

1890 LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES

1875	ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY
1871	ALCORN STATE UNIVERSITY
1887	CENTRAL STATE UNIVERSITY
1891	DELAWARE STATE UNIVERSITY
1887	FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY
1895	FORT VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
1886	KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY
1897	LANGSTON UNIVERSITY
1866	LINCOLN UNIVERSITY
1891	NORTH CAROLINA A&T STATE UNIVERSITY
1876	PRARIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
1872	SOUTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
1880	SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AND A&M COLLEGE
1912	TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
1881	TUSKEGEE UNIVERSITY
1873	UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT PINE BLUFF
1886	UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE
1882	VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY
1891	WEST VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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ASSOCIATION OF 1890 RESEARCH DIRECTORS

RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

OPENING SESSION

2026



MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2026 | 8:30 AM

INNOVATIONS IN FOOD, HEALTH & AGRICULTURE:
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS,
ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Innovations in Food, Health & Agriculture: Technological Advancements, Ecological Resilience and Economic Sustainability

The foundation laid by the Morrill and Hatch Acts directly and indirectly impacted teaching, research, and Extension at the 1890 Universities, as they evolved over time. Conscientious sacrifice, persistence and creativity were required for these institutions to collectively develop their current levels of expertise and overcome the many obstacles that arose to hinder their development to first-rate scientific research universities. Today, the 1890 campuses lead with diverse, high-impact research programs that tackle real-world problems through interdisciplinary approaches. The basic and applied research programs involve collaboration with member institutions at the local, state and national levels and are increasingly multi-institutional, multi-state and stakeholder driven.

The ARD has long recognized that land-grant institutions must remain relevant to the community of small and mid-size producers and entrepreneurs. These individuals bring a wide array of skills, innovative ideas, and practical knowledge to agriculture and natural resource practices, generate economic activity in rural communities, and serve specialized market niches. In response, ARD has consistently pursued innovative strategies and planning efforts to support this vital segment of the agricultural and natural resource system. Many argue that without the contributions of these producers and entrepreneurs, the nation’s agricultural and renewable natural resource sectors would lack the richness, and resilience that sustain its economy and communities.

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the ARD Biennial Research Symposium, we are reminded of the enduring significance and impact of this hallmark event. From its inception, the ARD Biennial Research Symposium has provided a platform not only for showcasing innovative programs and initiatives across a broad research agenda but also for addressing the pressing needs of communities in the 18 southern and border states and beyond. Both applied and translational research are given equal recognition alongside fundamental research, reflecting ARD’s commitment to advancing knowledge that is relevant, impactful, and inclusive.

Finally, in 2019, in celebration of ARD’s 40th Anniversary, we inaugurated the **Evan-Allen Memorial Lecture**. The Evans-Allen Act Of 1977 provided capacity funds for food and agricultural research at the 1890 land grant institutions and Tuskegee University in a manner to that provided to the 1862 universities under the Hatch Act of 1887. Representative Frank Evans of Colorado and Senator James Allen of Alabama originally sponsored the legislation (Evans-Allen) to provide funds for food and agricultural research programs at the 1890s. As we continue to celebrate the **135th Anniversary of the signing of the Second Morrill Act of 1890**, President, Ericke S. Cage, West Virginia State University, will deliver this year’s **Evans-Allen Memorial Lecture**.

Opening Plenary Session Program

Wesley L. Whittaker, *Presiding*
Chair of the Association of 1890 Research Directors, Inc.

The Occasion & Recognitions	Wesley L. Whittaker , <i>Dean & Director of Land Grant Programs</i> <i>Sherman Lewis School of Agriculture, Langston University</i>
Greetings	Orlando F. McMeans , <i>Interim President, Southern University System</i> <i>Chancellor and Dean, Southern University AgCenter & Committee Co-Chair, Southern University</i> Morgyn Edwards Courbin Crosby <i>Students</i> <i>College of Agricultural, Human and Environmental Sciences</i> <i>Southern University and A&M College</i> The Honorable Troy Carter , <i>United States Representative</i> <i>Louisiana’s 2nd Congressional District</i> Helena Moreno , <i>Mayor, New Orleans, LA</i>
Presentations	Jaye Hamby , <i>Director, National Institute of Food and Agriculture</i> <i>United States Department of Agriculture</i> Felecia M. Nave , <i>President & CEO</i> <i>1890 Universities Foundation</i>
Evans-Allen Memorial Lecture	Ericke S. Cage , <i>President, West Virginia State University</i> <i>Chair, Council of 1890 Presidents</i>
Closing Remarks	Orlando F. McMeans