

Building Joint Information and Support Programs in 1862 and 1890 Land-Grant Schools*

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MORE THAN 50,000 black students (1 out of every 9 black collegians in the United States) attend the unique group of institutions of higher learning—the black land-grant colleges. The 16 black colleges and universities are located in the southern and border states. The largest enrollment (almost 10,000) is at Southern University A&M College, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, while at Delaware State College, enrollment is barely more than 1,000 students. A&T State University has an enrollment of 4,500.

Some of these institutions are over 100 years old, whereas a few of them are less than 25 years old. The Morrill Act of 1862 sought to democratize American higher education by instructing the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life. In the 16 states I am talking about, southern blacks were not admitted to the institutions established in 1862, first by custom and later on by law. In 1890, Congress enacted the second Morrill Act which increased federal assistance to the original institutions and also authorized the creation of black land-grant colleges. The southern and border states implemented the 1890 act by establishing separate land-grant colleges for blacks. These colleges of 1890 have, along with the other black institutions, traditionally been and still remain the major route for ambitious blacks to get an inexpensive college education and enter into the professions.

Black land-grant institutions educate a very significant share of students from low-income families. According to the Carnegie Commission for Higher Education, the average family income of

*This talk was presented by Mr. Jones at the 1972 AAACE meeting, Tucson, Arizona.

37.6 percent of black students entering black colleges in 1968 was less than \$4,000. The black land-grant colleges, as well as the predominantly black colleges, generally have had, in the Commission's words, remarkable success in training such "high risk" students.

All of this, according to Peter H. Schuck, of Ralph Nader's Research and Study Group, Washington, D.C., in the June issue of *Saturday Review*, "Black Land-Grant Colleges' Discrimination As Public Policy."

Back in February 1970, chief officers of the 1890 institutions met with the Secretary of Agriculture and his staff and described with supporting data their difficult financial situation and expressed the belief that their institutions had been overlooked in both state and federal support, especially by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Following this meeting, 1890 college officials and USDA representatives met to develop specific budget recommendations and presented these to the Secretary. A small committee met and determined, as a result of these discussions, to develop a request for \$8 million for research and \$4 million for Extension activities in the 1972 fiscal year budget. There followed committee meetings and conferences with ECOP, ASCOP, with the deans of the schools of agriculture, and discussions as to the best route to follow in communicating this request to the Congress. The executive committee of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges endorsed the request of the 1890 institutions for research and Extension to the Secretary of Agriculture. Extension funds were made available under section 3(d) of the Smith-Lever Act. The research funds of \$8.6 million were made available mostly under a 1965 law, permitting USDA to grant research funds directly to institutions.

Congressman Frank Evans of Colorado was instrumental in developing and communicating the need for funds to these black institutions, before the Agricultural Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. He prefaced part of his appeal for these 16 land-grant colleges plus Tuskegee Institute with the comment that for 80 years, these institutions have been citadels of

college education for blacks, particularly in agriculture and mechanic arts and sciences.

He stated that approximately one-fifth of all black college undergraduates were enrolled in these schools, but despite the historic and continued commitment of the predominantly black land-grant colleges to the agricultural training of students and particularly those of disadvantaged and minority backgrounds, these institutions have been notoriously bypassed in the allocation of federal funds.

After the appropriation of Smith-Lever funds for these 1890 land-grant institutions, we undertook to develop a greater mutual understanding for support and working relationship between the land-grant colleges and the Extension Service, USDA, in these 16 states. It meant, in some cases, the restructuring of the purposes, adoption of program policies and procedures, appropriate funding arrangements and greater cooperation and coordination of staffs between the two land-grant universities of the states. It required a combined commitment of both universities in the state and the Extension Service to specific policies with respect to staff, funding, program development, planning, etc. In each case, cooperation and coordination of effort between these institutions become an integral part of the state plan of work submitted to the Extension Service. In most cases, we agreed upon an acceptable procedure for funding, and support of jointly developed and mutually agreed upon extension activities. We were determined that in any cooperative relationship between the two land-grant universities, no plan developed would appear to be or actually would be a separate Cooperative Extension Service.

