



ASSOCIATION OF 1890 RESEARCH DIRECTORS

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Message from the Chair

Dr. Vernon Jones

While in the throes of a COVID-19 pandemic, we recently had an exciting and successful 2020 Experiment Station Section Meeting (ESS). Though originally scheduled to convene in Baltimore, MD, this meeting was conducted virtually Sept. 28 – Oct. 1. The theme for this year’s meeting was “Inclusive Excellence.” Given the general state of race relations in our nation and in other parts of the world, awareness and proper responses to this theme are timely and in great demand.

The ESS meeting was both informative and challenging. Important recaps and crucial next steps were proposed by session moderators. I am proud to share that each of the three ESS sessions was moderated by a member of the Association of 1890 Research Directors. Dr. Moses Kairo, Dean of the School of Agricultural and Natural Resources, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, presently serves as the Chair of the APLU – Experiment Station Section on Organization and Policy (ESCOP). This meeting was held under the auspices of ESCOP. Great job Moses.

Four years ago, ARD’s nominating committee submitted my name for consideration as the new ARD Chair-Elect. You placed your trust in that nomination and I began a two-year stint of standing on the sidelines, carrying the clipboard and learning offenses and defenses. Two years ago you placed your confidence in me as the ARD Chair. I have never taken your vote of confidence lightly.

Over the past two years, we have worked closely together and seen great strides in participation, collaboration and funding. The ARD’s 19th Biennial Research Symposium was held during the spring of 2019. Previous



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FAMU expands COVID-19 testing abilities with Thermo Fisher partnership

Florida A&M University (FAMU) will expand its COVID-19 testing capabilities two-fold as the latest academic institution that joins a growing list of HBCU’s benefiting from Thermo Fisher Scientific’s \$25 million donation of diagnostic equipment, test kits and related supplies.

The agreement is designed to support no-cost COVID-19 testing for students, faculty and staff throughout the 2020-2021 school year.

Through “The Just Project,” named after pioneering biologist Ernest Everett Just, FAMU will also receive technical support that allows the University to increase testing capacity and return results within 48 hours. As a result, FAMU has agreed to serve as a testing hub, which will process samples from other HBCUs in the region, including Bethune-Cookman University, Edward Waters College and Florida Memorial University.

The lab has been set up in the Center for Viticulture & Small Fruit Research. Collection of samples for free testing will be administered at an on-campus facility.

“Florida A&M University is committed to testing our constituents during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said FAMU



FAMU conducting COVID-19 testing.

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PVAMU joins efforts to protect Black land ownership

The loss of historic Black family land is endemic in the southeastern United States. Likewise, discrimination and economic factors have diminished the value of Black-owned forests. However, a new project led by Prairie View A&M University (PVAMU) will work to reverse these trends and help families make money by using what they already have – forests on their land.



The American Forest Foundation (AFF) has awarded PVAMU a two-year grant to implement the Sustainable Forestry and African American Land Retention (SFLR) Program in Texas. The \$310,000 gift will allow the [Cooperative Extension Program's Agriculture and Natural Resources \(AgNR\) Unit](#) in PVAMU's College of Agriculture and Human Sciences (CAHS) to spearhead the program.

“Our goal is to help Texas landowners avoid heir's property and land retention issues and understand the value of properly managing forestland,” said Clarence Bunch, Ph.D., AgNR program leader. “I feel that if we can foster stable ownership to prevent land loss and abandonment, property owners can reap the many economic and sociocultural benefits for their families.”

Bunch is developing a program at PVAMU called the

[Small Farm Institute Program](#) (SFIP), which can help farmers and ranchers refine their skills, foster resilience in the agriculture community, enhance food supply and engage in innovative research and Extension initiatives. He says through SFLR, PVAMU will build upon its SFIP experience and partnerships to assist ranchers and farmers with forestry and land-retention education in counties in eastern Texas, which is a high priority area identified by the Texas A&M Forest Service.

“Our partnerships through SFIP include 100 Ranchers Inc., Texas AgriForestry Small Farmers and Ranchers, Landowners Association of Texas and the Pineywoods Small Farmers Ranchers and Landowners of Texas CBO,” said Bunch. “In collaboration with these community-based organizations, through SFLR, we will help landowners get involved in U.S. Department of Agriculture programs, hold property in the family, and understand the economic, environmental, social, and health benefits of well-managed forestland.”

