



Report to the Southern Region CARET/AHS Meeting
 July 31, 2021

AEA Officers

- Ms. Vonda Richardson, Chair, Associate Extension Administrator, Florida A&M University
- Dr. Rosalind Dale, Chair-Elect, Associate Dean/Extension Administrator, North Carolina A&T State University
- Dr. Allen Malone, Secretary, Extension Administrator, Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, Alabama A&M University
- Dr. Carolyn Williams, Immediate Past Chair, Executive Associate Director, Prairie View A&M University
- Dr. Mark Latimore, Treasurer, Associate Dean/Extension Administrator, Fort Valley State University

Extension Today Newsletter

The Association of Extension Administrators (AEA) initiated the publication of a monthly digital newsletter called *Extension Today*. The newsletter provides highlights and updates of Cooperative Extension programs across the 19 universities in the 1890 land-grant system. With editorial support from the AEA Marketing and Communications Committee, each monthly edition features a different theme with content supplied by 1890 institutions. Starting with the introductory August 2020 edition, the following monthly themes have been covered to date:

August 2020	1890 Land-Grant Universities response during the COVID-19 pandemic
September 2020	Awards and recognition of 1890 universities' Extension faculty and staff
October 2020	4-H Positive Youth Development
November 2020	Family & Consumer Sciences Extension
December 2020	Community Resource and Economic Development
January 2021	Agriculture and Natural Resource Extension – Small farms sustainability
February 2021	Black History Month – People & programs empowering communities
March 2021	Women's History Month – Celebrating women's contributions in Extension
April 2021	COVID-19 programming challenges, opportunities and successes
May 2021	Spotlight influential 4-H students and 4-H Youth Development agents
June 2021	Aquaculture, wildlife, fisheries, aquaponics, hydroponic and related programs
July 2021	Horticulture and Urban Agriculture

The newsletter is distributed widely and nationally and it has been well received, as reflected by the relatively high open and click rates. Previous editions are posted on the AEA website at: 1890aea.org/Extension Today

Extension Collaborative on Immunization, Teaching and Engagement (EXCITE)

The Association of Extension Administrators (AEA) is collaborating with the national Cooperative Extension System to implement the Extension Collaborative on Immunization and Engagement (EXCITE). The 1890 Universities Foundation is serving as sub-contractor with the Extension Foundation to facilitate participation of 1890 universities in the EXCITE project. The Extension Foundation, in cooperation with the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), through an Interagency Agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are funding the Cooperative Extension System (CES) to address health disparities among rural and other underserved communities. The EXCITE program is designed to:

1. Address barriers and concerns and increase acceptability about COVID-19, flu and other vaccinations among rural and medically underserved audiences.
2. Increase connection and communication between targeted communities and health care systems.
3. Increase accessibility of local COVID-19, flu and other adult vaccinations and vaccination clinics.
4. Inform CDC, USDA-NIFA, Cooperative Extension and health partners to implement public health programs to reduce health disparities.

The program serves all Land-grant universities through two sets of activities:

Activity 1 - ***Vaccinate with Confidence Campaign*** provides immunization education to diverse target audiences focusing primarily on messaging for COVID-19 vaccinations and seek to reduce vaccination hesitancy. Activity 1 is non-competitive and open to Extension professionals at all land-grant universities. Seventeen 1890 universities submitted applications and have been approved to participate in this activity. They will receive \$26,796 each to implement immunization education campaign in their respective states.

Activity 2 - ***Immunization Education Pilots*** will support 24 pilots projects, selected through a competitive process to create and test innovative delivery methods to inform future immunization education methodologies of best practices. Through AEA encouragement and support, nine 1890 institutions have been selected to receive funding in this critical activity. Pilot projects will examine the scope, delivery cost and methods to meet a range of rural and other medically underserved at-risk areas and communities around COVID-19, flu and other adult vaccinations. Each selected projects will receive up to \$200,000 funding for one year.

Additionally, the Extension Foundation has appointed Ms. Dawn Burton, Extension specialist from Prairie View A&M University to serve as EXCITE Engagement Coordinator for 1890 universities.

