

chancellor's

JUNE 2021

Report

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USDA
DEBT RELIEF

FREEDOM
for **VETS**

Faculty and Staff
PROMOTIONS

ORLANDO F. McMEANS
Chancellor-Dean

RENITA MARSHALL
Vice-Chancellor
for Academic and Student Services
/Associate Dean

DE'SHOIN YORK
Vice Chancellor
for Extension & Outreach

CALVIN WALKER
Executive Vice-Chancellor and
Director of SUAREC Special Projects
Interim Vice-Chancellor for Research

USDA DEBT RELIEF

Cedric Richmond announced USDA Debt Relief Plan during SU Ag Center Listening Session

Cedric Richmond, Senior Advisor to the President of the United States and Director of the Office of Public Engagement spoke to a group of socially disadvantaged farmers on May 24, 2021, during a listening session hosted by the Southern University Ag Center in St. James, Louisiana.

The session was held to provide information on the debt relief plan's process with borrowers and producers and answer any questions they may have had. The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) debt relief plan is part of the recently passed American Rescue Plan.

Historically, socially disadvantaged producers have faced discrimination which has prevented them from achieving as much as their counterparts who do not face these documented acts of discrimination. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) seeks to address the cumulative effects of discrimination among socially disadvantaged producers with a program of debt relief.

"The greatness of America lays not in being more inviting than any other nation, but rather in her ability to repair her faults," said Richmond. "And today we take a step towards repairing faults in this country. In fact, we take a \$5 billion step towards repairing and righting wrongs that have been here for hundreds of years," he added.

Dr. Dewayne Goldman, USDA Senior Advisor for Racial Equity to the Secretary of Agriculture discussed how ARPA 1005 and 1006 will assist farmers and fill the need to hold additional listening sessions to better understand issues faced by socially disadvantaged farmers.

Goldman also warned farms of individuals who may ask them to pay a fee to complete their application.

"Once you have the form AD2047 on file everything else is automated. That form is what identifies you as a socially disadvantaged farmer," stated Goldman. "If anybody is asking you to pay a fee to get this debit payment, I want to know about it because there should be no fee. All the paperwork that is needed to process these payments reside at FSA (USDA Farm Service Agency)," he expressed.





Form AD2047 is available at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/>.

Additional speakers attending the event included Congressman Troy Carter, Southern University Ag Center Chancellor-Dean Dr. Orlando F. McMeans, Vice Chancellor for Extension and Outreach Dr. De'Shoin York, Agriculture and Natural Resources Program Leader Zanetta Augustine, and USDA National Outreach Director for the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement Allison Johnson.

This announcement follows the May 13, 2021, USDA debt relief webinar that was co-hosted by the Southern University Ag Center and the USDA for small and minority farmers.



SU AG CENTER ONE OF FOUR CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE TO RECEIVE USDA FUNDING



USDA/NIFA awarded \$5.76 Million in support to four 1890 land-grant institutions

The Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center is one of four 1890 Centers of Excellence grant recipients to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). In total, USDA/NIFA awarded \$5.76 million in support to all four institutions.

"The 1890 Centers of Excellence awards are an effort to increase rural prosperity and economic sustainability of food systems in underserved farming communities," said NIFA director Dr. Carrie Castille. "These grants will support projects that address critical needs for developing global food security and defense; enhance academic and career activities for students pursuing careers in food and agricultural sciences; and address vital needs in nutrition and health to improve the quality of life of underserved populations."

The SU Ag Center received \$1,680,000 in funding to establish the Center of Excellence for Nutrition, Health, Wellness, and Quality of Life. This Center will address diet-related health disparities in African Americans by increasing the capacities of 1890 institutions through nutrition research, teaching and extension.

"The activities of the Center of Excellence for Nutrition, Health, Wellness and Quality of Life, not only will maximize partnerships among Southern University, North Carolina A&T State University and Tuskegee University and strengthen collaborative efforts within and across academic disciplines, but also will enhance student knowledge, leadership and research skills as it relates to food, nutrition, health, and diet disparities," said Dr. Fatemeh Malekian, Professor of Food Science, Project Director (PD), and Director of the Southern Institute for Food, Nutrition, and Wellness at the SU Ag Center. "Through intentional and deliberate collaborative efforts, partnerships will also be enhanced with other 1890 institutions and provide opportunities for other land-grant institutions to participate in the future," added Dr. Malekian.

