

ARD Updates

ASSOCIATION OF 1890 RESEARCH DIRECTORS

September 2022, Vol. 13, Issue 9



DR. CHANDRA REDDY

Message from the Chair

Dr. Chandra Reddy

I hope that between your professional meetings, you've had a wonderful summer full of vacations and family reunions. Where did the summer go? Our students are back, the fall semester is well underway, and our campuses are festive...

almost like the days before the pandemic.

As our students settle on their respective 1890 campuses, many African American and other minority parents remember the multigenerational sacrifices that established higher education as

a bridge to a better life. The 1890 Scholarship Program has been, and will continue to be, a very pivotal program to help build this bridge for our students in the food and agricultural sciences. For this reason, the 1890 Scholarship Program will be one of the 1890 priorities for the 2023 Farm Bill. For FY 2020 – FY 2022, each 1890 received \$752,632 (\$500,000 in mandatory funds and \$252,632 in discretionary funds). Thus, the total amount of scholarship funds awarded to the 1890 system was \$14.3 million per year for the last three years.

Based on a very engaging series of meetings and conversations in the poster/breakroom at the 1890 Extension system-wide conference last month, I am convinced that this will be another rewarding year for the 1890 research enterprise. This coming year offers us new opportunities to continue to boldly push toward goals we outlined in bold Transformations 2025. Foremost among these opportunities is the NextGEN Program, "From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals. This is a 'generational' funding opportunity (\$250,000,000) for minority-serving institutions, particularly the 1890 Institutions (research, Extension and teaching). Of course, we have to submit quality proposals by the deadline of Oct. 25. As such, we need to start our proposal process immediately. NIFA conducted a webinar at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 7.

In three weeks, ARD will be actively engaged in the Joint ESS/CES-NEDA meeting in Baltimore, MD. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore and the University of Maryland College Park are serving as cohosts. The [meeting registration site](#) is open. The registration site includes links to [room reservations](#) and

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Resolution recognizes 1890 anniversary

On Aug. 30, Congresswoman Alma Adams (NC-12) introduced a resolution "expressing the sense of Congress that Aug. 30, 2022, be observed as the 132nd anniversary of the 1890 Institutions." The 1890s are 19 historically black land-grant universities that were established by the Second Morrill Act of 1890.

[A copy of the resolution is available here.](#)

"The 1890 land-grant universities, like all historically Black colleges and universities, have opened doors of opportunity for millions of students over the past 132 years," said Adams, founder and co-chair of the Congressional Bipartisan HBCU Caucus. "Especially as many of our institutions have faced threats this year, it's important to remember these institutions are more than universities: they're the cornerstones of communities both urban and rural. This success has come even though 1890s haven't benefitted from the same resources as other land-grant universities."

"However, our advocacy for the 1890 institutions as well as HBCUs in general is making a difference. As the vice chair of the House Agriculture Committee, I work to make sure we continue to include 1890 researchers and students in the important work of the Committee. The recently passed *Inflation Reduction Act* includes language that helps 1890s partner with socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Furthermore, the United States Department of Agriculture announced its Next GEN Initiative to create



REP. ALMA ADAMS

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Congress approved the Evans-Allen Act of 1977 to provide capacity funding for food and agricultural research at the 1890 land-grant universities and Tuskegee University (the 1890 Institutions) similar to that provided to the 1862 universities under the Hatch Act of 1887. Research conducted under the Evans-Allen Program has led to hundreds of scientific breakthroughs of benefit to both the unique stakeholders of the 1890 institutions and the nation as a whole. The Evans-Allen Program has been extremely important in allowing the 1890 institutions to attract top-notch scientists to their campuses, conduct high-quality and innovative research and become more fully integrated within the land-grant system.

Below is an example of impacts from the 1890 research program submitted by scientists at Lincoln University.

