

ESCOP Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

APLU Annual Conference

Monday, November 15, 2010

1:45 pm – 4:45 pm

Cumberland G, Hyatt Regency Dallas

Participants

Jerry Arkin, GA	Dan Rossi, NERA
Govind Kannan, GA	Jeff Jacobsen, MT
Bill Brown, TN	Clarence Watson, OK
Edward Smith, CES	Eric Young, SAAESD
Shirley Hymon-Parker, NC	Meryl Broussard, NIFA
Steven Slack, OH	Mark Cochran, AK
Lee Sommers, CO	Bill Ravlin, OH
Ernie Minton, KS	Fred Clark, Cornerstone
Carolyn Brooks, ARD	Hunt Shipman, Cornerstone
Nancy Cox, KY	Dave Benfield, OH
Bob Shulstad, GA	Craig Nessler, TX
Mike Harrington, WAAESD	Dina Chacon-Reitze, CARET
Arlen Leholm, NCRA	Brad Hillman, NJ
Mark McLellan, FL	Bill Frost, CA
Orlando McMeans, WV	Karen Plaut, IN
Robert Barney, WV	Joe Kokini, IL
Joani Walsh, USDA	Dyremple Marsh, DE
Cathie Woteki, USDA	

Action Items:

Agenda Item	Actions Taken
1.0	Approved: Agenda Approved: Minutes Approved: Interim Actions
2.0	NIFA Updates – Dr. Meryl Broussard: <u>System is asked to nominate well qualified individuals for NIFA vacancies</u>
4.0	Policy Board of Directors Report – Nancy Cox/Eric Young : <u>Continue to get FSLI and LEAD21 to work together</u>
5.0	Systems Communication & Marketing – Faith Peppers (Public Affairs Team Leader, University of Georgia), John Scofield/Gerald Arkin/Arlen Leholm : <u>Consider ESCOP funding avenues to support this initiative</u>
6.0	Cornerstone Advocacy Update – Hunt Shipman: <u>Be vigilant for requests from Cornerstone to help with the lobbying efforts</u>
7.0	Budget & Legislative Committee – Steve Slack/Mike Harrington: <u>Include ESCOP representatives on 406 Advisory Committee</u>
9.0	Science and Technology Committee - Bill Ravlin/Dan Rossi: <u>Dan will send the current Roadmap to directors for their review/input; he will present to ESCOP a budget for funding options to continue the Roadmap project.</u>
12.0	February ESCOP Meeting Agenda Suggestions (Tentative Meeting Date is February 28, 2011) – <u>was tabled</u>

13.0	2011 ESS/SAES/ARD Meeting and Workshop Update – Lee Sommers – <u>will continue to update the body as planning continues</u>
------	--

Meeting Minutes and Agenda

Agenda #		Topic and Presenter
1.0	1:45	<p>Welcome and Introductions - Orlando McMeans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Approval of July, 2010 ESCOP Meeting Minutes b. Approval of the Agenda c. Interim Actions of the Chair <p>Approval of Agenda (Dave Benfield/Clarence Watson) Approval of Minutes (Govind Kannan/Lee Sommers) Interim Action of the Chair: Met with NIFA liaison, Meryl Broussard for monthly NIFA update. Information received would also be given by Dr. Broussard in subsequent portion of the meeting.</p>
2.0	1:50	<p>NIFA Updates – Dr. Roger Beachy; Dr. Meryl Broussard</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though the new NIFA structure was set in place on October 1st, several vacancies need to be filled, i.e. Assistant Directors for two of the institutes, six Division Directors, some critical NPL positions, and all of the Principal Scientist positions. A search firm will be used to assist in finding qualified applicants for the positions, and the system is asked to assist with nominating individuals. Jim Spurling is retiring; Rick Worshell in communications is going to NIH; Bob MacDonald is going to ARS on Dec. 5. • Councils and Task Forces are/will be established, some of which will include representation from the system to enhance communication and strengthen the partnership. Dr. Woteki’s presence has had a calming effect within the REE Mission Area and for BAA constituents. She is very active in helping the REE Mission Area in its planning. Planning includes evaluating the science agenda and looking at what’s missing, emphasizing U.S. agriculture productivity more, while still realizing the importance of global aspects. • Meryl Broussard is still the liaison to ESCOP and Ralph Otto is the liaison to ECOP. However, the NPLs who had been assigned as regional liaisons will be reassigned to broaden their knowledge beyond one region. Because of so many vacant lines, Meryl and Ralph have oversight of several NIFA areas. • NIFA employees will be physically relocating in the Waterfront Building during the first of the year as office technology is being upgraded. Dan Kugler’s work in Afghanistan continues and his vacated position may be filled with someone else. • The RFAs for 2011 will reveal that comments from stakeholders on the 2010 RFAs were addressed in large measure. NIFA tried to address the criticisms that they were over-prescriptive and were too limited on opportunities for individual investigators. The NIFA management staff seeks to stay in compliance, including meeting the percentage mandated to be for foundational research. There is not enough information in yet to see if they are in compliance on the last round.
3.0	2:05	<p>Dialog with Under Secretary Dr. Catherine Woteki (agenda will be flexible to accommodate her arrival)</p>