4-H Tech Changers Project – Bridging the Digital Gap

Digital access and adoption are barriers many underserved communities and rural Americans face to realizing economic mobility. Extension programs at 1890 institutions have strived to be at the forefront of programs designed to address this critical community issue. In recognition of this role, Dr. Makola Abdullah, Virginia State University president and chair of the Council of 1890 Presidents, and Dr. Juliette Bell, former University of Maryland Eastern Shore president, worked with the National 4-H Council Board to promote selection of eight Historically Black Land-Grant Universities (1890 universities) to receive funding in their 4-H Changemakers Program. The purpose of this innovative program is to empower youth to teach digital skills to adults, thereby closing the digital divide and driving economic opportunity in respective communities served. The National 4-H Council conducted a competitive process that resulted in the selection of 20 outstanding land-grant institutions, including eight 1890s, nine 1862s and three 1890/1862 partnerships for competitive awards. Funding for this project was made possible by generous funding from Verizon, Microsoft, Land O'Lakes and the Tractor Supply Company Foundation. It is projected that at least 25,000 adults from rural and underserved communities could benefit from this innovative program.

SARS-COV-2 Rapid Response Project

The Association of Extension Administrators (AEA) provided leadership for securing a \$1 million NIFA integrated AFRI project titled, *Reducing the Impact of SARS-CoV-2 and Related Disruptions on the Local Food Supply Chain in Minority Communities in the 1890 Land Grant Regional Network*. The primary goal of the project is to reduce the spread and mitigate infection of SARS-CoV-2 within small-scale, limited resource minority farms, food processing and food service communities in the 1890 land-grant regional network. The specific objectives are:

1. To educate and train multiple users focusing on: small-scale, limited-resource and minority producers and ranchers, small-scale packinghouses and processors, distributors, farmers' markets and CSA programs. In addition, direct delivery to consumers, small retailers and small processors to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2 and mitigate infection and transmission of SARS-CoV-2.
2. To determine the socioeconomic impact of SARS-CoV-2 on financial sustainability of the local food supply chain in minority communities.

These goal and objectives for the one-year project are achieved through a collaborative process involving all 19 1890 Land-Grant Universities, the Telamon Hispanic organization and in consultation with community-based organizations in the 1890 land-grant network.

In spring 2021, project collaborators conducted two train-the-trainer workshops for more than 200 Extension professionals from all 19 1890 universities. The workshops involved SARS-CoV-2 Produce Safety and Food Chain Safety training designed for small-scale and underserved producers and marketers. Project collaborators include: Delaware State University, Fort Valley State University, Kentucky State University, Lincoln University in Missouri, Tuskegee University, University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, Virginia State University and West Virginia State University.

1890 Extension Leadership Academy

The Association of Extension Administrators, in partnership with Extension Foundation and Fort Valley State University initiated the 1890 Extension Leadership Academy in 2018. The purpose of the 1890 Extension Leadership Academy is to prepare future and upcoming leaders in Extension to act as change agents to create a culture that encourages and sustains innovation throughout the organization. To date, two cohorts of 1890 Extension professionals, representing 118 participants have graduated from the program. The third cohort will begin on September 1, 2021, and will continue to create an experience that maximizes individual and team learning aptitude to build collective capacity for serving the 1890s system. This will be achieved through experiential learning activities for university teams and learning partner reflections involving a variety of assessments, speakers, team building and reflection experiences.

AEA Excellence in Extension Awards and Recognitions

The 2020 AEA Excellence in Extension awards were presented to the following individuals at the Joint meeting of the Association of Extension Administrators (AEA), Southern Region Extension Directors (ASRED) and Southern Region Program Leadership Network (PLN) in August 2020:

- ANR – Dr. Sanjun Gu, North Carolina A&T State University
- FCS – Dr. Tamara Warren, Alabama A&M University

- 4-H – Dr. Thomas Broyles, Tennessee State University

The 1890 Regional Excellence in Extension Award was presented to Dr. Sanjun Gu, North Carolina A&T State University, at the 2020 APLU Virtual Annual Meeting.

The AEA annual awards for Excellence in Extension are presented to individuals who have achieved career benchmarks reflective of excellence in Extension educational programming at the local, regional or national level. They also must demonstrate high program impacts, visionary leadership, commitment to diversity, and is recognized as a leader at his or her university, the communities served and in the respective field of expertise.

2022 AEA System-wide Extension Conference

AEA will hold the 1890 System-wide Extension conference at the Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld in Orlando, Florida, on July 30 – August 4, 2022. The conference will provide a forum for Extension educators, specialists, administrators, research professionals, and public and private partners to learn, share innovative ideas, best practices and explore collaboration opportunities for advancing impact-driven Extension programs in the 1890 Cooperative Extension System. Professional development workshops, exhibits and presentations on innovations and best practices will dominate the three-day conference. Last held in 2012, the conference is expected to draw wide range participation from 1890 Land-Grant Universities, 1862 land-grant partners, USDA agencies and other public and private sector partners. Initially scheduled for 2020, AEA postponed the System-wide Extension Conference to 2022 due to the dominance of the COVID-19 pandemic.