Cultivating native U.S. prawns increases food stock, farm profits

Lincoln University recently initiated freshwater prawn research. Dr. Dallas Flickinger, a new assistant professor of aquaculture who joined Lincoln University earlier this year, is the PI for this new project.

This research will potentially provide a high quality, alternative protein source for the food market, increase fish farmer's profits and promote the aquaculture industry in Missouri. Freshwater prawns, similar to shrimp, are larger and more likely to be sold at farmers markets and upscale restaurants. In this project, Flickinger plans to cultivate prawns native to the United States on a commercial scale, which is a unique task that no one in the country has accomplished before.

Flickinger had previously conducted similar studies in Brazil with much success.

The project's goal is to develop an alternative freshwater prawn species that is able to grow well under Missouri's conditions. Once a native species is established, it can be put into earthen ponds and be integrated with fish farming. This has shown to be a cost-effective benefit because farmers can harvest two different products simultaneously.

Additionally, this operation does not require extra feed—prawns eat nutrients and fish waste, taking advantage of the aquatic food web.



Many Missouri farmers are only cultivating fish in their ponds right now, which is an issue due to the accumulation of waste causing water and soil pollution. It can also be more expensive due to extra fertilizers and nitrates that are needed for management. Flickinger wants to popularize this system where more farmers can have both prawns and fish in their ponds to create economic resilience and viability.

For more information, contact [Dr. Dallas Flickinger](#). This project is supported by the Evans-Allen program of the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

NASA grants helps Lincoln enhance STEM education

Dr. Sougata Bardhan, an assistant professor of natural resource management at Lincoln University, was awarded a competitive NASA grant to enhance STEM education for minority and underserved high school students.

As proposed in the grant, Bardhan and several Lincoln University faculty members created a residential summer camp program, where high school student received 40 hours of STEM education and professional development activity. There were 14 minority high school students from Kansas City, St. Louis and central Missouri who participated in this summer camp for two weeks in July.

During the summer camp, the students actively learned about STEM education and various skills in agriculture, including drone technology, climate change, hydrology, GIS, nutrient cycling and climate modeling. Several guest speakers were invited to share their STEM experiences. The

students also participated in field trips, traveling to the St. Louis area to visit agriculture and alternative energy farms, the St. Louis Science Center and the Lake of the Ozarks for a cave tour.

With completion of the summer camp, the students found their interest in specific STEM areas they did not know about before. The students also learned a wide array of knowledge from university faculty and industry professionals, who also gave information on how to plan for their future. They were able to evaluate the different STEM paths to see which area they may want to pursue in college and as a possible career. This was particularly beneficial to high school freshmen and sophomores as they are considering their college majors and future career.

For more information, contact [Dr. Sougata Bardhan](#).

Impacts: 1890 Capacity Building Program at work

The USDA's NIFA partners with a system of 19 universities known collectively as 1890 land-grant universities (LGUs) to provide agricultural research, Extension and education programs.

A cornerstone NIFA program designed to strengthen the capacity of 1890 LGUs is the 1890 Capacity-building Grants (CBG) program. This program awards grants annually that address the key problems of national, regional and multi-institutional importance in sustaining all components of agriculture, including farm efficiency and profitability; ranching; renewable energy; forestry (both urban and agroforestry); aquaculture; rural communities and entrepreneurship; human nutrition; food safety; family and consumer sciences; biotechnology; and conventional breeding.

Authorized in the 1996 Farm Bill, funds were first appropriated in 1997. This month, 1890 LGUs will submit their latest round of funding applications, marking 25 years of the CBG program.

The 1890 CBG program supports projects that strengthen teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences in the areas of curriculum design and materials development, faculty development and others. CBG supports projects that strengthen research and Extension programs in areas of studies and experimentation, Extension program development support systems and others. The CBG also support integrated project grants.

