



ARD Updates

ASSOCIATION OF 1890 RESEARCH DIRECTORS

March 2023, Vol. 14, Issue 3

Message from the Chair
DR. LOUIS WHITESIDES



Dear Friends and Colleagues:

During the week of March 12, the Association of Research Directors will be fully engaged in the 2023 Joint Annual AHS/CARET meeting in Washington, D.C. Focusing on the theme, “Ag is the Answer: **Building Land-Grant Solutions to Global Food, Agriculture and Resource Challenges**,” the 1890 research directors and associate research directors, together with the 1890 Extension administrators and deans of agriculture, will have the opportunity to articulate and promote

the institutions’ exemplary efforts post-pandemic in the three mission areas, including international programs, our FY 2024 appropriations requests and our 2023 farm bill priorities. All 1890 administrators, CARET representatives and other advocates will be working with their university’s government affairs liaisons to prepare for Capitol Hill meetings on March 14 and 15.

This is the link for the [FY 2024 Annual Appropriations prepared by APLU](#), inclusive of the 1890 capacity programs (Evans-Allen and Extension Services at the 1890 Institutions).

The 1890 system is requesting appropriations for four additional important programs:

1890 Research, Education and Extension Activities

FY 2024

1890 Education Grants	\$30M
1890 Facilities Improvement	\$100M
1890 Centers of Excellence	\$10M
1890 Scholarships	\$10M

Given the antiquated facilities at all 19 of our universities, the 1890 system is also supporting [the 2023 Farm Bill Request for the Research Facilities Act](#).

In addition to our dire need for upgraded or new facilities, additional 2023 Farm priorities include:

- Reauthorization of the Evans-Allen (research and

Kirchner and FFAR partner to increase venture capital diversity

JACKSONVILLE, FA and WASHINGTON, DC – The [Kirchner Impact Foundation](#) (KIF) and the [Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research](#) (FFAR) announced today a \$1 million collaboration over five-years to increase diversity within the venture capital industry by training students at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to become agriculture technology venture capitalists. The partnership funds the Kirchner Fellowship HBCU Cohort, through which students invest capital in early-stage food and agriculture companies applying ground-breaking technologies to provide sustainable solutions to address global food challenges.

The Kirchner Fellowship provides high-level mentoring from networks of investors to a cohort of university students. Fellows are trained to evaluate agriculture business investments and given discretion over investment decisions for companies solving critical food and agriculture challenges. Fellows also work directly with the KIF leadership team and its network of thought leaders to engage in a series of face-to-face and online educational experiences that expose them to real-world, early-stage investment opportunities.

Students then evaluate investments and have the discretion over investment decisions for companies solving critical food and agriculture challenges.

“This partnership provides real-world experience to HBCU students, who are underrepresented in the venture capital space, to be the next leaders to make critical agriculture business investment decisions,” said [Dr. LaKisha Odom](#), FFAR scientific program director. “By learning from both agriculture and venture capital thought leaders, these students are empowered to help transform



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1890s HAVING AN IMPACT

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 Tennessee State University.

TSU research uses hemp residue to reduce food spoilage

The USDA estimates that over 30% of food in the U.S. is lost to spoilage at the retail and consumer level. Preventing or delaying food spoilage can save American consumers billions of dollars per year.

In a research program headed by Dr. Ying Wu, scientists at TSU are working to develop environmentally friendly solutions

to help cut the amount of food lost to spoilage. Their goal is to create improved packaging composed of natural materials that also incorporate natural compounds to retard spoilage.

