annual survey on the cost of a Thanksgiving meal. I would spend the better part of two weeks leading up to the holiday doing my best to explain to the media why the price of turkeys had gone up or down or stayed the same (TL;DR, supply and demand). Despite my past proficiency with turkey data, I learned something new about turkeys this year at the governor's mansion. Marvin Childers, President of The Poultry Federation, noted in his remarks at the event that every single Butterball brand whole bird sold in the US comes from Arkansas. That's pretty cool.

The star of the event, in my opinion, was Nevaeh Haile. She is the nine-year-old Faulkner County 4-Her who raised

Tom and Gladys – this year's pardoned turkeys. She was clearly proud of her birds, and as well-behaved as they were for the cameras, you might swear that she actually had them trained for the occasion. Much as I personally might have been tempted to put Tom and Gladys on the Thanksgiving menu, it would have taken a heart of stone to deny young Ms. Haile the satisfaction of seeing them pardoned.

Nevaeh and her turkeys were not alone in representing CES and 4-H in front of the governor this year. Faulkner County agents Kami Green and Mary Beth Groce came down in support of the Hailes. Our 4-H officers were on hand for the event as well, looking sharp, as always, in their green jackets. They got a chance to meet and shake hands with the governor as well as Secretary of Agriculture, Wes Ward. It was a great experience for our 4-Hers and a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase a little bit of our 4-H program.

As I write this a few days before Thanksgiving, I am mindful of the hard work that all of you have done for our organization and for all of our stakeholders around the state this year. I am thankful not only for your work but for the positive attitude and dedication that you bring to it. I hope you all enjoy a few relaxing days with your families and friends on a well-earned break.

Happy Thanksgiving! ■

INSIDE SCOOP

2. Quilt of Valor Ceremony
3. Cheese & Soapmaking Training
4. 4-H Month Celebration
5. Leadership Log
6. Tech Corner
7. Agency of the Year
- ...And much more!

Quilt of Valor Ceremony

Izard County 4-H Clubs organized a Quilt of Valor ceremony to honor Izard County veterans. Sixteen veterans, nominated by the community, were presented with hand-sewn quilts made by the Izard County 4-H Sewing Club during a ceremony at Ozarka College's Melbourne campus.

Through this meaningful project, 4-H members learned the importance of service and respect for those who have sacrificed for our freedom. Their work spanned several months, with 4-H members assembling kits with patriotic-colored fabric and instructions. The Izard County Extension Homemakers Council members lent guidance. EHC members Vivian Mitchell and Augusta Moore attended each 4-H meeting, ensuring the quilts were crafted with precision and care. Moore also machine-quilted most of the quilts, while Mitchell hand-quilted the quilt completed by her grandsons. Other EHC members, including Kelley Russell, Debbie Moody, Shirley Ross, Betty Neal, Jean Harvell, Janette Gillihan, Cindi House, and Carrie Goodey, as well as grandparent volunteers Betty Jo Evans and Mavaline Wilson, guided the young members throughout the project.

The 4-H members, who each made a quilt, were Issabella Bray, Chloe Coleman, Brylee Dillard, Brittany Dominquez, Brandon Dominquez, Emamaline Douglas, Hattie Gillihan, Aniston Johnson, Christina Maybrier, Sarah Maybrier, Layla McWilliams, Jeffrey Russell, Adrienna Tabb, Emmett Weston, Rory Weston, and Rylee Wood.

Veterans honored in the ceremony were Victor Dann, Darrell Douglas, Rayburn Finley, Larry Garner, Larry Lee, Ronny Loggains, Harold Marlin, Michael McSpadden, Gary Morrison, Kerry Sharp, Greg Tate, Charles Voyles, Donald Walker, Darrell Webb, James Wood, and Alvin Wooten. The ceremony included memorable stories shared by the veterans, providing young 4-H members a deeper understanding of the sacrifices made by servicemen and servicewomen.

