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## Arkansas Farm to School Conference

### **Bios of Presenters, Panelists and Field Trip Guides**

#### **Faith Anaya, Founder & Director, Kids Cook**



Faith Anaya is passionate about food and kids. She lived in San Francisco for 14 years before moving to Little Rock and working in a number of gourmet food businesses, where she gained an appreciation for fresh ingredients, local sources and healthy eating. She has traveled extensively, lived in Europe and gathered recipes from around the globe. When her son was born she made all her own baby food. Since then, healthy and creatively-prepared family meals have been a centerpiece of her life -- as has getting kids to eat right!

In the fall of 2003, Faith began working with kindergarteners on cooking projects and hosted an occasional cooking workshop for friends. By January 2004 Faith was certain that she wanted to launch a new business focused on teaching kids to enjoy the art of cooking, and Kids Cook!™ was born.

Today, Kids Cook!™ offers year-around programs that provide kids the chance to discover the joy of creating delicious, healthy food they can make themselves. Since launching Kids Cook!™ in the Spring of 2004, Faith and the Kids Cook!™ staff have hosted private classes, summer camps and cooking parties for both children and adults and have led classes in conjunction with a number of after-school programs for schools in Central Arkansas.

Between 2004 and 2007, Faith and her student chefs hosted a monthly Kids Cook!™ segment on KATV Channel 7's "Daybreak" morning show to demonstrate "kid-friendly" recipes. In addition, Faith and her students have been featured in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, in *Southern Living Home for the Holidays* 2006 issue, on Little Rock's THV, Channel 11 and on Little Rock's KARK, Channel 4 discussing one of the Kids Cook!™ core messages – that it is possible to teach children how to make smart and nutritious food choices. Faith is also a featured columnist for Arkansas' *AY* magazine, and has authored a number of articles for *Little Rock Family* magazine and Arkansas Children's Hospital's *Parenting in Arkansas* magazine. Her expertise has led her to serve as a judge for a number of cooking contests including the Gold Medal Cookie Contest held at the Arkansas State Fair, the Eureka Springs

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Chocolate Festival, the Arkansas Hospitality Association's 2006 Iron Chef Competition and *AY Magazine's* 2008 Recipe Contest.

Her best critic for kid food is her ten-year-old son, with whom she tests all recipes.

## **Alan Bennett, Bennett's Catering**

Bio coming soon.

## **Sylvia Blain, Founder & Director, Arkansas Local Foods Initiative**

Sylvia Blain is the Director and Founder of Arkansas Local Foods Initiative (ALFI), whose mission is to serve as a catalyst and educational resource for encouraging a healthy local food system in the state. Sustainability, nutritional health, social justice and economic development in relation to the local food system are the main goals of ALFI.

Prior to founding ALFI, Ms. Blain spent four years as the Executive Director of Little Rock's Dunbar Garden Project. She has worked with children in schools and community gardens for the last 10 years and has presented how-to workshops for implementing school garden programs at various conferences around the state. She serves as the current president of the Arkansas Food Policy Council and as the Chair of the Land Use and Planning Committee for the Mayor's Commission on Sustainability for the City of Little Rock.

## **Sheila Brown, M.S.E., R.D., L.D., Assistant Director for Fresh Fruits & Vegetables/Healthy School Environment, Child Nutrition Unit, Arkansas Department of Education**

Sheila Brown is the Assistant Director for the Healthy Schools and Fresh Fruit and Program Manager for the Arkansas Department of Education, Child Nutrition Unit. She is a Registered and Licensed Dietitian (R.D., L.D.). Sheila is a member of the American Dietetics Association and a Past - President of the Arkansas Dietetics Association (2002-2003). In her current position with the Department of Education, Sheila provides technical assistance and training for directors, managers and workers within the child nutrition departments from across the state on implementation of the federal wellness policy requirements and the state nutrition and physical activity standards, as well as providing training and technical assistance for schools selected to participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Ms. Brown received a Masters of Science in Education from the University of Central Arkansas. She was recognized by the University of Central Arkansas, Department of Family & Consumer Science as the "Young Achiever" for 2000 and by the Arkansas Dietetics Association as "Outstanding Dietitian of the Year" in 2005.