The additional three institutions receiving the 1890 Centers of Excellence awards are Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama; the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in Princess Anne, Maryland; and North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro, North Carolina:

•The "Center for Farming Systems, Rural Prosperity and Economic Sustainability" at Tuskegee University will develop and share best practices, innovations, technologies and personnel across an 18-state region to address the profitability, sustainability and prosperity challenges of small farmers, ranchers and forestland owners, with an emphasis on socially disadvantaged and underserved farmers.

•The University of Maryland will develop "The 1890 Universities Center of Excellence for Global Food Security and Defense" to foster international partnerships that strengthen agricultural development in developing countries and engage international researchers in addressing new and emerging animal and plant pests and diseases, and agricultural disaster recovery.

•The "1890 Center of Excellence for Student Success and Workforce Development" at North Carolina A&T State University will serve as a platform to allow the 1890 land-grant institutions to develop and share resources, educational materials (i.e. funding, webinars, chats, videos, modules, programming documents), evaluative tools and data collection, and reports that will be uploaded and shared in a log in/password protected environment.

NIFA invests in and advances agricultural research, education, and Extension across the nation to make transformative discoveries that solve societal challenges. It supports initiatives that ensure the long-term viability of agriculture and applies an integrated approach to ensure that groundbreaking discoveries in agriculture-related sciences and technologies reach the people who can put them into practice.

Information for this press release was provided by the USDA's Office of Congressional Relations.

FREEDOM

Southern University Ag Center unveils Louisiana's first inhalable Cannabis Product

The Southern University Ag Center, along with its partner, Ilera Holistic Healthcare (IHH) and PAX Labs, announced an exclusive partnership in Louisiana that pairs the PAX Era Pro™ inhaler platform with Ilera Holistic's AYO branded medical cannabis formulations. The partnership debuted FREEDOM™, a new line of cannabis products formulated especially for veterans, on May 26, 2021, at the WWII Museum in New Orleans.

This groundbreaking agreement allowed IHH to launch its first inhalable cannabis products to the Louisiana medical marijuana (MMJ) market — a major step in the company's mission to provide patients with the most advanced medical cannabis options. FREEDOM™ and other IHH products are available through the state-licensed MMJ pharmacies and accessible to all patients in the state through a doctor's recommendation. Ilera operates in Louisiana under the license of Southern University, the only historically Black university in the nation to launch CBD and THC lines of medicinal marijuana products.

The most sophisticated device on the international market, the award-winning Era Pro will provide exceptional delivery of medicated aerosol using premium cannabis distillate and all natural Harlequin Terpene Blend. This device's aerosol is free from harmful heavy metals, toxins, and combustion byproducts for the safest inhalation experience. PAX pods feature only food grade materials tested to medical standards and certified free from contaminants. The PAX App puts control and transparency directly into the hands of pharmacists and their patients, with true dose control, closed-loop temperature control, and lockout capabilities, available on iPhone, Android and web. PodID™ delivers unprecedented access to information, including pod ingredients, strain and potency information, state-regulated test results and more. The Era Pro device is available from PAX Labs or Louisiana cannabis pharmacies. A 20% discount is available to military members on pax.com.



“At Ilera Holistic Healthcare, our first priority is to serve the patients and provide them with the best options for their medical cannabis treatment,” says IHH CEO Dr. Chanda Macias. “Metered vaporization provides patients greater bioavailability of the medicine and a rapid onset of action compared to other delivery methods. We are so proud to partner with PAX, an industry leader that provides the highest quality technology system to bring the most advanced inhaler to our patients.”

“Ilera Holistic Healthcare produces only the highest pharmaceutical grade medical cannabis products, sharing PAX’s rigorous ethos of quality and safety,” said David Atkins, Head of Business Development, PAX Labs. “This launch marks a huge step forward for PAX in the South’s burgeoning cannabis industry, and we couldn’t have a better partner than trailblazer Dr. Chanda Macias and the talented team at Ilera Holistic Healthcare to bring these products to patients across Louisiana.”