Special thanks go to the Ozarka Culinary Department's Chef Edward and Chef Dillard for preparing refreshments, Ozarka College for hosting, and the families of each veteran for their unwavering support. This project, fostering community service and civic engagement, is a testament to the mission of 4-H in nurturing responsible, compassionate citizens. ■



Izard County veterans at Quilt of Valor ceremony.

Lammers Farm Field Day

In a faraway, northeast Delta county, bordered by the mighty Mississippi River, on a fabulous fall day, 87 third graders from Gosnell Elementary School students gathered at Jeff and Kelly Lammers Mississippi County family farm near Dell for a fun-filled day learning about agriculture.



Mississippi county 4-H Agent Kamella Neeley poses with a hissing cockroach and field day participants visit while holding their 4-H bags.

Mississippi County 4-H agent Kamella Neeley and Alan Beach, staff chair, manned educational stations at the event. Neeley set up an interactive bug station and donned beautiful butterfly wings complete with antennas. She shared farm-relevant and fun insect facts, with live hissing cockroaches present for a visual and touch experience. Beach provided information about cotton and its many uses.

The kids hand-picked cotton to take home from the learning cotton patch. Other activities included hayrides, drone demonstrations and a cow milking station. Farm Credit provided tee-shirts, and Farm Bureau provided snack bags. ■

Agents Host Mental Health Programs

This fall, county FCS agents and state faculty and staff have hosted several mental health programs around the state. Mental Health First Aid programs were held in Crawford County, Van Buren County, and at the Little Rock state office. Janet Perkins, Van Buren County FCS Agent hosted local first responders from Shirley and Damascus. The Crawford County Extension Homemakers hosted interested community members, and more than 50 Department of Agriculture inspectors and more than 40 UADA employees were trained across four sessions at the state office.

Pike County FCS agent Eva Langley hosted two suicide prevention classes in cooperation with the county health coalition and Dr. Brittney Schrick, extension family life specialist. Participants in Glenwood and Murfreesboro learned how to talk to someone experiencing suicidal thoughts and what mental health resources are available in the county and round the state. Clay County FCS agent Christin Holmes worked with Extension Homemakers members to host a health fair that included information on local resources and a session about recognizing anxiety and depression.

Benton County FCS agent Trudy McManus conducts a mental health program every other week with local EHC members.

Mental health program associate Laura Grutz spoke to Cleburne County EHC about anxiety and depression in older adults, and at Jefferson and Lawrence County EHC about farmer stress.



First responders and other community members in Van Buren County participate in Mental Health First Aid.

Ouachita County FCS agent Kerron Simpson presented on managing farm stress at the county Cattlemen's Association meeting. Pulaski County FCS agent Alicia Boatwright worked with veterans to teach how to deal with big feelings using the FLIP-IT program, and Shawnee Tichenor, Sebastian County FCS agent, is working with 4-H members to learn mindfulness and stress management using the 4-H Yoga for Kids program. White County FCS agent Katie Cullum works regularly with a local homeless shelter to deliver stress management programs. Although the programs reach different audiences, they were all designed to build skills, reduce stigma surrounding mental health, and increase awareness of the importance of stress management and self-care. Our county FCS agents are invaluable resources to their communities and make a real impact on community perceptions of mental health. ■

Cheese & Soapmaking Training

Dairy goat producers and UADA staff members toured the Institute for Goat Research at Langston University in Oklahoma and attended cheesemaking and soapmaking training in late September. It was an initiative of Dr. Dan Quadros, small ruminant specialist, and sponsored by Farm Credit. The full-day program included visiting the dairy goat production area, creamery and laboratories, hands-on workshops, presentations, and research updates. Most of the goat milk in the U.S. is used to produce cheese.

Cheesemaking combines food production's artistry with scientific precision. Additionally, soapmaking can be a good alternative for producers because goat milk soap has become very popular among consumers. Dermatologists have recommended goat milk soap for its gentle, non-irritating nature. In the hands-on workshops, participants



Top: Producers and UADA staff visiting the Langston University Goat Farm; Bottom: cheesemaking (L) and soapmaking (R) training.

learned fundamental skills to gain a solid foundation in the art and science of cheesemaking and tricks to produce a fragrant, silky soap. Family and Consumer Sciences educators shared their experiences with agents and producers, homesteaders and small farmers. The goal is to expand the potential of goat milk in Arkansas, increasing food security and family income. ■



4-H Month Celebration!