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## **Marne Coit, Attorney and Board Member, Apple Seeds**

Bio coming soon

## **Chef Ann Cooper, Lunch Lessons, LLC., Interim Nutrition Director Boulder Valley School District, Founder F3:Food Family Farming Foundation, and Renegade Lunch Lady**

Chef Ann is a celebrated author, chef and Kellogg Food and Society Policy Fellow (<http://chefann.com>). She has owned and worked for half a dozen restaurants across the country. In 1999, she became the Executive Chef and Director of Wellness and Nutrition of The Ross School in East Hampton, New York. From 2004 to 2008, Ann worked as the Director of Nutrition Services in the Berkeley Unified School District. Currently, Ann holds the title of Interim Director of Nutrition Services for the Boulder Valley School District where she is working with Beth Collins to transition the 46-school, 28,000 student district from heat and serve processed foods to scratch cooked whole foods. Ann is a passionate advocate for food systems change based on the premise that farming, food, and family are interconnected and need to be strong and healthy in order to feed children well. In a nation where children are born with shorter estimated lifespans than their parents because of diet-related illness, Ann has been a relentless voice of change and reform. She has appeared on all major networks and in mainstream media publications such as *The New York Times*, spoken at thought leader events such as the TED Conference, and been featured in numerous documentaries about the school food revolution, in which she is considered the "Renegade Lunch Lady." In 2009, Ann founded F3: Food, Family, Farming Foundation (<http://foodfamilyfarming.org>) as a nonprofit that would focus on solutions to the school food crisis. F3's pivotal project is the Lunch Box a web portal that provides tools and community to support school food reform. Ann co-owns Lunch Lessons, LLC (<http://lunchlessons.org>) with Beth Collins.

## **Cara Corbin, Assistant Manager, Fayetteville Farmers Market**

Bio coming soon

## **Chuck Crimmins, Garden & Forestry Coordinator, Heifer Ranch**

Chuck Crimmins was hired by Heifer Ranch in 1994 to work in areas of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management. He has a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from Stephen F. Austin State University, 1981 and his experience includes work with the U. S. Forest Service in timber management, the U. S. Peace Corps in tropical agriculture and forestry, and organic vegetable and crop farming. His work at Heifer Ranch includes management of the Ranch's forests and natural resources, and reforestation of acreage to pine plantations and hardwood stands through joint efforts with the U. S. Forest Service, Arkansas Forestry Commission, and Natural Resource Conservation Service.

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He also manages the organic vegetable fields of Heifer Ranch. A Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project is used to market the approximately 20,000 lbs. of annual production of organic vegetables, herbs, and flowers. Shares are distributed weekly to shareholders in central Arkansas. His work in organic agriculture includes experience in New York and Kansas before coming to Heifer Ranch. The CSA is now in its thirteen year of production and growth.

He also manages the Ranch's bee hives for increased pollination of garden crops and honey production.

## **Katy Elliott, Founder & Director, Arkansas Sustainability Network and Co-Founder, Felder Farm, Little Rock**

Katy Elliott, is Founder and Director of the Arkansas Sustainability Network (ASN). She began working with community agriculture projects in 1994 by creating and coordinating youth garden programs for Oak Forest Community Garden. She now facilitates the Local Food Club, which operates through [www.littlerock.locallygrown.net](http://www.littlerock.locallygrown.net), in conjunction with ASN's youth and adult educational and collaborative programming. Her work since 2005 has included a strong focus on collaboration with the Little Rock School District, most recently with Felder Alternative Learning Academy and Felder Farm. For more information visit [www.arnetwork.org](http://www.arnetwork.org).

