

SEIFT NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2026

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Upcoming!

**2027 SEIFT ANNUAL
FOOD INDUSTRY EXPO
ATLANTA, GA**

Welcome Back to Campus !



South Eastern Section
Institute of Food Technologists

Follow us on all our socials:

Our official website

LinkedIn

Instagram



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Southeastern Section Members,

What an incredible year it has been.

It has been a true honor serving as your SEIFT President for 2025–2026, and as I prepare to transition to the role of Past President in September, I want to take a moment to reflect on what we accomplished together — and to express my deepest gratitude to each of you for making it possible.

This year was filled with meaningful milestones. In March, I had the privilege of attending the IFT Leadership Retreat and Conference with Dr. Mis Solval and Dr. Manjunatha at the InterContinental Chicago Magnificent Mile — a wonderful opportunity for section leaders to come together for learning, networking, and collaboration. It was an energizing experience that set a strong tone for the year ahead.

Most recently, IFT FIRST 2026 brought our section together on a national stage. Students and professionals from the Southeastern Section presented their research, participated in competitions, and represented our community with excellence.

And the news we are most proud to share — the Southeastern Section received the 2026 IFT Impact Award for Student Engagement and Scholarship Initiative. This award belongs to every single one of you.

We also celebrated the remarkable achievements of our own members. Congratulations to Dr. Mis Solval and Dr. Manjunatha for receiving the Outstanding Service Award, and to Queen Abbah and Robina Rai for receiving the Outstanding Volunteer Award.

Your dedication to this section and to the food science community is truly deserving of this recognition.

To our Board Members - thank you. Your tireless commitment, leadership, and collaboration made this year's events and achievements possible. I am deeply grateful for every one of you.

It has been the greatest privilege to serve as your President. I look forward to continuing to support our section in the year ahead.

For more updates, please visit our website and follow us on social media:

- Please visit our [section's website](#)
- Follow us on
 - [Instagram](#) (South Eastern Section IFT)
 - [Facebook](#) (South Eastern Section IFT)
- Join our [LinkedIn Group](#) (Southeast IFT Section)

I look forward to your active participation in events and involvement in our section's activities

Kind Regards,
Ogechukwu Tasie, PhD
President, South Eastern IFT



MEET THE TEAM!

Executive Board for 2025-2026



Dr. Ogechukwu Tasie
President
Alabama A&M University



Dr. Adelia Bovell-Benjamin
President-Elect & Suppliers Night Chair
Tuskegee University



Alex Thompson
Immediate Past-President
Clemson Cooperative Extension



Sean Overstreet
Secretary
Tilley Distribution



Dr. Kevin Mis Solval
Treasurer
University of Georgia



Vick Patel
Employment Chair
Eurofins Microbiology



Dr. Sungeun Cho
Membership Chair
Auburn University



Dr. Martha Verghese
Director At Large
Alabama A&M University



Peter Gichuhi
Director at Large
Tuskegee University



Nedra Montgomery
Student Competition Co-Chair
Alabama A&M University



Dr. Vishal Manjunatha
Director at Large/Student
Competition Chair
McKee Foods Corporation



Robina Rai
Marketing Chair
Clemson University



Dr. Christopher Kucha
Director at Large
University of Georgia



Queen Abbah
Newsletter/Communications Chair
Tuskegee University



Montreka Dansby
Social Media Lead



Dr. Norma Dawkins
Member at Large
Tuskegee University



Dr. Feng Chen
Member at Large
Clemson University



Vanessa Njoku
Director at Large
Alabama A&M University



Viateur Ngabonzima
Student Representative
Tuskegee University



Gina Fimiano
Student Representative
University of Georgia



Tejasiri Thatipam
Student Representative
Alabama A&M
University



Alex Gillespie
Student Representative
Clemson University



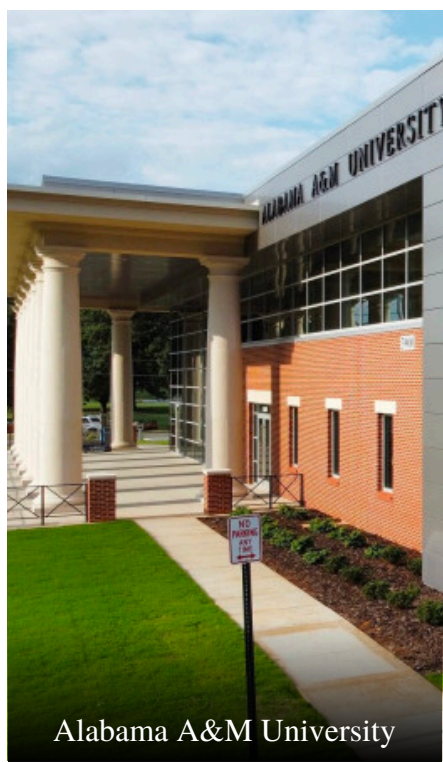
Vianca Maite Tashiguano Encalada
Student Representative
Auburn University