Arkansas County 4-H has 60 members and 15 volunteers, and they spent the month of October showcasing the great things that 4-H offers young people and promoting the organization.

The celebration began with the 4-H Appreciation Coffee held prior to the Arkansas County Quorum Court Meeting on Oct. 8. 4-H members welcomed courthouse visitors with coffee and refreshments. Connor Henry, State 4-H president, addressed the quorum court and shared some of his 4-H experiences. County Judge Eddie Best signed the 4-H proclamation proclaiming October as 4-H Month. On Oct. 17, 4-H hosted its annual 4-H Drive-by Hamburger Supper at the fairgrounds with 4-H youth and volunteers serving and promoting 4-H. The local Summit Utilities volunteer crew showed their support by cooking the hamburgers.



County Judge Eddie Best signed the 4-H proclamation proclaiming October as 4-H Month

4-H County Convention was held at the Arkansas County Courthouse on Oct. 21 to elect junior, senior and adult council officers and concluded the month's activities. ■

AACES & Chi Epsilon Sigma Fall Festival

On October 30th, AACES and Chi Epsilon Sigma hosted a spectacular fun-filled Fall Festival at the Little Rock State Office, complete with a lively costume contest, free food, and team spirit. It was a fantastic opportunity to strengthen connections across teams, with plenty of laughter and camaraderie as employees showcased their creativity. View the photo album [here!](#)

Costume Contest Winners:

- **Coolest Costume:** Nytalya Salter as Cruella de Vil
- **Scariest Costume:** Breanna Wade as a phishing scammer
- **Funniest Costume:** Kristena Merritt as a "Fitnessa" cheerleader
- **Sparkliest Costume:** Savanna George & Vanessa Lewis as Taylor Swift & The Golden Thread
- **Most Original Costume:** Anna Goff as the Blue Player from Candy Land
- **Best Costume:** A'ndrea Griffin as Maleficent
- **Best Group Costume:** HR & Office of Inclusion and Compliance, embodying Disney villains



Best Group Costume Winners.



Disco Diva, JeAlberne Smith.

So many great costumes were display at the Fall Festival.

We can't wait to see everyone's impressive costumes at next year's festival! ■





iLEAD

iLEAD Cohort IV Explores Northeast Arkansas

From Harrisburg, to Newport, to Batesville, iLEAD Cohort IV traveled northeast Arkansas to learn about extension and research in the area. We asked two iLEAD participants to share their experiences.

Day One

By: Brandon L. Mathews, Program Associate-Economic Development. If you ask ChatGPT what percentage of U.S. rice production comes from Arkansas, you may be surprised to hear the Natural State ranks number 1, producing 40%. While the first number is correct, the second number is not, but more on that later. Cohort IV of iLEAD traveled to the newly constructed Northeast Rice Research and Extension Center (NERREC) which opened its doors to the public on Aug. 30 with nearly 400 in attendance. Dr. Tim Burcham, NERREC center director, led a tour of the facilities and its offerings. Read more here.

Day Two

By: Linda Pate, Departmental Administrative Manager, Biological and Agricultural Engineering. iLead Cohort IV convened at Batesville Livestock and Forestry Research Station for their second day of visiting three research stations in northeast Arkansas. The drive to the Batesville research station is a beautiful drive. As you drive to the station, you can see the changing of the season, starting with the colors in the trees. Once at the station, the cohort worked on active listening and communication in a session led by Dr. Julie Robinson and Dr. Steve Siegelin. Being an active listener and having effective communication skills are two of the many qualities that make a good

leader and are skills the cohort is working on strengthening. Read more here.

