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# OUTSTANDING BLACK AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS



*The American Agricultural Economics Association  
Committee on the Opportunities and Status of  
Blacks in Agricultural Economics*

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## LIONEL WILLIAMSON

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Lionel Williamson is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky, where he holds a joint appointment in extension and teaching. His extension assignment involves work with the Kentucky Council of

Cooperatives in providing educational programs to agribusiness cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, and youth. His teaching appointment includes a graduate course on cooperatives in agribusiness. He is currently involved in several applied research projects focusing on agribusiness cooperatives.

Williamson earned the B.S. degree in vocational agricultural education from Alcorn State University and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Missouri.

Williamson taught Vocational Agriculture for five years prior to returning to graduate school in 1972. He has served as an Extension Specialist in agriculture in North Carolina and Associate Extension Administrator and Director of Agricultural Research at Kentucky State University. He has actively participated in international work in East Africa and Indonesia. He also serves on a number of state and national boards and holds memberships in professional associations. He has presented papers at professional association meetings. Williamson was recently appointed to the Board of Trustees of the American Institute of Cooperation.

# Outstanding Black Agricultural Economists

*The American Agricultural Economics Association  
Committee on the Opportunities and Status of  
Blacks in Agricultural Economics*

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## Acknowledgments

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The Committee on the Opportunities and Status of Blacks in Agricultural Economics wishes to express appreciation to the following sponsors for their support of this project: the American Agricultural Economics Association Foundation, the Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Farm Foundation, and the Ford Foundation.

The Committee also thanks the following individuals for their assistance: Sandra Batie, Karen Y. Davis, Sam Donald, James Houck, Eugene Jones, Mary Maher, and Charlene Price.

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## HANDY WILLIAMSON, JR.

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Handy Williamson, Jr., currently serves as Professor and Head at the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, University of Tennessee. From 1985 through early 1988, he was Deputy Director for Research and University Relations at

the Bureau for Science and Technology, Agency for International Development, in Washington, DC. He served at Tennessee State University from 1977-1985, where he held the positions of Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics, Director of the Cooperative Agricultural Research Program, and Coordinator of International Agricultural Development Activities. From 1974 through 1977, Williamson was Associate Director of the Center for Rural Development Research and Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics at Tuskegee University.

Williamson received an A.A. degree in liberal arts from Pineywood Jr. College, the B.S. degree in vocational agriculture from Alcorn State University, the M.S. degree in agricultural education from Tennessee State University and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Missouri.

Williamson's research and publications address economic and rural development issues. He served as a consultant on many projects and review teams in Africa, the Caribbean, the Far East, and the United States. He has testified before committees of both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. His works have been published broadly in professional journals, articles and reports.

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## THOMAS T. WILLIAMS

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Thomas Thackery Williams is Southeast Regional Director of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. He is credited with the establishment of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Southern University in Louisiana where he

served for a period of twenty-five years in various capacities. During this time he was also Adjunct Professor at Cornell University and Louisiana State University. Prior to his current appointment, he served as Director of the Human Resources Development Center at Tuskegee University. From 1966 to 1967, he served as a Fulbright Professor at the Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, Serdang, West Malaysia.

Williams received the B.S. degree in agricultural economics from North Carolina A&T State University, the M.S. degree in economics from the University of Illinois, and the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics from Ohio State University. He completed post-graduate work at Case Institute of Technology.

Williams has received numerous honors, recognitions, and awards. In 1988, he was selected as a recipient of the Southern Agricultural Economics Association's Honorary Lifetime Membership Award for his contributions to southern agriculture. His chairmanship of the Professional Agricultural Workers Conference (Tuskegee University) has yielded several publications. Williams edited *Unique Resources of the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions*, which details the wealth of opportunities and resources available through the Land-Grant System.

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## Preface

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The year 1990 marks the 100th anniversary of the 17 historically black land-grant colleges and universities. These "1890 Institutions" were fully funded by the Morrill Act of 1890. They were created to give freed blacks and their offspring access to educational opportunities once denied them.

