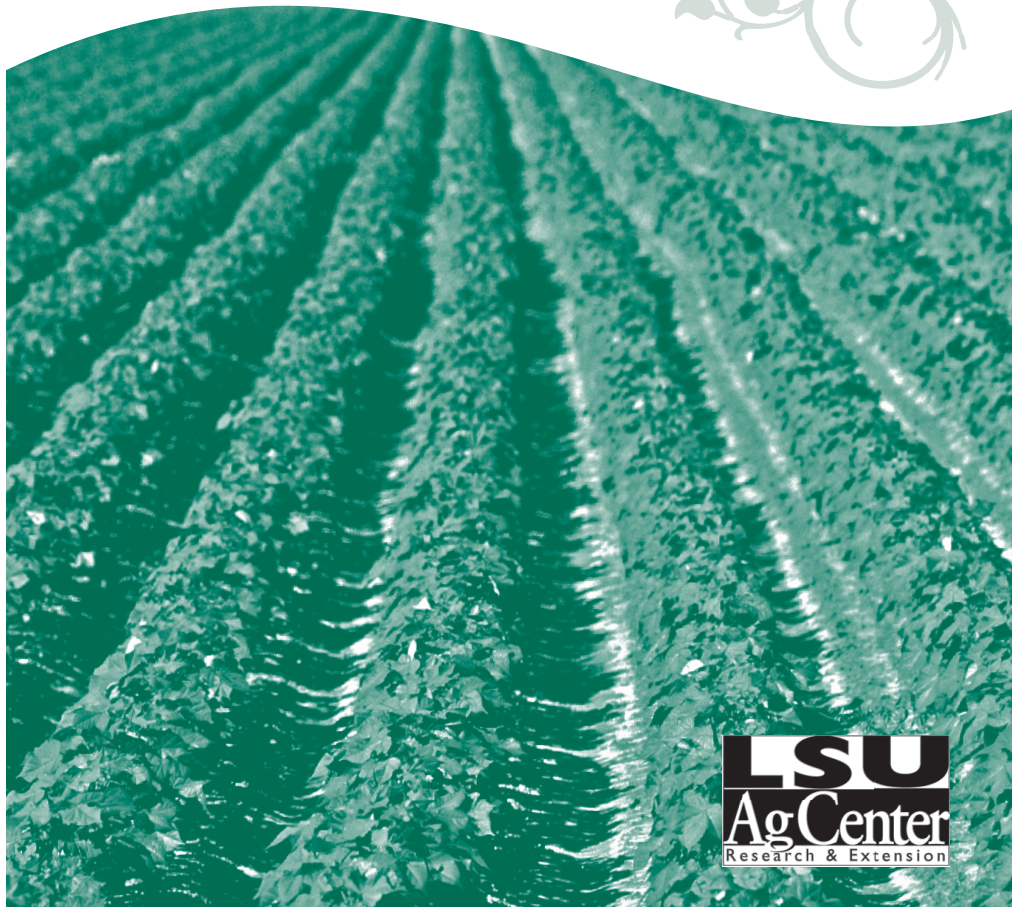


AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Class 2008 – 2010



LSU
AgCenter
Research & Extension

LSU Agricultural Center's

Agricultural Leadership Development Program

Class 2008-2010

Louisiana's agriculture, forestry, fisheries and agribusiness represent an important economic and cultural force in our state. Their greatest resource is the young men and women whose vision, talents and energy fuel the industries.

Every two years, the Louisiana State University AgCenter selects 25 of the most promising young men and women from the agricultural community to participate in a two-year educational program designed to strengthen leadership and the future of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, nurseries, rural media and agribusiness in the state.

In the outset three guiding principles were established for the program:

- 1) Help participants understand that the economics of agriculture are global in dimension; agriculture's economic interests do not begin or end at the parish, state or national borders.
- 2) Develop leadership skills and public awareness so the participants become effective spokespersons for agriculture and rural Louisiana.
- 3) Encourage the participants' understanding and involvement in the social, economic and political systems affecting rural communities.

The overall objective is to help each participant perform more effectively in leadership roles.