		<p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments echoed the system’s desire to have better and more open communication between the system and the REE agencies. One of her priorities is to have NIFA and ARS partner better. However, in doing her investigating of other agencies that have both intramural and extramural components, they too have problems with the partnering of them. At the upcoming retreat of the REE leadership, Dr. Woteki will be asking the same question the Secretary asked her – “How well are we doing?” There are still some 2008 Farm Bill directives that have not been done and they will be honing in on action items and critical details necessary to move forward. • It was shared with Dr. Woteki that although the land grant system strongly advocated for AFRI to grow, the unintended consequence was that this growth might expand the competition to the extent that the land grants will receive less and less of the awards. Dr. Woteki says the changes to AFRI will be monitored and assessed and the Department will determine how to evaluate the impacts of the changes to AFRI. Dr. Broussard reminded all that AFRI is no different than the NRI was in terms of being open for applications from non-land grant universities. He has not seen a noticeable shift, in who gets funded and the land grant universities are still the recipients of most of the AFRI awards. Attention on increasing the indirect cost rate for AFRI awards might attract more non-land grant applicants. While the land grant universities may not be adverse to that increase either, they realize the low rate might be protective of their award level dominance.
4.0	2:25	<p>Policy Board of Directors Report – Nancy Cox/Eric Young</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BAA Policy Board of Directors (PBD) will meet on Tuesday, Nov 16 at the end of the APLU Annual Conference. Any items to be brought before the PBD should be given to the current ESCOP representative, Nancy cox (UKY). Following this meeting, the new ESCOP PBD representative will be Mark McLellan (UFL) and the alternate will be Steve Slack (OSU). <p>Action requested: Information only.</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESCOP chair thanked Nancy for her services on the Policy Board of Directors. She thanked Eric Young for the great assistance he provided to her during her tenure. Her agenda brief had been provided, but she mentioned that the issue of having the two leadership programs, FSLI and LEAD21 working more collaboratively still needs prodding. Mark McLellan replaces Nancy on the board and Steve Slack is the alternate.
5.0	2:30	<p>Systems Communication & Marketing – Faith Peppers (Public Affairs Team Leader, University of Georgia), John Scofield/Gerald Arkin/Arlen Leholm</p> <p>The other Gulf oil crisis, Adam Liska, University of Nebraska, 8/6/10 McClatchy-Tribune News Service ran several places</p> <p>State College, PA paper Center Daily http://www.centredaily.com/2010/08/06/2136820/addiction-causing-another-gulf.html</p> <p>The Lexington Herald http://www.kentucky.com/2010/08/03/1374605/the-other-gulf-oil-crisis.html</p>

Modesto Bee

<http://www.modbee.com/2010/08/03/v-print/1279402/americans-ignore-the-other-gulf.html>

Bellingham Herald

<http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2010/08/03/1553796/the-other-gulf-oil-crisis.html>

Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/2010/08/03/2932755/the-other-gulf-oil-crisis.html>

A Woodbury school tries harder, Vincent Myers, Principal, West End Memorial Elementary School

Gloucester County Times and Newjersey.com, 10/4/10

http://www.nj.com/gloucester/voices/index.ssf/2010/10/a_woodnury_school_tries_harder.html

Rep. Tom Cole Op-ed in Oklahoma Farm Bureau monthly magazine link to online version. Piece starts on page 20.

