

Oklahoma students get a close look at CAHS



PRAIRIE VIEW -- If you are a high school student on the cusp of graduating, there is no experience like first-hand experience when it comes to picking a university to attend.

With that premise in mind, students from Oklahoma descended on the College of Agriculture and Human Sciences on July 13th during a day trip to Prairie View A&M University. The students belong to the Retired Educators for Youth Agricultural Programs based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. They traveled to learn about the school's agricultural offerings as well as life on "The Hill."

The group of 40 students and chaperones gathered at the Cooperative Agricultural Research Center where they met with representatives of the university. The students attentively listened as discussions were held on the importance of performing well in high school and the steps necessary to apply for college.

Seventeen year-old Kendra Shaw of Watonga, Oklahoma said she enjoyed touring the PVAMU campus. "I really liked the farm and learning about the research labs." She is currently considering majoring in Agribusiness.

REYAP, founded in 1994 by retired agriculture teachers, the late Sam Combs Jr., W.G. Parker, James R. Johnson, A.W. Hampton and M.E. Gamble, seeks to provide opportunities for growth and development to young Oklahoma students in agriculture. The program functions throughout Oklahoma and has reached over 1,000 students in the program's 15 years.

USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer Horace Hodge said the REYAP group has a strong history with the College of Agriculture and Human Sciences at the university. "I facilitated hosting this group in 2005. Approximately 45 students participated," Hodge said. "As a result, Christine Williams was accepted into the Research Apprentice Program. She is currently a student majoring in Human Nutrition and Food."

REYAP Executive Director Rita Combs said the visit is a part of a tour the students are taking to various historically black colleges and universities.

Ardmore, Oklahoma resident Zinat Turner, 17, said she appreciated the hospitality showed to the group during the visit, especially on the university farm. "I'm a country girl so I enjoyed seeing the goats," she said.

"The focus has been on agriculture, science and technology. They really do enjoy the production agriculture and the crops," Combs said. She added that one of the students is enrolled to attend Prairie View in the fall. Hodge said he expects three to four students in the group to enroll in PVAMU.