Ilera Holistic Healthcare’s cannabis products are grown, cultivated, processed and packaged in Louisiana through a partnership with Southern University’s Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

“We are thrilled to launch our first inhalable product with Ilera Holistic Healthcare through this exciting new partnership with PAX,” says Dr. Janana Snowden, director of the Southern Institute for Medicinal Plants at the Southern University Ag Center. “We all share the goal of delivering the highest quality medical cannabis to all Louisianans in a variety of methods to suit their needs. The launch of FREEDOM and other forthcoming inhalable products through this partnership are a significant step in that direction.”

Information for this press release was provided by Ilera Holistic Healthcare.





VICE CHANCELLOR EXTENSION & OUTREACH

De'Shoin A. York, Ph.D., has been appointed the Vice Chancellor for Extension and Outreach at the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center.

Dr. York was appointed to the position during the Southern University System Board of Supervisors' meeting on May 21, 2021.

In September 2020, she was named Interim Vice Chancellor for Extension and Associate Vice Chancellor of the Center in January of the same year. For the past 20 years, Dr. York has served as the Southern University Ag Center's Nutrition, Health, and Wellness Specialist. In this role, she has designed and implemented nutrition, health, and wellness programming for the Center's disadvantaged and low-income clientele. She also serves as Director for both the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed) nutrition education programs.

Prior to coming to the Southern University Ag Center, York was a research assistant at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center where she worked on the well-known Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Study.

She also served as the Director of Dietary Services for BHC Meadow Wood Hospital as well as Special Programs Coordinator and Food Procurement Coordinator for the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank.

York has written several journal articles and publications in the area of food and nutrition.

She will serve as Chair for the Family and Consumer Sciences group of the Southern Region - Program Leadership Network (SR-PLN) for the 2021 programming year. The organization's mission is to foster and strengthen Extension education programming throughout the southern region by promoting multistate cooperation, anticipating emerging program issues and needs, and implementing action processes to address them promptly.

York is a member of the Louisiana Statewide Clinical and Translational Science Center (LaCATS) Advisory Board, which provides oversight to a statewide medical research consortium of 10 major academic and biomedical research centers within the state. The goal of the board is to facilitate clinical research to improve the health and healthcare of all Louisiana citizens, particularly those living with chronic diseases.

Dr. York earned a Bachelor of Science in Human Foods and Nutrition; a Master's of Public Administration and a Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy with a concentration in Health Policy, all from Southern University.



Saturn Douglas was appointed the Director of Recruitment and Retention for the Southern University College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences during the Southern University System's board meeting on May 21.

Prior to her current appointment, Douglas served as the Recruitment and Retention Counselor for the SU College of Ag.

Before joining the College of Ag, Saturn served as an Outreach Recruitment/ Counselor for the TRiO-Educational Talent Search, Academic Advisor/ Retention Coordinator for the Southern University – SUSLA Connect Program, and as an Admissions Recruiter for the Southern University and A&M College.

Douglas was also an Adjunct Professor for the Southern University – SUSLA Connect Program.

Saturn earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications Studies with a Minor in Social Sciences from California State University, Northridge, and a Master's of Arts in Mass Communications from Southern University and A&M College.

#GROW
JAGS!

SU Ag Center Extension Agents participate in Exxon Mobil – Wellness Wednesday

Every Wednesday from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at the ExxonMobil YMCA you will find the BREADA Farmers Market with fresh in-season produce, Pennington Biomedical, TOPBOX, Our Lady of the Lake, and the Southern University Ag Center providing the community with educational information, health screenings, access to fresh food, live food demonstrations and more! The YMCA offers a variety of classes to its members. This summer will be equally exciting, as Cooperative Extension employees, Kiyana Kelly and Michael Polite will provide the 4-H Healthy Habits Program, along with the Eradicating Food Deserts Through the Development of School Gardening project's lessons to students from Up Elementary.