## **Emily English, Board Member, Arkansas Urban Gardening Educational Resources (AUGER)**

Emily English is a Little Rock native currently pursuing her Master in Public Service from the Clinton School of Public Service and her Master in Public Health from UAMS' College of Public Health. The majority of her post-undergraduate time was spent working on small organic farms, including the Heifer Ranch's Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm in Perryville, Arkansas, and a small urban farm in Bend, Oregon. Since entering graduate school she has traveled internationally to document rural development with small farmers in Vietnam and has facilitated school garden initiatives in Belize and Honduras with the international development organization *Peacework*. She is currently serving on the board of AUGER, Arkansas Urban Gardening Education Resource, and is also serving as the temporary Co-Chair of the Arkansas Food Policy Council. Emily is a community representative on the planning committee for the Arkansas Farm to School Conference and is currently working to map the farm to school movement in Arkansas.

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## **Jody Hardin, Founder & Director, Certified Arkansas Farmers Market and Board Member, Arkansas Farmers Market Association**

Jody Hardin is a fifth generation farmer from Grady, AR. He received his B.S. degree from the University of Tampa with a major in Economics and Finance before returning to the family farm in 1994. He is founder of the All Arkansas Basket-A-Month CSA, and the Certified Arkansas Farmers Market (CAFM) in the Argenta and Hot Springs Village. He will be opening a new local foods concept store in 2009 called Argenta Market, also in the Argenta district of NLR. This new indoor market will feature local meats, dairy, cheeses, wine and beer, and grains. With significant assistance from local real estate developers, NLR City Council and the mayor's office, the outdoor CAFM markets are expanding to include four communities by the end of 2009. In 2007, Hardin was elected to the Arkansas Farmers Market Association Board of Directors, and in 2008 was elected Vice President of the Board. In 2008, Hardin received the Agricultural Activist of the Year Award by the Citizens First Congress in Arkansas.

In 2006, Hardin and his partner, Barbara Armstrong, founded Foodshed Farm. This model, sustainable farm was created from the Hardin Farms existing infrastructure, yet incorporates natural, organic and sustainable farming methods into the conventional farming model, already developed by previous generations of the Hardin Family. Hardin has introduced grass based grazing of beefalo, heritage pork, and poultry into the existing mix of vegetable and fruit crops. Foodshed Farms sells its products at the CAFM and high-end restaurants in Little Rock. Hardin has been featured in numerous publications, as an author and speaker.

## **Bobbie Hawkins, Food Service Director, Heifer Ranch**

Bobbie Hawkins came to work for Heifer Ranch in Perryville in 1998 as a part-time cook and was hired as food service supervisor three months later. She started her food service career at Perry-Casa school in 1994 and attended summer classes for three years to become a certified food service manager. She loves the challenge of using home grown products from the Ranch and gets excited when people get excited about food.

## **Harold Hockenhull, Farmer**

Bio coming soon

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## **Glyen Holmes, Executive Director of the New North Florida Cooperative Association, Inc. and Southern Regional Leader for the National Farm to School Network**

Glyen Holmes, originally from MS, has over 20 years experience working with small-scale farmers in the Southeast. He worked 18 years for USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service before entering private sector as Executive Director of NNFC.

**New North Florida Cooperative (NNFC)** is the South Regional Lead Agency for the National Farm-to-School Network, serving Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Texas. NNFC has received national recognition for linking schools with local fresh produce. Over the past 14 years, they have developed an approach that helps school food service develop innovative ways of incorporating locally or regionally grown fruit and vegetables into child nutrition programs. Not only has this effort offered rural and urban schools additional fresh food choices, but also is an innovative way to promote healthy eating and enhance nutrition for school meals while cultivating schools in a local market for small-scale farmers. Training for food service personnel involves menu planning, local product procurement, fresh produce storage and preparation. NNFC's model also focuses on networking and capacity building among small farmers in the Southeast. Their efforts include farmer training in enterprise development, marketing and farm business management and distribution to local schools.

Since 1995, NNFC has provided fresh, locally grown agricultural produce to over 100 school districts in Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Arkansas, reaching well over one million children. The primary products available are fresh leafy greens, green beans and sweet potato sticks. Other items have included fresh southern peas and beans, red potatoes, okra, muscadines, blackberries, strawberries and watermelon.

