



Thanks for ringing in on the survey related to NERA's Spring Meeting. See the [Action Items](#) for an update from the survey.

We've just celebrated Martin Luther King Day and you'll see in [Informational Items](#) an opportunity for you, your research staff, and students/trainees to provide input to the NIH on their UNITE initiative, an effort dedicated to ending structural racism in the greater scientific community.

We hope your new year is off to a good start: all the best!

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” Dr. Martin Luther King, April 16, 1963, in *Letter from Birmingham Jail* (1964), Penguin/Random House UK, London, England.

Action items:

- Two weeks ago, we polled the region to seek your intent to travel to the face-to-face NERA Spring Meeting scheduled for March 15-16, 2022 in Philadelphia. Based on the results of the polling and upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, we will forgo a face-to-face meeting. **NERA will meet virtually on March 15 from 8:30 AM- 12:00 PM.** Please mark your calendar! An agenda for the meeting will be issued three weeks prior to the meeting.
- ESCOP is seeking faculty scientist members from the Northeast to serve on Social Sciences Subcommittee. The areas of expertise that are sought include: Agricultural Communications, Agricultural Education, Agriculture Leadership, and Rural Sociology. If you'd like to nominate one of your faculty members, please share the name, email address and area of expertise with [Rick](#). He'll pass that on to Bret Hess who serves as the Executive Vice Chair for the Subcommittee.
- The NEED/NERA Joint Summer meeting is scheduled for June 5-7, 2022 at the Portland Regency in Portland, ME. The planning committee will be sharing a survey to gauge your intent to travel this summer and to seek your recommendations on a meeting theme. The data from the survey will be used to make key decisions on this meeting. Stay tuned! When you receive the survey, please respond!

Reminders/Updates:

- The NIH has established an initiative, [UNITE](#), to identify and address structural racism within the NIH-supported and the greater scientific community. A cornerstone of the effort is collaboration through sharing. To that end, the NIH is hosting listening sessions for students and trainees on January 26 (6:00-7:30 PM ET), research staff (assistants, associates and technicians) on January 27 (3:00-4:30 PM ET),

and colleges and universities on February 1 (1:00-2:30 PM ET). Registration is required for each of the sessions and registration for all the sessions can be accessed here: [Listening Sessions - NIH Stakeholders Discuss Racial & Ethnic Equity](#).

Informational items:

- Second time: With support from the Southern Region Land-grant universities and NIFA, Auburn University is hosting a joint, hybrid effort dedicated to “[Envisioning 2050 in the Southeast: AI-Driven Innovations in Agriculture](#)” on March 9-11, 2022 at the Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center in Auburn, AL. The conference is open to all who have an interest in how Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled decision support systems, automation, and robotics will transform agriculture with a focus on the Southeast.
- The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service is soliciting nominations for membership to the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI). Nomination packages, including self-nominations, must be received by February 18, 2022. [Click here](#) for more information about nomination package requirements, position background, and to apply.
- The University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is seeking applicants for an Agricultural Technician Supervisor position. [Click here](#) for more information and to apply.



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