LeadAR

Exploring Morocco: A Journey with LeadAR Class 20

As LeadAR Class 20 members embarked on their international study tour to Morocco, excitement buzzed in the air. Over 10 days, the class explored vibrant cities, rich agriculture, and unique cultural experiences that deepened our understanding of Morocco's agricultural landscape. Read the recap of our incredible journey here.

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. Applications for LeadAR Class 21 will open soon. For more information about LeadAR, visit the website or contact Julie Robinson, jrobinson@uada.edu, or Lisa Davis, ldavis@uada.edu.

Leadership Lunch and Learn

Leadership Lunch and Learn: Everybody Matters, Reviewed by Karl Bradley. In a recent Leadership Lunch and Learn, Karl Bradley, Extension Foundation leadership and team development specialist, reviewed "Everybody Matters: The Extraordinary Power of Caring for Your People," by authors Bob Chapman and Raj Sisodia. The book delves into the transformative impact of genuine care in the workplace. The central theme emphasizes that prioritizing people leads to greater engagement, productivity, and loyalty. Read details here. Watch the recording here. ■



Monroe County

Community Service

October's community service project for Monroe County 4-H members was a little more than gathering socks and soap. Members and leaders along with help from the Monroe County Farm Bureau Women's Committee, bagged approximately 648 quarts and 270 gallons of rice donated by Riviana Rice in Brinkley. The bagged rice was donated to local food banks, churches, and SR Centers in Monroe County as well as Ronald McDonald House in Little Rock and other nearby places who hand out food to those in need. ■

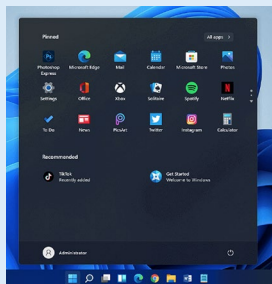


Monroe County 4-H members helped bag rice to donate to help those in need.



Windows 11 Upgrade Volunteer Migration Phase 2

Windows 11 is the biggest major Microsoft operating system update since 2015. With the release of this new operating system, Microsoft will stop supporting Windows 10 in October 2025. What does this mean for us? All UADA computers will need to be upgraded to Windows 11 or replaced with a new Windows 11 computer by October 2025.



We are currently in Phase 2 - Volunteer migration.

Volunteer Migration Phase 2

We are now entering phase 2 of the migration, which is completely voluntary. For those wanting to move forward with the Windows 11 upgrade, fill out the [volunteer request form](#) for each computer.

Mandatory Migration - Phase 3

In early 2025, any computer requiring an upgrade will be forcibly upgraded to Windows 11 unless they qualify for an exception. Exceptions will only be approved for the following devices:

- Any device that is used strictly with research\testing\networking equipment and not connected to the internet.

Admin By Request

Admin By Request gives each UADA user using a UADA domain managed device (e.g., desktop computer, laptop, tablet, etc.) the ability to download whitelisted (approved) software not available in Company Portal, request administrative rights on

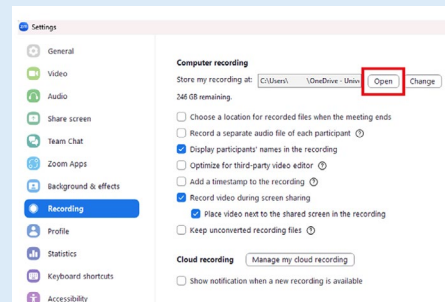
their device, and to uninstall programs. A key benefit is that users can request admin rights without having to put in a ticket with the help desk.

Knowledge Base Reference: Article - [Admin By Request](#).

Zoom Pro Tip

Where did my Recording go?

You recorded that meeting, but where did it go? If you don't have a licensed account or simply hit the wrong option when recording, it can be a pain to find where that recording went. An easy way to find that folder is to open up your settings, go to the recording tab, and select the Open button next to the file address box at the top of the dialog box. This will open up the file location where your Zoom recordings are saved. You can also change where these recordings are saved by using the



Change button to select a new folder. For more information on finding Zoom recordings, check out the [Zoom Support website](#).

