

Morehouse Parish 4-H Advisory Leadership Council Meeting

March 4, 2014

LSU Ag Auditorium

The Morehouse Parish 4-H Advisory Leadership Council Meeting was held at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 4, 2013 at the LSU Ag Auditorium. Terry Erwin, Morehouse Parish Chair, welcomed members to the meeting. He introduced Lauren Edwards, Morehouse Parish 4-H Agent, and Terri Crawford, Northeast Region 4-H Coordinator.

Lauren Edwards invited Council members to introduce themselves and identify their affiliation with 4-H. Council members present were: Lance Bruce, Cynthia Clark, Pam Little, Clay Moore, Tammie Moore, Riley Smith, Jody Straughn, Dee Tubbs, Jody Waller, Bailey Willis, and Jana Wilmore. Members that agreed to serve, but could not attend were: David Blondin and Dr. George Noflin.

Edwards emphasized the importance of each member's contribution to the Council. Members were selected for their role as leaders in the community, having a genuine interest in the 4-H program, and experience or knowledge of issues affecting youth in the parish. Members' responsibility to serve as advisors and ambassadors for the Morehouse 4-H program was also discussed.

The purpose of the Advisory Leadership Council Meeting was also discussed. The meeting served as a mechanism for obtaining input from the community to guide 4-H programming decisions. Service on the Council is an opportunity for members to have a leadership role in local 4-H efforts. The meeting also served to create public awareness of the value of extension and its 4-H programs.

Crawford provided an overview of the LSU AgCenter, including historical significance and ties to existing legislation. She described the mission of the program, emphasizing the importance of educating local citizens. Members were reminded to refer to the mission, bearing in mind the "education" piece to 4-H's role in serving youth.

Members were encouraged to review the 4-H Parish Profile and 4-H Club Summaries for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. These documents contained enrollment and participation data for the previous 1-3 years. Lance Bruce posed questions about why 4-H Clubs were not available at Bastrop High and Cherry Ridge Elementary. Lauren Edwards explained the resistance from school principals to provide meeting time or club leaders at the respective clubs. Pam Little suggested working with the Morehouse Parish School Board to address this issue.

Members were then asked to create a list of issues facing youth in Morehouse Parish. Terri Crawford facilitated group discussion as a compiled list was created to include all identified issues. The list included: giving back to the community, manners, use of social media, character building, bullying, communication skills financial education, sewing, cooking, safety (fire, driving, social media, drug abuse), gardening, and water conservation. These issues

were consolidated into four topic areas - personal development, life skills, safety, and agriculture awareness.

Crawford asked the group to consider what issues were of the most importance for the youth of Morehouse Parish. Members were encouraged to vote on those issues they considered to be of highest priority. It was determined that personal development was the most pressing issue to be addressed in the coming year. Life skills, safety, and agriculture awareness would also be incorporated, accordingly.

Following the group discussion, Lauren Edwards informed members of the process for addressing each of the issues that were identified. Issues will be incorporated into 4-H Club meetings, workshops, and events for the 2014-2015 school year. Council members may be asked to provide additional advising or volunteer with related events.

The Council agreed to meet at least annually to review progress and make plans for additional efforts. Members were encouraged to contact Lauren Edwards with further comments and suggestions throughout the year. The meeting concluded at 12:45 p.m.