



TU-FNS, IFT-Students Chapter, Faculty and Staff Attendees  
*IFT Southeastern Section (SEIFT) Food Industry EXPO and Student Competitions, in Cobb Galleria, Atlanta, GA, February 19, 2025*

[2025 SEIFT Event Guide](#)[2025 Floor Plan](#)[See List of Exhibitors](#)[2025 Student Program](#)[TOPGOLF](#)[EXPO](#)





Tuskegee University Team “**Eco-sweets**” Presenting in Product Development Competition  
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Tuskegee University Team “**Blueberry Bliss Alkaline Water**” Presenting in Product Development Competition  
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Queen Abbah, TU Graduate Student, Presenting in Research Competition  
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All Students Competitors with the Competition Judges  
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Break Time – Side Chats  
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Educational & Insight Seminar Presentations  
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TU Team "Blueberry Bliss" **Won 3<sup>rd</sup> Place** in the Food Product Development Competition  
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Queen Abbah, TU, Received **“Peoples’ Choice” Award** in the Research Competition  
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## 2025 SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

**EXPO**  
WEDS, FEB 19, 2025

**COBB GALLERIA**  
[2 Galleria Pkwy SE,](#)  
[Atlanta, GA 30339](#)

*\*PLEASE NOTE: ALL EVENTS ARE TAKING PLACE AT COBB GALLERIA*

**9:30 – 11:30 am**  
**Student Competitions**  
See More Info [HERE](#)

**12:00 – 2:00 pm**  
**Educational & Insight Sessions**  
*75 Years of Food Innovation: Honoring the Past & Shaping the Future*

**Academic Contributions to Food Innovation**  
Dr. Josh Herring, Professor - Alabama A&M University  
See Speaker [BIO](#)  
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**Pioneering Food Science: Breakthroughs in Research & Innovation**  
Dr. Brian Bowker - USDA  
See Speaker [BIO](#)  
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**Advancing Food Innovation: The Changing Landscape of R&D & Product Development**  
Dr. Jim Gratzek - Director of UGA's Food Innovation & Commercialization Center  
See Speaker [BIO](#)  
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**Food Innovation Driven by Transformational Leadership**  
**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**  
Luis Martinez, Sr VP of R&D & Commercialization - Rubix Foods  
See Speaker [BIO](#)

**2:00 – 4:30 pm**  
**Student Networking Events**

**2:00 – 6:00 pm**  
**EXPO HALL OPEN**  
Exhibitors Checkin & Set Up from 12:00 noon – 2:00 pm



## SEIFT STUDENT AWARDS RECIPIENTS

### Product Development Competition

**1st Place (\$1000)** – Alabama A&M University

**Team Lead:** Karthik Madabalimi  
**Members:** Vanessa Njoku, Karyn Rose, Maria Martinez, Kristan Gooden, Manideep Busarapu  
**Product:** Rindastic Revive

**2nd Place (\$700)** – Alabama A&M University

**Team Lead:** Harpreet Singh  
**Members:** Tejasri Thatipamula, Madison Wright, Lauryn Strong, Katalyn Boyle  
**Product:** Hemp-based Bar

**3rd Place (\$500)** – Tuskegee University

**Team Lead:** Wes Whitner  
**Members:** Linda Kpomblekou, Viature Ngabonzima, Jacqueline Yeboah  
**Product:** Blueberry Bliss Alkaline Water

### Research Competition (3-Minute Thesis)

**1st Place (\$500)** – Robina Rai, Clemson University

**Topic:** Printing Innovation: Developing 3D-printed Texture Analysis Probes for Food Application

**2nd Place (\$400)** – Elizabeth Zlobtchenko, University of Georgia

**Topic:** RRM2 and Its Effect on Woody Breast Meat

**3rd Place (\$300)** – Madison Wright, Alabama A&M University

**Topic:** Consumer Perception of Natural and Synthetic Colors and Flavors: The Development of a Functional Mint-Based Beverage

**Peoples' Choice (\$200)** - Queen Abbah, Tuskegee University

**Topic:** Characterization of Cellulose Extracted from Industrial Hemp Biomass Residues as a High-Value Potential Biomaterial

### Student Achievement Scholarship Winners

**Graduate (\$500)** – Robina Rai, Clemson University

**Undergraduate (\$500)** – Maddie Franz, University of Georgia