



# NERA News & Notes

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From the Office of the Executive Director

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## *Rubie Mize Initiated into the CSREES Hall of Fame*

Ten outstanding individuals were initiated into the CSREES Hall of Fame October 21, 2004 during the Agency's celebration of its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding work by individuals who have advocated and supported the fundamental efforts of CSREES to integrate research, education, and extension in fulfilling the Agency's mission to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities. We were most pleased that Rubie Mize was included in this, the inaugural class of inductees to the Hall of Fame.

Rubie Mize, has played a vital role in the management and re-engineering of the National Information Management and Support System (NIMSS), which was originally developed for the Northeast Region State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors but has been transformed into a national system for the management of information related to the multi-state research portfolio. Ms. Rubie Mize has served in this role since 1996, which also included initiating and managing partnerships with various federal agencies, regional state land grant universities, and the private sector.

In addition to Rubie, the following individuals were also inducted into the Hall of Fame: Jane Coulter, CSREES; Daniel Dooley, NAREEE Advisory Board and CARET; R. Rodney Foil, Mississippi State University and CSREES; Victor Lechtenberg, Purdue University and the NAREEE Advisory Board; Martin Massengale, University of Nebraska and the NAREEE Advisory Board; Madeline Mellinger, CARET; Eldon Ortman, Purdue University and CSREES; Leodrey Williams, Southern University and CSREES; and, Edward (Ted) Wilson, CSREES.



## *New Deans and Directors Workshop December 8-10, 2005*

The agenda, registration and hotel information for the New Deans and Directors Workshop to be held December 8-10 is now available on the ESCOP website in the workroom section. The workshop will be held at the Westin Embassy Row, 21<sup>st</sup> and Massachusetts Ave (Dupont Circle), Washington DC. The direct url for the workshop agenda, registration and hotel



## *National Council for Science and the Environment – 5<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Science, Policy and the Environment – Forecasting Environmental Changes*

The National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE) invites you to participate in the 5<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Science, Policy and the Environment: Forecasting Environmental Changes, to be held on February 3-4, 2005 at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC.

The conference will serve as a forum for more than 700 leading scientists, engineers, policy makers, government officials, business executives, and educators to assess our ability to understand and forecast environmental changes and to identify opportunities for improving these capabilities. It will bring together researchers who study environmental conditions and trends with decision-makers who need that information.

The opening keynote address will be delivered by **James Gustave Speth**, Dean of the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, who will draw upon his experience as former Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Founder and former President of the World Resources Institute, and former Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality to address opportunities for

the United States to assert a leadership role in domestic and international environmental issues.

Three plenary roundtable discussions will address the following themes:

- Lessons Learned from Successful Environmental Forecasting Approaches
- Designing Ecological Forecasting Systems
- Applying Environmental Forecasting to Environmental Decision making

Participants in roundtable plenary discussions will include:

- **D. James Baker**, President and CEO of the Academy of Natural Sciences; former Administrator of NOAA
- **Charles Groat**, Director of the U.S. Geological Survey
- **Bruce Hayden**, Chair of the Department of Environmental Sciences at the University of Virginia; Lead Investigator of the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) Design Consortium
- **Adm. Conrad Lautenbacher**, Administrator of NOAA; U.S. Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
- **Margaret Leinen**, Assistant Director of Geosciences at the National Science Foundation
- **Thomas Lovejoy**, President of The H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment
- **Ronald Pulliam**, Regent's Professor at the University of Georgia; former Director of the National Biological Survey

All conferees will take part in one of 15 interactive breakout sessions and one of three symposia, where they will generate strategies to connect institutions, fields of science and stakeholder communities to further advance environmental forecasting and decision making. Active participation and lively discussion are encouraged in these sessions. A poster session will enable participants to share their research on topics related to the major themes of the conference.

A report containing strategies developed at the conference will be widely publicized and presented at briefings to the U.S. Congress, federal, state and local governments, educational institutions, and the general public.

Please visit the conference website at [www.ncseonline.org/ncseconference/2005conference/](http://www.ncseonline.org/ncseconference/2005conference/) to register online, see pre-conference materials, obtain the latest program updates, and view links to travel and lodging options. A limited number of complimentary registrations are available to members of the NCSE University Affiliates Program (see the conference

registration page at: [www.register123.com/event/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x53068abcd](http://www.register123.com/event/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x53068abcd) or call 202-530-5810 for details). Please direct general conference questions to: [conference2005@NCSEonline.org](mailto:conference2005@NCSEonline.org).



### ***Nominations Sought For Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has recently announced that it is seeking nominations for membership on the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF).

Nominations are being sought for scientists with expertise in epidemiology, food technology, microbiology, risk assessment, infectious diseases and biostatistics and other related sciences. Nominees may be currently employed by state and federal governments, industry, academia or other scientific pursuits.

The NACMCF, established in 1988, provides scientific advice on public health issues relative to the safety and wholesomeness of the U.S. food supply. The committee serves the following departments: Agriculture (Food Safety and Inspection Service), Health and Human Services (Food and Drug Administration), Commerce (National Marine Fisheries Service) and Defense (Veterinary Service Activity).

The Secretary of Agriculture will make appointments to the committee after consultation with the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Members serve a two-year term, with the possibility of two additional consecutive terms. The full committee meets at least once a year, and subcommittees meet as necessary.

