



Dr. Ann Berry's 32-year Extension career spans appointments with two Land-Grant universities, LSU and The University of Tennessee, having county/parish, area/regional and state roles in which she developed and evaluated programs for both youth and adults. Dr. Berry is a Professor and Consumer Economics Specialist in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences (since 2006). Through Dr. Berry's visionary leadership UT Extension FCS is one of only three agencies approved by the Tennessee Department of Education to provide high school teachers the required 14 hours of training to teach personal finance. Dr. Berry introduced using regional teams of FCS agents to conduct yearly statewide training sessions. In 14 years, 18 FCS agents (6 teams) have conducted 125 workshops training over 12,000 high school teachers who have reached over 1.5 million students in their personal finance classes. Dr. Berry was instrumental in establishing one of the first certification

programs for FCS agents. Through a partnership with the Tennessee Housing Development Agency, agents provide home buyer education to first time home buyers. As state Extension coordinator, Dr. Berry provides educational programs and training for the agents who conduct both face to face and on-line classes in their counties. Since the beginning of this innovative partnership agents have conducted over 1,100 workshops reaching over 15,000 participants and receiving over \$3.0 million in revenue. Dr. Berry's leadership provides an external revenue funding stream for professional development opportunities and program support for county FCS programs. Through Dr. Berry's visionary leadership many counties have been so successful in receiving funds that they have established county FCS endowment accounts which will provide financial security for future FCS programs. In 2020, 1,360 prospective homeowners successfully completed homebuyer education requirements of which 938 purchased a home resulting in \$143,397,051 in loan activity. This economic impact breaks down to \$96,904,473 in rural counties; \$46,492,578 in urban areas. As a result of UT Extension's Consumer Economics programming in 2020, the estimated economic impact of clientele's savings for six months totaled \$2,897,183. The economic value of volunteer's time given to financial education programming totaled \$728,965. Since 2002 Dr. Berry has been a member of the multi-state research/Extension project, Rural Families Speak. She has served on the Executive Board for several years. This project is currently researching resiliency of rural families during adverse events. She has collaborated with colleagues from across the country in research, presentations, publications, and Extension programming through this project. Dr. Berry collaborates with colleagues at the Department of Financial Institutions, the Federal Reserve, the Office of the TN Attorney General, the TN Department of Education, the TN Department of Treasury, TN Higher Education Commission, numerous financial institutions to provide financial education for Tennesseans. Selected professional accomplishments and recognition include graduate of LEAD21, UT Extension Outstanding New Worker Award, UTIA J.E. Moss Achievement Award, Southern Region FCS Rep to ECOP, JCEP Board Member, National ESP President, National ESP Visionary Leadership Award, National ESP Continued Excellence Award, UT Faculty Senate, UT Faculty Senate Ag Caucus Chair, UTIA Advisory Council.



Robert C. Kemerait, Jr. Professor and Extension Specialist, Plant Pathology University of Georgia Bob Kemerait is charged with providing Extension outreach to agents and farmers for disease and nematode management of peanut, corn, cotton and soybeans. These crops are planted on around 2.5 million acres annually, and University of Georgia Cooperative Extension agents in well over half of Georgia's 159 counties must be able to effectively address disease and nematode management issues to help mitigate potential losses affecting grower profitability. Kemerait has worked for more than 21 years to develop a program that supports, trains and mentors UGA Extension agents, graduate, and undergraduate students from UGA and Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC), and the diverse staff whom he employs. His passion extends to helping farmers across Georgia, the U.S., and throughout the developing world, including in Guyana, Haiti, the Philippines, and Cambodia. His program impact is documented in the expansion of the Peanut Rx risk management

tool, advances in disease and nematode management recommendations to increase producer profitability, the achievements, and promotions of the UGA Extension agents whom he has mentored, and in his efforts to bring better production practices and reduced losses to diseases and aflatoxin among economically challenged farmers in tropical areas across the globe. The broad scope, diversity, and tenacity of his program to address disease and nematode issues that face growers at home and abroad, while simultaneously mentoring county agents and students, are at the core of his career.

Kemerait received a bachelor's degree in biology from Davidson College and a doctoral degree in plant pathology from the University of Florida.



Michelle Eley, Ph.D., has spent nearly 18 years with Cooperative Extension at N.C. A&T building programs and training staff on efforts focused on community and organizational development, leadership development, food systems planning, emergency preparedness, and civil dialogue/discourse. The community and economic development specialist was recently recognized for her work by being named the 2021 nominee for the Excellence in Extension Award from the 1890s Region in Community and Rural Development (CRD). “Dr. Eley’s experience and expertise in community and economic development are demonstrated in her Extension work,” said Rosalind Dale, Ed.D., Extension administrator at N.C. A&T. “She has a broad

understanding of the interconnectedness of communities, their residents and their wellbeing. She has made many valuable contributions to the land-grant system, Cooperative Extension, and the field of community and economic development in North Carolina, regionally, and nationally.” Eley’s work helps to strengthen rural communities that face a multitude of challenges, from poverty to a lack of community services to a dearth of information on how to build the capacity of their communities and farms. She has secured more than \$2 million in external support to expand Extension efforts to reach these communities and provides training to Extension faculty and field staff, community organizations, civic leaders, and volunteers. Her most recent funded project is Youth Stepping Forward. Funded through the National 4-H Council, the program teaches youth in six underserved counties skills in decision making and problem solving so they can address the issues facing their communities. The youth program is modeled after the successful Community Voices program, an Extension at A&T initiative that trains adults to be community leaders. Eley has been instrumental in the success of Community Voices and has trained more than 120 adults and youth as facilitators of the program in the last five years. She is also part of a national and statewide training team that developed the program Coming Together for Racial Understanding, an effort supported by ECOP and the Southern Rural Development Center that has offered training for Extension staff nationwide as well as community leaders. Eley serves on a wide range of committees and task forces related to her expertise, including the Southern Regional Program Leadership Network, 1890 Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) Advisory Group, and the CRD Advisory Team for N.C. Cooperative Extension. She holds a Ph.D. in human and community development and a master’s in agricultural economics (both from the University of Illinois) and a bachelor’s in agricultural economics from N.C. A&T. “Extension has given me the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of so many people,” said Eley. “I’m thrilled to know that the 1890s Region recognizes the importance of my work, and I’m thankful to all our partners, agents, specialists, and community members who have worked with me over the years.”