

ADVANCER

NEWS BULLETIN

June 2024



Legacy and Celebration of Leon Phillips Sr.



Lakeview, Arkansas

The Legend of “Leon A. Phillips Sr. Continues to Inspire and Educate

Mr. Leon A. Phillips Jr., born in 1934 a native of Wilson, Arkansas, was only four years of age when his parents Leon and Antee who were sharecroppers were invited to participate in the government farm resettlement project in Lakeview in 1938 under the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt that included a home, forty acres of land and a barn that they would eventually own. The resettlement project was the first and largest of three new Arkansas communities set up exclusively for African Americans. As a “New Deal” farm community, Lakeview stood for a significant venture into improving the social and economic conditions for ninety-one, highly scrutinized farm families who were struggling to survive the “Great Depression.” The United States Resettlement Administration planned and developed the community, but the Farm Security Administration handled its operation.



Mr. Leon A. Phillips was the third child of ten siblings where he grew up on the farm in Lakeview raising cotton, soybeans and other vegetables. During his developmental years in Lakeview Mr. Phillips played basketball, baseball, and was involved in Future Farmers of America, Student Government, the Typing Club and the Honor Society. After graduating from Lakeview high school with honors in 1954, he attended the A.M. & N. College (University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff-UAPB).



In 1958 Mr. Phillips was drafted into the Army and served two years’ active duty and four years in the reserves. He returned after two years to go back to UAPB in 1960 to receive his Bachelor of Science Degree.

In 1962 Mr. Phillips married his long-time sweetheart Virgie Gant who was from West Helena, Arkansas, and together they had two children.

In 1971 he attended Tennessee State University receiving a master’s in administration and supervision. Phillips administrative career as principal of the Lakeview Elementary School began from 1960-1968.



Leon Sr., Leon Jr., Virgie Phillips- (not pictured Dr. Fredrick Sabastain a Medical doctor in Augusta, GA (deceased)).



In 1969, Mr. Phillips took a leave from his educational responsibilities to serve as Director of the Neighborhood Youth Corps for Eastern Arkansas. A federal position, netted Mr. Phillips the status of the first African American to have an office in the Phillips County Court House. As a Job Specialist, he placed and supervised over one hundred enrollees from Lakeview, Holly Grove, Marvell, Clarendon, Helena, and West Helena. Successful completion of the internship enabled students to get a job in their field of interest. He placed Black children in white schools and white children in Black schools.

From 1969-1977 he served as principal of the local C.V. White High School, and in 1977 was hired as the superintendent of Lakeview School District. He became the first African American superintendent chose to Phillips County. He worked tirelessly to remove barriers and

conversely, offer more opportunities for success in student's lives.

In January of 1990 Mr. Phillips became Mayor of Lakeview. He served as mayor until 2006 and continued as the superintendent for Lakeview. During his tenure as superintendent in 1998 Mr. Phillips seeking to improve funding for his district so that salaries and facilities could be improved, successfully sued the Arkansas Department of Education on the grounds that its formula for funding public schools discriminated against poor districts. The state courts ordered the DOE to recalculate its funding distribution formula to ensure equity. At that time, schools were still funded largely by local property taxes, with the result that poorer communities like Lakeview could not afford to compete with other school districts in teacher pay and other educational expenditures. The case spent years in the courts, going through several stages, resulting in smaller schools getting more money.

Throughout the years Mr. Phillips continued to farm, raising soybeans, corn, sweet potatoes, and a vegetable garden up until 2020 upon retiring.



On April 20, 2024, Mr. Phillips celebrated his 90th birthday with over a hundred and fifty guests at Lakeview Community Center. Giving tribute were Judge Ollie Neal, Honorable Jack Crumbly, Attorney Jimmie Wilson, numerous faculties, co-workers, students, family members and friends. In addition, he was presented with a plaque *"In Appreciation for Being an Outstanding Educator, Superintendent, Leader, Motivator, Father, Friend and Mentor"*.

ALCDC Youth Rally

April 6, 2024

Youth Enterprise and Careers in Agriculture and Entrepreneurship (YECAE)- Education Excellence for our Children through Enrichment Leadership Development, and Work Experience (EXCEL)



We grow more than vegetables. We grow healthy children. We inspire youth to lead healthy and ambitious lives through mentorship and hands-on education in urban farming, sustainability, and nutrition.