<http://www.okfarmbureau.org/index.php?action=media.publications>

Alcorn State President piece in Vicksburg Post on anti obesity programs attached, 10/4/10

In meeting discussion:

- ESS endorsed the continuation of the Podesta initiative at the 2010 meeting in Nashville. Op-Ed articles have been well placed with the common thread of getting the word out to support ag research as a whole. Next theme to be worked on is food safety. John Scofield looks forward to more articles submitted to him by faculty and administrators.
- Faith Peppers from the Univ. of GA (along with Ruth Borders from MSU) represented a group of ~46 Ag. Communicators working on a national impacts project (developing a database that will provide critical issues outcomes, best practices to initiate strategic issues management, and be a repository of issues and messages). The database will include eXtension as a posting site and will be helpful as an information site for NIFA, universities, communities, Congressional Aids, Podesta, and can even help universities for internal communication and to help them be better spokesmen on national issues. The communications team is seeking funding to help with annual maintenance for the database site from AHS, ECOP and ESCOP. It was requested that a proposal be submitted for consideration. Also, it was suggested that the proposed NRSP-1 impact statement mechanism could feed into the national impacts database. The database could also be aggregated into SARE stories, impacts of IPM Centers, regional initiatives, funding sources, legislative priorities, and even single institution/state initiatives. Also, the initiatives of the Ag communicators will include a tool kit on line for those who wish to use the best practices being used nationally. It was the general consensus that ESCOP is supportive of the development of the communications database as a part of the Communications and Marketing Committee's goals.

6.0	2:45	<p>Cornerstone Advocacy Update – Jim Richards/Hunt Shipman</p> <p>In meeting discussion: Cornerstone Report: Navigating the new legislative scene in Washington after the election will be quite a challenge. Additionally the anti-earmark sentiment must be attended to in terms of how it can affect the system and can affect NIFA. There are two major scenarios to watch for - the possibility of a 6 month to one year or more Continuing Resolution for funding (CR); and the ominous possibility of NIFA funding returning to the 2008 levels. As for the next Farm Bill, it is most likely that hearings on it will be delayed until 2012. This would probably be best. Still, the mandatory funding for NIFA is in jeopardy because this funding expires soon and work has to be done to preserve these lines.</p>
	3:00	<p>Break (break will coincide with the APLU All-Conference Break)</p>
7.0	3:30	<p>Budget & Legislative Committee – Steve Slack/Mike Harrington</p> <p>For information only</p> <p>2012 Budget Cycle and BAC meeting The BAC will be meeting at the November APLU Annual Meeting at which time initial “draft” priorities for the FY 2012 budget cycle will be discussed. At the request of the BAC, Cornerstone developed the attached several scenarios for 2012 NIFA appropriations. The B&L Committee supports options 1 and 2.</p> <p>FY 2011 Budget As of this writing there has not been a budget resolution for 2011; however, both Houses have marked up their versions of the bill. There has also been recent discussion on a number of approaches to the budget including the passage of an omnibus bill could be passed before the end of the year and also discussion about going back to a FY08 budget base. If this were to occur, the following amounts would be available: Hatch: \$195.812 M, Evans Allen: \$41.151 M, McIntire-Stennis: \$24.791 M; AFRI \$190.833 M. Cornerstone will be providing a full discussion of the current situation.</p> <p>In the event of a year- long Continuing Resolution, the B&L committee supports an all out effort to capture special grant funds in capacity fund lines as appropriate.</p> <p>Input on the 2012 Budget Priorities A national survey of Directors was conducted to obtain preliminary input for the 2012 Farm Bill. Included in the survey were questions that provided input on budget and legislative priorities as well. Consistent with previous budget priorities surveys, the Directors continue to rank “Capacity Funds” and increasing competitive funds for AFRI as highest priorities.</p> <p>AFRI Funding for 2010 and 2011 NIFA will be forward mortgaging more AFRI grants in FY 2011. There were some \$23 M in awards from previous years that were funded from 2010 funds and as much as \$155M will be carried forward into FY 2011. This practice, common in NIH and NSF, allows more awards to be made; however, there are potential problems in the amount of available funds does not increase. The scenario below shows potential the impact of this practice given the current House and Senate marks for AFRI. Assuming an average of the two Houses for the appropriation, the AFRI will likely be on the order of \$311 million if a budget is passed. This would leave some \$119 million available for new awards in 2011. If an Omnibus Budget is passed at the 2008 level with \$190.833 M for ARFI, few or no funds would be available for new awards in to 2011</p>