On the following pages, we introduce you to the members of the program's eleventh class.

Dr. Bobby Soileau
Director

Ms. Jodie Whiddon
Assistant

Dr. William B. Richardson
Chancellor & Chalkley Chair
Administration Advisor



Joyce B. Allen
Batchelor

From Pointe Coupee Parish, Joyce is co-owner of Allen Ranch and Performance Pecan Pickers. A third-generation producer, she produces 200 head of cattle and hay on 1,200 acres. In addition, she is a custom pecan harvester in Pointe Coupee Parish. She is currently enrolled in the LSU Master Farmer Program. Her husband's name is Robert, and they have 5 children – four sons and one daughter.



Robert E. Allen
Batchelor

From Pointe Coupee Parish, Robert is co-owner of Allen Ranch and Performance Pecan Pickers. He produces 200 head of cattle and hay on 1,200 acres. In addition, he is a custom pecan harvester in Pointe Coupee Parish. He has a degree in vocational education from LSU. His wife's name is Joyce, and they have five children – four sons and one daughter.



Erle West Barham
Rayville

From Richland Parish, Erle West owns farming and elevator operations in Louisiana and Mississippi. He produces 2,500 acres of cotton, 2,000 acres of corn, 800 acres of wheat and 500 acres of soybeans. He has an agribusiness degree from the University of Louisiana at Monroe. His wife's name is Trudy.



Michael Blazier
Homer

From Claiborne Parish, Michael is the project leader for forestry research for the LSU AgCenter's Hill Farm Research Station. He has a bachelor's degree in forest management from Louisiana Tech University. In addition, he has a master's in forest resources and a Ph.D. in environmental science from Oklahoma State University. His wife's name is Stacy.



Donald W. Branton
Ferriday

From Concordia Parish, Donald is the general manager of Tanner and Company Ginning Corporation, which gins 25,000 to 45,000 bales of cotton a year. He has a degree in management information systems from the University of Mississippi. His wife's name is Jenny.



Epney Brasher
Amite

From Tangipahoa Parish, Epney is the forestry parish supervisor for Tangipahoa Parish with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. She provides assistance with land management, fire suppression and cost-share programming. She has a degree in forest management from LSU.



Errol J. Domingues
Erath

From Vermilion Parish, Errol is the co-owner of Domingues Farms. He produces 4,800 acres of sugarcane and soybeans, rotates rice and crawfish on 600 acres and raises 210 head of F-1 beef cattle. Errol was recently elected as a Vermilion Parish Police Juror. His wife's name is Jodi. They have two boys, Austin and Blake.



Theodore W. "Todd" Ellefson
Mandeville

From St. Tammany Parish, Todd is the general manager of Windmill Nursery of Louisiana, which produces container trees, evergreen shrubs and perennials. Todd's family has a 120-year history in the nursery business. His wife's name is Stacy.



Jonathan H. Fife
Mangham

From Richland Parish, Hunter is a sales representative for Dow AgroSciences where he sells plant commodity and range and pasture chemicals. In addition, he produces hay and cross bred beef cattle. He has a bachelor's degree in agribusiness from the University of Louisiana at Monroe and a master's degree in entomology from LSU. His wife's name is Le Labon.



Stuart A. Gardner
Sunset

From St. Landry Parish, Stuart is the area range conservationist in Lafayette for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In addition, he is the operator of a 425-acre ranch producing beef cattle, quarter horses, meat goats, and provides customized grazing services. He has an animal science degree from Northwestern State University. His wife's name is Sophia.



Benny W. Guerrero Jr.
Oak Grove

From West Carroll Parish, Benny is the location manager at Agriliance, which sells seed, pesticides, fertilizer and farm supplies. Benny has an agribusiness degree from the University of Louisiana at Monroe. His wife's name is Tammy.



Robert H. "Hank" Jones
Winnsboro

From Franklin Parish, Hank is the co-owner of C & J Ag Consulting where he works with numerous plant commodities in Northeast Louisiana. Hank has a bachelor's degree in agronomy from Louisiana Tech and a master's degree in entomology from LSU. His wife's name is Melanie.



