Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar

The Center’s Human Relations Committee sponsors the individual special emphasis events throughout the year. We celebrate these together, with the Asian Pacific Heritage Month Celebration activities going on in May. These celebrations fit within our mission to help encourage acceptance, respect for diversity and for eliminating discrimination. However, our HRC’s activities go much beyond this goal. The large number of volunteers from our ranks who serve on various sub-committees educate us about different cultures and national backgrounds, and broaden our horizons. Through the Committee’s work, we have heard inspirational stories about people whose struggles and hard work have impacted our world. We also get to discuss contemporary events that will shape the future of our planet. At the same time, we meet at these events and get to know our colleagues.

HRC activities give us a pleasant break from the daily rigors of research, while allowing us to taste delicious cuisine representative of different parts of the world, in the comfortable environment of our Center. Dr. H.N. Cheng has recently joined Dr. Karen Bett-Garber in leading the HRC.

I thank all our industrious volunteers that make this happen for us. In working together, we are better.
Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration
Submitted by: H.N. Cheng

New Member of New Orleans City Council Visits SRRC

On May 1, Cyndi Nguyen, the first Asian American elected to New Orleans City Council, visited SRRC and gave a stimulating and informative talk entitled, “Commitment, Connectivity, and Community.”

In her talk, she traced her career from an immigrant to a community leader, while raising six children in New Orleans East. She and her parents left Vietnam when she was 5 years old and settled in New Orleans. She went to school in Texas and Iowa, getting her B.A. degree in social work and coming back to New Orleans in 1998. In 2001, she co-founded Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training (VIET), the first nonprofit organization in Louisiana to focus on the needs of non-English-speaking communities. Since then, she has also been very engaged in numerous community activities and was selected as a W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) Community Leadership Network fellow from 2013-2016. In late 2017, she ran for the City Council and defeated the incumbent (59% vs. 41%), thereby becoming New Orleans’ first Asian American City Council member. Throughout her career, she indicated her love for people, and her commitment to improve the community, establish connectivity, and revitalize the city. She indicated a number of areas where she would like to work on in the City Council, including economic development, improved city governance, usage of empty land, and child development programs. She showed considerable interest in the work being done at SRRC.

After her talk, she answered several questions from the audience and actually stayed 15 minutes longer than anticipated to listen to attendees. Cake, cookies, coffee and soft drinks were enjoyed by over 60 people attending the event.

The APAH lunch will be held on Thursday, May 24th with sandwiches supplied from Dong Phuong Bakery. Mr. Pan Luo, an accomplished local musician, will speak and provide a demonstration of Chinese instrumental music, “Highlights of Traditional Chinese Instrumental Music”.
Earth Day 2018
Submitted by: Cathy Mason

We held our 2018 Earth Day Celebration on Monday, April 23. We started the day with a very enlightening seminar by Meriam Belblidia, co-founder and CEO of Water Works, NOLA. Miriam is a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) with extensive experience in flood mitigation, storm water management, National Flood Insurance Program, hazard mitigation flooding and planning. Her seminar covered many of her company’s projects and also gave many solutions that can be utilized by local homeowners to improve storm water drainage. The talk was well received by our employees and generated much conversation concerning rain gardens, rain barrels and permeable driveways and walkways.

The seminar was followed by our annual Plant and Book Swap. Every year, as we are preparing our own home gardens, we start extra plants to share with our co-workers. This event is always well attended by our SRRC personnel. We also expanded the Swap to include books and magazines; a way to clean out our book piles while sharing our favorite articles and authors.

This year’s Earth Day theme was End Plastic Pollution. SRRC has a very active Recycling Committee, recycling plastic, paper, cardboard and aluminum. Rather than focusing on our plastic recycling, we highlighted the effect of plastic in the environment through our SRRC Event bulletin board. This also included information about several family-friendly Earth Day events around New Orleans and Baton Rouge.