AFRI Funding Scenario	FY 2010
AFRI Budget	262,428,000
Set asides 7.8536% (management fee, SBIR, Biotech Risk Assessment, panels, etc)	20,610,000
Available for awards	241,818,000
Awards continuing from previous years estimated at \$23 M in 2010, \$155 M in 2011	21,818,000
Funds available for new awards	220,000,000

OPTIONS FOR THE BAC TO CONSIDER

F.Y. 2012 NIFA Appropriations

During the Budget and Advocacy Committee meeting in July, Cornerstone was tasked with developing a series of “options” for the BAC to discuss over the next few weeks. The Cornerstone Team believes that the four alternatives outlined below (or some combination thereof) should be considered by the BAC as it works to develop its F.Y. 2012 recommendations in light of the changing political/policy landscape.

Option 1: The Status Quo

- Continue to seek “targeted enhancements” for no more than seven NIFA funding lines.
- Target key “capacity” priorities for 1862s (Smith-Lever, Hatch, McIntire-Stennis), 1890s (Evans-Allen, 1890s Extension), and 1994s (Extension).
- Also target Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) in recognition of strong support from the administration, Congress, stakeholders, and much of the land-grant system.
- Permit BAC constituent organizations to support increases for other NIFA priorities but provide no system-wide support (materials, lobbying assistance, etc.).

Option 2: Commemoration of 150th Anniversary of First Morrill Act

- Major push to increase land-grant system’s key programs (1862s, 1890s, 1994s) in commemoration of sesquicentennial. Could focus on capacity programs, AFRI, combination, or something else entirely.
- Amounts requested could be significantly higher than recent years (a “one time” boost).
- Might be simply a restatement of BAC’s themes/issues.
- Could be a two-year effort since 150th anniversary falls on July 2, 2012.

Option 3: A One Year Break from Earmarks

- Voluntary commitment from all land-grant institutions not to seek NIFA earmarks for a single year (F.Y. 2012) to “reset the clock” in exchange for capacity program increases.
- In exchange for forgoing earmarks, Congress would increase major 1862 capacity programs (Hatch, Smith-Lever, McIntire-Stennis) by a specified amount. (Proportional increases could also be made to 1890s and 1994s capacity programs.)
- Amount of capacity program increase could equal final dollar value of earmarks in F.Y. 2011 (\$M), F.Y. 2010 (\$M), or some other amount.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress would agree that primary purpose is to establish new capacity program “baselines.” • Institutions would be free to seek earmarks again in F.Y. 2013, but appropriators would insist on “clean slate,” with heightened justification requirements. • Like any other year, there is no guarantee that capacity programs would not go down in F.Y. 2013, but intent is to protect new baselines, clean up earmarks, and take advantage of current political climate. <p>Option 4: Consolidate NIFA Funding Lines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIFA has extraordinarily large number of appropriations funding lines. (Consequently, many smaller meritorious programs such as RREA have not changed in many years/decades.) • Smaller programs could be folded into larger programs with an agreement to increase funding above the F.Y. 2011 enacted levels for combined programs: 1 + 1 = 3. • Examples of possible combinations: (1) Smith-Lever 3(d) programs (excluding EFNEP) combined with Smith-Lever 3(b)-(c) and administered in the multistate pool or merged into a single line; (2) Sec. 406 integrated programs combined with AFRI or rolled into Hatch to be administered within the 25% multistate component; and/or (3) core academic programs (Graduate Fellowships, Challenge Grants) combined with AFRI. • Congress would specify in bill/report that NIFA would have to demonstrate that combined programs were enhanced and not diminished. <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAC Report: Steve reviewed the 4 options suggested by Cornerstone for FY 2012 NIFA Appropriations. ESCOP chose to support Option 1 which is to continue seeking targeted enhancements for no more than seven NIFA lines (which are AFRI and the capacity lines). ESCOP also supports Option 2 which is a marketing and communications strategy, utilizing the commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the First Morrill Act. Option 3 was to take a year off from earmarks, but any scenario about earmarks would probably be driven by Congress right now. Option 4 relates mostly to CES and the suggestion is that they look to consolidate some funding lines. Since 406 lines are integrated programs and NIFA wants them rolled into AFRI and preserve them, ECOP has decided to form an advisory committee to discuss and possibly alter their fate in NIFA. ESCOP representation on this advisory committee is requested and the ESCOP chair will communicate further with the ECOP chair accordingly. • A goal that is continuously expressed is that if earmarks are to be lost, the system should engage in strong lobbying efforts to recapture those sums by having them returned to the appropriate capacity lines as was done in 2008.
8.0	3:40	<p>Committee on Legislation & Policy – Steve Pueppke/Mike Harrington</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP) Report: Mike reported on the progress of the committee’s activities and all sections have submitted changes/recommendations desired for the next Farm Bill and then the other groups either have listed these as agreeable or requiring more discussion.