## **Luke Howard, Ph.D., Professor, Food Science Department, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville**

Dr. Howard received his B.S. degree in Horticulture from Purdue University, and his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Food Science from the University of Arkansas. He worked as an Analytical Chemist at the Dole Packaged Foods Research and Development Center for two years, and was an Assistant Professor in the Horticultural Sciences Department at Texas A&M University for five years. He has served on the faculty in the Department of Food Science at the University of Arkansas since 1997. His research program is focused on the identification and quantification of bioactive compounds in fresh and processed fruits and vegetables. Dr. Howard has published over 75 scientific articles and five book chapters and had delivered over 50 presentations at scientific meetings. He is a Professional Member of the Institute of Food Technologists and the American Chemical Society.

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## **Lisa Jenkins, President, Arkansas School Nutrition Association and Child Nutrition Director, Fayetteville Public Schools**

Bio coming soon

## **Anupama Joshi, Co-Director, National Farm to School Network & Program Director, Center for Food & Justice, Urban and Environmental Policy Institute, Occidental College**

Anupama Joshi is Co-Director of the National Farm to School Network, and is based at the Center for Food & Justice, a division of the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College. Since 2002, Ms. Joshi is helping build a movement of farm to school projects across the country by providing training and assistance for farm to school program development and evaluation, promoting networking opportunities, facilitating policy advocacy, developing informational resources and undertaking media and marketing activities. Ms. Joshi has over fifteen years of experience working on nutrition, agriculture and food systems issues in various countries around the world. She has presented at various conferences and events and the author of several articles and resources on farm to school programs.

Ms. Joshi has worked with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand; the Pesticide Action Network; and consulted with various non-profit organizations in Asia. She has presented at various conferences and workshops including those organized by the School Nutrition Association, Society for Nutrition Education, Community Food Security Coalition, California Nutrition Network, American Public Health Association, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Food and Society Networking Conference.

Ms. Joshi has been quoted extensively in print and other media pieces on farm-to-school programs. She has been a past board member of the Community Alliance with Family Farmers, and is a member of the Society for Nutrition Education. She holds a M.S. in Food & Nutrition from the Maharaja Sayajirao University in Baroda, India. Recent farm to school related articles and publications by Ms. Joshi include:

- Joshi A & Misako Azuma A. Bearing Fruit: Farm to School Program Evaluation Resources and Recommendations, March 2009.
- Joshi A, Misako Azuma A, Feenstra G. Do farm to school programs make a difference? Findings and future research needs. J Hunger Environ Nutr. 2008; 3(2-3)
- Joshi A, Beery M. A Growing Movement: A Decade of Farm to School in California. Center for Food & Justice, Occidental College, 2007.
- Joshi A, Kalb M, Beery M. Going Local: Paths to Success for Farm to School Programs, National Farm to School Program, Center for Food & Justice, Occidental College. 2006
- Joshi A. & Beery M. Farm-to-School Programs Promote Healthy Lifestyle, Poppy Seeds – publication of the California School Nutrition Association, Summer 2005.
- Gottlieb R & Joshi A. Fresh Outta the Farm and Straight to Compton, Los Angeles Times Op-Ed, February 15, 2004.

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**The National Farm to School Network** is coordinated by the Center for Food & Justice, Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College ([www.uepi.oxy.edu](http://www.uepi.oxy.edu)) and the Community Food Security Coalition ([www.foodsecurity.org](http://www.foodsecurity.org)). The Network is supported in part by a \$2.4 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Visit the National Farm to School Network website at [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org).

## **Marion Kalb, Co-Director of the National Farm to School Network and Program Director, Community Food Security Coalition**

Marion Kalb is the Co-Director of the National Farm to School Network for the Community Food Security Coalition. She is responsible for developing farm to school programs nationally, through organizing workshops, developing materials and creating networking opportunities.

Ms. Kalb organized two national Farm to Cafeteria conferences, and worked with farmers and school food service directors in Massachusetts, Illinois, California, Wisconsin, New York, North Carolina, Washington, Florida, Colorado, Arizona, Iowa, and other states to institute Farm to School programs. She also worked with USDA Food Nutrition Service to develop a "how-to" manual for food service directors to create farm to school programs.