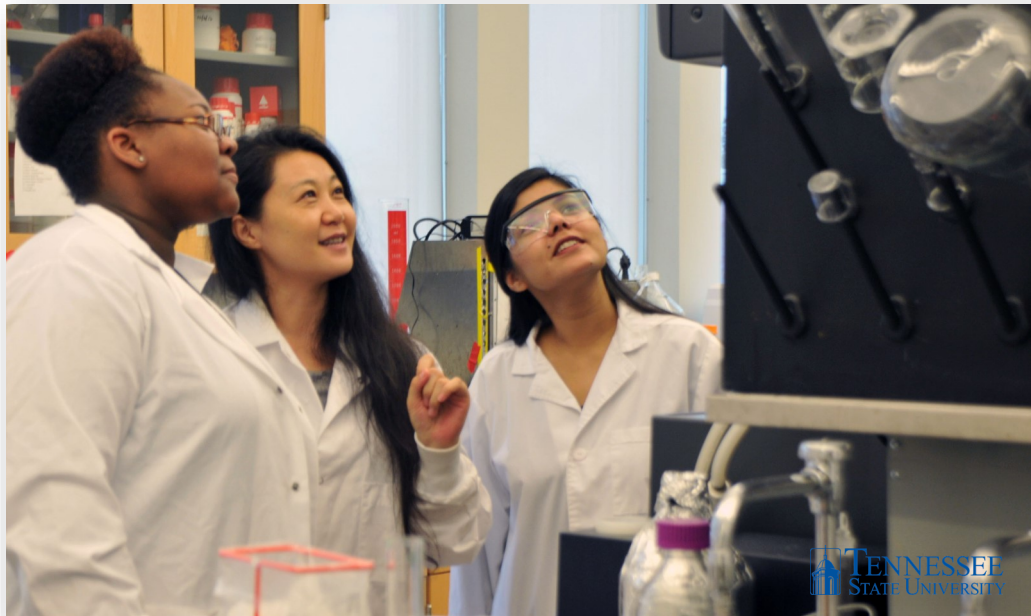
The first step of this process is to identify natural, biodegradable materials that can be economically extracted from agricultural waste products. An abundant source of material was determined to be the hemp residue that remains after CBD extraction. Macromolecule polymers were extracted from the hemp biowaste and used as carriers for bioactive compounds. Using electrospray, freeze dry and

freeze spraying technologies, the new materials can be sprayed on a container's surface, or sprayed onto a film that can be applied to the container's inner surface.

When used in food packaging and when the improved packaging materials touch the food surface, it can inhibit the growth of pathogens on the product and extend the food's storage life. The

result will be to reduce the amount of food lost to spoilage and save consumers money. These results will be obtained by making use of a biodegradable by-product that would have gone to a land-fill.

For additional information, contact: Ying Wu, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences,



TSU research Dr. Ying Wu and students in her laboratory.

114 Agricultural Biotechnology Building, Tennessee State University, ywu@tnstate.edu, 615-963-5436.

Does keeping carbon locked up reduce global warming's affect on soil?

Humans are changing the earth's atmosphere in ways that result in global warming. Increases in carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations in the atmosphere are thought to be a leading cause of the warming. Soil is the largest storehouse of organic carbon on land. This carbon is tied up in the organic matter that accumulates from decomposed plants, trees and other organisms. The microorganisms that decompose the plants and other organic matter change some of the carbon into CO₂ in the process. This CO₂ moves out of the soil and into the atmosphere.

What effect will increase soil temperatures have on the microorganisms and the amount of CO₂ that is released from the organic matter decomposition process?

Dr. Jianwei Li and his team at Tennessee State University are taking a unique approach to answer this question. In a long-



TSU research Dr. YJiamwei Li in one of his research fields.

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USDA 1890 National Scholars Program

Applications are now being accepted for the [USDA 1890 National Scholars Program](#). The USDA/1890 National Scholars Program is open to high school seniors entering their freshman year of college, and rising college sophomores and juniors. Applications will close on March 15.



TSU students taking soil measurements.



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term experiment, field plots are being artificially heated around the clock to simulate an increase in soil temperature. Soil from these plots is then analyzed and compared to soil from adjacent non-heated plots every two weeks for multiple years.

Using inverse data simulation analysis, information from the monthly, seasonal and yearly changes in microbial activity will be used to develop models that will increase the accuracy and efficiency of predictions of how the soil can retain carbon during times of climate change. These models will be used to develop a means to help the soil keep the carbon as organic matter, rather than releasing it to the atmosphere as CO₂.

For additional information, contact: Jianwei Li, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, 204G Farrell-Westbrook Building, Tennessee State University, jli2@tnstate.edu, 615-963-15234.

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global food production toward climate-smart solutions with their investment decisions.”