9.0

3:50

Science and Technology Committee - Bill Ravlin/Dan Rossi

Background Information:

1. Committee Membership:

- Chair
 - William Ravlin (NCRA)
- Delegates
 - John Liu (SAAESD)
 - John Russin (SAAESD)
 - Mike Hoffmann (NERA)
 - Tom Brady (NERA)
 - Steve Meredith (ARD) – Vice Chair
 - _____ (ARD)
 - Larry Curtis (WAAESD)
 - _____ (WAAESD)
 - Jozef Kokini (NCRA)
 - Abel Ponce de Leon (NCRA)
- Executive Vice-Chair
 - Dan Rossi (NERA, Executive Director)
- NIFA Representative
 - Meryl Broussard
- ERS Representative
 - Terry Nelsen
- Social Science Subcommittee Representative
 - Travis Park
- Pest Management Strategies Subcommittee Representative
 - Frank Zalom
- Liaisons
 - Cliff Gabriel (Office of Science and Technology Policy)
 - Edwin Price (ICOP)

2. Meetings

The Committee met on November 15, 2010 in Dallas, TX. Its next face-to-face meeting is scheduled for February 10-11, 2011 in Washington, DC, during which time it will half a joint half day session with the Social Sciences Subcommittee.

3. Multistate Research Award

The 2010 ESS Excellence in Multistate Research Award was presented to NE-1033 *Biological Improvement of Chestnut through Technologies that Address Management of the Species, its Pathogens, and Pests* at the APLU awards ceremony on November 14, 2010. This committee will also receive \$15,000 in off-the-top Hatch MRF as approved by the directors at the ESS meeting in Nashville. The announcement for the next round of awards will be sent out to directors and participants in the NIMSS System in December.

4. Science Roadmap

The Science Roadmap for Food and Agriculture report is now completed and is ready to go to print. The plan is to print a limited number of the full report for distribution to the ESS and some of our partners. The Committee also plans to provide links to a print-ready pdf on the ESCOP, regional association and APLU websites. The Committee is also discussing other documents for a broader distribution including an Executive Summary and a series of one-pagers for each of the seven challenge areas. Funding for printing of the original report and other documents will be required. Finally the Committee will also develop an operational plan for the Roadmap which will include estimates of required