Before working with the Coalition, Ms. Kalb spent 10 years as the Executive Director of the Southland Farmers' Market Association. Working with farmers, cities, and non-profit organizations, she has helped to organize over 20 farmers markets in Southern California, as well as organized workshops to promote the direct sales of farm products to restaurants. Ms. Kalb worked as an Agricultural Extension Agent in Gabon, Central Africa, and has a M.A. from the University of California, Los Angeles.

## **Kristi Kidd, Science Teacher, Pulaski Heights Middle School, Little Rock**

Bio coming soon

## **Chris Kirby, Farm to School Director, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture**

Bio coming soon

## **Ryan Neal, Garden Coordinator & Educator, Heifer Ranch**

Ryan Neal is originally from Rogers, where his family raises vegetables, eggs, hay, and beef on a small farm. He graduated from the University of Arkansas with a B.S. degree in soil

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science in 2005. In 2007, Neal began volunteering in the gardens at Heifer Ranch in Perryville. In 2008, he was hired as the Garden Coordinator and now also works as the Garden Educator. Neal is responsible for ten acres of organic certified vegetables, of which 30% are distributed directly to the Heifer Ranch Cafeteria and 70% through the Ranch's Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program.

## **Marion Nestle, Author, Lecturer and Paulette Goddard Professor, Department of Nutrition, Food Studies & Public Health, New York University**

Marion Nestle is the Paulette Goddard Professor in the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health at New York University, which she chaired from 1988-2003. She also holds appointments as Professor of Sociology at NYU and Visiting Professor of Nutritional Sciences at Cornell. Her degrees include a Ph.D. in molecular biology and an M.P.H. in public health nutrition, both from the University of California, Berkeley. She has held faculty positions at Brandeis University and the UCSF School of Medicine. From 1986-88, she was Senior Nutrition Policy Advisor in the Department of Health and Human Services and Managing Editor of the 1988 Surgeon General's Report on Nutrition and Health. Her research examines scientific, economic, and social influences on food choice. She is the author of three prize-winning books: *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*; *Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology and Bioterrorism*; and *What to Eat*.

Her latest book, *Pet Food Politics: The Chihuahua in the Coal Mine*, was published in September 2008. She writes the Food Matters column for the San Francisco Chronicle; co-writes a food and nutrition column for The Bark magazine, and blogs daily (almost) at [www.foodpolitics.com](http://www.foodpolitics.com) (recent posts below) and at the Atlantic Food Channel.

## **Keith Richards, Board Chair, Apple Seeds**

Keith Richards is a consultant to organizations that work for more sustainable food systems. As a former Program Manager for the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, Keith provided training and technical assistance to both community-based organizations and farming organizations, providing a link between the sustainable agriculture movement and the community food movement. He has also provided education to producers and service providers on numerous aspects of farm-based, sustainable enterprise development.

Keith is also Chair of the Board and acting Director for Apple Seeds, Inc. Apple Seeds was created in 2007 to provide education and tools to enhance local food systems and support better nutrition for people in Northwest Arkansas. The organization is currently partnering with Leverett Elementary School in Fayetteville to develop a pilot program that helps students make healthy food choices and form lifelong healthy eating habits by combining nutrition education in the classroom with experiential learning about food and agriculture.

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Keith grew up in a farming community in northern Iowa. In the 1980s, he helped develop a sustainable training farm in mid-Missouri, and then managed an organic farm in northern California. In the early 90s he was the marketing manager for the Ozark Organic Growers Association, a coop of organic farmers in the Ozarks bioregion. Since that time, he has consulted with farmers' organizations and community-based organizations throughout the South.

## **Vonda Richardson, Farm Management Specialist, Florida A&M University**

Vonda Richardson is an Extension Specialist for Florida A & M University Cooperative Extension Program. She is Program Leader for Marketing and Small Farm Outreach, and has 14 years of experience working with small-scale farmers in Florida and surrounding states. As Program Leader responsible for marketing and farm management programming, she has developed and conducted training programs in alternative market development, marketing strategies, value-added production, alternative farm enterprises, production practices and farm financial management. She has also been instrumental in developing Small Farm-to-School training and assistance efforts in five states. She has worked collaboratively with NNFC over the past 13 years.