Hump Day Hacks

- [Excel Keyboard Shortcuts](#)
- [Getting Started with Microsoft Bookings](#)
- [Microsoft Copilot Now in Microsoft 365 App](#)
- [Zoom Host Tools and Security Settings](#)
- [Accessible Hyperlinks](#) ■



2024 TECH TUESDAY 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 October's [Advanced Excel](#) Tech Tuesday? Check out the recording and resources.



Agency of the Year

Hempstead County 4-H was recently named the 2024 Agency of the Year by the United Way of Hempstead County at their annual gala. The gala was held on October 17th at the Hope Country Club.

Shelly Short, Gala & Golf Co-chair, presented the award stating "...this agency has consistently gone above and beyond to meet the needs of our community. Their commitment to inclusion, mentorship, and education has enriched the lives of many, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive. Moreover, this agency exemplifies what it means to be a community partner. Their collaborative spirit shines through their partnerships with local businesses, schools, and organizations, all working together to create a brighter future for our youth. This synergy amplifies their impact, proving that when we come together, we can achieve extraordinary things."



Pictured left, Shelly Short presenting award to Betty Wingfield (center) and Terrie James (right).

Present to receive the award were Terrie James, Staff Chair and Betty Wingfield, CEA – 4-H. United Way of Hempstead County supports 11 area agencies – Hempstead County 4-H being one of them. ■

Extension Hosts ACEDA Meeting

Extensions EDA University Center for Rural Resilience and Workforce Development hosted the October Arkansas Community and Economic Development Alliance meeting (ACEDA) on October 16. The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis presented, "Investing in Rural Prosperity: A Forum on Blending and Braiding Federal and Private Funds," which was attended by 75 individuals

across Arkansas representing industry, higher education, philanthropy, extension, local, state, and federal government. Attendees heard from state and federal agencies such as the Delta Regional Authority, USDA, and AEDC as well as organizations like Communities Unlimited and the Walton Family Foundation.

The meeting recording, presentation, contact information for presenters and panelists, and resource links will be made available in the coming weeks on the [ACEDA website](#). ACEDA meets quarterly and rotates speakers and hosts. If you want to learn about community, workforce, or economic development resources to benefit your county, program, or region of the state, join ACEDA and subscribe to the mailing list.

The next meeting will take place in January 2025. Date TBD. The topic will feature tools for researching and identifying private foundation grants with Foundation Directory Online. Contact Brandon L. Mathews at bmathews@uada.edu for more information. ■



Resource Panelists left to right: Darryl Treat, Greater Searcy County Chamber of Commerce; Christel Taylor, Newport Economic Development Council; Tinecia Harris, Delta Regional Authority; and moderate Samantha Evans, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.



ACEDA members and guests listen to open remarks from Daniel Paul Davis, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

Annual Leave Update

Effective Jan. 1, 2025

The U of A System will implement changes to the annual leave accrual schedule effective Jan. 1, 2025. All eligible employees will now accrue leave on a uniform schedule starting at 10 hours per month, increasing to 15 hours per month after five years of employment.

Current employees will maintain their existing rate or be adjusted to the new schedule based on the higher of the two accrual rates. No current employee will see a reduction in their accrual rate.

Revised Annual Leave Accrual Schedule

Year of Employment	Revised Accrual Schedule & Maximum Carryover
1	10 hours monthly / 120 Annually
2	12 hours monthly / 240 annually
3	12 hours monthly / 240 annually
4	14 hours monthly / 240 annually
5	14 hours monthly / 240 annually
6 and beyond	15 hours monthly / 240 annually

Additionally, changes to the annual leave maximum payout schedule will take effect for new hires beginning Jan. 1, 2025.

Current employees will follow this new payout structure starting Jan. 1, 2030. Under the revised policy, the maximum payout upon termination will be a dollar limit based on years of service.

