



## Equity for all of America's Land-Grant Colleges and Universities

**T**he federal government has long played a leading and meaningful role in bringing social and economic equity to America's minority communities. It has an opportunity to extend that role in an area that offers enormous possibility to minority scientists, farmers, and food production experts.

For many decades now, the African American, Native American, Hispanic, and U.S. territorial communities have been grossly underserved by America's land-grant system, which integrates agriculture and natural resources research, teaching, and extension. While this situation has several root causes, the primary problem is a continual shortage of federal funding.

There are three program areas that need priority attention:

### FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE 1890 INSTITUTIONS

America's land-grant system was established by the Morrill Act of 1862 and expanded by the Morrill Act of 1890 to include black land-grant colleges and Tuskegee University (the 1890 institutions). With additional federal support, the 1890s can enhance the teaching, research, and extension facilities they urgently deserve and need. These needs include upgrades to laboratories, classrooms, and information systems. Without such improvements, the 1890s will continue to lack the facilities to fully serve the next generation of agriculture scientists and students, especially minorities.

### CAPACITY BUILDING AT THE 1890 INSTITUTIONS

In addition to major improvements in facilities and equipment, the 1890s need a substantial influx of funding to broaden their research and teaching capabilities. This can best be achieved through expansion of the 1890s capacity building program, as a GAO study noted in 2003. Research in this program focuses on biotechnology, nutrition, aquaculture, and plant and animal science. Included in teaching projects are agribusiness, management and marketing, regulatory sciences, plant and soil sciences, and veterinary sciences. Since the capacity building program began in FY 1990, funding has remained far below the authorized level, thereby dramatically limiting the number

of research and teaching grants that could otherwise have been awarded.

From these and other programs, hundreds of scientific breakthroughs have come from the 1890 institutions. They have, for example:

- Improved technology and scientific instrumentation, assisting small and disadvantaged farmers to produce value-added products and providing nutrition education to poor families
- Increased productivity of grain legumes, helping to alleviate poverty in developing nations
- Synthesized a series of oxygen-carrying protein complexes, providing new blood substitutes for sickle cell anemia treatment.

### CAPACITY BUILDING AT ALL MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTIONS

The situation at the 1890s institutions is egregious and long-standing. However, other minority-serving land-grant colleges and universities have been substantially underfunded as well. Collectively, Native American land-grant colleges (the 1994 institutions), land-grant universities in the U.S. territories, and Hispanic-serving programs address critical issues in health, natural resources, and economic development through programs in teaching, extension, and research. All deserve greater financial commitments.

#### \*NASULGC'S PRIORITY REQUESTS FOR FY 2006:

■ 1890s facilities. . . . .	\$24.5 m
■ 1890s capacity building grants. . . . .	\$24.5 m
■ 1994s research. . . . .	\$3.0 m
■ 1994s extension. . . . .	\$5.0 m
■ Hispanic education partnership. . . . .	\$6.0 m
■ Resident Instruction & Distance Ed. . . . .	\$1.0 m

\*NASULGC's Council of 1890 Presidents/Chancellors also supports major increases for 1890 research (\$56.3 m) and 1890 extension (\$47.6 m) and other CSREES programs.