"The field of agricultural economics has been growing in importance at the 1890 institutions. Most 1890's currently offer a bachelor's degree or concentration in agricultural economics or agribusiness. Five offer masters of science degrees in one or the other discipline," according to retired Professor Sidney Evans of North Carolina A&T State University.

In recognition of the centennial celebration of 1890 institutions, the AAEA Committee on the Opportunities and Status of Blacks in Agricultural Economics honors several of our colleagues for their efforts in and commitment to the agricultural economics profession. Nominations were accepted from the agricultural economics community for black agricultural economists, living or deceased, who have made significant contributions to the field of agricultural economics or agriculture related disciplines. Achievements are in research, teaching, extension, administration, business and/or public service. The individuals listed in this brochure were selected from among the nominees for the honor of "Outstanding Black Agricultural Economist."

A single brochure cannot contain the names of all individuals deserving of such an honor. We congratulate the honorees as well as the many talented individuals who were nominated but not selected at this time. It is our hope that this brochure provides some insight to the broad range of talents and experiences of Blacks in the agricultural economics profession.

Doris Epton Newton  
Chairperson - Brochure Committee

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## Message from the President

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In 1980, The American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) established the "Committee on the Opportunities and Status of Blacks in Agricultural Economics." The original mission of the committee was to survey and ascertain information on the opportunities for blacks in the agricultural economics profession. The Committee conducted a survey of agricultural economists and published its findings in a report entitled "Opportunities and Status of Blacks in the Agricultural Economics Profession." Since that early effort, the Committee has evolved to address numerous issues of importance to minority professionals as well as to the entire membership of AAEA. These activities include organizing invited paper sessions and symposia, hosting receptions at annual meetings, publishing a directory of Black Agricultural Economists, conducting a survey of agricultural economists in conjunction with both the AAEA Committees on Women in Agricultural Economics and the Employment Services Committee and co-sponsoring a pre-meeting conference entitled "The Future for Agricultural Economists - Career Opportunities and Planning."

As part of the 1989 Southern University-Baton Rouge, Louisiana, AAEA meetings, the Committee sponsored a highly successful conference entitled "Agricultural Economics and Rural Development Programs at the 1890's: Past, Present, and Future." The papers from this program will be published in the fall of 1990.

This brochure is another contribution of the Committee. The brochure recognizes outstanding black agricultural economists; in the years to come, additional individuals will be recognized. I congratulate each of the professionals featured in this brochure and look forward to their continued contributions to our association and profession.

Sandra S. Batie  
AAEA President, 1989-90

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## CLIFTON R. WHARTON, JR.

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Clifton R. Wharton, Jr., is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association and College Retirement Equities Fund, the nation's largest pension fund. Wharton has had an outstanding career in foreign economic development, higher education, and business, and is a recognized authority on economic development in Southeast Asia and Latin America.

Wharton is a graduate of Boston Latin School and holds a B.A. degree in history from Harvard University. He earned the M.A. degree in international affairs from Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in economics from the University of Chicago. He holds 35 honorary degrees.

A founding member of the Overseas Development Council, Wharton was the first Chairman of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development, AID, U.S. Department of State. He has served as Chancellor of the State University of New York system, President of Michigan State University, and Chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation. He has won numerous awards, including the President's Award on World Hunger, and is a Fellow of the American Agricultural Economics Association.

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## MELVIN E. WALKER, JR.

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Melvin E. Walker, Jr., is Acting President of Fort Valley State College. Prior to assuming the duties of Acting President, he served as Dean and Research Director of the School of Agriculture, Home Economics, and Allied Programs, Associate

Professor and Research Director of the Agricultural Research Station, and Assistant Professor of Agricultural Economics.

Walker received the A.S. degree from Prentiss Junior College, the B.S. degree in agriculture from Alcorn State University and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Illinois.