Wilson E. Justice
Centerville

From St. Mary Parish, Wilson is the manager of Frank Martin Farms, which produces sugarcane and soybeans. He manages 2,100 acres of sugarcane and 250 acres of soybeans. He has bachelor's and master's degrees in agronomy from LSU. His wife's name is Dana.



D. Chad LeBlanc
Arnaudville

From St. Landry Parish, Chad is the area sales manager for Monsanto where he provides cotton, corn and soybean germplasm and technology. Chad grew up on a rice farm in Welsh, Louisiana. He has a degree in agribusiness from LSU. His wife's name is Jamie.



Amelia L. Levin
Amite

From Tangipahoa Parish, Amelia is the co-owner/manager of J Bar L Farm where she produces beef cattle and hay with her mother and sister. In addition, she is part owner of a nursery operation and a 1,000-acre tree farm. Amelia has a degree in economics and religion from Wellesley College.



Jeannine M. Meeds
Big Branch

From St. Tammany Parish, Jeannine is the owner/operator of a pine and hardwood tree farm. In addition, she has written cookbooks and produced television programs promoting Louisiana food products. She has a liberal arts degree from the University of Montana, and a Spanish and communications degree from Southeastern Louisiana University.



Donna S. Morgan
Pineville

From Rapides Parish, Donna has been with the LSU AgCenter for seven years and is an assistant area agent in the central region. She helps coordinate the statewide training sessions and the Model Farm demonstrations with the Master Farmer Program, which addresses environmental issues associated with agriculture. Donna has a degree in agribusiness from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her husband's name is Jamie.



Jennifer "Jenni" Peterman
Alexandria

From Rapides Parish, Jenni and her husband own Peterman Farms, which produces cotton, milo, corn and cattle on 1,200 acres. She works part time as an accountant and is active in her community through association boards and her church. In addition, she is a justice of the peace in Ward 8 in Rapides Parish and has a business administration degree from LSU. Her husband's name is Pat, and they have two daughters.



**Christian J. Richard
Kaplan**

From Vermilion Parish, Christian is the owner/operator of Christian Richard Farms LLC, which produces rice, crawfish and soybeans on 1,300 acres. In addition, he provides custom planting and precision land-leveling services. He has an agribusiness degree from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.



**Scott F. Shepard
Oak Ridge**

From Morehouse Parish, Scott is the owner and farm manager of Scott Shepard Farms and Shepard Planting. He farms corn, cotton, soybeans and wheat on 2,000 acres. He has a degree in agricultural economics and agribusiness from LSU. His wife's name is Marlo.



**Howard D. Smith
Wisner**

From Franklin Parish, Howard is the Winnsboro vice president of the Louisiana Federal Land Bank, which provides rural land financing. In addition, he is a part-time cattle producer. He has a degree in agribusiness from the University of Louisiana at Monroe. His wife's name is Tara.



Brian L. Spillman
St. Francisville

From West Feliciana Parish, Brian is the owner/operator of a family beef cattle operation. In addition, he owns a lawn and landscape business and is a nuisance alligator trapper. He was assistant chief of law enforcement for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and is currently a deputy sheriff in West Feliciana. His wife's name is Amy.



John C. Thevis
Simmesport

From Avoyelles Parish, John is a sales representative for United Agri Products, which sells seed, pesticides, fertilizer and farm supplies. John grew up on a farm and produced cotton for 15 years. He has an agribusiness degree from LSU-Alexandria.



Dwayne J. Viator
Youngsville

From Lafayette Parish, Dwayne is the owner/operator of Dwayne Viator Farms, which produces sugarcane, wheat, soybeans and crawfish on 965 acres. Dwayne has an agribusiness degree from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette where he also played football.



**Jennifer L. Young
Zachary**

From East Baton Rouge Parish, Jennifer is the owner/operator of Y-Farms Ducks & Dogs, which is a mallard duck hatchery and a hunting retriever kennel. She hatches approximately 40,000 mallard ducks annually. In addition, she breeds and trains hunting retrievers. Her husband's name is Benjamin.



For information:

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The LSU AgCenter provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.