These funds have impacted those served by the 1890 LGU system for decades. Check out these recent examples of CBG-funded research, Extension and education projects:

- Ongoing research at **Fort Valley State University** (FVSU) in Georgia revealed that peanut skins could lead to better health and sustainability. Results showed that this low-value byproduct and precursor of vitamin E increases the concentration of antioxidants in lean meat after a team of scientists and students studied 33 male lambs. Antioxidants are a good source to help strengthen the immune system to fight infections and diseases. Based on FVSU's findings, peanut skins consumed by small ruminants such as sheep and goats could benefit the health of humans who consume this meat.
- **North Carolina A&T State University** is helping middle and high school students develop soft skills while exposing them to different science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers. Called "You're Hired," the program provides a unique blend of teacher-led activities, virtual training and small group activities to support the development of soft skills in youths. Program modules focus on personal branding, communication, conflict resolution, customer service, responsibility and time management. It has been used with youths in limited-resource counties, and 4-H staff members are currently working to transition the program to an online format to reach more teens.

- **Southern University** in Louisiana is providing agricultural training to recently released, adjudicated and homeless youths. Through classroom instruction and hands-on activities, including the establishment of horticultural garden plots, participants receive workforce training in vegetable gardening, landscape installation, landscape maintenance, lawn service, marketing, interpersonal skills and an introduction to the many possibilities for careers in agriculture. Upon successful completion of the program, certificates are awarded and can be used to support applications at any horticulturally related establishment to obtain gainful employment.
- Researchers at the **University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff** are studying the unique features of biochar made from animal byproducts to optimize its manufacture methods and desired functions. The project's goal is to develop a cost-effective method for livestock farmers to convert various plant residues and animal byproducts to



value-added biochar products. This research focuses on raw materials that are abundantly found in local agricultural waste and not widely reused. Specifically, UAPB researchers are converting rice husks, cotton wood, tree bark, shrimp shells and chicken feathers into biochar. Biochar already has a long history of use as a soil amendment in agriculture. However, UAPB research will lead to the creation of products that also remove pollutants from runoff and other agricultural processes to ensure better sustainability in agriculture. Eventually the product could be a cost-effective, multifunctional agent to not only increase soil fertility, but also prevent environmental pollution.

- **West Virginia State University** (WVSU) Healthy Grandfamilies started in 2015 as a collaboration between WVSU Extension Service and the university's depart-

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NIFA seeks partners for \$10 million Bioproduct Pilot Program

NIFA is encouraging project directors at 1890 land-grant institutions to consider applying to the [Bioproduct Pilot Program](#), which is authorized under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This new program directs USDA to partner with no less than one qualified institution to support the scale-up of sustainable bioproduct manufacturing, with the goal of providing a low-cost alternative to conventional products.

A total of up to \$10 million in funding is available. NIFA expects two to five projects to be funded at individual award amounts ranging from \$2 million to \$5 million.

The 1890 institutions possess key strengths that can make them competitive applicants. Here are some tips to help your research faculty develop a strong proposal:

- **BPP encourages the formation of an interdisciplinary team.** Successful applicants will assemble project teams that unite several fields of expertise, bringing together scientists — chemists, biologists, economists — with engineers and manufacturers. BPP is a true opportunity to win a substantial research award that will fund an interdisciplinary team at your institution.
- **Regional feedstocks are acceptable.** One of the BPP's key goals is that the winning projects stimulate economic activity in the United States and directly benefit underserved populations, and this includes the use of regionally appropriate feedstocks. Using local feedstocks is one way to improve your local community by creating a circular economy, which ensures wealth and other economic ben-

efits are created — and stay in — rural communities.

- **Carefully consider the manufacturing part of your proposal.** BPP is designed to keep manufacturing in the location where the research is being led, and marketing and distribution are important factors in the viability of manufacturing operations large or small. Successful applicants will either be using a local manufacturer or be bringing a manufacturer to their area.
- **Feel empowered to be creative.** In a similar project with a plastics molding supply company that wanted to provide a biobased option to their clients, they succeeded in focusing on



smaller parts. Think of grips on tools or shielding on a piece of equipment like guards on a weed whacker. Products at varying stages of a supply chain are in play here.