The program is accepting applications for 2023-2024 academic year through April 30. HBCU graduate students or undergraduate students with professional business experience are encouraged to apply. Applicants should be self-motivated, intellectually curious and passionate about the power of impact-oriented, for-profit businesses to address global food security challenges.

Application information is available on the [Kirchner Fellowship website](#). Interested applicants are encouraged to participate in an informational webinar on April 5, at 2 p.m. ET and must [register to attend](#). A recording of the webinar will be available on the KIF and FFAR websites shortly afterward.

“A successful Kirchner Fellow is a student who stays curious, remains a lifelong learner, self-starter and enjoys nurturing relationships with founders, investors and other stakeholders,” said 2021-2022 Fellow Martin Adu-Boahene. “This program is empowering HBCU students to become trailblazers in impact investing.”

KIF established the Kirchner Fellowship program nine years ago to strengthen impact investing networks in areas underserved by capital markets by training and empowering diverse young investors to allocate equity investments into early-stage companies. KIF launched the HBCU cohort two years ago, with support from FFAR, to foster diversity and inclusion within the food and agriculture venture capital industry. Students selected through

the current application process will comprise the third HBCU cohort.

“We are immensely proud of the partnership between KIF and FFAR,” said [Hattie Brown](#), KIF co-manager. “This new five-year engagement is a testament to the success of the last four years of collaboration. As a result of this award, we will now be able to sustain our commitment to the communities in which we work, delivering programming to dozens of students and building an alumni base that will serve as a strong network for our Fellows throughout their careers.”

FFAR has supported the [Kirchner Fellowship program since 2018](#). To date, program alums across all cohorts represent over 55 institutions, 14 countries, gender parity and over \$350,000 of investment capital deployed. Alums have started their own businesses and work as investors or in adjacent industries.

In addition to the Kirchner Fellowship HBCU Cohort, FFAR and KIF have agreed to provide up to an additional \$1 million to establish another Kirchner Fellowship Program, the theme of which is still to be determined.

The Kirchner Fellowship is made possible through the support of the [Kirchner Group](#), a leading values-based traditional merchant bank, FFAR and organizations like [the Burroughs Wellcome Fund](#), and individual donors.

Contact: [Michelle Olgers](#), 804.304.4200.

VMLRP announces scholarship applications

NIFA's Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP) announces the opening of the fiscal year 2023 application cycle. NIFA anticipates that approximately \$10 million in funding will be available in FY23 to help mitigate food animal veterinary service shortages in the United States. VMLRP helps qualified veterinarians offset a significant portion of the debt incurred in pursuit of their veterinary medical degrees in return for their service in certain high-priority veterinary shortage areas.

The VMLRP supports NIFA's Animal Systems portfolio by facilitating professional workforce development in critical agricultural sectors related to animal health and well-being. The program contains two general categories of participation:

- Mitigation of private veterinary practice shortage situations.
- Mitigation of public veterinary practice and specialty veterinary discipline shortage situations.

VMLRP awardees commit to providing at least three years of food animal veterinary services in a designated veterinary shortage area in return for payments of up to \$25,000 of student loan debt per year with a maximum of \$75,000 for a three-year contract. VMLRP awardees are eligible to reapply to continue to serve their originally awarded shortage situation area in the last year of their contract or one year after their contract ends.

The [VMLRP Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) and the [2023 veterinary shortage situations](#) are now available. A new requirement this year is a Letter of Intent (LOI). Specific instructions are available in the VMLRP RFA. The deadline for LOI is April 3, 2023, and the application deadline is April 17, 2023.

NIFA encourages interested applicants to view the informational webinars before starting the application process. Informational webinars are provided below.

- [Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program Overview](#)
- [Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program Application](#)

- [Process for Program Documents](#)
- [Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program Application Process for Loan Documents](#)
- [Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program Review Process Webinar](#)
- [Choosing a Veterinary Shortage Situation Webinar](#)



VMLRP staff will host two live FAQ sessions which will occur on:

March 16, 2023, from 4-5 PM EST | [Register here](#)

March 28, 2023, from 4-5 PM EST | [Register here](#)

Refer to the [VMLRP Annual Report](#) for more program information.

