



## **PVAMU JOINS ELECTED OFFICIALS, BUSINESS & COMMUNITY LEADERS IN CELEBRATING THE 130TH ANNIVERSARY OF MORRILL ACT OF 1890**

The federal legislation created a system of nineteen 1890 land-grant universities.

**PRAIRIE VIEW**, Texas (August 24, 2020) – The presidents and chancellors of the nation’s 1890 Universities announced plans for a weeklong celebration from August 24-31 of the 130th anniversary of the federal legislation that designated them as land-grant institutions. The Morrill Act of 1890 established a land-grant university system of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in states where African Americans were banned from accessing public higher education.

“As one of the 1890 land-grant institutions, PVAMU, through its College of Agriculture and Human Sciences Extension and Research units, is proud to serve the needs of almost half a million minority, underserved, and underrepresented Texans. This anniversary is a reminder of the vital role that our extension agents in 35 counties across Texas play in addressing needs, whether it is in food security, nutrition, youth development and family services, community development, and agriculture and natural resource stewardship. Being a part of the 1890 family is part of a rich tradition dating back to the establishment of the second Morrill Act and one that we celebrate,” said Gerard D’Souza, Ph.D., Dean and Director of Land Grant Programs, PVAMU College of Agriculture & Human Sciences.

Higher education leaders, elected officials, and policymakers, business and community leaders will join in an online celebration of the 1890 land-grant universities anniversary, culminating with a two-hour online forum on Monday, August 31 from 1-3 p.m. EDT that will explore the history and accomplishments of these institutions and the important role they play in the nation’s future. Registration for that convening is open to all [here](#).

During the week of August 24, leaders and members of the 1890 university community, policymakers, business, and community leaders will use an array of platforms to reflect on and celebrate the legacy of these land-grant institutions, including on social media using #Celebrate1890s. They will highlight innovative programs at the 1890 land-grant universities and their role in developing solutions for local, regional, and global challenges. This week of activities will also include points of pride and/or significant accomplishments for each of the 19 1890 land-grant universities.

The celebration will end with a virtual webinar on August 31, from 1-3 p.m. EDT. This would have been an in-person gathering were it not for the pandemic. Still, the 1890 land-grant universities are committed to having a very meaningful event honoring their history and celebrating their current work. The webinar will have two panel discussions. One panel will feature Makola Abdullah, President, Virginia State University; Heidi Anderson, President, University of Maryland Eastern Shore; Paul Jones, President Fort Valley State University; and Peter McPherson, President of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. The webinar will also feature a second panel with private sector leaders such as Fred Humphries, Corporate Vice President of U.S. Government Affairs; Kellie Adesina, Director, Government Affairs, Bayer U.S. – Crop Science; and Karis Gutter of Corteva Agriscience.

(more)

The webinar will also feature remarks from prominent dignitaries such as Scott Hutchins, Deputy Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics; Representatives Alma Adams, Chair of the House Agriculture Committee; David Scott, Lead Sponsor of the 1890 Scholarship Program; and Sanford Bishop, Chair of the House Appropriations Committee; Sherrod Brown, Co-Lead Sponsor of the 1890 Centers of Excellence.

After 130 years, 19 universities designated as 1890 land-grant universities continue to work together to provide essential research, education, and Extension/public outreach that sustains U.S. food, fiber, and renewable fuel production and addresses the challenges of our time at local, regional, national and global levels. The 1890 land-grant universities have a legacy helping to fill a crucial need of educating first-generation and economically disadvantaged college students; enhancing the resilience of limited-resource farmers, families, individuals, and underserved communities; and pioneering the most advanced and advanced education, research, and engagement programs to improve quality of life. With very little investment, the 1890s educate nearly 100,000 students annually, contribute more than \$4.4 billion to the local economies, and provide pathways of opportunity for thousands of Americans.

The land-grant philosophy is even more relevant today, given the dynamic complexity of the socioeconomic environment where an integrated, iterative systems approach provides the best likelihood of generating solutions that are responsive to the complex dynamism of our environment. The 1890 land-grant universities are a perfect platform for addressing the three interlocking disparities of education, health, and economic prosperity made more evident by the COVID-19 pandemic. Looking ahead, the 1890 institutions plan to focus on these disparities while continuing to play a foundational role in the higher education system and in providing access and enhancing opportunities for all citizens.

The 1890 land-grant universities are Alabama A&M University, Alcorn State University, Central State University, Delaware State University, Florida A&M University, Fort Valley State University, Kentucky State University, Langston University, Lincoln University in Missouri, North Carolina A&T State University, Prairie View A&M University, South Carolina State University, Southern University and A&M College, Tennessee State University, Tuskegee University, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Virginia State University and West Virginia State University.

###

**About Prairie View A&M University:** Designated an institution of "the first class" in the Texas Constitution, Prairie View A&M University is the second-oldest public institution of higher education in the state. With an established reputation for producing engineers, nurses, and educators, PVAMU offers baccalaureate degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degree programs through eight colleges and schools. A member of The Texas A&M University System, the university is dedicated to fulfilling its land-grant mission of achieving excellence in teaching, research, and service. For more information regarding PVAMU, visit [www.pvamu.edu](http://www.pvamu.edu).

## MEDIA CONTACTS

**Candace Johnson**  
Executive Director of Marketing  
and Communications

936-261-1566 • [cajohnson@pvamu.edu](mailto:cajohnson@pvamu.edu)

**Michael Douglas**  
Communications Specialist III

936-261-2149  
[mwdouglas@pvamu.edu](mailto:mwdouglas@pvamu.edu)

**The Office of Marketing and Communications • 936-261-1560 • [www.pvamu.edu/marcomm](http://www.pvamu.edu/marcomm)**