

## Faculty Members & Their Areas of Expertise

**Gary B. Jackson, Ph.D.**  
Director

**Ned Browning, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor, Agricultural Information Science & Education

**Jane Caston, M.S.**  
Instructor, Apparel, Textiles, & Merchandising

**Wanda K. Cheek, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor, Apparel, Textiles, & Merchandising

**Louise Davis, Ph.D.**  
Extension Professor, Early Childhood Development

**Jacquelyn Deeds, Ph.D.**  
Professor, Agricultural Information Science & Education

**Jean Kizer, Ph.D.**  
Professor Emeritus, Human Development & Family Studies

**Phyllis Bell Miller, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor, Apparel, Textiles, & Merchandising

**Michael Newman, Ph.D.**  
Professor, Agricultural Information Science & Education  
Extension Professor, Program & Staff Development

**Matt Raven, Ph.D.**  
Professor, Agricultural Information Science & Education

**Patsilu Reeves, Ph.D.**  
Professor Emeritus, Family Education & Policy

**Julie Sexton, Ph.D.**  
Associate Extension Professor, Program & Staff Development

**Bobbie Shaffett, Ph.D.**  
Associate Extension Professor, Family Resource Management

**Erin Hiley Sharp, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor, Human Development & Family Studies

**Tabitha Staier, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Extension Professor, Family Life Education

**Kirk Swortzel, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor, Agricultural Information Science & Education

**Jan Cooper Taylor, Ph.D.**  
Professor, Human Development & Family Studies

**Walter Taylor, Ed.D.**  
Professor, Agricultural Information Science & Education

**Paula Threadgill, Ph.D.**  
Associate Extension Professor, Program & Staff Development

**Ronnie White, Ph.D.**  
Extension Professor, Program & Staff Development

**Joe Wilmoth, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Professor, Human Development & Family Studies

**Sheri Lokken Worthy, Ph.D., CFCS, CFLE**  
Associate Professor, Human Development & Family Studies

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# School of Human Sciences Newsletter

105 Lloyd Ricks • Box 9745 • Mississippi State, MS 39762 • Phone 662-325-2950 • Editor: Meredith McCormick

Mississippi State University  
Fall 2007

## A Message from the Director

Greetings from the School of Human Sciences! This introductory issue of our newsletter highlights some success stories and major achievements in each of our program areas. We plan to publish this newsletter three times per year.

As you know, MSU continues to grow and change because of our responsibility to provide contemporary educational programs, conduct research to solve problems, and serve the citizens of Mississippi through outreach programs. With this responsibility to stay on the "cutting edge" and fulfill our land-grant mission, the School of Human Sciences is constantly changing, too. Our current mission is to provide education, research and outreach programs related to agricultural and extension education; apparel, textiles, and merchandising; and human development and family studies.

Our commitment to teaching is evident, considering the academic honors received by our faculty and the continued increase in enrollment. The School currently has the largest enrollment and the largest graduate degree program in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

The School has an outstanding group of Extension faculty who provide excellent outreach programs to Mississippians in the areas of early childhood development, family education and policy, family financial resource management, leadership development, program evaluation, and instructional technology.

As Director, I have had the opportunity to meet many alumni and friends, and I look forward to meeting more of you. I hope to gain more valuable insight from you to help the School of Human Sciences continue to have a positive impact on the development of people, families, communities, and schools.

-- Gary B. Jackson, Director School of Human Sciences

**Dr. Patsilu Reeves** (pictured at right) has recently been named Professor Emeritus of Family Education and Policy by Dr. Robert Foglesong, President of Mississippi State University, and the IHL Board of Trustees. Dr. Reeves retired from the School of Human Sciences-MSU Extension Service in July 2006 where she was responsible for providing statewide leadership and conducting Extension programming in the area of Family Education and Policy. Dr. Reeves' largest contribution came from writing and presenting numerous professional publications and materials in this area. As a family development expert, she was featured in numerous professional publications, presentations and news articles published around the state, region, and nation during her 30-year career. Her value and implementation of her knowledge and expertise dealing with family issues was further noted following Hurricane Katrina. A native of Monroe County, Mississippi, Dr. Reeves plans to continue working with special projects related to family well being and serve as a volunteer to various community and civic organizations.