Contact seiftsection@gmail.com or go [here!](#)

Congratulations to all Summer 2026 Graduates and a warm welcome to all our members!

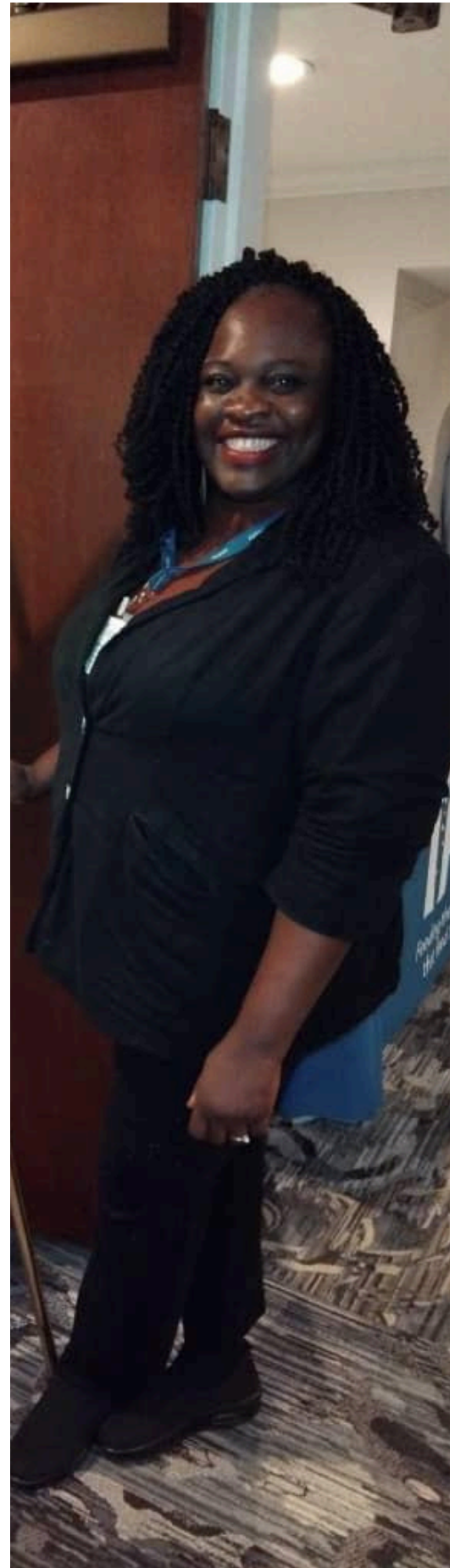
SEIFT congratulates all the young Food Science professionals who graduated this Summer, and we welcome both old and new members back on campus!



We are excited to celebrate this milestone with you!



**IFT SECTION LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.
MARCH 10-12, 2026**





CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

The Food Science Club at Clemson University held its 2026 Spring Barbecue, sponsored by SEIFT! Interested in hosting a similar event at your university? Reach out to us to learn more.





2026 IFT FIRST ANNUAL EVENT
CHICAGO ILLINOIS
JULY 11-15, 2026



◀◀ SYNOPSIS OF 2026 IFT FIRST ANNUAL EVENT

Last July, the City of Chicago, Illinois, hosted another IFT FIRST Annual Event and Expo, which took place between July 12 -15, 2026. The Event was an assembly of Food Scientists, researchers, students, business executives, and government representatives, gathered to discuss the current trends and new and future innovations in the food industry. More than a hundred scientific presentations with over 1,000 exhibitors were recorded at the event. These professionals exhibited great innovation and tentative solutions to salient issues in food safety, nutrition and health, artificial intelligence, plant protein, product development, and consumer needs.

The conference offered an amazing opportunity for connecting research discoveries with real-world applications and also an avenue for professional networking, career development, and student engagement.



In the end, IFT FIRST 2026 showed how technological advances, science, research, and teamwork can tackle significant issues in ensuring safe food, sustainability, nutrition, and food-system innovation while giving participants connections and information that they can use for professional practice, education, and research.





