

# Letter from the Editor



## USDA FOOD AND NUTRITION SUMMER INSTITUTE

FALL 2006

In 2007, the USDA Food and Nutrition Summer Institute program will be 10 years old. After a year of planning, a workshop on how to define the program was held in 1998. Since that time Summer Institutes have been held in the Washington DC metropolitan area, on two HBCU campuses, and twice in Africa.

This program is the only one of its kind within the US Department of Agriculture and it's based on a model with 4 focus areas: nutrition education and outreach, intervention research, policy, and linkages to the community. Under Secretaries, Deputy Under Secretaries, a US Surgeon General, and members of Congress have met with and spoken to participants. Major goals have been to 1) enhance the growth and development of a competent, diverse body of nutrition students and professionals; 2) build collaborative partnerships and; 3) work with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges by helping to strengthen their knowledge of domestic and international nutrition issues. A strong emphasis has been placed on experiential learning, incorporating theory and application.

We are particularly proud of the program's role in developing African American professionals based on the following outcomes:

- 1) Encouraged several students to pursue PhD's. Students are currently at Purdue University, Auburn University, and Howard University.
- 2) Assisted one student to complete her dissertation research and obtain a GS-11 position with the CSREES National Research Initiative.
- 3) Encouraged undergraduate students to pursue advance degrees. To our knowledge at least 10 students have entered Masters degree programs; three have obtained the MS degree.

In addition, several students are completing or have completed dietetic internships.

- 4) Exposed undergraduate students to research methodology and diverse career options in food and nutrition. Since 2000, 10 – 20 students have participated each year.
- 5) Assisted students to submit research abstracts to national and international nutrition meetings. In the past 4 years, we've had 5 – 7 students submit abstracts each year. Students have presented posters at the American Public Health Association, the Experimental Biology Meeting, the American Dietetic Association, and the International Congress of Nutrition held in 2005 in Durban, South Africa.
- 6) Encouraged the faculty to apply for research funds in and outside of USDA. Several faculty credit this encouragement to their success in receiving funding from USDA, CDC, and NIH. Several have received CSREES funding and one has received funding from NIH.

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Dr. Harris at 2006 Summer Institute

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*“In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure.”*

*Bill Cosby*

# Letter from the Editor (cont. from p. 1)

While our major focus has been on HBCU nutrition programs, from time to time we've had participants from Tribal Colleges (TCs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and nursing programs. These participants have added interesting perspectives to our quest to enhance the growth and development of a competent, diverse body of nutrition professionals. With that in mind we are proposing to broaden the scope of this program.

The purpose of the USDA Food and Nutrition Summer Institute 2007 will be to discuss how we can strengthen our focus on students, lengthen the time of the program during the summer, and expand the program's format. In the coming months, we will be inviting our federal partners, representatives from a couple of HBCUs, HSIs, and TCs, the American Dietetic Association, and

colleagues within the Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center to meet with us June 13 – 15, 2007 in Beltsville, MD.

If the program is to grow and continue to make a contribution, change is necessary. All comments and suggestion are welcomed as we plan our next 10 years!

*Ellen Harris, DrPH*

Assistant Director

Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center

## Student Spotlight

### Tiffany Williams

Tiffany Williams graduated Fall 2005 from Southern University with a BS in Family & Consumer Sciences and a concentration in Dietetics. Before pursuing a Master's Degree at Tuskegee University Tiffany worked as a Substitute teaching 5th grade Math, Science, and Social Studies. Currently, she is working with Dr. Norma Dawkins and her anticipated research will be on sweet potato greens and their effect on lowering risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

Last year, Tiffany presented findings from the Southern University pilot study at the 2005 USDA Food and Nutrition Summer Institute in Cape Town, South Africa and at the International Congress of Nutrition in Durban, South Africa. She also was a presenter at the 2004 USDA Food and Nutrition Summer Institute at North Carolina Central University. Most recently she presented at the International Food and Nutrition Conference at Tuskegee University in October 2006.

Tiffany says "The USDA Food and Nutrition Summer Institute greatly influenced my decision to pursue a graduate degree and before participating, I never thought of getting an advanced degree. I feel like I'm very well prepared for research because of my work in doing literature reviews and proposals thru the Summer Institute. I'm also grateful for the opportunities to connect with graduate programs, especially Dr. Pace and Tuskegee University, where I've received a scholarship to pursue my Master's degree. Lastly, I'm tremendously grateful to Dr. Harris and her dedication to the program and feel it is a great program. I'm proud to be associated with the USDA Food and Nutrition Summer Institute and grateful to the program for giving me the tools necessary to be a success."



*Tiffany presenting poster at 2005 South Africa meeting*

## Calendar of Events

### Federation of American Societies for Experimental

#### Biology

"Tomorrow's Health"

Washington Convention Center

Washington, DC

April 28—May 2, 2007

### International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and

#### Physical Activity

6th Annual Meeting

Oslo Congress Centre

Oslo, Norway

June 20—23, 2007

# Holiday Recipe



## Sweet Potatoes with Sugared Pecans

Nutr. Per Serving	
Calories	180
Total Fat	9 g
Cholesterol	15 mg
Sodium	250 mg
Carbohydrate	24 g
Dietary Fiber	3 g
Protein	2 g

### Ingredients:

#### Potatoes Ingredients

- 4 medium sweet potatoes or yams, cut into 2-inch chunks
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper

#### Pecans Ingredients

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 2 tsp sugar
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions

**COMBINE**—sweet potatoes and enough water to cover in 4-quart saucepan. Cook over high heat until water comes to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-high. Cook until potatoes are tender. Drain. Cool slightly. Peel potatoes.

**HEAT**—oven to 375°. Place sweet potatoes and all remaining potato ingredients in large bowl. Beat at medium speed, scraping bowl often, until smooth.

**SPOON**—potato mixture into lightly greased 2-quart casserole. Cover; bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until heated through.

**MELT**—1 Tbsp. butter in small nonstick skillet until sizzling; add pecans and sugar. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until pecans are golden. Remove from heat.

**BEFORE**—serving, sprinkle potatoes with pecans and green onions

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