



Message from the Chair



Dear Colleagues:

I hope you all had a blessed holiday season. I also wish for all of you and our 1890 Universities a very productive year. The year of 2015 has finally arrived. It seems like it has been here for a year already because of all the planning and hard work that has taken place for months for the 125th Anniversary of the Signing of the Second Morrill Act. Now the really big events will take place on your campuses and in Washington, D.C. and we all need to stay informed and engaged. We need to also start planning for the next Research Symposium which will be in 2017. So, lots to do. Our next ARD meeting is scheduled to be a part of the AHS/CARET meeting in March, but it might be wise to hold a meeting prior to that. Please look for a doodle scheduler soon and we will be able to determine the availability for as many of you as possible for a face-to-face meeting (someplace warm). Otherwise, a few conference calls will be in order.

By now all of you have seen the results of the NIFA funding for 2015. NIFA received \$786.874 million in funding for research and education activities and \$471.7 million for Extension activities. The NIFA funding increased by \$11.846 million compared to last year. Since all of the capacity funds and AFRI were either constant or increased, we have been asked to contact our Representatives and Senators to thank them. The increase was to AFRI going from \$316.409 M to \$325M. The 1890 lines stayed the same as they were in 2014 at \$52.485M for Evans-Allen, \$43.920M for Extension, \$33.961M for McIntire-Stennis, \$19.336M for Capacity Building Grants and \$19.730M for 1890 facilities. The approved budget directs that no less than 15% of the competitive research grant funds may be used for USDA's ag. research enhancement awards program, including USDA-EPSCoR. The agreement allows for 5% of funds appropriated for AFRI to be retained by USDA for overhead costs, previously that was 4 percent. The bill also requires that all appropriated funds provided to AFRI be made available without regard to the matching requirement of the 2014 Farm Bill.

The only other end-of-the year reminder is your involvement in the "APLU Study of Capital Infrastructure and Deferred Maintenance." Because you paid the assessment of \$1000 you will be invited to participate in the webinars and teleconferences provided by Sightlines, the company providing the work for the land-grant universities. It is critical that you participate in those activities. Please watch for the emails and instructions from Sightlines. Happy New Year to you all!

Sincerely,

James O. Garner,
ARD Chair

DOW AgroSciences Awards the ARD a \$10,000 Grant

On November 13, 2014 the ARD was notified that Dow Agrosciences' (DAS) Aid to Education program awarded \$10,000 to the ARD to provide two day training programs for soft skills and leadership on selected campuses. This will allow DAS to recruit students at the same time. "If things go well, we may be able to leverage this process and go beyond the initial schools selected," according to Ms Paige Oliver of DAS. The campuses selected for the first trial are North Carolina A&T, Tuskegee, Delaware State and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. The funding will include costs to host a lunch and leadership training at the campuses for ~50 top students from relevant departments along with faculty. The presentations from DAS will focus on leadership development and exciting careers in agriculture, with the goal to increase receptivity to these kinds of careers in their disciplines.

ARD UPDATES



Please visit the ARD website-

www.umes.edu/ard

or contact us using cbbrooks@umes.edu

ARD UPDATES



The 1890s Join the STEM Food and Ag Council

The STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Food & Ag Council (SFAC) is a unique membership group coordinated by STEMconnector with the goal of engaging the next generation of STEM careers in the Food & Agricultural industries. SFAC has the bold vision of developing the requisite human capital that will drive the innovation to feed 9 billion people by 2050. “Together, as fully committed leaders and professionals, the SFAC will engage America’s youth, educators and parents to inspire, nurture and engage them in their discovery and pursuit of Stem Food and Ag careers. “ The SFAC includes key players from industry, non-profits, higher education and government in order to maximize impact through collective action. The STEMconnector staff members are responsible for carrying out the mission, executing clerical and research tasks and securing resources. Current members are CEOs or COOs of Pepsico, Monsanto, Land O’Lakes, Kemin, National FFA, Dow AgriSciences, DMACC , Ag. Future of America, ADM, ACSESS, National 4-H Council, IFF, and Dupont Pioneer. The 1890s collectively join with other academic institutions, Iowa State University, Tuskegee University, University of Minnesota, and the University of Nebraska.



Florida and North Carolina Partner on Organic Strawberry Work

North Carolina A&T State University and the University of Florida have received a \$200,000 grant from the Wal-Mart Foundation to continue their research into organic strawberry production. The three farms in north-central Florida are assessing two cover crops and three commercial strawberry varieties that performed well in initial trials. During the second phase, researchers will evaluate on-station and on-farm research for seasonal variability in market yield, nutrient-use efficiency, consumer acceptance, and response to post-harvest handling and storage.

Last year, both open-field and high-tunnel systems were tested in North Carolina and Florida. High-tunnel evaluation will continue at North Carolina A&T, where 10 cultivars will be trialed. In addition, four cultivars have been planted in a high tunnel as well as in the open field at a Hmong demonstration site in Lincolnton, N.C.

Pest management continues to be a focus, with two spotted spider mites and spotted wing drosophila being major targets. Since farmers’ markets and community supported agriculture are important marketing channels for small-scale strawberry growers, the researchers plan to conduct a national online consumer survey. It will focus on consumers’ preference of strawberry quality attributes and their willingness to pay for them.



Dr. Ivory W. Lyles

New Administrative Appointments made at Alcorn State University



Dr. Gregory Reed

Alcorn State University School of Agriculture, Research, Extension and Applied Sciences recently added seasoned professionals as new interim leaders to lead the school to new levels of excellence. Dr. Ivory W. Lyles has been appointed as interim dean and director of land-grant programs, and Dr. Gregory Reed serves as interim extension administrator.

We congratulate and welcome Drs. Lyles and Reed.