## **Penny Rudder, Chief Eating & Environmental Officer, [naturalfoodscoking.com](http://naturalfoodscoking.com)**

Penny Rudder embodies a passion for eating and living healthfully and offers a refreshing antidote to living in today's hectic world. Her background includes a Bachelor of Science in Foods and Nutrition with a minor in Biochemistry, awarded with Magna cum Laude distinction. She also was awarded an appointment to a team of healthcare professionals exploring the connection between the foods we eat and drink, how we handle stress and daily living activities and how these factors influence overall well-being, especially our ability to maintain vibrant, lifelong mental and physical health. She created Natural Foods Cooking where she is the CEO (Chief Eating and Environmental Officer) to navigate her clients through the chaos of food choices and connect them to the fun of leading healthier, happier lives. Matching people to simple foods and tools that are good for them and good for the environment, she also offers personal coaching to give everyone the opportunity to look fit and fabulous and have strong physical and mental health at any age.

## **Joel Salatin, Farmer, Author and Lecturer; Owner of Virginia's Polyface Farm**

Joel Salatin is an American farmer, lecturer, and author whose books include *You Can Farm* and *Salad Bar Beef*. Salatin raises livestock using holistic methods of animal husbandry, free of potentially harmful chemicals, on his Polyface Farm in Swoope, Virginia, in the

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Shenandoah Valley. Meat from the farm is sold by direct-marketing to consumers and restaurants.

Salatin's 550-acre farm is featured prominently in Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (2006) and the 2009 documentary film, *Food, Inc.* His unconventional farming practices have drawn attention from the alternative agriculture community -- especially those interested in sustainable livestock management. For example, Pollan became interested in Salatin because of his refusal to send food to locations not within a four-hour drive of his farm, i.e. outside his local "foodshed." "We want customers to find farms in their areas and keep the money in their own community," said Salatin. "We think there is strength in decentralization and spreading out rather than in being concentrated and centralized."

Salatin's philosophy of farming emphasizes healthy grass on which animals can thrive in a symbiotic cycle of chemical-free feeding. Cows are moved from one pasture to another rather than being centrally corn-fed. Then chickens in portable coops are moved in behind them, where they dig through the cow dung to eat protein-rich fly larvae while further fertilizing the field with their droppings.

Today, Salatin's farm arguably represents America's premier non-industrial food production oasis. Believing that the Creator's design is still the best pattern for the biological world, the Salatin family invites like-minded folks to join in the farm's mission: to develop emotionally, economically, environmentally enhancing agricultural enterprises and facilitate their duplication throughout the world.

The Salatins continue to refine their model to push environmentally-friendly farming practices toward new levels of expertise.

## **Wanda Shockey, Director, Child Nutrition Unit, Arkansas Department of Education**

Wanda Shockey is Director of the Child Nutrition Unit (CNU), Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). She is a registered licensed dietitian and has a master's degree in education. Ms. Shockey has thirty-two years experience in child nutrition programs. She has served locally as a school district Child Nutrition Director for twelve years and, at state agency level, as a Child Nutrition Area Specialist, Breakfast Grant Specialist, Nutrition Education & Training (NET) Coordinator/Assistant Director, Education and Training and state agency Director. She is among the guest authors who contributed to the first and second editions of the newest book on management of child nutrition programs, *Managing Child Nutrition Programs – Leadership for Excellence*.

## **Ragan Sutterfield, Co-Founder, Felder Farm**

Ragan Sutterfield is a writer, cultural critic, and farmer living in his native Arkansas. He has written for a variety of magazines including *Plenty*, *Men's Journal*, *Paste*, *Gourmet*, *Spin*, and

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Books & Culture on issues relating to good food, sustainability, and contemporary culture. Ragan has been a guest lecturer at colleges and universities and a speaker for churches and conferences on sustainable agriculture, the theology of creation, and contemporary culture. He is one of the founders and operators of a farm at Felder Academy, a public charter school for troubled youth.