Additional resources are displayed in the Library and can also be found at:

- Water Wise NOLA
- Groundwork New Orleans
- Urban Water Plan

Human Resources Corner

Submitted by: Jocelyn Mack

On May 17, our Aetna and GEHA representatives will make a visit as part of Public Service Recognition Week. During Public Service Recognition Week, they plan to honor all federal employees and military personnel who devote their lives to a stronger America. They will make this visit to say “Thank You” to the SRRC employees. The time for this event is 11:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in the Director’s Conference Room.
Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day 2018  
Submitted by: Darlene Downey and Chris Mattison

The SRRC held its annual Take Our Daughters & Sons to Work Day on Friday April 20th. The 2018 theme was “Agents of Positive Change”. The day was a resounding success and many happy faces were seen by all. There were 23 student visitors that attended the event. The day started with a continental breakfast and introductions to the Center and the day’s activities. Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar, the Center Director, introduced the students to the scientific method and the research ongoing in the SRRC building. Ms. Shannon Beltz presented the students with notes on how to remain safe while in the building and in the labs during their visit.

The students observed five tour stops, including a visit to the vintage lab to observe scientific equipment dating back to the 1940’s, use of polymers to make slime, study of phase changes using liquid nitrogen to make ice cream, production of butter and aroma identification, microscopic characterization of insects, and inspection of microbiological contamination of sugar cane. After lunch there was an intellectually stimulating game of “Minute-To-Win-It”. After the game, we had a visit from the AquaVan from the Aquarium of the Americas (part of the Audubon Nature Institute), where the students learned about animals that live in and around the state of Louisiana.

Over 50 SRRC personnel helped with various events of the day, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to all who volunteered. We received a great deal of positive feed-back and a real appreciation for everyone who helped make the day a memorable experience. We are already looking forward to next year.
2018 Public Service Recognition Week Winners and Honorable Mention Recipients

Submitted by: Dr. Deepak Bhatnagar

The SRRC management team nominated 13 individuals from SRRC in various categories for 2018 Public Service Recognition celebrations. I am happy and proud to report that eight of these individuals were winners, while 5 received Honorable Mention:

**Category 1A - Outstanding Supervisory Professional (GS-13 and Above)**
Michael K. Dowd

**Category 1B - Outstanding Supervisory Professional (GS-12 and Below)**
Janell M. Becker

**Category 4 - Outstanding Trades and Crafts Supervisor**
Christopher D. Delhom

**Category 14 - Outstanding Diversity Contribution**
Dawn M. Reed ~ Mia Schexnayder

**Category 15 - Outstanding Community Service Volunteer**
Gregory Ford

**Category 19 - Distinguished Public Service Career**
Janice Boyd

**Category 20 - Rookie Employee of the Year (Technical, Scientific and Program Support)**
Stephanie Gross

**Honorable Mention Recipients:**
Christopher Florane
Jeanne Lea
Suzanne L. Martin
Melissa A Santos
Tommy Williams

This recognition for SRRC is very significant because we are one out of nearly 32 Federal Agencies in the Greater New Orleans Area.

We do have a significant number of highly productive individuals, and I am committed to recognizing all that do exemplary work. I thank the Management Team for putting these nominations together. All these individuals will be recognized at a luncheon on May 16th.
2018 Public Service Recognition Week—Awards Luncheon
Submitted by: Trinia Bax

The Awards Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 16, 2018, at the Audubon Tea Room, 6500 Magazine St, New Orleans, LA 70118 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. Check-in begins at 11:00 a.m. The luncheon event will cost $31.61 per person. Payment can be made at [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/distinguished-service-awards-ceremony-and-luncheon-tickets-42631797855](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/distinguished-service-awards-ceremony-and-luncheon-tickets-42631797855). Payments will need to be made by May 9th in order to confirm the amount of attendees with the venue. Please let me know if anyone has issues with paying on the Eventbrite site. Any NO FEB member agency is welcome to attend the luncheon event even if you do not have any award nominations for this year.