Janie Williams
Youth Director



Summer Program Dates

EXCEL

Starting Date: June 17-June 28, 2024

YECAE

Starting Date: June 17-July 26, 2024

Call: 870-734-3005



USDA Easing Producers' Transition to Organic Production with New Programs and Partnerships, Announces Investments to Create and Expand Organic Markets

WASHINGTON– Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced new programs, partnerships, [grant awards](#) and an additional \$10 million in funding to expand the markets for organic products and help producers transition to organic production. These programs will support the development of new and better markets for domestic organic products, provide hands-on training to producers transitioning to organic production and ease the financial burden of obtaining organic certification.

“Offsetting the costs for organic transition helps more farmers realize higher margins sooner while giving consumers more access to high-demand organic products,” Secretary Vilsack said. “The partnerships and technical support we offer will ease the transition for producers, and the investments in grant projects we are announcing today will reduce the organic industry’s reliance on imports, lower cost barriers for businesses transitioning to organic, and address crucial infrastructure needs. Together, these resources ensure small and mid-sized producers can gain access to new, profitable markets and further our commitment to maximize American farmers’ share of the food dollar.”

Today’s announcements build on USDA’s comprehensive approach to supporting local and regional food systems, expanding access to markets to more producers, and increasing the affordable food supply for more Americans while promoting climate-smart agriculture and ensuring equity for all producers. USDA recognizes that smaller and mid-sized food and farm businesses are essential to a strengthened food supply chain. Launched in 2022, the Organic Transition Initiative (OTI) offers a suite of programs and resources to help existing organic farmers and those transitioning to organic production and processing. Other efforts under OTI include AMS’ [National Organic Program’s \(NOP\) Transition to Organic Partnership Program \(TOPP\)](#). TOPP builds mentorship relationships between transitioning and existing organic farmers to provide technical assistance and wrap-around support in six U.S. regions. Additionally, USDA’s Risk Management Agency administers federal crop insurance products, including [Whole Farm Revenue Protection](#) and [Micro Farm](#), which may be good options for organic producers.

Tri-State Rural and Community Economic Development Outreach Meeting Crenshaw, Mississippi

Arkansas Land and Community Development Corporation (ALCDC) convened a Tri-State Rural Community Economic Development Summit in Crenshaw, Mississippi, on March 27, 2024, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Crenshaw Municipal Building located at 600 Broad Street.

ALCDC, and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA Farm Service Agency partnered to supply individuals, small businesses, including agriculture enterprises (farmers and ranchers), and communities, useful information, tools, resources, and an opportunity to engage in dynamic discussions outlining relevancies to Urban and Rural Economic Development.

Our Tri-State Regional Summit Resource Speakers offered participants insights on available resource opportunities and programs inclusive of:

- Introducing the new and underserved populations to beginning farming as a career.
- Introducing new and existing farmers to NRCS conservation equity program resource opportunities.
- Access to farm financing for rural and urban farmers.
- Heir's property challenges and financing opportunities for housing.



USDA Now Accepting Applications for Available Funds to Help Cover Organic Certification Costs

Through the [Organic Certification Cost Share Program](#) (OCCSP), USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will cover up to 75% of organic certification costs at a maximum of \$750 per certification category. FSA is now accepting applications, and organic producers and handlers should apply for OCCSP by the Oct. 31, 2024, deadline for eligible expenses incurred from Oct. 1, 2023, to Sept. 30, 2024. FSA will issue payments as applications are received and approved.

OCCSP was part of a [broader organic announcement](#) made by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on May 15, 2024, which also included the Organic Market Development Grant program and Organic Transition Initiative.

Eligible Applicants, Expenses and Categories

OCCSP provides cost-share assistance to producers and handlers of organic agricultural commodities for expenses incurred obtaining or maintaining organic certification under USDA's [National Organic Program](#). Eligible OCCSP applicants include any certified organic producers or handlers who have paid organic certification fees to a USDA-accredited certifying agent.

Cost share assistance covers expenses including application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement and arrangement requirements, inspector travel expenses, user fees, sales assessments and postage. OCCSP pays a maximum of \$750 per certification category for crops, wild crops, livestock, processing/handling, and state organic program fees (California only).

How to Apply

To apply, producers and handlers should contact FSA at their local [USDA Service Center](#) and be prepared to provide documentation of organic

certification and eligible expenses. OCCSP applications can also be submitted through participating state departments of agriculture. For more information, visit the [OCCSP](#) webpage.

Opportunity for State Departments of Agriculture

FSA is also accepting applications from state departments of agriculture to administer OCCSP. FSA posted a [funding opportunity summary on grants.gov](#) and will electronically mail the Notice of Funding Opportunity to all eligible state departments of agriculture. Applications are due July 12, 2024.