		<p>investments.</p> <p>Action Requested: For discussion and feedback.</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science Roadmap is still being sharpened. It is recognized that while the full document is essential, the most utilized materials of the documents will be the Executive Summary, the targeted challenge area summaries and one-pagers. There are still informational gaps to be fixed, and reviews should continue to determine if the messages are correct and tied to budgetary needs. More advice on the Roadmap's utility is needed from Cornerstone and Podesta and the directors should get a chance to review the document and suggest improvements. Dan will follow up on these steps. • Printing is costly, but some hard copies are essential and should be sent around strategically. The document will of course be electronic and posted on the websites of ESCOP, APLU, the regions, etc. Additionally, it was suggested that the word 'Roadmap' is too restrictive if this is going to be a dynamic document. • In terms of the budget to continue the Roadmap project, Dan asked the group how they should proceed. Since the ESCOP Executive Committee can approve no more than \$5,000 without ESS approval, should a vote go out to get approval to spend more than \$5,000 or should the project be done in increments to fit the amount that can be paid without exceeding \$5,000 each time. Chairman McMeans requested that a budget be provided for the group to review prior to making such a decision.
10.0	4:00	<p>ESCOP Discussion Items for the meeting of the ESCOP Chair and other Section Leaders with Dr. Woteki on November 22nd.</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input in terms of what the section wanted conveyed to Dr. Woteki at her upcoming meeting with the system's section leaders was deemed as no longer needed because Orlando had heard the input by way of several different meetings already.
11.0	4:15	<p>ESCOP Input for the newly formed ESCOP-ECOP committee on partnerships – Arlen Leholm/Eric Young</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicated that the ESCOP-ECOP committee on partnerships has not begun in earnest yet, but they will be working with Linda Benning and Robin Sheppard (chair) soon and will be considering how to strengthen the partnerships, not only with NIFA but also between ESCOP and ECOP.
12.0	4:30	<p>February ESCOP Meeting Agenda Suggestions (Tentative Meeting Date is February 28, 2011)</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for agenda items for the February ESCOP meeting in Washington – tabled.
13.0	4:40	<p>2011 ESS/SAES/ARD Meeting and Workshop Update – Lee Sommers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2011 ESS meeting will likely be held in Estes Park, CO from September 26-29. Two potential sites for the meeting have been identified and they will be

		<p>visited on November 19 prior to developing a final recommendation.</p> <p>In meeting discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date for the 2011 ESS/SAES/ARD Meeting and Workshop will be September 26 – 29th in Estes Park in Colorado, (about one hour from the Denver airport). Further details will be forthcoming.
	4:45	Adjourn @5:00 p.m.
		<p>Written Reports Only</p> <p>ARD Report</p> <p>Presenter: Orlando F. McMeans</p> <p>Since the last report, the Association of Research Directors and the Association of Extension Administrators (AEA) hosted a stakeholders’ meeting in Atlanta, GA on the Capacity Building Grants Program for the 1890 Universities. More than 70 individuals were in attendance for this meeting which was held July 27, 2010. The attendees offered suggestions to address common issues of concern about the program and to help improve the 2011 RFA. The Executive Director of ARD and the Executive Administrator of AEA subsequently met with the National Program Leader for the CBG Program, Dr. Ali Mohamed, to discern whether the input provided was being considered for the next RFA. We were pleased to learn that it was.</p> <p>The Council of 1890 Presidents and Chancellors hold summer meetings, conference calls and meet at the annual APLU meetings and at some ad hoc meetings. On most of these occasions (and all of the summer and APLU meetings) they invite the ARD Executive Director and the AEA Executive Administrator to give presentations in which updates on initiatives of both associations are provided, areas of concern are shared related to land grant programs of the 1890s that would benefit from the attention of the CEOs, and information is provided about the 1890 input to the BAC and the CLP so as to receive their input and approval on the directions the 1890 institutions are to take.</p> <p>The ARD was the hosting region for the annual ESS/SAES/ARD Meeting and Workshop in September, 2010 in Nashville, TN and met a day early for the ARD fall meeting. Much of the agenda was dedicated to the next Biennial Research Symposium which will be held in Atlanta, GA April 9 - 13, 2011. Attendance at the 2009 symposium exceeded 700. The ARD winter meeting will be held in conjunction with the Symposium Steering Committee at the hotel site in January, 2011.</p> <p>Dr. Orlando McMeans, current Chair of ARD passes the gavel to Dr. Dyremple Marsh, Dean and Director at Delaware State University at the APLU meeting. However, Dr. McMeans will serve as Chair of ESCOP, a role he stepped into at the ESS/SAES/ARD meeting. The ARD’s Executive Committee has agreed to meet periodically with the Executive Committee of the Association of Extension Administrators (AEA) to strengthen this essential partnership. The ARD Executive Director will attend all AEA meetings to represent ARD and the AEA Executive Administrator will do likewise for the ARD.</p>