- **Don't let your budget keep you from applying.** If you don't have a large research budget, partnering with a larger land-grant institution could be the way to go. Consider how you might use sub-awarding with partners as a way to make up for any gaps in an application. This is an opportunity for 1890s to exercise leadership— in both project design and in controlling how research funds are expended.

If you are interested in exploring more about this opportunity, please contact National Program Leaders Toby Ahrens and Victoria Finkenstadt. Contact information, and answers to frequently asked questions, is available on [the NIFA website](#).

Resolution ... from page 1

new pathways for 1890 students to become leaders in the USDA,” Adams continued.

“As a proud 1890s graduate, I am honored to introduce this resolution celebrating the 132nd anniversary of our dear universities, and celebrate their great work: past, present and future,” Adams concluded.

The resolution is cosponsored by Bipartisan Congressional HBCU Caucus Vice Chairs Terri A. Sewell (AL-07) and Michael Turner (OH-10), and Reps. Sanford Bishop (GA-02), Cheri Bustos (IL-17), Ro Khanna (CA-17), Al Lawson (FL-05), Barbara Lee (CA-13), Mark Pocan (WI-02), David Scott (GA-13) and David Trone (MD-06). The resolution

is also endorsed by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU) and the 1890s Universities Foundation.

Adams, Ph.D., represents North Carolina's 12th Congressional District (Charlotte, Mecklenburg County) and serves as vice chair of the House Committee on Agriculture, the committee of jurisdiction for the Morrill Acts. Additionally, she serves on the House Financial Services Committee and the House Education and Labor Committee, where she serves as chair of the Workforce Protections Subcommittee. In 2015, Adams co-founded the first Bipartisan HBCU Caucus in Congress. She is a graduate of North Carolina A&T State University, one of the 1890s institutions.

USDA plans 2022 Census of Agriculture

The USDA will mail the 2022 Census of Agriculture to millions of farmers and ranchers across the U.S. and Puerto Rico this fall. The census will be mailed in phases, starting with an invitation to respond online in November followed by a paper questionnaire in December.

Farms of all sizes, both urban and rural, that produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2022 are included in the census.

READ MORE: [2022 Census of Agriculture signup ends June 30](#)

“Census of Agriculture data are widely used by federal and local governments, agribusinesses, trade associations, Extension educators and many others to inform decisions about policy and farm programs and services that aid producers and rural communities,” says NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. “By responding to the Census of Agriculture – by being represented in these important data – producers are literally helping to shape their futures.”

Information about American agriculture has been collected since 1840, and the census is currently conducted every five years by USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). By highlighting topics like land use and ownership, producer characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, the Census of Agriculture tells the story and shows the value of agriculture across the U.S.

Revisions to the questionnaire to document changes and emerging trends are considered between ag census years by NASS. In 2022, changes to the questionnaire include new questions about the use of precision agriculture, hemp production, hair sheep and updates to internet access questions.

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ment of social work as an education and support program for grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. The pilot project kicked off in 2016 with 125 grandparents completing the program, learning about such issues as 21st century parenting, navigating the school and legal systems and social media. Because the pilot program was able to demonstrate positive effects

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the [meeting agenda](#). The theme for the meeting is "Building Trust" and will feature professional development sessions with David Horsager from the Trust Edge Leadership Institute and The Ready.

ARD’s business meeting will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 28 from 8-10 a.m. In addition to discussing our multistate, integrated climate change project, an important agenda will be follow-up workshops, seminars, etc. to further develop our understanding and application of leadership strategies to improve



The banner features two large sunflowers in a field under a blue sky. The text "2022 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE" is in the top right corner. A green banner across the middle says "SIGN UP TO BE COUNTED." with the URL "nass.usda.gov/AgCensus" below it. Below that, it says "YOUR VOICE. YOUR FUTURE. YOUR OPPORTUNITY." In the bottom left, there are logos for USDA, NASS, and the United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. In the bottom right, there is the hashtag "#AgCensus" and icons for Twitter and YouTube.

