

FANR FOCUS: WHAT'S THE LATEST?

APLU's Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources (FANR) Update

FROM DOUG'S DESK

Doug Steele, Vice President

The Office of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources just completed an eight-day stretch of winter/spring advocacy meetings in Washington, DC. We were pleased to host: The Board on Health and Human Sciences (BHHS), Council on Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET)/Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) Washington Conference, the Academic Programs Section (APS) and Non-land-grant Agricultural and Renewable Resources Universities (NARRU) as each group discussed advocacy and program priorities for 2024.

We were also pleased that the USDA/NIFA FY24 appropriations bill recently passed through Congress. Our partners at Lewis-Burke Associates will provide an overview of implications of the bill, but like most federal agencies there are some funding reductions this year. The FY25 annual appropriations and FY23 Farm Bill continue to see little movement and may not advance until after the elections. We will continue to watch closely over the next several weeks (and months).

I want to personally thank everyone that engaged during our Washington, DC meetings, especially our CARET delegates. What a great voice to have on the Hill reaching out to their congressional member offices. An amplified, unified voice is critical in carrying forward the value of a national system of land-grant and public colleges of agriculture, life sciences and natural resources.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Washington Update

Prepared for the Board on Agriculture Assembly by Lewis-Burke Associates

After months of delays, Congress is poised to pass the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations agreement by the end of this week. More details follow below, but in brief, the agreement will keep agricultural research, extension, and education programs largely flat.

Congressional champions made difficult decisions to cut programs while keeping others at FY 2023 levels. The outreach from this entire community and network—especially CARET, AHS, Cooperative Extension and agInnovation—made the case and resulted in Capitol Hill recognizing the absolute need to keep our **capacity programs** whole despite fiscal constraints.

Similarly, the advocacy push to fund the **Research Facilities Act (RFA)** was recognized once again, with \$1 million for the program. While a small amount of funding, the fact that Congress found a way to keep RFA despite all the fiscal challenges, is vitally important as we continue to work on other avenues of funding for this critical program.

There is much uncertainty with respect to FY 2025 appropriations, the Farm bill, and what the November election will mean for the year ahead. What we do know is that this community will continue to be the best testament for investing in research, education, and Cooperative Extension and will enable success in the future. THANK YOU for all your efforts!

[READ THE FULL REPORT](#)

CARET / BAA Washington Conference Update

The [2024 Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching \(CARET\)/Board on Agriculture Assembly \(BAA\) Washington Conference](#) took place February 25-28, 2024.

CARET is a national grassroots coalition of volunteer advocates created in 1982 by APLU's Board on Agriculture Assembly. CARET's mission is to educate and advocate on behalf of the land-grant system (colleges of agriculture) and related national priorities for funding for research, Extension, and teaching. The conference was held last week with the theme Investing in Capacity for Impact and Innovation. The event brought together CARET delegates and BAA members together to discuss the state of agricultural innovation, education, and Extension across the land-grant university system. The teams visited Members of Congress and their staff to discuss why capacity funding is critical to support in FY2025 federal appropriations. You can see the related [capacity whiteboard explainer videos](#), the BAA BAC [FY2025 Appropriations](#) request and [Farm Bill priorities](#) for reference.

Congratulations to our 2024 CARET award winners!

2024 Lifetime Service to CARET Award Winner: Bob Kidd (Posthumous)

Join us in celebrating Bob's 30+ years of exceptional service to CARET. View the [video](#) about Bob with comments from: Deans Barbara Rasco, Frank Haley, Steve Horn, and Bob Hile.

2024 Meritorious Service to CARET Award Winner: Dr. Mort Neufville

CARET was pleased to acknowledge Dr. Neufville's meaningful contributions to CARET and the broader land-grant university system for over fifty years. The ceremony featured remarks from:

- [Senator Ben Cardin, Maryland](#)
- [Senator Chris Van Hollen, Maryland](#)
- [Congressman Andy Harris, Maryland](#)
- [UMES President Heidi Anderson](#)

CARET and the BAA are committed to increasing national support and understanding of the important contributions of the land-grant university system's agricultural research, education, and Extension that enhance the quality of life for all people.

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Farewell and Best Wishes to Caron Gala

The APLU offices of Governmental Affairs (OGA) and Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources (FANR) received notification from Caron Gala that she will step down from her position by April 1, 2024 after over 4 years of service.

Caron was the first person to be hired in this newly-created position that supports the Board on Agriculture Assembly advocacy efforts, serves as Executive Director of the Council for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching (CARET), and acts as liaison between the Council of Government Affairs and the work of FANR and its advocacy partner Lewis-Burke Associates. Additionally, Caron collaborates with the International Agriculture Section and provides advocacy leadership on international development priorities, including the Feed the Future Innovation Labs.

We greatly appreciate Caron's dedication to the role, successes in building support for priorities, and how she built valuable partnerships within CGA, CARET, and external coalitions. Caron has been an important member of the OGA and FANR teams. We wish her success in her future endeavors. APLU will be in further contact as we recruit to fill this important role for the organization and member institutions

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New Board on Agriculture Assembly Publication

The 2024 report [America's Public & Land-grant Universities: Leveraging Discovery, Education, and Engagement for Climate-Smart Solutions](#) highlights how public and land-grant universities are on the leading edge of addressing climate change, creating and implementing practical solutions, and building a sustainable future.