IFT FIRST 2026 EXHIBITION HALL JULY 12-15, 2026



***SEIFT was
awarded the 2026
IFT Impact Award
for Student
Engagement and
Scholarship
Initiative!***



ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AND FELLOW CEREMONY JULY 12-15, 2026



***Dr. Adelia
Bovell-
Benjamin of
Tuskegee
University was
honored as an
IFT fellow***

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD FOR 2026



Dr. Kevin E. Mis Solval
University of Georgia



Dr. Vishal Manjunatha
McKee Foods



OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER AWARD FOR 2026



Robina Rai
Clemson University



Queen Abbah
Tuskegee University





COLLEGE BOWL COMPETITION

JULY 12-15, 2026

BEHOLD OUR WINNERS: UGA- 3RD PLACE





STUDENT ORAL & POSTER RESEARCH COMPETITION JULY 12-15, 2026

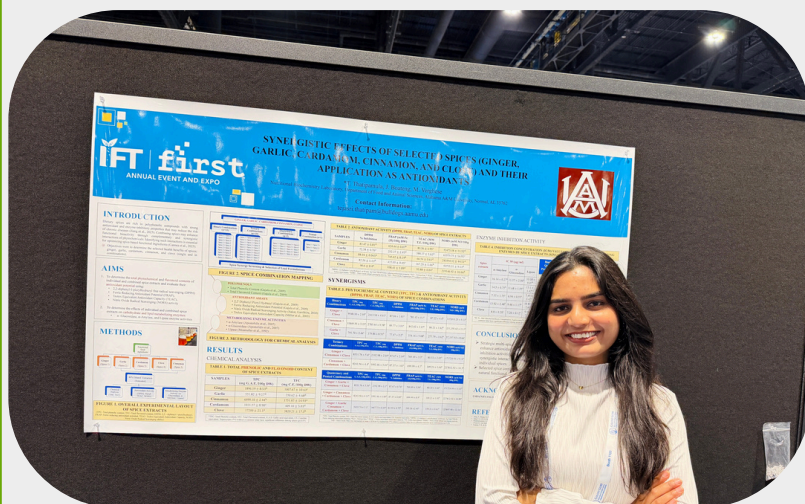


STUDENT RESEARCH COMPETITION

JULY 12-15, 2026

Meet the Researchers!

At the just-concluded 2026 IFT FIRST Annual Event, our students participated in the oral and poster research competitions, showcasing the amazing work they do. Your research work is proof of your resilience, commitment, hard work, and dedication to continuous learning and contribution to the field of Food Science, Nutrition, Technology, and to ensuring a sustainable food system. We are proud of you, and we appreciate the amazing work that you do!



Tejasri Thatipamula
Alabama A&M University

"Synergistic effects of selected spices (ginger, garlic, cardamom, cinnamon and clove) and their application as antioxidants."



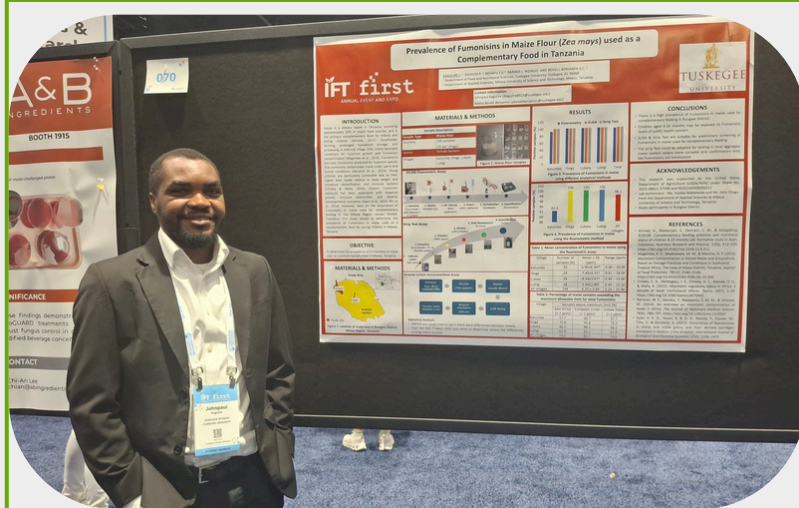
Katelyn Boyle
Alabama A&M University

Antioxidant and Anti-Obesity Potential of Bioactive Compounds in Spirulina Microalgae and Bilberry on 3T3-L1 Adipocytes.