Learn more about the Census of Agriculture by visiting nass.usda.gov/agcensus or call 800/727-9540. The website includes frequently asked questions, past ag census data, partner tools to help share information about the upcoming ag census, special study information and more.

and ease of replication, Healthy Grandfamilies is now a statewide initiative serving all 55 counties in the state and has helped more than 1,000 participants to date, culminating in a recently held statewide conference.

The 1890 CBG program is one of several NIFA initiatives targeting the 1890 LGUs. [Learn more about NIFA’s 1890 LGU programs on the website.](#)

organizational effectiveness, employee engagement and client/constituency trust.

Finally, since we have a number of new research directors and associate research directors/deans, I strongly encourage my new colleagues to participate in the “Professional Development for New Administrators” session on Sunday, Sept. 25, 3:30-5 p.m.

We are 19 strong!



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ARD OFFICERS

Chandra Reddy
(Chair)

Tennessee State University
Email: creddy@tnstate.edu

Louis Whitesides
(Chair-Elect)

South Carolina State University
Email: lwhitesides@scsu.edu

Vacant
(Secretary)

Conrad K. Bonsi (Treasurer)

Tuskegee University
Email: cbonsi@tuskegee.edu

Olga Bolden-Tiller
(Member-at-Large)

Tuskegee University
Email: oboldentiller@tuskegee.edu

Vernon Jones
(Immediate Past Chair)

Langston University
Email: vjones@langston.edu

Non-Elected

Alton Thompson
(Exec. Director)

Email: athompson1@ncat.edu

1890 Land Grant Universities

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[Alcorn State University](#)
[Central State University](#)
[Delaware State University](#)
[Florida A&M University](#)
[Fort Valley State University](#)
[Kentucky State University](#)
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[West Virginia State University](#)

ARD Updates is published monthly by the Association of Research Directors. To suggest articles, contact Dr. Alton Thompson at athompson1@ncat.edu

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

JOB

[WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR EXTENSION ASSOCIATED DEAN/ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR WV SU AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH STATION](#)
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[DEAN, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES](#), LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

[DEAN, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FAMILY SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY](#), FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

NEW APPOINTMENTS

DR. MICHAEL SELF, vice president for Academic Affairs, Lincoln University, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

DR. DEXTER B. WAKEFIELD, interim dean and director of Land-Grant Programs, School of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, Alcorn State University, effective August 2022.

CALENDAR

JOINT ESS/CES-NEDA MEETING | Sept. 25-28 | The Marriott Baltimore Waterfront in Baltimore, MD. [Click for details](#). The registration site includes links to [room reservations](#) and the [meeting agenda](#). The meeting's theme is "Building Trust" and will feature professional development sessions with David Horsager from the Trust Edge Leadership Institute and The Ready.

80TH PROFESSIONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS CONFERENCE | Tuskegee University | Nov. 13-15

LOUISIANA SMALL FARMERS CONFERENCE | Sept. 21-23 | Dr. [Brian Keith Phillips](#) for information.



APLU ANNUAL MEETING, Nov. 6 – 8; Denver, CO, Hyatt Regency Denver at Colorado Convention Center.

FALCON 2022 Conference - Registration for the First Americans Land-Grant Consortium (FALCON) is open for its 18th Annual Conference, scheduled for Oct. 21-24, 2022. This in-person conference will be held at the Hotel Albuquerque in Old Town, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference will include sessions on 1994 land-grant teaching, Extension programs and research that benefit Native American students, communities, governments and lands. There will be a strong student focus and tribal college students are especially invited to participate and present their work. The conference will also include a USDA NIFA update, training workshops, information-sharing and networking opportunities.