If a state department of agriculture chooses to participate in OCCSP, both the state department of agriculture and FSA county offices in that state will accept OCCSP applications and make payments to eligible certified operations. Producers or handlers can receive OCCSP assistance from either FSA or the participating state department of agriculture but not both.

More Information

USDA offers other assistance for organic producers, including the [Organic Transition Initiative \(OTI\)](#), which includes direct farmer assistance for organic production and processing and conservation. For more information on organic agriculture, visit [farmers.gov/organic](#).

To learn more about FSA programs, producers can contact their local [USDA Service Center](#). Producers can also prepare maps for acreage reporting as well as manage farm loans and view other farm records data and customer information by logging into their [farmers.gov account](#). If you don't have an account, sign up today.



Tri-State Rural and Community Economic Development Outreach Meeting Greenville, MS Partnering with the City of Greenville

Errick D. Simmons, Mayor of the City of Greenville, Mississippi and Arkansas Land and Community Development Corporation partnered to present the Tri-State Rural and Urban Community Economic Development Summit One USDA” in Greenville on April 11, 2024

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and USDA Rural Development partnered to provide individuals, landowners, rural and urban farmers, ranchers, small businesses, agriculture enterprises, and community residents, resourceful information tools, and an opportunity to engage with interactive discussions to achieve Urban and Rural Agricultural Economic Development.

The event engaged participants in round table discussions that included Dr. Calvin King Sr. and Mayor Errick D. Simmons, NRCS Blake New District Conservationist, FSA representative Jamelda Fulton Farm Loan Manager and Rural Development staff Evelyn Murry and Contenia Magee along with community partners and stakeholders. Discussions focused on challenges, shared best practices, and innovative solutions for Equity and Equality Program Resource Opportunities.

Agriculture production plays a key role in our rural and urban economies. As we build back better, we must create new and better markets for all producers’ communities and consumers. As always, ALCDC program service delivery is supporting historically underserved and underrepresented farmers who are seeking participation in this essential part of our economy. We want to thank the City of Greenville and all those who attended the in-person/hybrid summit. We are looking forward to a continued partnership and collaborating with you as a catalyst in Urban and Rural Community Economic Development.



Blake New and Dr. Calvin King Sr.



Jamelda Fulton



Evelyn Murry and Contenia Magee

Save the Date!

Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation 44th Annual Conference Hosted by Arkansas Land and Community Development Corporation



October 24, 2024 -October 25, 2024
Event will be held at the Brinkley Convention Center
located at 1501 Weatherby Drive, Brinkley, AR 72021

Brinkley School District



James Tillma Sr, Dr, Brian Cornelious, Dr. Calvin R. King Sr.



Day 1
Youth Conference



[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0rdO2hrz4iE9U7qvdEECVFFexbYoZBAzL0DaD](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8446175995)

Day 2
Annual Conference



[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0ldOivqzwwqHtynufQLFpw4oxV11FoZma8y](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8446175995)

ALCDC Outreach Meeting in Memphis TN, (Shelby County)



ALCDC convene an In-Person/Hybrid Summit One USDA NRCS/FSA/Rural Development meeting at Knowledge Quest in Memphis, TN on April 25, 2024.

The roundtable discussion brought together resource specialist in the areas of urban agriculture farming, beginning farmers, limited resource and veteran farm, small business resources, rural residential housing, special government resource opportunity programs, elected officials resource opportunities for rural and urban municipal government, rural business and faith-based community organizations.

Agriculture continues to pose the greatest challenges but also opportunities for progress.

ALCDC outreach meeting focus on the following:

- To demystify and develop a shared understanding an emphasis on equity in the context of Agriculture
- Identify gaps/opportunities for urban and rural farming.
- Brainstorm ideas that support Agriculture in the region strategies and opportunities for agriculture and rural economic development

The agencies provide integral program resource information for sustainable economic renewal for our rural and urban farms, and our under-served and unserved communities where participants gained knowledge and education training on the available resources and how to access them.