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2024 Land-grant Impacts Educational Materials

The National Land-grant Impacts Database (NIDB) is the nation's most comprehensive repository of the land-grant system's collective impacts in agricultural research, education, and Extension. In 2023, land-grant universities across the nation submitted a record 620 impact statements.

This February, [a team of twenty-two professional university communicators](#), representing all five regions, gathered in Atlanta, GA to create educational materials based on these submissions. They wrote, edited, and designed 99 web stories, 38 fact sheets, and one video.

[View all the materials](#) or view by category:

- [Agricultural Systems](#)
- [Energy and Bioproducts](#)
- [Environmental Stewardship](#)
- [Food Security](#)
- [Nutrition and Health](#)
- [Youth, Family, and Communities](#)

Note: to see all posts featuring your institution, scroll down on the [Featured Impacts landing page](#) and click your university name.

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Food Systems Leadership Institute Cohort 20

The Food Systems Leadership Institute (FSLI) is now accepting applications for the new Cohort 20 beginning in the fall of 2024. FSLI is a national executive leadership development program of APLU with a mission to create a cadre of leaders who are dedicated to developing broader, more integrated and collaborative food systems focused on healthy humans, environments, communities, and economies.

FSLI provides Fellows with strategies to handle the leadership challenges and opportunities for the future. The FSLI experience develops or reinforces a series of core leadership competencies identified by a team of top-level leaders including university presidents and chancellors and leaders from industry and the non-profit sector who understand the requirements of food systems leadership.

If you have questions, please contact either Sam Pardue, FSLI Director (slpposc@ncsu.edu) or Sarah Kotzian, FSLI Program Manager (sehardis@ncsu.edu).

- [View the FSLI recruitment packet](#)
- [Apply here by March 24, 2024](#)

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AWARDS

2024 USDA Teaching Awards Request for Applications

The USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is accepting nominations for the [2024 USDA Excellence in Teaching Awards](#). To find information about the awards, please refer to this [resources page](#) and the [2024 awards guidelines](#). Nominees may find [this webinar](#) helpful when thinking about how to prepare their [nomination packets](#).

All nominations must be submitted electronically, and arrive no later than 5:00pm ET on April 15, 2024.

Please contact Wendy Fink (wfink@aplu.org) with questions about the nomination process.

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National Cooperative Extension Award Nominations Open

The Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), in partnership with USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), offers the following awards:

- National Extension Diversity Award
- Individual Awards for Excellence in Extension
- Team Award for Excellence in Extension

Online submissions are required by May 1, 2024. Winning Cooperative Extension professionals from [these land-grant colleges and universities](#) are selected by the end of July and will travel to the APLU Annual Meeting in November to receive their awards. For more information, please visit <https://awards.extension.org/>.

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WEBINARS

Kenya: Extension and Related Activities

March 8, 2024 | 3:00pm ET | Virtual

On March 8 at 3:00 pm, APLU and ECOP will host an information sharing Zoom meeting regarding Extension and related activities in Kenya. The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture recently held a trade mission to that country and there is a very positive US agricultural benefit proposition to cooperation in Kenya. [Register here.](#)

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MEETINGS

2024 BAA Summer Leadership Meeting

Formerly known as Joint COPs

July 16-18, 2024 | Providence, Rhode Island

Save the date! Plans are to begin on July 16 at 8 am and adjourn at 10:00 am on July 18.

Who should attend: Elected and appointed leaders of all BAA sections; liaisons to sections and the Policy Board of Directors; and members of the Budget and Advocacy Committee, Committee on Legislation and Policy (Farm Bill), and Communications and Marketing Committee.

More details on logistics and draft agendas will be forthcoming.

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PARTNER EVENTS

Lessons Learned from Teams Using Transdisciplinary Approaches Webinar

March 13, 2024 | 2:00-3:30pm ET | Virtual

What do effective transdisciplinary approaches look like in practice? What kinds of systems, tools, and aspects of team culture contribute to successful transdisciplinary efforts? In this webinar, Hailey Wilmer (ARS), Greta Landis (University of Wisconsin-Madison), and their collaborators will dig deeper into how teams have implemented transdisciplinary approaches.

[See more information and register here.](#)

National 4-H Conference

April 19-24, 2024 | Arlington, VA

Bringing hundreds of 4-H'ers to the nation's capital each spring, National 4-H Conference is the flagship youth development opportunity of USDA, hosted by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). From April 19-24, 2024, the nationally recognized event is developing the next generation of leaders alongside more federal partners than ever before. Experience unparalleled discovery, learning, professional development, and networking with 4-H'ers from around the world. The event features Conference roundtable sessions, Youth Career Fair exhibitions, special events, assemblies and much more.

[See more information and register here.](#)

National Health Outreach and Engagement Conference

May 13-15, 2024 | Greenville, SC

The National Health Outreach and Engagement Conference is a premier conference for research, Extension presentations, and networking.

[See more information and register here.](#)

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RESOURCES

Public and Land-grant University Job Board

The APLU [job board](#) is a free resource available to member institutions. Post your own job or find open positions at public and land-grant universities across North America.

FOCUS is an update from the Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources office of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) to provide timely, relevant information and actions items to the membership of the Commission on Food, Environment, and Renewable Resources (CFERR) and its member boards and sections. [Join the FANR Focus Mailing List.](#)

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