Revised Annual Leave Maximum

Year of Employment	Maximum Payout Amount
1	Up to 30 Days (240 Hours) not to exceed \$7,500
2	Up to 30 Days (240 Hours) not to exceed \$12,500
3	Up to 30 Days (240 Hours) not to exceed \$17,500
4	Up to 30 Days (240 Hours) not to exceed \$25,500
5	Up to 30 Days (240 Hours) not to exceed \$32,500
6 and beyond	Up to 30 Days (240 Hours) not to exceed \$35,500

For more details on these changes, please refer to Board Policy 420.1 or contact Human Resources. ■



PRINT LOCAL

Just in case you didn't know (or in case you forgot), the Cooperative Extension Service has its very own in-house print shop. Whether you need a few flyers or a large order of perfect bound books, the Print Media Center is here to provide the support you need. Your print shop has a knowledgeable staff with over 40 years of combined dedicated service to Extension.

You can email printshop@uada.edu to get a quote or ask a question about a print job. Or, if you work in or near the Little Rock State Office, you can ask in person. The Print Media Center prints a wide variety of items such as flyers, postcards, business cards, envelopes, brochures, booklets and stickers. If you don't work in or near the Little Rock State Office, your order can be shipped to you. And there is no tax charged to any Extension Service print job. *The Print Media Center exists to support you. So, print local!*

"The print shop is amazing! The items they produce are top-notch. From customized stickers to beautiful recipe booklets and slick one-pagers, the items the print shop have produced for me are not only professional but also printed quickly right in house."

Leigh Ann Bullington
FCS Educator

"The print shop is a great tool to have at our disposal as we disseminate information around the state to farmers and ranchers, community leaders, and elected officials. The convenience of having printed material in-hand so quickly is incredibly valuable."

Jeffrey C. Weaver
Director of Government Affairs and Stakeholder Relations

Extension Homemakers Council New Hours

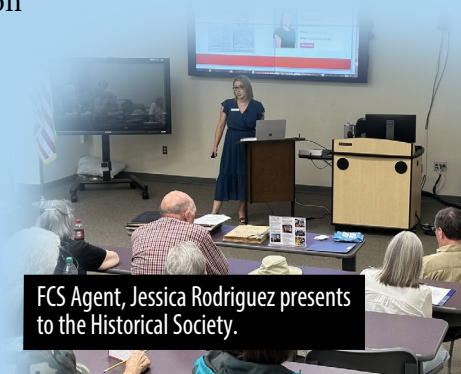
The Hot Spring County Extension Homemakers Council launched a new evening hours club. HSC currently has two established clubs, Harp, founded in 1961, and Gifford, founded in 1983. The current clubs meet in the morning, making it difficult for young professionals to attend the meetings. The new club will meet monthly on the third Thursday at 6 p.m. at the Malvern Library. AEHC Membership Chair Marilyn Spence attended the first meeting to encourage

the new club members. FCS agent Jessica Rodriguez, has been actively promoting EHC in Hot Spring County by hosting several interest meetings including a history of AEHC presentation at the HSC Historical Society.

On Oct. 29, 12 members joined the new club! The first meeting focused on getting to know the interests and strengths of the members and discussing officer roles. The next meeting will focus on selecting a club name, setting goals, voting for officers, and planning for holiday fun! ■



AEHC Membership Chair, Marilyn Spence and FCS Agent, Jessica Rodriguez.



FCS Agent, Jessica Rodriguez presents to the Historical Society.