## **Damian Thompson, Director of Programs, Dunbar Garden Project**

Damian Thompson is an educator and urban farmer in his hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas. He has been working with students at two area schools, and implementing summer work programs for youth in agriculture for the last 6 years. Damian is an expert at composting, companion planting, soil building and has recently added bee-keeping to his repertoire.



### **Joseph W. Thompson, MD, MPH**

Dr. Joseph Thompson holds many titles: Surgeon General for the State of Arkansas; Director, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation National Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity; Director, Arkansas Center for Health Improvement; Associate Professor in the Colleges of Medicine and Public Health at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences; and Practicing General Pediatrician at Arkansas Children's Hospital

Dr. Thompson's work is centered at the intersection of clinical care, public health and health policy. He is responsible for developing health policy, research activities and collaborative programs that promote better health and health care in Arkansas. Dr. Thompson works closely with the Governor's office, the Arkansas legislature and public and private organizations across the state on relevant health policy topics. Nationally, as Director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity, he is leading a strategic partnership with PolicyLink that serves as the linchpin of RWJF's strategy to reverse the epidemic of childhood obesity by 2015.

Dr. Thompson has led vanguard efforts in planning and implementing health care financing reform, tobacco- and obesity-related health promotion and disease prevention programs. He was the lead architect of the Tobacco Settlement Act of 2000, at the forefront of Arkansas's nation-leading efforts against childhood obesity and instituted the Arkansas Health Insurance Roundtable. Under his leadership, ACHI helped pass the Clean Indoor Air Act of 2006, documented the state's success in halting progress of the childhood obesity epidemic, and helped implement AR Health Networks, Arkansas's health care benefits waiver for low-income workers.

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He currently serves on the Arkansas Board of Health and is past President of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Nationally, Dr. Thompson serves on the board of Academy Health and on the Health Care Financing and Organization National Advisory Panel. He is author of numerous articles and publications that reflect his research interests in the areas of health and health care including access, quality and finance.

Dr. Thompson earned his medical degree from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He served as the RWJF Clinical Scholar at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Luther Terry Fellow in Preventive Medicine advising the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Health in Washington, DC, and the Assistant Vice President and Director of Research at the National Committee for Quality Assurance in Washington, DC. In 1997, he served as the First Child and Adolescent Health Scholar of the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (then the U.S. Agency for Health Care Policy and Research) before returning to Arkansas.

## **Chris Trice, Livestock Coordinator, Heifer Ranch**

Chris Trice, who has worked around cattle since he was 14 years old, is a third-generation Quarter Horse breeder/trainer. He started by helping get up hay in the summers at a local dairy and working as a field hand to eventually becoming manager of a 1200-acre organic beef/poultry farm. Trice, whose family still raises livestock in Virginia, started as a volunteer at Heifer Ranch in Perryville in 2005 and is now the Ranch's Livestock Coordinator. He continues to welcome the joys and challenges of being around animals.

## **Stephan Walker, Extension Associate, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and Board Member, Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group**

Bio coming soon

## **Nathanael Wills, Co-Founder, Felder Farm**

Nathanael Wills is an after school program director, Spanish teacher, youth leader, and aspiring farmer in Little Rock. A graduate of Appalachian State University with a degree in anthropology, Wills strives to cultivate the sustainability of understanding, respect, and personal connections within and among local communities in Central Arkansas. In 2006, he launched the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Challenge, where each year on MLK Day, youth from various communities come together and carry out service projects throughout Little Rock, from painting murals at the Step-Up Community Center to sorting donations at St. Francis House and Our House. Wills helped establish the Backyard Garden Project, through which volunteers put vegetable gardens in the backyards of those who sign up at their local food bank. In 2008, with friends, Wills founded Felder Farm, a half-acre organic garden at Felder Learning Academy in Little Rock. The farm is a learning extension and partnership for both Felder students and youth from the surrounding neighborhood, sparking their interest

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with hands-on education, making connections with biology and economics, as well as history and sustainability.