UPCOMING JUNETEENTH EVENTS



Juneteenth 5K
Sat. June 15- 7 AM – 6 PM
Mosaic Templars Cultural Center
501 W. 9th Street, Little Rock



Juneteenth Arkansas Festival '24
Sat. June 15- 4 – 10PM
First Security Amphitheater
400 President Clinton Ave, Little Rock



Juneteenth Celebration
Sat. June 15- 9:30 AM – 5:30 PM
Jacksonville Boys & Girls Club
1 Boys Club Dr., Jacksonville, AR



Juneteenth Community Celebration
Sat. June 15 – Sun June 16
4233 AR-60, Bigelow, AR



3rd Annual Juneteenth Celebration
Sat. June 15- 8 AM- 7PM
Feaster Park, 92 Pinnacle Dr., Arkadelphia, AR



Ft. Smith Juneteenth Celebration w/Funk Factory
Sat. June 15-1:45 – 3:45 AM
121 Riverfront Dr., Fort Smith, AR



Juneteenth Celebration
June Diner
Wilmar, AR



2nd Annual Juneteenth on Juneteenth- Sunday, June 19, 2022
3 pm | “A Father’s Day Juneteenth with Free Home Cooked Soul Food Dinner”
Elaine Legacy Center (former Elaine Elementary School)
313 College Avenue Elaine, AR 72333



3rd Annual Juneteenth in Jonesboro Parade
Sat. June 15- Line Up at 9:30 AM at E. Boone Watson Community Center-
Parade at 11 AM.- 1005 Logan Ave. Jonesboro, AR



HISTORY

The significance of Juneteenth centers on June 19, 1865, the day federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced that all enslaved people were free. This announcement came two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. In 2021, Juneteenth was made a federal holiday.





MID-DELTA HEAD START GRADUATION Fargo, Arkansas



Director Veola Cannon



Brinkley/Fargo Head Start program support children's growth from ages 3 to 5 through services that support early learning and development, health, and family well-being.

Head Start Director Veola Cannon actively engage parents, recognizing family participation throughout the program as key to strong child outcomes. All Head Start programs continually work toward the mission for eligible children and families to receive high-quality services in safe and healthy settings that prepare children for school and life.

ALCDC Outreach Meeting in Tollette, AR- May 9, 2024

USDA is the most resourceful institution in our nation and in our local communities. Not all people are familiar with the roles that Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plays. NRCS provides farmers, ranchers and forest managers with free technical assistance, or advice, for their land that includes resource assessment, practice design and resource monitoring.



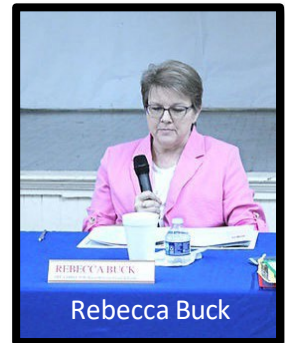
Patsie Egleston



Dylan Bowman

Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loans (OL) to family size farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank, Farm Credit System institution, or another lender. FSA loans can be used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and supplies.

Rural Development (RD) can build an entire community by improving the quality of life and promoting economic development. RD invests in rural America with loans, grants, and loan guarantee programs. The commitment and resources rural communities they bring helps drive economic security and prosperity.



Rebecca Buck



Dr. Calvin King Sr.

The roundtable discussion brought together these resource in the areas of urban agriculture farming, beginning farmers, limited resource and veteran farm, small business resources, rural residential housing, special government resource opportunity programs, elected officials resource opportunities for rural and urban municipal government, rural business, and faith-based community organizations.

Dr. Calvin King Sr., and the agencies provide integral program resource information for sustainable economic renewal for our rural and urban farms, and our under-served and unserved communities where participants gained knowledge and educational training on the available resources and how to access them.



Mayor Brenda Porter





ALFDC/ALCDC Partnership Membership Renewal Form October 1, 2023- September 30, 2024

_____ Individual Membership \$25 _____ Partnership Membership \$40
_____ Organizational Membership \$200

Member Benefits

Advocacy and Public Relations -ALCDC/ALFDC participates in federal and state hearing sessions that focus on policy development for its members, farmers, youth, and rural residents.

Member Opportunities -ALCDC/ALFDC offers leadership opportunities within the organization for our youth, farmers, and rural residents. As a member you will have the opportunity to serve on advisory committees in support of the organizations program service delivery work.

Marketing Opportunities -ALCDC/ALFDC offers cooperative marketing opportunities for rural and urban farmers, and businesses. We also offer the opportunity to present and set up an exhibit during our Regional Meetings and Annual Conference, along with faculty rental discounts.

Access to housing, farming, and youth services -ALCDC/ALFDC offers rural and urban residents technical aid and training for access to affordable housing, homeownership education business development, help in accessing farm financing resources for conservation practices, youth leadership development, education enrichment, and workforce readiness.

