The Delta Obesity Prevention Research Unit—
Mission Statement

The Delta Obesity Prevention Research Unit is coordinating a major research program that brings together the expertise of seven institutions in the three state region. These institutions and their research scientists provide unique skills and resources to the Delta. Their research will result in Lower Mississippi Delta specific recommendations for input into the 2015 Dietary Guidelines that will enable rural Lower Mississippi Delta individuals and families to adopt food and physical activity guidelines for sustaining healthy weights, preventing obesity, and reducing the risk factors for obesity related chronic diseases.

Current Louisiana Personnel Supported by Delta OPRU

Southern University and A&M College
Bernestine B. McGee  Sharon Hutchinson
Glenda S. Johnson  Robert Kelly
Valerie Richardson  Daniel Colins
Crystal Johnson  Alma Thornton
Debbe Gwinn  Cecil Duncan
Lorraine Fuller

Pennington Biomedical Research Center
Peter Katzmarzyk
Catherine Champagne
David Harsha
Stephanie Broyles
Catrine Tudor-Locke
Ray Allen
William Johnson
Mary Afton
Dawn Turner
Mavis Crow
Erma Levy
Deirdre Harrington
Tiago Barreira

2012 Personnel Levels Supported by Delta Obesity Prevention Research Unit

Southern University and A&M College - 11 Employees
Pennington Biomedical Research Center - 13 Employees

USDA, ARS, Delta OPRU
www.ars.usda.gov/spa/dopru

900 S. Shackleford Rd STE 220
Little Rock, AR 72211
Phone: 501-954-8882
Fax: 501-954-9596
E-mail: mike.grusak@ars.usda.gov

Pennington Biomedical Research Center
Baton Rouge, LA
Steps to Adapt Physical Activity Guidelines for the Lower Mississippi Delta:

Delta Obesity Prevention Research Unit cooperating researchers at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center are determining ways in which physical activity patterns of adults in the Lower Mississippi Delta can be effectively adapted to the 2005 physical activity recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Through the use of pedometers and an educational program, delta residents will self-monitor their progressive steps to meet these national recommendations. Through a successful physical activity implementation and an adapted eating pattern, anticipated results include a reduction of unhealthy weight gain and an increase in physical activity levels. For additional information, contact Dr. Peter Katzmarzyk (peter.katzmarzyk@pbrc.edu).

Southern University and A&M College Significant Publications:


- **McGee, B.B., Richardson, V., Johnson, G., Thornton, A., Johnson, C., Yadrick, K., Ndirangu, M., Goosby, S., Groves, D., Simpson, P., Hyman, E., Stigger, F., Bogle, M.L., Kramer, T.R., Strickland, E., McCabe-Sellers, B.J.** 2008. Reducing weight gain and risk factors for obesity-related chronic diseases in Lower Mississippi Delta African American parents and their children is of major concern. Southern University & A&M College cooperating scientists are utilizing a culturally tailored intervention (We Can!) (NIH-NHLBI, 2009) which is designed to educate parents how to encourage their children to improve food and physical activity behaviors by modifying the youth’s beliefs and values. Changes in the Health Eating Index (HEI) scores, physical activity level, percent body fat, and diet related chronic disease biomarkers will provide the researchers with an overall understanding of the effectiveness level of the intervention We Can! For additional information, contact Dr. Bernestine McGee (bernestine.mcgee@subr.edu).