Questions about the VMLRP application process may be sent by email to VMLRP.applications@USDA.gov

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- education programs) with the percentage share of Hatch funds increased from 30% to 40%;
- Approve tuition and fees as allowable expenses for Evans-Allen;
- Reauthorization of the 1890 Extension Program with the percentage share of Smith-Lever funds increased from 20% to 40%;
- Reauthorization of the 1890 Capacity Building Grants Program;
- Reauthorization of the 1890 Facilities Improvement Program;
- Reauthorization of the six existing Centers of Excellence and request support for four additional centers: Climate-Change/Climate-Smart Agriculture, Forestry Resiliency and Forestry Conservation, Food Safety/Bioprocessing/Product

- Development and Transdisciplinary Social Science Research (specific to the food and agriculture sector);
 - Reauthorization of student scholarships at 1890 institutions; and
 - Request support for the 1890 Universities Foundation.
- Finally, as we celebrate Women's History Month, I want to thank Drs. Carolyn Brooks, former ARD Executive Director, and Shirley Hyman-Parker, former associate dean for research at North Carolina A&T State University, for their leadership and service to ARD and to the collective 1890 community. They have served as exceptional role models for women, particularly for our present directors, Drs. Olga Bolen-Tiller, Ami Smith and Cheresse Winstead. In addition, it should be noted that Drs. Bolen-Tiller, Smith and Winstead are role models in their own right.

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1890 Land Grant Universities

[Alabama A&M University](#)
[Alcorn State University](#)
[Central State University](#)
[Delaware State University](#)
[Florida A&M University](#)
[Fort Valley State University](#)
[Kentucky State University](#)
[Langston University](#)
[Lincoln University](#)
[North Carolina A&T State University](#)
[Prairie View A&M University](#)
[South Carolina State University](#)
[Southern University and A&M College](#)
[Tennessee State University](#)
[Tuskegee University](#)
[University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff](#)
[University of Maryland Eastern Shore](#)
[Virginia State University](#)
[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



AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST is seeking a [Training and Education Manager](#) to join the [Farms for a New Generation](#) team and lead the collaborative design and implementation of experiential training programs to support the equitable transfer of farm and ranch land across the country. For more information on the position, please visit farmland.org. If you have specific questions regarding the position or this initiative at AFT, please contact Erica Goodman, Farms for a New Generation Director, at egoodman@farmland.org.

The **FOUNDATION FOR FOOD & AGRICULTURE RESEARCH** (FFAR) has [two job opportunities](#). Scientific Program Director for [Advanced Animal Systems](#) and [Health-Agriculture Nexus](#). The positions are **fully telework/remote**. More information can be found in the PDFs on the [FFAR website](#).

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE, School of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Bioinformatics and/or Biostatistics](#)

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Precision Agriculture](#)

[Assistant Professor of Biology: Cell Biology/Immunotoxicology/ Metabolism](#)

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Fashion Merchandising and Textiles Program](#)

[Assistant or Associate Professor: Nutrition and Dietetics](#)

[Assistant Professor and Agribusiness /Resource Economist Specialist](#)

[Chair, Department of Agriculture Food Resources Science](#)

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY, College of Agriculture and Human Sciences

[Research Associate Professor \(Ruminant Nutritional Physiology\) \(myworkdayjobs.com\)](#)

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT PINE BLUFF, School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human

[Assistant Professor – Ag Economics](#)

[Assistant Professor – Ag Engineering](#)

[Assistant Professor – Animal Science](#)

[Extension Specialist III – Horticulturist](#)

[Extension Specialist II – Project/Program Manager/Communications Director – School of Agriculture, Fisheries and Human Sciences](#)

VIRGINIA TECH, Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation, Department of Agricultural, Leadership and Community Education. Research Assistant Professor

[Department of Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education \(ALCE\)](#), [Center for Food Systems and Community Transformation](#). [For a full position description and information to apply.](#)

CALENDAR



MANRRS CONFERENCE | April 13-16, 2023 | [Additional Information.](#)



HBCU ENGAGE | April 18-19, 2023 | Nashville, TN. [Registration open.](#)

NERAOC 2023: Hitting the High Notes | April 30—May 3 | Nashville, TN