Walker has contributed significantly to advancing the cause of the land-grant function at Fort Valley State College, in particular, and at the 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, in general. As a scientist, his work on rural poverty in Georgia has been recognized as the basis for the first regional research project to be undertaken by 1890 institutions. As Chairman of the Association of 1890 Research Directors, he played a major role in gaining passage of legislation providing funds for much needed improvement of agricultural research facilities at 1890 institutions. He holds memberships in numerous professional organizations and has served on many regional and national committees. He has published extensively in the areas of agricultural economics and rural sociology and has received numerous outstanding service awards, including awards presented by the USDA Honors Program and U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Advisory Committee.

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## THE HONOREES

Joyce E. Allen  
Ralph D. Christy  
Ivery D. Clifton  
Carlton G. Davis  
Sidney H. Evans  
Allie C. Felder, Jr.  
Tesfa G. Gebremedhin  
Alfred L. Parks  
Richard D. Robbins  
Howard F. Robinson  
Melvin E. Walker, Jr.  
Clifton R. Wharton, Jr.  
Thomas T. Williams  
Handy Williamson, Jr.  
Lionel Williamson

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## JOYCE E. ALLEN

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Joyce E. Allen is a Senior Research Associate at the Joint Center for Political Studies (JCPS), a private nonpartisan, nonprofit research institution based in Washington, D.C. She conducts research on economic policy, rural poverty, and minority business development.

Prior to joining JCPS in 1987, Allen was an agricultural economist with the Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, where she was a Project Leader for the Food Assistance and Nutrition project.

Allen earned the B.S. degree in economics at North Carolina A&T State University, the M.S. degree in agricultural economics at North Carolina State University, and the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics at the University of Illinois.

Allen has published extensively on agricultural and food policy issues. She holds memberships in agricultural and economics honor societies and has received the Administrator's Special Merit Award and Certificates of Merit from the Economic Research Service. She has testified before the U.S. House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Census and Population. In 1986, Allen was a Fellow in the Leadership Development Program at the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy, Resources for the Future. She has served on several AAEA committees and is a past chairperson of the Committee on the Opportunities and Status of Blacks in Agricultural Economics. Allen currently serves on the board of the Committee on Women in Agricultural Economics.

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## HOWARD F. ROBINSON

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Before his death in 1985, Howard F. Robinson had given thirty-one years of scholarly, dedicated service to North Carolina A&T State University. Robinson retired June, 1983 from the position of Director of the Office of Research Administration. He was formerly a

professor. He also served as Associate Dean of Agricultural Research of the School of Agriculture (1978-82), Director of the Office of Research Administration and Director of the Institute for Research in Human Resources (1967-82), and Director of the Manpower Research and Training Center (1970-1980).

Robinson received the B.S. degree in agricultural education from North Carolina A&T State University. He received the M.S. degree in agricultural economics from the University of Illinois, the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics from Ohio State University and pursued post-doctorate studies in applied economics at the University of Chicago.

Robinson served as an American Delegate to the International Conference of Agricultural Economics in Russia and Brazil. He also chaired and served on a myriad of national, international, regional, state and local associations, councils, boards, and commissions. Robinson served on the AAEA Board of Directors from 1973-76.

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## RICHARD D. ROBBINS

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Richard D. Robbins is a Professor of Agricultural Economics, Chairman of the Department of Agricultural Economics, and Director of International Agricultural Programs at North Carolina A&T State University. Robbins serves as Chairman of the

1890 Association of Directors of International Agricultural Programs and is a member of the North Carolina Commission on Civil Rights Advisory Committee. His areas of specialty are farm management, agricultural statistics, and rural and economic development.

Robbins earned the B.S. degree in agricultural economics from North Carolina A&T State University; the M.S. degree in agricultural economics and the Ph.D. degree in economics from North Carolina State University.

