

**DeSoto Parish
Family and Consumer Sciences
Advisory Leadership Council
April 11, 2006**

Members and Guest Present- Sherry Shockley, Carol Huff, Callie Woodard, Wanda McDonald, Julia Sanders, Helen Reed, Jackie Odum, Gracie McKinney, Connie Aclin, Hilda English and Chuck Griffin.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. Chuck Griffin, County Agent in DeSoto, welcomed all the members present. Chuck discussed the financial situation of the LSU Agriculture Center. He said that we are down about 300 positions in the LSU Agriculture Center since 2001. Chuck also said that we have not filled seven positions in the DeSoto Parish Extension Office, since he had been employed in 1992. DeSoto Parish currently has eight agents and a secretary housed in DeSoto Parish. Chuck discussed the importance of securing local funding to help support our local Extension Service mission. He also discussed the LSU Agriculture Center declaring financial exigency.

Chuck Griffin said because of the reduced staffing in local offices, in order to conduct Family and Consumer Sciences programs in DeSoto Parish we will have to rely heavily on leadership within our community. Chuck did say that the DeSoto Parish Extension Service Office would do everything within its power to help support the FCS programs because he thought that a strong family system could cure many of our problems with crime, poverty, nutrition and drugs. He also saw the importance of some of the initiatives of the FCS programs such as food and nutrition, family finance, child care provider and parenting.

Connie Aclin, DeSoto Parish Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) Supervisor for DeSoto Parish, presented a power point slide show showing the LSU AgCenter's mission and the importance of the FCS Advisory Leadership Council, Why we were chosen and our roles.

Connie also went over some of the programs that are currently taking place in DeSoto Parish. Connie said that Desoto Parish has 3 certified nutrition educators who teach 100 EFNEP homemakers, nutrition lessons a month. The EFNEP nutrition educators also have table top demos in Big Star

Grocery Store and teach 80 fifth graders, nutrition monthly, at Mansfield Elementary School.

The FCS also takes part in the Food and Nutrition Program (FNP) under the direction of Vicky Chesser who is housed at the Northwest Region Office. The DeSoto Parish FNP program reached 900 students at Mansfield Elementary school and will go to Logansport Elementary on May 9th, which has a potential of reaching 369 additional students. The BodyWalk consists of tents connected together to form a maze, to teach the importance of good nutrition, health and exercise to all parts of your body such as brain, teeth, heart, lungs, muscles, bones, intestines etc. Almost all the students are very receptive to this teaching method. Mansfield School also taught leadership by letting the High School Students teach the lessons.

Connie also reported that the DeSoto Volunteers for Family and Community (DVFC) which was the old homemaker clubs are under the leadership of Callie Woodard. These organizations conduct monthly educational meeting, service projects and are used as volunteers to many other projects.

Connie then opened the floor up to identify additional needs/programs and means for achieving these needs. The Council agreed that we should try to continue the BodyWalk in additional schools in the parish, continue serving the EFNEP home makers and conduct demonstrations in local grocery stores. A suggestion was made on conducting demonstrations on organic and conventional gardens and learning the proper method of storing these vegetables. Chuck Griffin said that once we move up to the 4-H barn that he would like both the 4-Her's and DVFC to be involved in this project.

The Family and Consumer Sciences Advisory Leadership Council also chose Sherry Shockley and Carol Huff to participate in the over-all DeSoto Parish Advisory Meeting. The members were also informed that the minutes and a list of members of this Council would be made available on DeSoto Parish Web site which can be found at www.lsuagcenter.com and go to the DeSoto Parish Office site.

Without any further discussion the meeting was adjourned