



Winter 2012



From the President

Drenda Williams

It was December 1992 at Tuskegee University during the Professional Ag Workers Conference that Sherman Lewis, Lloyd Wright, Pearlie Reed, Jim Tatum, Lannie Smith, Maxine Barren, Herbert Ross and Percy Magee passed a hat around the room to collect operating funds for what became the National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees.

This Black History Month eLink is dedicated to the Organization's founding fathers and mothers who had the vision to create what has become NRCS's largest employee organization to date. They started this organization to supplement the traditional NRCS training and provide an avenue for Black employees to network and enhance their professional development. As an Assistant State Conservationist for Operations in Missouri, I attribute my personal success to my involvement with The Organization over the years. It is an honor to move from a student intern at Lincoln University to President of this great organization. I am proud to follow in the footsteps of its former leaders.

I would like to thank the founding fathers and mothers, past executive boards and members for the guidance they have provided me during my professional career. I also would like to thank The Organization's past presidents for their exemplary service:

Lloyd Wright 1993-1997

Charles Adams 1997-1999

Jim Tatum 1999-2001

Bill Hunt 2001-2005

Charles Adams 2005-2007

Charles Adams Angie Billups Drenda Williams 2007-2009

Kalven Trice 2009-2011

This month we will be hosting our first national video conference with NRCS Chief Dave White as our featured guest/speaker. He will discuss cultural transformation efforts, agency training, the Telework policy, and more. Member and friends of The Organization are encouraged to join in. Please see the next section for complete details.

As I reflect back on The Organization's history, it is only fitting for us to take time to reflect on the professional accomplishments our members have made through the years. As a result, NOPBNRCSE has partnered with the MN Chapter to facilitate its first Black History Month Quiz. The MN Chapter has worked diligently to provide all members an opportunity to test their knowledge of The Organization. Please take time out of your day to reflect on the agency's Black History. More information on quiz can be found in the article below.

I am dedicated to the growth of The Organization. I have an open door policy and I sincerely look forward to your feedback. Thank you for letting me serve as your President.

Sincerely,

Drenda Williams

President NOPBNRCSE

NOPBNRCSE to Host National Video Teleconference w/ Chief White

The National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees (NOPBNRCSE) will hold a national training videoconference on **Wednesday, February 15, 2012** from **3:00 pm to 5:00 pm EST**. Below are the coordinates. **PLEASE BE ADVISED**, we have only 200 audio lines available, therefore for those who do not have access to a VTC connection we ask that you consolidate when feasible and utilize the VTC at your respective NRCS state or area offices. **Contact your local [Chapter President](#) for VTC location(s).**

Conference ID#: 71001

Meeting Participant(s):

The NOPBNRCSE National Training will be hosted by video teleconferencing (VTC). Please reserve the VTC in your location or join the meeting through the audio only portion – call coordinates below.

To join the VTC call, please enter the conference ID number **71001** and select the **green** call button. **(Do Not enter the # button** – just enter conference ID number **71001** then select the **green** call button)

AUDIO-ONLY Participants (Members Only):

To access the call-in information, [please click here](#). If you are a member and have not received your call-in information, please contact your local [Chapter President](#).

NEED HELP...

Please Instant Message (IM) or e-mail Natasha Galbreath (970) 295-5648, Mark Lueck (202) 821-9554, or George Cleek (970) 295-5336 and they will work to get you connected.

Do you Know your Black History?

By the Minnesota Chapter with support from The Organization

OUR HISTORY – The Beginning

According to the only written history we can find of Black U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) NRCS employees in our agency, formerly known as the Soil Erosion Service (SES) and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), were the first Black employees hired in the early 1940s. These individuals were Bishop Holifield in Florida, John Jones in North Carolina (deceased 2011), and Howard Hardy in South Carolina. Circa 1942 Richard Moody opened an office in Tyler, Texas. Other Black offices were opened soon thereafter primarily to serve Black farmers notably in other parts of Texas and the states of Tennessee, Virginia, and Louisiana.

In the attached quiz, you will find information about other noteworthy NRCS Black firsts and have the opportunity to share your knowledge about NRCS Black History. Please click on the link below to find complete details on the quiz including instructions on submission and guidelines.

All entries must be submitted to the MN Chapter, NOPBNRCSE at william61hunt@aol.com no later than April 15, 2012. For additional questions or inquiries, please email william61hunt@aol.com.

[Click here to download enter the BHM Quiz!!](#)