## New Faces

### Dr. Erin Hiley Sharp Assistant Professor

Having completed her Ph.D. at Pennsylvania State University in May 2006, Dr. Sharp joined our forces this fall in HDFS. She is currently teaching the courses Child Development I and Professional Seminar I.



### Dr. Joe Wilmoth Assistant Professor

Dr. Wilmoth joined Human Sciences in August 2006. He has a Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University. He teaches family studies and parenting classes.



### Dr. Tabitha Staier Assistant Extension Professor

Dr. Staier hails from Florida State University, where she received her Ph.D. in August 2007. She is currently working with the Extension program to promote healthy relationships for individuals, couples, & families in Mississippi.



### Meredith McCormick Office Associate

An August 2007 psychology graduate from MSU, Ms. McCormick joined the School of Human Sciences upon graduation. She supports Human Sciences teaching faculty and has developed this & future newsletters.



### Andrelyn Smith CDFSC Manager

Ms. Smith is a Mississippi State native, having received her B.S. in HDFS from MSU in 2003. She now serves as the Child Development & Family Studies Center's Manager, & is currently working toward a B.S. in Elementary Education.

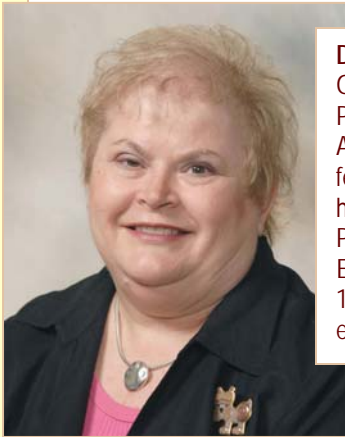


For more information about our faculty, staff, & programs, please visit <http://www.humansci.msstate.edu>. To save resources, future newsletters will be e-mailed & posted on our website. Please contact Angel Fason ([angelf@humansci.msstate.edu](mailto:angelf@humansci.msstate.edu)) to give us your e-mail address.

## Agricultural Information Science



**Dr. Kirk A. Swortzel** (pictured at right), Associate Professor and Undergraduate Coordinator, was named a Teaching Fellow by the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) at their 2007 annual meeting at the University of Illinois. The NACTA Teaching Fellow Award recognizes those individuals whose efforts represent the very best in agricultural higher education. Candidates are evaluated based on their personal teaching philosophy; evaluations from students, alumni, peers, and administrators; and a self-evaluation on a number of teaching factors. Dr. Swortzel was one of 14 individuals to receive the teaching fellow award this year. Dr. Swortzel has been a faculty member at MSU since January 2001.



**Dr. Jacquie Deeds** (pictured at left), Professor and Graduate Coordinator, just completed her term as President of the American Association for Agricultural Education. Dr. Deeds was the first female to hold the office of president. As a result of her position, Dr. Deeds also serves as Vice President of the National Council for Agricultural Education and is providing leadership on the 10 X 15 Initiative to have 10,000 quality agricultural education programs by 2015.

**Meredith McCurdy**, a senior in Agricultural Information Science (communications emphasis) was selected to be a National Collegiate Agricultural Ambassador for the National FFA Organization. Meredith is one of 15 collegiate students representing agricultural education and the FFA to promote agricultural awareness across the nation. During this year, Meredith will be visiting college campuses and making presentations about agriculture and the FFA.



## Agricultural & Extension Education – Master's/Ph.D.

**Dr. Walter Taylor** (pictured at right) received the designation of Fellow of the American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE) at the 2007 annual meeting in Minneapolis, MN. This designation is the highest honor the AAAE can give, with only three receiving the award this year. The AAAE is a national organization "dedicated to studying, applying, and promoting the teaching and learning processes in agriculture" ([aaae.okstate.edu](http://aaae.okstate.edu)). Additionally, he was awarded a Certificate of Recognition by the Black History Month Committee and IHL Board of Trustees for his positive advancement of diversity on campus and in the community. Dr. Taylor was also promoted to the position of Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in July 2006.



**Lee James**, a 1977 Agricultural & Extension Education graduate, was named Mississippi Teacher of the Year for 2006. As part of this award, he had the opportunity to meet President and Mrs. Bush (pictured at left). Mr. James is currently the Agricultural Education teacher at the Choctaw County Vocational Center in Ackerman, MS. Furthermore, he serves as president of the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE), an organization whose members strive to promote the development of American agriculture through the advancement of agricultural education.



