



United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture



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Cooperative Extension, USDA-NIFA & APLU Award Top Honors in Extension Excellence and Diversity

Washington, DC — Cooperative Extension (Extension), the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) today announced winners of their 2017 Excellence in Extension and National Excellence in Diversity Awards. NIFA and Extension have sponsored the Excellence in Extension and National Diversity awards since 1991, which will be presented at the APLU Annual meeting in Washington, D.C. on November 12, 2017.

“NIFA is proud to support the national network of Extension experts and educators through our land-grant institution partnership, said NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy. “This collaboration brings science-based knowledge to farmers, ranchers, and community members to help them grow their businesses, raise healthy families, and support their communities.”

“Citizens in the counties, parishes, boroughs, and municipalities served by Cooperative Extension professionals in every state, in the five U.S. territories, and in the District of Columbia can be proud, as I am, of those receiving these awards. These awards represent the finest examples of the many positive impacts of Cooperative Extension work in the United States,” said Fred Schlutt, Vice Provost, Extension & Outreach and Director Cooperative Extension Service, University of Alaska and Chair, Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP). ECOP is the representative leadership and governing body of Extension nationwide.

Kentucky State University’s Louie Rivers, Jr. will receive the 2017 Excellence in Extension Award – a prestigious national recognition for visionary leadership, excellence in programming, and positive impact on their community. Rivers has helped secure and manage more than \$12 million in extramural funding to enhance Kentucky State University’s work with the small, limited-resource, minority, veteran and women farmers in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. On average, participants of the Small Farmers Program have shown an annual increase of \$5,000 in income from their farms. His leadership has impacted more than 20,000 individuals at Kentucky State University’s monthly workshop for small farmers and those new to farming.

The National Extension Diversity Award – an esteemed recognition of an Extension program or an educator for achieving and sustaining diversity and pluralism – will go to the 4-H Youth

Development Educators at Oregon State University Extension Service for its “Attitudes for Success Youth Leadership Program.” Since inception in 1989, more than 9,000 Hispanic and Native American youth have participated in the “Attitudes for Success” program. Over 950 students have served as youth council officers and 270 professionals, including university and college representatives from institutions located in the northwest, have volunteered as presenters, many for multiple years. Local mentors assist the youth in leadership engagement such as running for student body officer positions or planning community events. As a result of the impact, longevity, and the availability of curriculum and evaluation tools, the program is being replicated to other states. Patricia Dawson, 4-H Youth Development Professor, will accept the award in Washington.

In addition to the national recognition, one educator from each of the five Extension regions (northeast, north central, south, west, and 1890 universities), will be recognized for excellence at the APLU Annual Meeting.

The 2017 regional Excellence in Extension awardees are:

- **1890s Region:** Misty Blue-Terry, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
- **North Central Region:** Kevin Erb, Director, University of Wisconsin-Extension
- **Northeast Region:** Chet Arnold, University of Connecticut
- **Southern Region:** Damona Doye, Oklahoma State University
- **Western Region:** Marsha A. Goetting, Montana State University

About Cooperative Extension

Cooperative Extension (Extension) translates science for practical applications; engages with the public by providing reliable information leading to positive action; and transforms individuals, families, communities and businesses in rural and urban areas. Extension operates through the nationwide land-grant university system and is a partnership among the federal government (through USDA-NIFA) and state and local governments. At the national level, Extension is coordinated by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), which is the representative leadership and governing body of Extension nationwide and works in partnership with the APLU Commission on Food, Environment and Natural Resources. See www.landgrantimpacts.org/extension and www.extension.org/ecop for more information or follow us on Twitter [@Ext100Years](https://twitter.com/Ext100Years).

About the National Institute of Food and Agriculture

NIFA’s mission is to invest in and advance agricultural research, education, and extension to solve societal challenges. NIFA’s investments in transformative science directly support the long-term prosperity and global preeminence of U.S. agriculture. To learn more about NIFA’s impact on agricultural sciences, visit www.nifa.usda.gov/Impacts, sign up for [email updates](#), or follow us on Twitter [@USDA_NIFA](https://twitter.com/USDA_NIFA), [#NIFAImpacts](https://twitter.com/NIFAImpacts).

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About the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

APLU is a research, policy, and advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening and advancing the work of public universities in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. With a membership of 237 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and affiliated organizations, APLU's agenda is built on the three pillars of increasing degree completion and academic success, advancing scientific research, and expanding engagement. Annually, member campuses enroll 4.9 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.2 million degrees, employ 1.2 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$43.9 billion in university-based research.

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