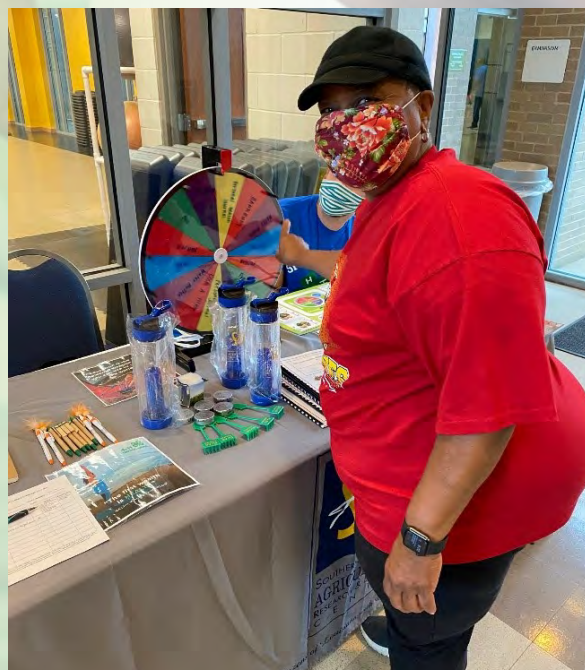
On Wednesday, May 12th Kelly and Polite attended their first Wellness Wednesday event. They provided fact sheets about emergency preparedness, activity guides, and 4-H swag. Attendees who stopped by the table were able to spin the wheel to win a prize. Agents used this valuable opportunity to talk about the programs offered through the SU Ag Center within the community. Visitors were encouraged to take literature from the table in addition to their prizes. The "Spin the Wheel" was a popular attraction for the table, as this sparked an engaging dialogue with the attendees. Meeting residents from the community was the highlight of the event, as well as seeing familiar faces, including our very own, Baton Rouge Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome and First Gentleman Marvin Broome who experienced Wellness Wednesday for the first time! It's going to be a great summer!

Funding for the National 4-H Council's 4-H Health Habits grant is provided by The Walmart Foundation. Funding for The Eradicating Food Deserts Through the Development of School Gardens project is provided by the USDA 1890 Capacity Building Grant Program.

Micheal Polite is an Extension Associate and Kiyana Kelly is an FCS/Youth Agent in East Baton Rouge and East Feliciana Parishes with the SU Ag Center's Cooperative Extension Program.



Wellness WEDNESDAY





Kayla FONTENOT

Kayla Fontenot is a Youth Development Agent for the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center. She can be best described as a lover of nature, animals, sports, and all things outdoors. Growing up in rural Louisiana as a 4-H'er, it made perfect sense that she would eventually choose Agriculture as a career. Fontenot recalls very fond memories of 4-H at Lawtell Elementary School in Opelousas, Louisiana. It was Marvel Guidry, her then Physical Education teacher that would provide this unique learning experience that has molded Fontenot's career today.

"She cared about our health, connecting our families and community! She was the epitome of a sense of belonging when it came to 4-H. I knew eventually when I grew up that's what I wanted to do," said Fontenot.

For the past five years, Fontenot has developed youth programming in southwest Louisiana, once again bringing that same sense of belonging to her community. When asked about her programmatic guiding principles she said that dedication is one of the main takeaways for youth that participate in gardening projects.