**Dr. Lyle Westrom**, a 1990 Agricultural and Extension Education graduate, was recently awarded the Region I Outstanding Higher Education/Adult Agricultural Education Program Award for 2007 at the Minnesota Association of Agricultural Educators (MAAE) Agriculture Technology Conference. The MAAE is an organization of teachers of agriculture who seek to advance agricultural education in Minnesota and is affiliated with the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE). Dr. Westrom now serves as Associate Professor of Dairy Science and Agricultural Education at the University of Minnesota, Crookston.



# Apparel, Textiles, & Merchandising

Dr. Phyllis Bell Miller and Dr. Wanda Cheek visited India during December 2006 and January 2007 as participants in the Fulbright-Hays Group Study Program, "The Fabric of Indian Life." Angie Lawrence, Family and Consumer Science teacher at Kossuth High School, was also a team member. The highly competitive, national fellowship, which was funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered through Colorado State University, was awarded to only six teams. Due to India's growth, the fellowship was to provide extensive knowledge of Indian culture, religion, politics, and industry and their impact on dress and textiles. Participants will disseminate the information by incorporating it into curricula, community activities, exhibits, etc. Before the trip, participants completed extensive readings and attended seminars on all aspects of Indian life. The trip included major cities and states in northern India, where participants visited artisans, historians, and other experts on Indian culture and industry as well as schools, factories, temples, landmarks, and private homes. Among the highlights were businesses owned and run by women and ancient methods of textile production. Pictured at right (from L-R) are Dr. Phyllis Miller, Dr. Wanda Cheek, and Ms. Angie Lawrence.



Parron Edwards, Ashley Gunkel, and Gabby LaRoche, all Apparel, Textiles, and Merchandising majors, were selected for the finals in the Young Designers Competition, a national competition. The finals took place on September 21<sup>st</sup> in St. Charles, Missouri, where Parron Edwards placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Wearable Art category. There were about 100 applicants from over 20 design schools and programs across the U.S. All of the winning garments were designed in Dr. Phyllis Miller's experimental course "Creating Wearable Art: Techniques for Innovative Design." The success of this course, along with its high evaluations, has prompted Dr. Miller to write a proposal to make it permanent.

Leanne Thornton, an Apparel, Textiles, & Merchandising student, was chosen from a large national applicant pool to participate in a prestigious internship in Cary, North Carolina with [TC]<sup>2</sup> (Textile/Clothing Technology Corporation). Leanne was one of six (6) students selected. She participated in an 8-week intensive study program during Summer 2007. During final project presentation, Leanne and her partner from Baylor University proposed a business plan and design concept that won first place from the 100+ member professional audience.



# Human Development & Family Studies

The Human Development & Family Studies undergraduate program has been approved by the **National Council on Family Relations (NCFR)** as meeting the Standards & Criteria for the Provisional **Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE)**. Graduates of the program have relevant coursework in: Families & Society, Internal Dynamics of Families, Human Growth & Development, Human Sexuality, Interpersonal Relationships, Family Resource Management, Parent Education, Family Law and Public Policy, Ethics, and Family Life Education Methodology. The CFLE designation equips students to work with families in today's complex society. For information about how to apply for the designation, contact your Human Sciences advisor or Dr. Sheri Worthy at 662-325-0918 or [sworthy@humansci.msstate.edu](mailto:sworthy@humansci.msstate.edu).

Recent Child Life graduates **Jaime Griffin Pitcock**, **Melissa Langley**, & **Elizabeth Wilson** passed the child life certification exam in June 2007 and now hold the designation Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS).

The Kappa Beta Phi Chapter of **Kappa Omicron Nu** won the "Chapter Award of Excellence 2005-2006." This was awarded on August 5, 2007, at the bi-annual Conclave in Dallas, TX.



## Child Development and Family Studies Center (CDFSC)

**Manager**  
Andrelyn Smith

**Teachers**  
Delois Mickens (Infant Room)  
Christina Doss (Toddler 1)  
Rebecca "Becky" Oden (Toddler 2)  
Kim Harris (2- & 3-year-olds)  
Tiffany Crawford (3- & 4-year-olds)  
Teresa Tuten (4- & 5-year-olds)

**Staff**  
Beyonka Lovelace – Office Associate