STUDENT RESEARCH COMPETITION

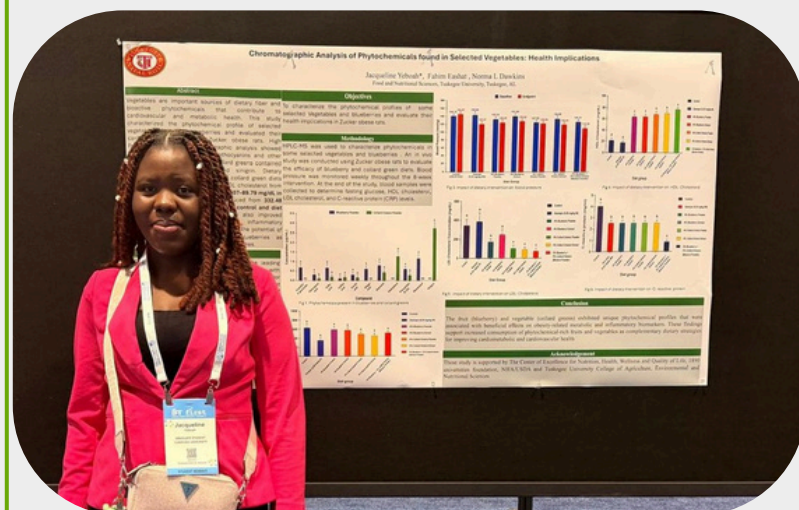
JULY 12-15, 2026

Meet the Researchers!



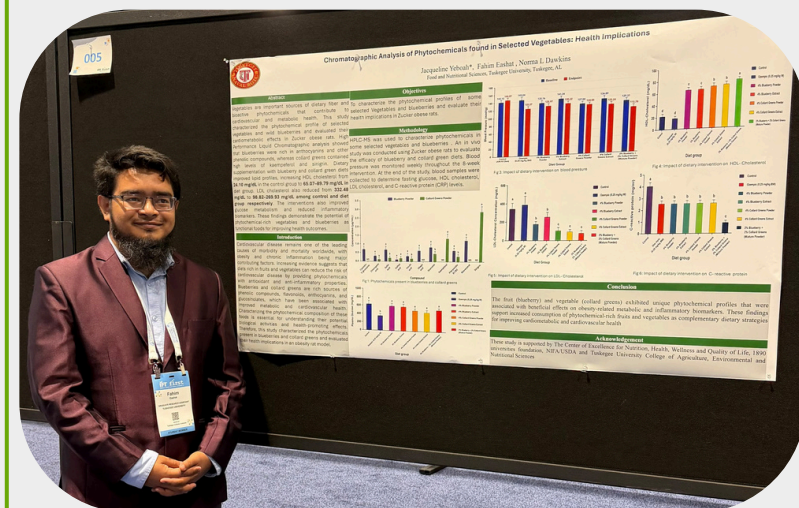
JohnPaul Kagulire
Tuskegee University

Prevalence of Fumonisin in Maize Flour (Zea Mays) Used as a Complementary Food in Tanzania



Jacqueline Yeboah
Tuskegee University

Chromatographic Analysis of Phytochemicals Found in Selected Vegetables: Health Implications.



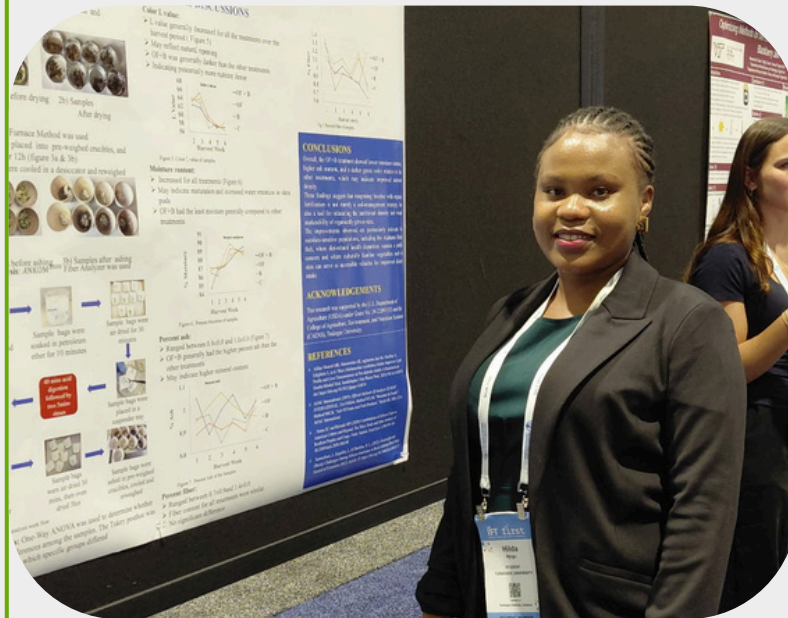
Md Fahim Sharker Eashat
Tuskegee University