PVAMU's program joins several existing project sites in the SFLR Network, including Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. To date, the program has assisted more than 1,400 landowners who own a combined 99,000 acres, ensuring land assets remain held by their historical owners.

“This is a much-needed program, and it's exciting to know that PVAMU will help lead the way,” said Gerard D'Souza, Ph.D., CAHS dean and director of land-grant programs. “We are thrilled to work with this consortium of universities and organizations as we address the issues caused by the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act. It aligns well with our mission to advocate for Texas' underserved populations and limited resource clientele.”

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President Larry Robinson, Ph.D. “This partnership with Thermo Fisher allows us much needed testing capacity to help protect our students, faculty and staff as well as those at our fellow HBCUs in Florida.”

FAMU began planning its testing strategy early during the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to enact measures to keep its campus community safe. The University's comprehensive reopening plan leverages all available safety precautions, including a detailed contact tracing initiative, isolation schedules for positive cases, public health education and community screening.

Since April 25, FAMU's Bragg Memorial Stadium has been home to the region's largest free COVID-19 testing site. More than 54,000 people have received free diagnostic testing, which is being conducted in partnership with the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the Florida National Guard, the Florida Department of Health and the Leon County Health Department.

The donation from Thermo Fisher enables the University to immediately scale FAMU's existing testing efforts

two-fold, with the potential of achieving an expanded testing capacity of five times its current operations.

“We are proud The Just Project now includes FAMU, a highly regarded institution that had already demonstrated a sophisticated and comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Michael Dubose, president of the Healthcare Market Division at Thermo Fisher Scientific. “As a proud FAMU alum, I personally recognize the critical role HBCUs play in shaping our future generation of leaders. This is why Thermo Fisher is committing to hire at least 500 students from these schools over the next three years to provide them a path toward careers in business, science and engineering.”

Thermo Fisher has now signed agreements with seven campuses that will serve as testing hubs and process thousands of samples from HBCUs across the country. In addition to FAMU, testing hubs include Tuskegee University, Howard University, Morehouse School of Medicine, Meharry Medical College, Xavier University and Hampton University.

Alcorn continues USDA grant to operate Center for disadvantaged farmers

WASHINGTON, Oct. 6, 2020 – Today, the USDA announced \$19.1 million in grants to provide training, outreach, and technical assistance to socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers. USDA's Outreach and Assistance for Socially Dis-

advantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers (2501) Program is managed by the USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE).
ual technical training, or grassroots community partnership efforts, these projects empower socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers to help them and their businesses thrive.”

USDA will fund approximately [\\$17.6 million in grants](#) (PDF, 339 KB) (PDF, 501 KB) issued to 49 organizations conducting outreach and assistance for socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers in 28 states. This funding is made available through the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act and the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020.

Additionally, **ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY** will continue to administer the Socially Disadvantaged Policy Research Center (The Center) with a \$1.5 million grant authorized in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020. The Center specializes in

policy research impacting socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in order to make policy recommendations that will improve their success.

Among the projects, the Charleston, South Carolina-based Center for Heirs Property Preservation received a grant to provide landowner outreach and forestry

technical assistance to promote land retention and use. The Asian Business Institute and Resource Center in Fresno, California, received a grant to conduct outreach and training to ensure Southeast Asian farmers are aware of USDA programs that benefit their work in terms of financial resources, resources for growth, environmental practices, and long-term economic sustainability. Appalachian Sustainable Development in Bristol, Virginia, received a grant to support veterans in agriculture.

The 2501 Program was created through the 1990 Farm Bill to help socially disadvantaged farmers, ranchers, and foresters, who have historically experienced limited access to USDA loans, grants, training, and technical assistance. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded the program's reach to veterans. Grants are awarded to higher education institutions and nonprofit and community-based organizations to extend USDA's engagement efforts in these communities. Projects funded under the 2501 Program include but are not limited to conferences, workshops, and demonstrations on various farming techniques, and connecting underserved farmers and ranchers to USDA local officials to increase awareness of USDA's programs and services while filling the needs for increased partnerships. Since 1994, the 2501 program has awarded 533 grants totaling more than \$138 million.



“These grants provide access to USDA programs,” said Mike Beatty, director of the USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement. “Whether it’s through individ-

ual technical training, or grassroots community partnership efforts, these projects empower socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers to help them and their businesses thrive.”

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attendance levels were surpassed, we celebrated the historic 40th Anniversary of the founding of ARD, we formally launched our strategic agenda (bold Transformations 2025) and we witnessed history with the establishment of the Evans-Allen Memorial Lecture Series.