Under the new NACMCF charter, [www.fsis.usda.gov/About\\_Fsis/NACMCF\\_Charter/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_Fsis/NACMCF_Charter/index.asp) committee members who are not federal government employees will be appointed to serve as non-salaried special government employees (SGEs) and will be subject to appropriate conflict of interest statutes and standards of ethical conduct. As a condition of their appointment, SGEs must complete the Office of Government Ethics 450 Confidential Financial Disclosure Report, [www.usoge.gov/pages/forms\\_pubs\\_otherdocs/forms\\_pubs\\_other\\_pg3.html](http://www.usoge.gov/pages/forms_pubs_otherdocs/forms_pubs_other_pg3.html) before the first committee meeting. Members will be reviewed for conflicts of interest

related to specific NACMCF work charges, pursuant to 18 U.S.C.208.

Nominations and resumes will be received for 30 days after the notice seeking nominees is published in the Federal Register [www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=/oppde/rdad/frpubs/04-031n.htm](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=/oppde/rdad/frpubs/04-031n.htm) and should be sent to Karen Thomas,



***Interagency Effort to Strengthen and Enhance the Collaborative Relationship of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)***

In an effort to address the above issues, the Administrators for ARS and CSREES set forth as a primary IPA project objective the development of a mechanism to identify and evaluate proactive ways that ARS and CSREES could use within and across its various program areas to enhance collaborative relationships that benefit agricultural research, education, and outreach to better meet the needs of customers, stakeholders, individuals, and other clientele groups. In order to achieve this goal a team of experts was assembled from within USDA as well as from the land grant system and appropriately named the Collaboration Assessment and Enhancement Team (CAET). The project looked at the OMB requirements for the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) which is part of the annual agency self evaluation, to see how the assembled group of leaders could address some of the issues raised in "PART" and as such, make recommendations to the agencies as to how they could strengthen the depth and breadth of what they do in terms of measurable impacts.

This study was conducted by Dr. Bobby Phills while completing an IPA assignment with CSREES, and is available for review at the following website:

[www.csrees.usda.gov/about/offices/pdfs/caet.pdf](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/about/offices/pdfs/caet.pdf)



***Homeland Security Presidential Directive – HSPD –9***

In the event that you have not seen this directive, issued January 30, 2004 I urge you to download and read. The directive established a national policy to defend the agriculture and food system against terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. A careful reading will demonstrate that there are clear roles for the educational system, for professional development, training, capacity building, , the establishment of university centers, and for the development of state of the art biocontainment laboratory facilities for research and diagnostic's. Some of the directives have been achieved, however a careful reading will point out a number of areas where there is still much work to be done, and a great deal of coordination between agencies required.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/02/print/20040203-2.html>



***Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate and Postgraduate Fellowship Grants Program – A Request for Proposals***

This program awards grants to train students for master's and/or doctoral degrees and provide additional postdoctoral training for Fellows who have completed their doctoral degrees at colleges and universities that have demonstrable teaching and research competencies in the food and agricultural sciences, broadly defined. Grants are specifically intended to support fellowship programs that encourage outstanding students to pursue & complete their degrees or obtain postdoctoral training in areas where there is a national need for the development of scientific & professional expertise. Post-doctoral Fellowships will not be awarded in FY 2005. In FY 2005, applications are being solicited in the following national need areas: 1) animal, microbial, or plant molecular biology, including genomics and bioinformatics; 2) natural resources and the environment; 3) agricultural systems and natural resource engineering; 4) marketing and management; 5) food science and human nutrition; 6) human or family science and consumer sciences; and 7) multi-disciplinary and/or multi-institutional programs.

Closing date for proposals is January 5, 2005. Estimated funds being made available is \$6M, with the range of awards expected to be between \$32 and \$276K. Cost sharing is not required. More information is available at the following site: [www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1280](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1280)

## *News from Across the Region*

### ***Maine AES - Opens New Aroostook Farm Greenhouse Facility***

The Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station at the University of Maine celebrated the completion and opening of the new greenhouse located at the Aroostook Farm in Presque Isle on October 13. The greenhouse, primarily funded by public bond referendum funds approved in 2003, provides year-around potato research capabilities needed to support the potato industry in the state of Maine.

The new greenhouse replaces the original structure, which was built in 1942. The plant breeding, entomology and pathology programs utilized the original structure, but isolation of each department in the old building was not complete. The new building provides that feature with three individual sections each with its own temperature and ventilation controls.

The potato breeding program will mainly use the new greenhouse for the program's hybridization (crossing) activities - to produce hybrid seeds of potatoes - which is normally done in the spring. With the new greenhouse, hybridization work can be done during late winter or early spring and this allows the researchers to do other evaluations and to prepare for the spring planting. The greenhouse will also be used for other breeding studies and greenhouse experiments.

The entomology program will use the new facility to culture potato infesting aphids and Colorado potato beetles and to continue our work on virus transmission with aphids as vectors. The greenhouse will allow us to conduct experiments on aphid movement in large cages that will simulate field conditions to try to learn what makes aphids move from plant to plant and correlate this with virus transmission.

The major emphasis of the pathology program is evaluating potato disease control measures, diagnosing disease problems and assessing their threat to the industry. The pathology section of the greenhouse allows us to conduct studies of various soil-borne diseases of potato, and to compare screening methods for varietal resistance to disease.