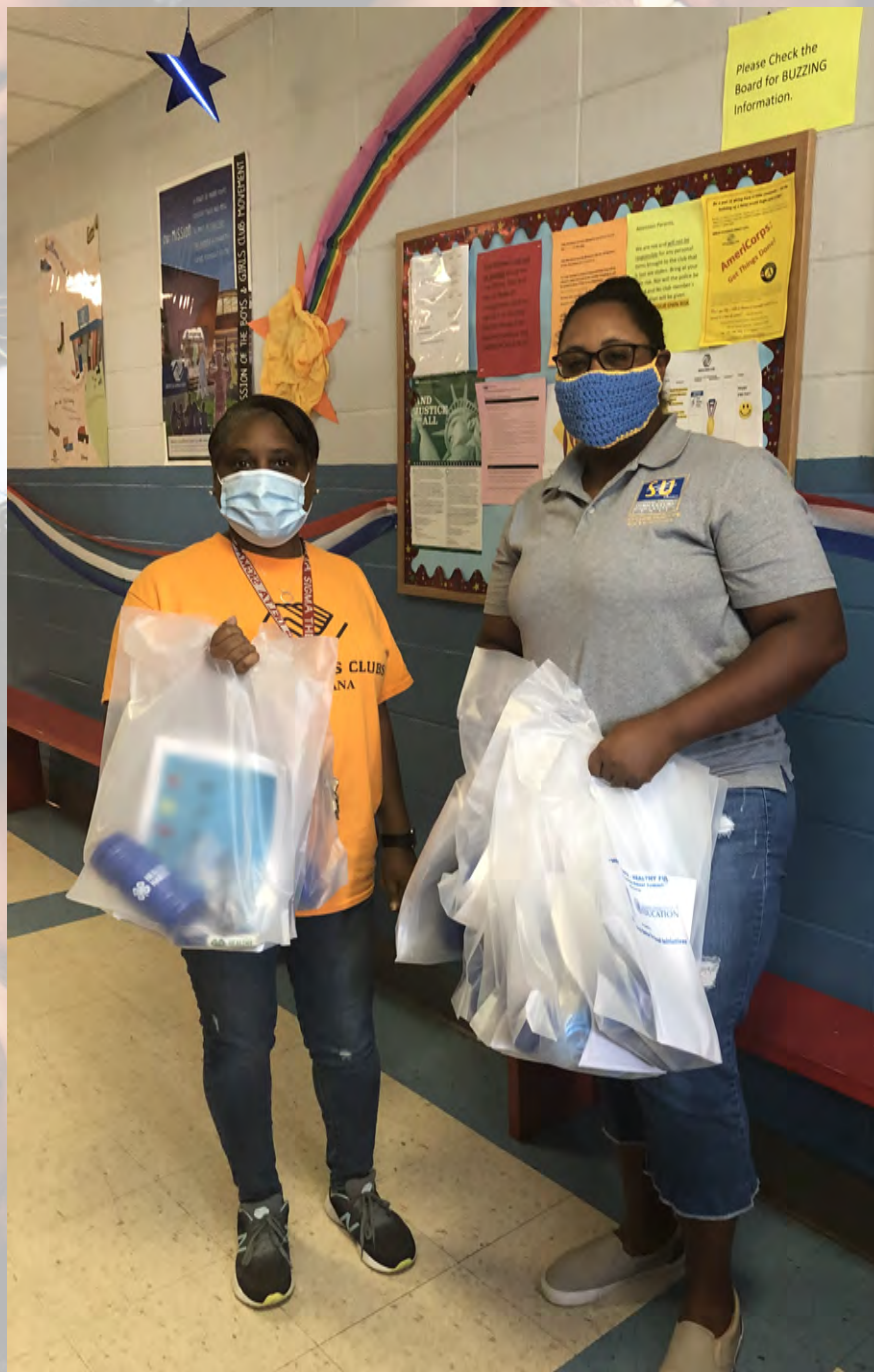
"Many of the projects that we do with gardening takes a lot of dedication. It can mean early mornings, hot sunny evenings, after-hours, and even on the weekend," she said.

Motivation has also been a major guiding principle for Fontenot, as she navigates through the new norm of virtual programming during a global pandemic. Faced with minimal challenges, moving programs that are traditionally face-to-face to totally online took just a little brainstorming and creativity.

"The kids are very tech savvy, and in the beginning of the pandemic we made the best with what we had. I made many home videos on healthy snack ideas, yoga, and even made gardening kits that we would drop off to ensure that we were physically distanced," said Fontenot.

Physically distanced, but not for long. As guidelines continue to change, and public schools and summer programs begin to reopen, you can expect to see her doing both traditional and hybrid youth programming.

"My goal as an Extension Agent has always been to follow the many youths that we service through whatever processes they may go through," said Fontenot.



AN AGENT FOR

CHANGE

SHAINA



CRAIGE



This article was written by Mike Jernigan and appeared in the Spring 2021 Auburn Veterinary Magazine. Dr. Craige is a 2014 Agricultural Sciences graduate of the Southern University College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer Sciences.

DR. SHAINA CRAIGE '18 WANTS TO CHANGE A FEW THINGS FOR THE BETTER.

The world for one. Diversity and inclusion for another. Oh, and maybe the veterinary profession while she's at it.

The Mobile, Alabama, native is already hard at work on helping change the world since being named to a Science and Technology Policy Fellowship (STPF) by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) last year. Awarded through a highly competitive process, the fellowships provide opportunities for outstanding scientists and engineers to learn firsthand about policymaking and apply their knowledge and analytical skills within the public policy realm. Fellows are assigned to one-year positions with appropriate federal government agencies to serve the nation and assist people around the world.

