

## *Report to the Southern AHS/CARET*

### *Association of 1890 Research Directors (ARD)*

*July 30 – August 1, 2021*

#### **ARD Officers**

Dr. Chandra Reddy, Chair, Dean and Director of Research/Administrator of Extension,  
Tennessee State University

Dr. Louis D. Whitesides, Chair-Elect, Vice President & Executive Director 1890 Research and  
Extension, South Carolina State University

Dr. Conrad Bonsi, Treasurer, Tuskegee University

Dr. Majed El-Dweik, Secretary, Dean/1890 Director of Cooperative Research and Extension,  
Lincoln University

Dr. Vernon L. Jones, Immediate Past Chair, Langston University

Dr. Shirley Hymon-Parker, Member-at-Large, North Carolina A&T State University

#### **2022 ARD Research Symposium**

Plans are underway for the research symposium, ARD's signature event. The ARD Research Symposium will be held on April 2-5, 2022 at the Marriott Marquis in Atlanta, GA. Fort Valley State University is the host institution. The theme of this 20<sup>th</sup> ARD Research Symposium is "The 1890 Research and Innovation Agenda: Pathway to *Build Back Better*."

ARD sponsors this major symposium to provide a venue for our outstanding faculty and students to share their research outcomes with colleagues and stakeholders. Students, particularly graduate students, are a big part of these symposia with the explicit intent of enhancing student scholarly experience, including but not limited to promoting excellence in student learning, experiences, and outcomes. Early-career scientists are also an important part of these symposia. Similar to past symposia, this symposium will focus on students' experiential learning, and cultivating their potential to assume roles as both scientists and leaders of an evolving knowledge-based, global economy. Ben Franklin said it best: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

#### **Agricultural Research Infrastructure Advocacy (ARIA)**

The Agricultural Research Infrastructure Advocacy (ARIA) is a bold initiative by the Experiment Station Section, endorsed by APLU, and supported by ARD, AEA and the 1890 Council of Deans of Agriculture to request that Congress support an agricultural research infrastructure investment of at least \$11.5 billion at U.S. colleges of agriculture in any future federal infrastructure initiatives. Specifically, ESS Chair and past ARD Chair, Moses T. Kairo, is

urging funding over a five year period for the [Research Facilities Act](#) (Act), administered by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The Act authorizes an agriculture and food focused research infrastructure program for facility construction, alteration, acquisition, modernization, renovation, or remodeling. ESS seeks to ensure the Secretary of Agriculture has the authority to waive matching requirements, as well as consider geographic and equity in program administration.

Below is a synopsis of Experiment Station Section current progress.

- With the release of the President’s Budget on May 23, the Experiment Station Section (ESS) has intensified its efforts to identify Congressional champions. I would like to thank the CARET representatives who have already contacted their Congressional delegation. Because the infrastructure legislation seems to be changing every week, please continue to reach out to your Congressional delegations.
- Earlier this month (July), a “Dear Colleague” letter supporting agricultural research infrastructure was sent to the House of Representatives that also included a reference to and inclusion of Cooperative Extension.
- On June 16, the House Agriculture Committee held a hearing entitled “1890 Land Grant Institutions: Investing for Agricultural Resiliency, Equity, and Global Impact.” Four 1890 Presidents (Makola Abdullah, Virginia State University and Chair of the 1890 Council of 1890 Universities; Heidi Anderson, University of Maryland Eastern Shore; Paul Jones, Fort Valley State University; and Chancellor-Dean and former Policy Board of Directors Chair, Orlando McMeans) testified before this Committee. House Members praised the 1890 Land-grant Institutions’ accomplishments in conducting critical agricultural research, teaching the next generation of agriculturalists, and providing outreach to their communities through cooperative extension. Member’s questions focused on the benefits of the 1890 Scholarship Program and Centers of Excellence, the need for broadband, addressing inequity, and the national benefit of the land-grant university system. Considerable time was also spent on discussing the need for funding for infrastructure and deferred maintenance, noting the opportunities new and updated buildings could provide. Reps. Adams, Schrier, Plaskett and Panetta focused specifically on ARIA.
- In June, Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) submitted a letter to President Biden and Congress requesting \$40 billion for agricultural infrastructure, and agricultural research and innovation.
- On May 3, the APLU agriculture research infrastructure campaign sent a stakeholder letter to House and Senate Agriculture Committee leaders requesting at least \$11.5 billion for research infrastructure at U.S. colleges of agriculture over a period of five years. Over 350 national, regional and local stakeholder groups signed the letter, which stated that such an “investment is necessary to advance the critical work being done at institutions across the country to support American jobs, recruit a diversity of talent for the agricultural science pipeline, address our climate challenges, and ensure ongoing U.S. leadership in food and agricultural innovation.” The purpose of the letter was to ensure a strong stakeholder show of support for the request. In addition to the

Experiment Station Section, members of APLU BAA Administrative Heads Section, Cooperative Extension Section, and APLU Council on Governmental Affairs were very helpful in obtaining these signatures.

- Moses Kairo, Experiment Station Section Chair and Dean of the School of Agricultural and Natural Sciences at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore is requesting that the 1890 community continue to engage your congressional delegation on the importance of this request in the next infrastructure bill. This will enable the 1890 delegation to act when appropriate in support of the request and your needs. For more information about the request, please view the [leave behind document](#).

## **Leadership Development Programs**

ARD, AEA and the 1890 Council of Deans are participating in, and have representatives on the Board of Commissioners/Directors on the Food System Leadership Institute (FSLI) and Leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (LEAD 21).