Grants & Contracts

PROJECT TITLE	AWARD AMOUNT	PI	GRANTING AGENCY
Determining the Viability RPAAS for AR Fruits & Vegetables	68,347	Aaron Joseph Cato	Arkansas Agriculture Department
Statewide Technical Assistance for Micro Irrigation Systems in High Tunnels and Urban Agriculture	177,042	Amanda L McWhirt	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Building Landscape Resilience through Improved Native Plant Production for the Green Industry	50,915	Anthony Bowden	Arkansas Agriculture Department
Arkansas High Obesity Project (ArHOP) YR 2	780,000	Bryan Mader	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Develop and Implement of Outreach/communication Strategies to educate the public, specifically, hay land produces on Climate Smart practices	240,709	Bronc Finch	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Building Vaccine Confidence, Community Partnerships, and Tailored Messaging for Pharmacists in Arkansas	40,000	Jessica Vincent	Extension Foundation
Integrating the Learn. Understand. Decide. Methodology into How to Talk to Your Doctor in Arkansas	125,000	Jessica Vincent	Extension Foundation
EDA University Center at UADA-Extension -- Year 2	130,000	Jessica Vincent	U.S. Economic Development Administration
Climate Smart Agriculture virtual demonstration and educational program delivered statewide	552,325	Julie C Robinson	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Assessment of Biochar in Mitigating Nutrient Runoff and Promoting Soil Health and Carbon Sequestration in Southeast Arkansas	84,589	Mike Daniels	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Conduct Water Quality monitoring in Identified Mississippi River Basin initiative and National Water Quality Initiative watersheds to Provid data	118,518	Mike Daniels	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Increase the Implementation of Climate Smart Forestry practices through demonstration, technical assistance and Education	124,997	Mike Daniels	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Continue the Jointly-Funded Irrigation Water Management position with additional focus on Climate Smart Practices	148,272	Mike Hamilton	Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
Southern Plant Diagnostic Network (SPDN) 2024-2025	29,500	Travis Fiske	University of Florida
TOTAL AWARDS FOR OCTOBER 2024: \$2,670,214			

Early Childhood Conference

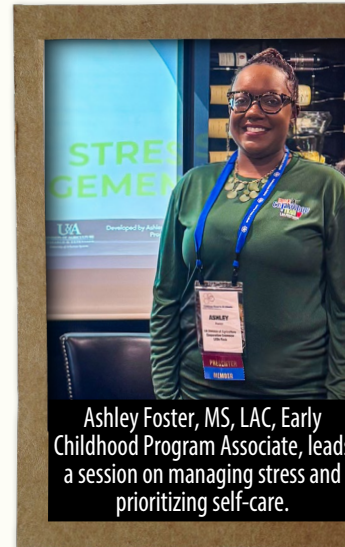
Ashley Foster, an early childhood program associate in Family and Consumer Sciences, presented on stress management to more than 370 childcare professionals at the Arkansas Early Childhood Conference held Oct. 9-12.

Childcare providers often experience stress from the demands of caring for young children and juggling multiple responsibilities, leading to physical symptoms like fatigue, headaches, and irritability, as well as emotional responses such as anxiety and frustration.

Foster's presentation on "Stress Management: Caring for Our Mind, Body, and Spirit" emphasized the importance

of self-care in managing stress, and focused on resilience-building, relaxation techniques, improved time management, and self-compassion as key strategies.

Mindfulness practices, including deep breathing exercises and meditation, were also discussed, along with the importance of setting realistic goals and seeking support from colleagues and mental health professionals. ■



Benefits Corner

Assistance Programs

Whether you're dealing with stress, mental health concerns, a child with a learning disability, a parent who needs in home care or a difficult colleague, the university offers resources to help.

The assistance programs provide resources for life's issues — no matter how big or small. You and your immediate family members can use the assistance programs for confidential, no-cost individual and family counseling.

There are two options: the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the UnitedHealthcare (UHC) Member Assistance



Program (MAP). To learn more about what each offers visit [here](#).

To schedule an appointment with EAP, call 800-542-6021 or 479-973-9072, or visit the EAP website. To schedule an appointment with UHC, call 877-660-3806 (TTY: 711).

The assistance programs are available 24/7/365 – holidays included. Call any time. Any questions, please reach out to yourbenefits@uada.edu. ■

Personnel Changes

Welcome Aboard:

Shannon Nolden – Administrative Specialist III, Jefferson County

Jessica Nicole Holcomb – Administrative Specialist II - Family & Consumer Science, Little Rock

Farewell to:

Bryan Mader – Assistant Professor - Family & Consumer Science, Little Rock

Lena Corbin – Administrative Specialist III - Jefferson County

Ronda Best – County Extension Agent - Family & Consumer Sciences, Dallas County

Henryetta A Farver – Administrative Specialist III - Horticulture, Little Rock