Community Outreach Project: Blessing Bags for Homeless Shelters
Submitted by: Trinia Bax

The New Orleans Federal Executive Board Community Outreach Project is again sponsoring “Blessing Bags for Homeless Shelters”. The drive is currently running now through May 11, 2018. Necessity items such as toiletries, non-perishable foods and notes of encouragement will be collected in several boxes throughout the Center. The designated agencies for blessing bag donations are: Chez Hope, Inc. [www.chezhope.org](http://www.chezhope.org), Eden House [www.eden housenola.org](http://www.edenhousenola.org) and Ozanam Inn [www.ozanaminn.org](http://www.ozanaminn.org).

During the last week of May, FEB staff members will collect the Blessing Bags for distribution to the designated charities.

If you have any questions, give me a call at ext. 213.

Thank you for your donations.
Submitted by: Shannon Beltz

Hello everyone! Just a reminder to check the date on your Work Zone Safety Plan and make sure that it is current. We tried to get all of them taken care of before the BISHOP visit, but we would like to make sure we didn’t miss anyone. If your WZSP is expired or will expire soon, and you have no changes, then I can sign it and bring it up to date.

Getting ready to buy a chemical?? Remember to check the chemical repository before buying chemicals! You might be surprised at what is available in room 0101. You can search for your chemical in the new Chemical SDS Database and see if it is located in the repository. The database link is available under Safety on the SRRC Intranet:


If you have any questions about how to search for a chemical, just ask the Safety Office and we will be happy to help!

Submitted by: Shelia Parker

The following link serves as a reminder of the proper technique for washing your hands:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGJNspLRdrc

As simple as it may seem, proper handwashing remains the most effective way of removing germs and harmful bacteria from your hands. Proper hand washing prevents the spread of diseases.

There are many easy ways to keep the hands clean. The common methods used in many workplaces include the use of sufficient soap and water or good alcohol-based sanitizers when water is not easily accessible.

It will be easier to take hand washing more seriously when you know the benefits of keeping the hands clean as much as possible and also keeping the environments within your work spaces properly sanitized.
Getting to Know Your Colleagues

Director’s Office
Administrative Office

The Director’s Office and Administrative Office are comprised of Administration, Safety, Library Services, Human Resources, Budget and Finance, Engineering, Acquisitions, and Property. The experts in each of these areas strive to provide top quality, friendly, and timely support services to all personnel of the SRRC. They can assist you with safety issues, database searches, hiring, timekeeping, accounting issues, maintenance of facilities and equipment, purchasing, contracting, and inventories, just to name a few. If they do not have answers to your questions, they will find them for you. Stop by their offices anytime, they are always willing to help.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Director’s Office Staff:</th>
<th>Administrative Office Staff:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deepak Bhatnagar, Center Director</td>
<td>Janell Becker, Administrative Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgina Acosta, SEA Program Analyst</td>
<td>Olga Carias, Office Automation Clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinia Bax, Program Support Assistant</td>
<td>Matt King, Quality Assurance Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shannon Beltz, Acting Safety and Occupational</td>
<td>Jocelyn Mack, Human Resources Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Specialist</td>
<td>Suzanne Martin, Financial Technician</td>
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<td>Suhad Wojkowski, Librarian</td>
<td>Melissa Santos, Purchasing Agent</td>
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Scientific Meetings

2\textsuperscript{nd} Advances in Sugar Crop Processing and Conversion Conference

Submitted by: Sophia Wojkowski

SRRC is hosting the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Advances in Sugar Crop Processing and Conversion (ASCPC) Conference held on May 15-18\textsuperscript{th}. The Conference will focus on sugar products and technologies that have specific applications in sugar and specialty chemical manufacturing markets.

The objective of the Conference is to exchange information on new sugar crop commodities, process development, and conversion technologies, as well as to promote the use of sugar crops (sugarcane, sweet sorghum, and sugar/energy beet) as a sustainable renewable resource for processing and conversion into food, energy, and chemicals.