Robbins served on the Committee for the Governor's Conference on Balanced Growth and Economic Development in North Carolina (1977-78) and the Governor's Oversight Committee for Official Labor Market Information (1983-85). He has provided testimony to the Congressional Sub-committee on Government Information, Justice, and Agriculture which held hearings on "Black Farmers and FmHA Policies." Robbins was chairman of the AAEA Committee on the Opportunities and Status of Blacks in Agricultural Economics (1982-85). During this time, he directed a pioneering study on the "Opportunities and Status of Blacks in the Agricultural Economics Profession," which was published in June 1986. He has authored several publications on issues related to small farming in North Carolina and has received academic honors and awards.

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## RALPH D. CHRISTY

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Ralph D. Christy is an Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics at Louisiana State University. His research and teaching interests are in the areas of agricultural marketing (with emphasis on cooperatives), economic development, and public policy. In 1989,

he was a Visiting Professor of Agricultural Economics at Cornell University.

Christy earned his B.S. degree in agricultural economics (with honors) from Southern University, Baton Rouge, and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from Michigan State University.

Christy has published extensively in the areas of marketing and development. He is also co-editor of a book of readings, *Rural Development Issues of the Nineties: Perspectives from the Social Sciences*. In 1988, Christy was selected "Teacher of the Year," within the College of Agriculture and received the "Outstanding Faculty Member" award at Louisiana State University. The American Agricultural Economics Association selected him to serve on a delegation of U.S. Economists to the International Conferences in Jakarta, Indonesia (1982) and Buenos Aires, Argentina (1988). He has worked as an agricultural economist in Jamaica, Kenya, and Cameroon. Christy was a member on the Editorial Board of the *Southern Journal of Agricultural Economics* (1985-88) and served on three AAEA Committees. He holds memberships in several professional associations. Christy was elected Second Vice President of the Southern Agricultural Economics Association for 1990-91.

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## IVERY D. CLIFTON

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Ivery D. Clifton is a Professor of Agricultural Economics and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Georgia. He has served as Interim Division Chairman and Head, Department of Agricultural Economics and Assistant to the

Dean, College of Agriculture. He is a member of the graduate faculty with teaching and research interests in production agriculture and natural resource economics. Clifton has served as Agricultural Economist with USDA-ERS and Tennessee Valley Authority during 1970-76 and 1966-67, respectively. He also holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (P) in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Clifton earned the B.S. degree in agricultural education and the M.S. degree in agricultural economics from Tuskegee University. He received the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics from the University of Illinois. He has also pursued supplemental professional education at Harvard University.

Clifton is the author of numerous refereed articles, experiment station publications, and other publications on natural resource economics and farm real estate markets. He has served with distinction on many university and professional committees and as First Vice President of the Southern Agricultural Economics Association.

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## ALFRED L. PARKS

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Alfred L. Parks is a Professor and Head of the Department of Agriculture at Prairie View A&M University. He also serves as a research scientist in the Cooperative Agricultural Research Center at the same institution where he specializes in small farm

problems. He is currently working on projects related to problems associated with marketing goat products.

Parks received the B.S. degree in agricultural economics from Arkansas AM&N College (now University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff) and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Illinois. He has done further study at Texas A&M University, Louisiana State University, and the University of Yaounde in Cameroon, West Africa.

Parks has received numerous awards and honors in the field of agriculture. He has twice been selected "Outstanding Teacher of the Year," within the College of Agriculture, Prairie View, Systems Exchange Professor in the Texas A&M University System, and has received a travel fellowship to the International Association of Agricultural Economists meeting in Banff, Canada. Parks has traveled extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and West Africa. From 1974-76 he served on special assignment at the University of Yaounde, Cameroon, West Africa, where he worked with an AID sponsored project to establish an agricultural economics project at the National Advanced School of Agriculture.

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## TESFA G. GEBREMEDHIN

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Tesfa G. Gebremedhin is an Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics in the areas of rural, community, and regional economic development and small farm research at Southern University, Baton Rouge. Currently, he is a Visiting Associate Professor in the Division

of Resource Management, West Virginia University.