Chromatographic Analysis of Phytochemicals Found in Selected Vegetables: Health Implications.

STUDENT RESEARCH COMPETITION

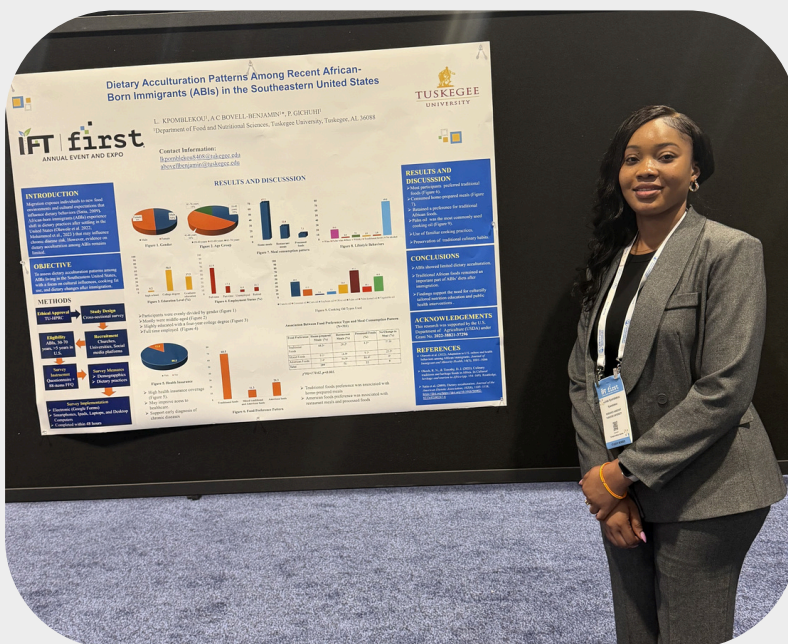
JULY 12-15, 2026

Meet the Researchers!



Hilda Njogu
Tuskegee University

Nutritional and Physical Properties
Assessment of Organic Okra
(*Abelmoschus esculentus*) Grown
Under Different Soil Treatments



Linda Delali Kpombleku
Tuskegee University

Dietary Acculturation Patterns
Among Recent African-Born
Immigrants in the Southeastern
United States.



TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND FACULTY (JULY 12-15, 2026)



TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WITH PRESIDENT PEGGY POOLE



SO WHAT'S NEXT?

Upcoming 2026/2027 Events



Be on the lookout!



GOT RESEARCH TO SHARE?



Share your research work with us and we'll highlight it in our newsletter as well as socials. We know your work is important and we believe it needs to be known!

Share more?

Job postings, achievements, career highlights or more – Use this Newsletter to share and connect with other food professionals in your section!



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

South Eastern IFT invites you to become a corporate sponsor for our section's upcoming events in 2026 and beyond, thereby supporting the larger community of food professionals in your local region. Committing to become one of our sponsors in this section puts your company in a position to support one of the largest sections of IFT, with over 500 food and nutrition science professionals from industry and academia, including student members who will be provided with several opportunities to learn and grow by participating in our section activities.

All our sponsors are listed on our website, in event invitations, and in promotions. Their respective contributions are also acknowledged during the event(s). Your generous contribution would primarily facilitate student members' participation in the section's events for free and be used as prizes for various student competitions and leadership awards. Surplus funds would be used to provide subsidized price for professional members.

We anticipate such financial support to increase member engagement and eventually make our events more successful.

[Click here to sign up as a corporate sponsor](#)

Sponsorship Categories

Platinum

\$1000 or above

Gold

\$750 or above

Silver

\$500 or above

Bronze

\$250 or above

[Click here to see all the benefits of sponsorship](#)



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PLATINUM SPONSORS



GOLD SPONSORS

AROMATECH



SILVER SPONSORS



BRONZE SPONSORS



BATORY FOODS®