For more information, visit the conference website: ars.usda.gov/ASCPC
For registration, visit: https://www.regonline.com/USDA_ASCPC2018

Scientific Presentations

Dr. Heping Cao, Research Plant Pathologist of the Commodity Utilization Research Unit recently attended the Experimental Biology 2018 Meeting in San Diego, CA to present three posters:

- Isolation of Cottonseed Extracts that Affect Human Cancer Cell Growth
- Identification of Diacylglycerol Aeryltransferase 2 mRNA as the Major Form of DGATs Expressed in Eukaryotic Cells
- Cottonseed Extracts and Gossypol Regulate Diacylglycerol Aeryltransferase Gene Expression in Mouse Macrophages

Dr. Cao also served as a poster competition judge and is pictured with Nobel Prize winner Leland Hartwell at the meeting.

Submitted by: Terri Von Hoven

May 6-9 American Oil Chemists’ Society Meeting & Expo New Orleans, LA

May 15-18 ASCPC Conference New Orleans, LA
Did You Know?

May Is…?

Skin Cancer Awareness Month

With over 5 million cases diagnosed in the United States each year, skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S. Fortunately, skin cancer is also one of the most preventable forms of cancer. About 90 percent of nonmelanoma skin cancers and 85 percent of melanoma cases are associated with exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun. By raising awareness of the dangers of unprotected exposure and encouraging sun-safe habits, we can change behaviors and save lives.

For more information, visit the Skin Cancer Foundation website: [https://www.skincancer.org/get-involved/skin-cancer-awareness-month](https://www.skincancer.org/get-involved/skin-cancer-awareness-month)

ALS Awareness Month

May is ALS Awareness Month, observed to raise awareness of and foster research for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease. ALS is a progressive, fatal, neurodegenerative disorder of upper and lower motor neurons. The cause of ALS is not known, and no cure exists.

In October 2010, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) launched the congressionally mandated National ALS Registry ([https://wwwn.cdc.gov/als/](https://wwwn.cdc.gov/als/)) to collect and analyze data regarding persons in the United States with ALS. The goals of the registry are to determine the incidence and prevalence of ALS, characterize the demographics of persons living with ALS, and examine possible risk factors for the disease.

In August 2016, ATSDR released its second prevalence report, which indicated an estimated 16,000 persons (5.0 per 100,000 population) were living with ALS in 2013. ALS remains more common among whites, males, non-Hispanics, and persons aged 60–69 years.

A new National ALS Biorepository allows researchers to request high-quality biologic specimens to study ALS. Both in-home and postmortem specimens are being collected from interested patients enrolled in the National ALS Registry. Epidemiologic data from patient surveys will be matched with patient specimens, making the biorepository a rich data source for ALS research.

ATSDR is collaborating with the ALS Association ([https://www.alsa.org](https://www.alsa.org)), the Muscular Dystrophy Association ([https://www.mda.org](https://www.mda.org)), the Les Turner ALS foundation ([http://www.lesturnerals.org](http://www.lesturnerals.org)), and other organizations to spread awareness about the National ALS Registry. Additional information is available at [https://www.cdc.gov/als](https://www.cdc.gov/als).
New Saints Room

The 3rd floor Saints Room (Rm 3211) is now available for Center staff to use for small gatherings or events like birthday celebrations, baby showers, etc.

A Note from the Editorial Board

The April issue of the *On The Bayou* marked the 1\textsuperscript{st} year anniversary of our newsletter!

Its purpose is to serve as a communication tool to help keep our staff informed on a variety of topics, such as upcoming events, observances, recognition/awards, recent SRRC publications.

If you have a professional or community award or outside recognition you’d like to share, please let Trinia Bax know. Have a suggestion or something you want included in OTB, contact a member of the editorial board. We look forward to hearing from you. Guest contributors will be featured as needed.

We hope you enjoy the monthly issues and excuse our typos and unintentional omissions. We make our best effort to keep everyone informed of the happenings at the Center.
Recent SRRC Publications

Submitted by: Suhad Wojkowski


Click on the article’s title below to launch the pdf from Eprints.