Gebremedhin earned the B.S. degree in economics from Haile Selassie I University, Ethiopia, the M.S. degree in economics from Colorado State University and the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics from Oklahoma State University.

Gebremedhin has received numerous awards and honors in the field of agriculture. He has been honored for outstanding research accomplishments by Sigma Xi (1988), Phi Delta Kappa (1989), and the Association of Research Directors with First Place Scientific Paper Award (1987) and the Morrison-Evans Outstanding Scientist Award (1989). In 1988, Gebremedhin was the recipient of the Chancellor's Research Excellence Award at Southern University. He has published and presented numerous papers in professional journals and at professional association meetings and holds memberships in professional associations.

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## CARLTON G. DAVIS

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Carlton G. Davis is a Professor in the Food and Resource Economics Department at the University of Florida. He has a teaching and research appointment in the areas of human resource economics, food policy analysis, and international agricultural

development. He has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in agricultural policy and rural welfare and development policy.

Davis earned B.S. degree and M.S. degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Nebraska and the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics from Michigan State University.

Davis was a visiting Ford Foundation scholar in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, during the 1968-69 academic year. During his tenure at the University of the West Indies, he conducted research on the economics of agriculture research in the English speaking Caribbean. He has published extensively in the areas of the economics of rural poverty, food and nutrition policy analysis, international agricultural development and labor market conditions as they relate to minority agricultural economists in the U.S. He has served on a number of AAEA professional committees. He has also served as a member of the honorary Lifetime Membership Award Committee of the Southern Agricultural Economics Association and is the United States representative for the Caribbean Agro-Economic Society.

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## SIDNEY H. EVANS

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Sidney H. Evans is retired as Associate Dean for Research in the School of Agriculture at North Carolina A&T State University. Before assuming this position, he was Research Director for the 1890 Evans-Allen Research Program (1982-1987), Chairman of the

Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology (1979-1982), and Chairman of the Department of Economics (1968-1979). Before joining North Carolina A&T, Evans began his professional career at Fort Valley State College. He is assisting in coordinating the Centennial activities for the "1890 Institutions."

Evans received the B.S. degree in agricultural economics from Virginia State College, the M.S. degree in agricultural and general economics from Iowa State College, and the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics from Ohio State University.

In 1986, Evans received the George Washington Carver Public Service Award and was inducted into the George Washington Carver Hall of Fame at Tuskegee University. Evans was also presented a 1986 Triad Achievers Award by the City of Greensboro. He is a member of several professional societies and organizations and has conducted and directed many research projects relative to agricultural economics and rural sociology. He has been on assignment with Agency for International Development (AID) programs in Uganda, Kenya, and other African countries. Evans has also served on several regional and national committees involving the 1890 Evans-Allen Research Program. In 1990, he was a recipient of the Southern Agricultural Economics Association's Honorary Lifetime Membership Award.

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## ALLIE C. FELDER, JR.

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Allie C. Felder, Jr., is Senior Vice President Emeritus of the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA). He has contributed substantially to the human and economic development of thousands of people in India and the United

States. As Director of the NCBA office in India during the 1960's, Felder laid the foundation for assisting the Indian cooperatives with program development and implementation. Felder also served as an Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics at Hampton University, for six years. Additionally, he spent one year on the faculty of the University Center for Cooperatives at the University of Wisconsin.

Felder received the B.S. degree in agriculture from Hampton University, the M.S.C. degree in agricultural economics and rural sociology from the University of Illinois and the Ph.D. degree in agricultural economics and rural sociology from Ohio State University.

Felder attained appointments as Director of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) from 1971 through 1986 on the recommendations of Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, and Reagan. He was a recipient of the first "John Hay Whitney Opportunity Fellowship", a citation from the governor of North Carolina, a Certificate of Honor from the Prime Minister of India, the Distinguished Service Award by the Board of the Cooperative League of the USA, and a commission as a Colonel by the governor of Kentucky. Felder served as a member of the United States delegation to the Foreign Agricultural Organization Conference, Rome, Italy, during 1977.

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