Craige has prepared throughout her career for just such an opportunity. After graduating from Southern University and A&M College — an HBCU in Baton Rouge, Louisiana — with a degree in agricultural science, she came to Auburn with the goal of becoming a public health veterinarian. “I wanted to utilize both my agricultural background and DVM to aid in the prevention and control of diseases affecting the nation's agriculture,” she recalled. “That led me to enroll in the DVM/MPH dual program, and there I became aware of the One Health initiative.

Overall, I enjoyed my time at Auburn. We had phenomenal professors and clinicians who truly went above and beyond for students.”

While at Auburn, Craige also became involved with diversity and inclusion issues, helping found and lead Auburn Vet Med's inaugural Veterinarians as One Inclusive Community for Empowerment (VOICE) chapter. In 2016, as a Meriel Fellowship Scholar, she studied the effects of niacin on nonalcoholic fatty liver disease and completed a rotation at Koch's Foods in Montgomery, where she worked on management compliance with National Chicken Council animal welfare guidelines. During this rotation, she was introduced to the policy side of the industry and discovered her interest in the field, which has had a major impact on her career path.

After adding her master's in public health from the University of Minnesota, Craige moved to Houston, Texas, where she worked in several veterinary clinics. But her desire to have a greater impact and her growing interest in public policy soon led her to seek other opportunities. In 2020, she applied and was selected as an STPF and appointed to a one-year posting with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

in response to devastating famines in East and West Africa, FEWS NET “provides unbiased, evidence-based analysis to governments and relief agencies that plan for and respond to humanitarian crises.” The team’s analysts and specialists work with scientists, government ministries, international agencies and non-governmental organizations to track and publicly report on conditions in the world’s most food-insecure countries.

“Right now,” Craige explained, “I’m working on a project concerning pastoralism — a branch of agriculture concerned with the raising of livestock — in East and West Africa. Pastoralists, or people who practice pastoralism for their livelihood, are generally classified according to their mobility, such as nomadic, semi-nomadic, etc. Although pastoralists are extremely resilient, they have become increasingly vulnerable to various factors such as climate change, ongoing conflict, land degradation and forced or encouraged resettlement.

“As of right now, we’re still teleworking due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so I’m primarily in a research phase working with our livestock model,” she added. “The idea of the livestock model is to improve the monitoring of food security in pastoral and agro-pastoral areas by improving the analysis of likely changes in herd size and productivity over time.”

Craige is quick to note that her work with the bureau is a perfect example of the interconnections between animal and human health and well-being. “Through my work with FEWS NET, I’m able to utilize the One Health perspective daily,” Craige said. “We monitor zoonotic disease outbreaks that may result in food insecurities. We also monitor climate change — which results in droughts, floods, etc. — and its impact on livestock and the pastoralist community.”

Not only is the USAID experience giving her new perspectives on the concept of One Health, it is also providing her with a valuable inside look at how government policy is influenced and implemented.



Craige hopes to eventually apply her knowledge to amplify the veterinary point of view on the shaping of that policy.

“Public policy for human, animal and environmental health has a profound influence on veterinary medicine,” she noted. “Yet veterinarians remain underrepresented in the policy process. As I’ve started this fellowship, I’ve gained insights on global health. I would eventually like to gain experience on the congressional side, as well as to advocate for policies with a more direct impact on the veterinary profession.”

In fact, Craige has come to recognize that helping to shape public policy is the best way forward to large-scale positive change in many areas. For that reason, it has become the focus of her future career goals. “I possess a strong interest in policy-related issues concerning animal health and food safety,” she said, “as well as issues related to environmental health and protecting our natural resources. My long-term goal is to remain within the policy sector and build a career that cultivates both public health and sound policy.”

Along the way, Craige also plans to continue to use her voice and example to encourage more diversity and inclusion in the veterinary profession...

“That is something else I am very passionate about,” she stated with conviction. “As the U.S. population continues to become more diverse, an increase in diversity within our profession is critical. It is necessary to increase trust and access among underrepresented groups and reduce potential disparities in the care sought for their pets. The veterinary field is vast and full of opportunities. I hope to continue to mentor students and advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion within veterinary medicine and other STEM professions.”



CONGRATULATIONS
CHRISTOPHER J. ROGERS, PH.D.
on a job well done and a journey worth traveling. In your famous words, it is your time to *“go forth and be great!”*



TM



P.O. Box 10010
Baton Rouge, LA 70813



(225) 771-2242



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