FSLI offers executive leadership development to upper-level leaders in higher education, government, and industry to prepare them to meet the leadership challenges and opportunities of the future. The two-year FSLI experience includes three week-long residential sessions, personal leadership coaching, mentoring, a personal development plan, distance learning activities, and an individual leadership project. The FSLI is designed for experienced leaders. Fellows include leaders from various sectors, including education, industry, and government. Participant titles include program or division directors, provosts/vice presidents, experienced department heads/chairs, deans and associate deans, and others working in leadership of administrative capacities.

LEAD21 is intended to meet the future needs for leadership development of faculty, specialists, program and team leaders, research station and center directors, district and regional directors, department heads and chairs, and others in land grant universities' colleges of agricultural, environmental, and human sciences and USDA/NIFA.

The primary purpose of LEAD21 is to develop leaders in land grant institutions and their strategic partners who link research, academics, and extension in order to lead more effectively in an increasingly complex environment, either in their current position or as they aspire to other positions.

The participation of 1890 leaders is increasing, and applications are still open for the fall cohorts.

## **2021 Fall Experiment Station Section Meeting**

ARD will be actively participating in the 2021 Fall Experiment Station Section (ESS) Meeting, September 27 – 30 in Olympic Valley, CA. Registration is now open. If you have not already receive the registration and hotel information, please contact our Executive Directors, Alton Thompson for ARD and Gary Thompson for the Southern Experiment Station Directors. As

Chair of Experiment Station Section Committee on Organization and Policy (ESCOP) and past ARD Chair and Dean of the School of Agricultural and Natural Sciences at UMES, Moses T. Kairo will be chairing his first and last in-person meeting. Given the issues associated with COVID-19, the conference theme is “Disruptive Innovation.” Please plan to attend.

### **1890 Scholarship Program**

The project directors are meeting virtually on a regular basis to discuss scholarship management and implementation, recruitment and retention strategies, methods of awarding scholarships, promising and best practices, value added professional development; documentation, evaluation and reporting metrics, and engaging students during the summer.

As of May 30, 2021, 797 scholarships have been awarded to first year students in the food and agricultural sciences for a total of \$11.5 million, which represents 80% of the total dollars obligated to date. About 27% of these student scholars are majoring in agribusiness/agricultural economics. About 17% of these student scholars are majoring in animal sciences, following another 17% majoring in general agriculture and about 10% are majoring in food science/nutrition. In terms of demographics, 78% of these student scholars are African American and 64% are female.

### **1890 Centers of Excellence**

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to recognize not less than three centers of excellence, each led by an 1890 institution. AEA, ARD and the Council of 1890 Deans of Agriculture supported the implementation of all six centers identified in the 2018 Farm Bill.

The FY 2021 Request for Applications (RFA) was released by NIFA on September 1, 2020; the proposals were due on November 18, 2020. The RFA allocated \$5,760,000 to fund four centers (Student Success and Workforce Development; Farming Systems, Rural Prosperity, and Economic Sustainability; Global Food Security and Defense and Nutrition, Health, Wellness and Quality of Life). Eight consortium proposals were submitted.

Based upon competitive process, four 1890 universities were selected to serve as host institutions for these Centers for Excellence: Tuskegee University; Southern University; University of Maryland Eastern Shore; and North Carolina A&T State University.

- The “Center for Farming Systems, Rural Prosperity and Economic Sustainability” hosted by **Tuskegee University** will develop and share best practices, innovations, technologies and personnel across an 18-state region to address the profitability, sustainability and prosperity challenges of small farmers, ranchers and forestland owners, with an emphasis on socially disadvantaged and underserved farmers.

- **Southern University** will establish and host the “Center of Excellence for Nutrition, Health, Wellness, and Quality of Life” to address diet-related health disparities in African Americans by increasing the capacities of 1890 institutions through nutrition research, teaching and extension.
- **The University of Maryland - Eastern Shore (UMES)** will be developed and hosted by “The 1890 Universities Center of Excellence for Global Food Security and Defense” to foster international partnerships that strengthen agricultural development in developing countries and engage international researchers in addressing new and emerging animal and plant pests and diseases, and agricultural disaster recovery.
- The “1890 Center of Excellence for Student Success and Workforce Development will be developed and hosted by **North Carolina A&T State University** will serve as a platform to allow the 1890 land-grant institutions to develop and share resources, educational materials (i.e. funding, webinars, chats, videos, modules, programming documents), evaluative tools and data collection, and reports that will be uploaded and shared in a log in/password protected environment.

One concern that the 1890 community is asking NIFA to address pertains to year-to-year funding. It is very difficult to operate a Center of Excellence on annual funding; multi-year funding is preferable.

## **Thompson and Parks receive Awards**

On December 7, 2020, Dr. Alton Thompson, ARD Executive Directors, was inducted into the George Washington Carver Public Service Hall of Fame at Tuskegee University. The George Washington Carver Public Service Hall of Fame is given annually to individuals affiliated with 1890 land grant universities over a career and who exemplify the public service philosophy and leadership qualities of Dr. Carver.

Dr. Alfred L. Parks, College of Agriculture and Human Sciences Interim Executive Associate Director of Research and Interim Farm Director, Prairie View A&M University was selected a 2021 Fellow by the Agricultural & Applied Economics Association — the organization’s most prestigious honor. AAEA Fellows are selected for their continuous contribution to the advancement of agricultural or applied economics.

Dr. Parks received the ESS National Excellence in Leadership Award from ARD Region at the 2020 APLU Virtual Annual meeting.