Information and Communication -ALCDC/ALFDC members can communicate with an ALCDC representative via phone or website concerning their farming, housing, business and youth service's needs. Members receive ALCDC updates and news through our quarterly newsletters and weekly e-letters and website.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please return your application and tax-deductible contribution to:
ALCDC/ALFDC Membership
P.O. Box 743 • Brinkley, AR 72021

ALCDC/ALFDC programs and services are available without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or familial status. On your compatible Android phone, Smart phone, or tablet-open the built-in camera app. Point the camera at the QR code. Tap the banner that appears on your Android phone, Smart phone, or tablet to join or renew membership.



ALFDC/ALCDC Information Survey for Service

We are requesting that you complete the following survey and provide the requested information. This will give us added options for providing you with valuable service during these challenging times.

Name: _____ Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
County: _____

Mobile Phone Number: _____ Home Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Is your phone a landline or a mobile? Landline _____

Mobile _____

Do you have access to the internet? Yes _____ No _____

Please check yes or no to all the following that apply:

Landowner: Yes _____ No: _____ Heir Property Interest Holder: Yes: _____ No: _____

Row Crop Farmer: Yes: _____ No: _____ Gardner: Yes: _____ No: _____ Small Farmer: Yes: _____ No: _____

Vegetable Farmer: Yes: _____ No: _____ Rancher (Livestock Operation): Yes: _____ No: _____

Small Business Owner: Yes: _____ No: _____ Veteran: Yes: _____ No: _____ New/Beginning Farmer: Yes: _____ No: _____

Are you presently receiving any service from USDA? Yes: _____ No: _____

If so, which ones apply? _____ National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
_____ Farm Service Agency (FSA) _____ Rural Development (RD) _____ Forestry _____ Other

Do you have any conservation program service contracts? Yes: _____ No: _____

If you are an heir or a joint interest holder of land (farm, ranch, or woodland), has this property received any USDA program service? Yes: _____ No: _____

Does your property of interest have a Farm # assigned by USDA Farm Service Agency? Yes: _____
No: _____

Would you desire ALCDC to assist you with attaining a farm # from USDA to qualify you for additional USDA assistance? Yes: _____ No: _____

Please mail the information provided in the survey to:

**Mary Harris
P O Box 743
Brinkley, Arkansas 72021**



P.O. Box 907
Brinkley, AR 72021

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ABOUT THE ADVANCER

The Advancer is a publication of the Arkansas Land and Community Development Corporation (ALFDC) printed quarterly and circulated as a public service and communication resource for our membership and constituents. The Advancer publication reaches a broad range of organizations and residents throughout the Delta and the United States.

The Advancer reflects the nature of our work—supplying self-help opportunities and support services to our farmers and others of limited resources in our sixty-six (66) county service area. ALCDC is committed to helping people become more productive and self-sufficient. We appreciate your comments and suggestions. Direct all comments and inquiries about this publication by phone to (870) 734-3005 or e-mail us at alcdc1934@yahoo.com.

If your mailing address is not correct, you can correct the label above and fax back to (870) 734-4197 or call Mary Harris at (870) 734-3005.

ALCDC STAFF

Dr. Calvin R. King Sr. – President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Lashica Miller – Vice-President and Chief Financial Operation Officer (CFOO)
J. D. Davis – Vice-President of Programs and Policy
Larry Lofton – Director of Ag. Farm Program Division
Barbara Erby – Director of PR/Mktg Admin Service and Membership
Janie Williams – Farm Advisor Specialist, Youth Director
Michael Tucker – Farm Advisor
Ashley Crockett – Housing Director, Farm Advisor
Mary Harris – Office Manager, Farm Admin Asst.
Diamond Smith – Accts Payable, Farm Financial Analyst
Tomyra Privett – Admin Assistant
Endia Rapiere – Housing Site Manager
MyKaitlyn Smith – Administrative Assistant
Nelson Hubbert – Environmental Engineer

Multi-Family Housing (Off-Site)

Ashley Crockett- McNeil Apartments Phase II, Crawfordsville, AR., Earle Duplex's,
Pinewood Apartment Development, Brinkley, AR
Keisha Caffey (Resident Manager)- Meadowbrook, Marianna, Helena-West Helena
Jennifer Jones (Resident Manager) Forrest City and Wynne

ALCDC MISSION STATEMENT



The mission of ALCDC is to supply advocacy outreach, technical aid, and training to limited resources small farmers and all rural residents to alleviate poverty, enhance sustainable farming and strengthen communities' economic sustainability and workforce readiness.

ALCDC services and programs are available without regard to age, race, religion, gender, or physical handicap.

For Additional Information
Phone: (870) 734-3005
Visit Our Website
www.arlcddc.org

Website for
ALFDC:
<https://alfdc.webs.com>