Over the past two years, we had the finalization of the 2018 Farm Bill. Fruits of the labor of Congressional Champions of the 1890 Universities have been the much needed 1890 Scholarship Program and the 1890 Centers of Excellence. These are both milestones on the road to increased levels of scholarship, research and Extension programs on our campuses. Capacity funding for our 1890 Research and Extension Programs has increased. This is an area where we must continue to be resourceful, vocal and vigilant. Funding levels are not at the Farm Bill authorization level yet, but new and optimistic strides have been made toward full authorization.

This summer, ARD celebrated the 130th year since the passing of the Second Morrill Act. ARD, AEA, the 1890 Council of Deans, the 1890 Universities Foundation, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and others worked collaborative

and seamlessly to produce a landmark celebration.

Reflecting on this working together reminds me of the very positive collaborations that have been strengthened over the past two years. These range from joint ARD and AEA annual meetings to increased planning and working closely with the 1890 Council of Deans and the 1890 Universities Foundation.

As we near the end of October 2020, it is now time for me to pass over the ARD Playbook. Before doing so at our virtual APLU meeting later this month, I want to thank you for allowing me to serve as your chair. Many thanks to the executive committee for your support and wisdom. Also, I want to give very special thanks to our Executive Director, Dr. Alton Thompson. He has made calling plays and reading opposing defenses so much more manageable; especially on third downs and long.

Dr. Chandra Reddy will assume the role of ARD Chair. He is well experienced, knowledgeable and a proven leader. ARD will be in very capable hands.

Please continue to stay COVID-Wise, COVID-Aware and practice COVID-Care and keep on exercising.

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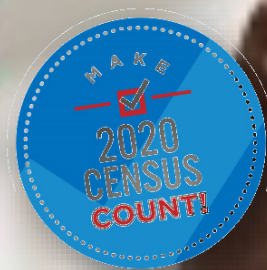
1890 Land Grant Universities

[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



United States[®] Census 2020



VOTE

NEW APPOINTMENT

DR. SUBRAMANIA I. SRITHARAN has been named interim dean and director of 1890 Land-Grant Programs, College of Engineering, Science, Technology and Agriculture (CESTA), at Central State University.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY, ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE RESEARCH PROFESSOR IN FOOD SCIENCE, AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH STATION (AERS).

The assistant/associate research professor in food science is a full-time 12-month appointment with primary responsibilities in research (75%), extension (20%) and teaching (5%). The position is housed within the Agricultural and Environmental Research Station and reports directly to the research director and dean for land-grant programs. The position is expected to co-lead the establishment and capacity building of the Food Science and Human Nutrition Research Institute at West Virginia State University. This position may be considered for the opportunity to co-direct the research institute, along with a new nutrition specialist.

Click on [this link for the position description](#), responsibilities and minimum/preferred qualifications. Review of applications will continue until the position is filled.

WVSU, EXTENSION SPECIALIST AND ASSISTANT RESEARCH PROFESSOR FOR HUMAN NUTRITION, WVSU EXTENSION SERVICE /WVSU AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH STATION

The Extension specialist and assistant research professor for human nutrition at West Virginia State University is responsible for leading, coordinating, and evaluating educational programs and products related to human nutrition. The position will be split between the Extension Service (75%) and the Agricultural and Environmental Research Station (25%).

To Apply PREFERRED: Information accepted as e-mailed in Word or PDF format to rdemployment@wvstateu.edu. Qualified candidates may submit a cover letter, résumé, unofficial transcript and three professional references (name, title, address, phone number, and e-mail address). Closing date: Sept. 28. West Virginia State University Research and Development Corporation, ATTN: Search Committee for Extension Specialist and Assistant Research Professor for Human Nutrition, P.O. Box 1000, 204 ACEOP Administration Building, Institute, WV 25112.

ARD CALENDAR

2020 APLU ANNUAL MEETING – Nov. 8-10 | Virtual Meeting

ARD BUSINESS MEETING, Monday, Oct. 26, 2-4 p.m. | Virtual

ESCOPE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 1 – 3:30 p.m. | Virtual

APLU/COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS-CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: Extension Award and

Research & Seaman A. Knapp Memorial Lecture, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 3-5:30 p.m. | Virtual

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS SECTION (AHS) BUSINESS MEETING, Thursday, Oct. 29, 3:30- 5 p.m. | Virtual

2020 PAWC Dec. 6-8 | Virtual