The joint USDA-NASULGC Extension Study Committee made a survey in 1968 to determine the capabilities and activities, opportunities and potentialities of the 1890 land-grant institutions and what might be their contributions to extension's goals and functions. This was a part of the national report, "A People and A Spirit."

The survey results indicated that faculty preparation and competencies were increasing among the 1,878 instructional staff members employed by the 1890 institutions reporting. During

that period, almost 500 held doctoral degrees, approximately 1,300 held master's degrees. From 1960 to 1968 a total net staffing increase in these institutions responding to the questionnaire was approximately 1,000 and of this number, 163 were Ph.D.'s and 350 were master's degrees. The survey at that time indicated that these 1890 institutions would place high priority, if funds were made available, on the following program areas:

1. Leadership Development
2. Family Youth Development
3. Community Development

To be fully effective, the report indicated that these institutions must be backstopped by a more adequate and relevant research responsibility which places emphasis on the above program areas. Such program areas could be developed with people of all social and economic levels, with special emphasis on problems of the poor, the disadvantaged, the alienated, the deprived and the dislocated.

Back in 1970, and even before that, we started to develop a dialogue and working relationship between the administrators and other relevant individuals of the two land-grant universities of the states and the Extension Service, USDA. It was suggested that we jointly explore 1890 and 1862 land-grant universities' needs and problems of the states and determine ways to utilize existing organizational structures and interrelated structures and approaches in solving relevant social and economic problems. It was further suggested that we jointly develop programs and projects that would combine relevant capabilities of staffs, materials and other resources to achieve jointly pre-determined purposes and objectives. This one commitment we have in the funding of the 1890 land-grant universities is that we propose to effectively utilize the competencies and leadership of the personnel of these universities in solving social and economic problems in which both land-grant universities share a common goal.

As a result of this funding to the 16 states, we developed a set of guidelines affecting the working relationships, procedures, business management, administration, etc. We agreed that:

- (1) the selection of personnel would be the responsibility of the

1890 colleges, subject to the approval of the State Extension Directors of the 16 states;

(2) both 1890 and 1862 institutions resources would be utilized as an integral part of the Cooperative Extension programs in the states for the benefit of all the citizens of the state;

(3) 1890 colleges were expected to take the initiative and leadership in developing and submitting a program proposal as a basis for approving the appropriation for each state;

(4) each state, it was suggested, would have the broadest latitude in determining the program emphasis and staff necessary to carry out these programs; and

(5) the 1890 land-grant institutions would designate a person mutually satisfactory to both 1890 and 1862 institutions to be responsible for developing and implementing proposals for programs to be funded under this appropriation. It was suggested that the individual so selected would participate as a member of the State Director's staff in the administrative operations concerning programs, projects, procedures mutually agreed upon.

In North Carolina, we began to develop the plans for this program in August 1971. We received approval of our proposal the latter part of December 1971. We employed the first workers January 1, 1972. We have people employed in housing, home management and family economics, horticulture and 4-H youth work.

I am a joint employee of the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service and A&T State University. We have mutually satisfactory relationships between the business offices of the 1890 and 1862 institutions. We've had the complete cooperation of the information division of the School of Agriculture at North Carolina State University in developing information through the extension organ in the state to all extension workers. We've presented our program to the total state extension staff on university television and the state organization of the press, radio and TV editors in North Carolina. We are a total part of SEMIS in the state, as well as each of the 16 states. The 1890 Extension Coordinators in each of the 16 states met and organized as a group in May 1972. They selected, with the concurrence of ECOP, a representative from this organization as a member of ECOP Committee and a Legislative

Representative on the Legislative Committee of ECOP. I am certain that the resources and professional competence, if properly utilized in the several states, can add considerably to the total impact of the Extension Service in the several states and throughout the country. What we are doing in the 16 southern and border states with extension and research programs in the land-grant institutions, might have implications for states with minorities in the population or people with similar economic, social and educational problems and needs.