



News

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NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

Six N.C. A&T Faculty Members Honored For Outstanding Research Contributions

Greensboro, NC – May, 2019 – The Division of Research and Economic Development at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is proud to announce the 2019 winners of the university's research awards. Fifteen N.C. A&T researchers were considered for awards this year, with six faculty members being honored for their research contributions at the university's annual Celebration of Faculty Excellence ceremony and banquet.



The **Senior Researcher of the Year Award** went to **Dr. Manoj Jha**, Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering in the College of Engineering. Dr. Jha has achieved an outstanding reputation as a research leader and educator in the field of water resources engineering. He has been very productive conducting and publishing innovative research in his areas of interest including hydrology, water resources management, watershed modeling, hydrologic and environmental impacts of land use change, climate change and variability, extreme climate and water resources, and, in parallel, develops courses to effectively train undergraduate and graduate students in these areas. Methods and tools developed in Jha's research have already made a significant impact on how humans should manage watersheds to help solve current water quality problems.

The **Outstanding Young Investigator Award** was presented to **Dr. Andrea Ofori-Boadu**, Department of Built Environment in the College of Science and Technology. Dr. Ofori-Boadu recently received a CAREER award from the National Science Foundation. The award program



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is a foundation-wide activity that offers NSF's most prestigious awards in support of early-career faculty like Ofori-Boadu who have the potential to serve as academic role models in research and education and to lead advances in the missions of their organizations. Ofori-Boadu believes that broad STEM interventions have improved women's representation in some STEM professions, but have not been as effective in architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) professions.

The **Rookie of the Year Award** was given to **Dr. Uchenna Anele**, Department of Animal Sciences in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Dr. Anele's research goals are focused on improving nutrient utilization and abatement of greenhouse gas emissions in ruminants (cattle, sheep and goats) through efficient and sustainable supplementation strategies. His research philosophy has been to collaborate with other scientists to get research done faster, cheaper and with more breadth and depth. In the fast and very dynamic field of animal nutrition, it is almost impossible for one researcher or scientist to conduct cutting-edge research from beginning to the end all by himself. Anele has built a multidisciplinary team that includes engineers, a microbiologist, a mycologist, a food scientist, a nutritionist, a bioinformatician and an economist.

The **Intellectual Property Award** was conveyed to **Dr. Guochen Yang**, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Design in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Dr. Yang's area of expertise is plant tissue culture and micropropagation (test tube babies of plants). His research interest has been using tissue culture and micropropagation techniques for economic development including rescue of endangered species, mass production of rare species and plant species with high economic values, and for secondary production such as nutraceuticals. As Principal Investigator or a co-PI, he has been collectively awarded funding for about \$3 million. Dr Yang has 11 intellectual property activities including two U.S. patents, one pending U.S. patent, four U.S. provisional and utility patent applications and subsequent patent application publications, and four invention disclosures.

The **Interdisciplinary Research Award** was presented to **The TEHLAV Center**, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering in the College of Engineering. TEHLAV, a Center of Excellence in Autonomy funded by the U.S. Department of Defense, is comprised of a strong multi-disciplinary team and synergizes expertise in Control, Communication, and Human Cognition along with its collaborator, the University of Texas San Antonio (UTSA). The Center also collaborates with the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) to provide and promote education, outreach activities, and curriculum development to a larger Native American community. The TEHLAV Center members are: Dr. Abdollah Homaifar, Dr. Ali Karimodini, Dr. Younho Seong, Dr. John C. Kelly, Dr. Sun Yi, Dr. Joseph Stephens and Mrs. Shar Seyedin.

The **Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentor Award** was given to **Dr. Kim Smith**, Associate Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communications in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. Dr. Smith, a champion for undergraduate research, encourages students majoring in journalism and mass communications to consider ways research can be incorporated into their studies, and mentors them in conducting research. He also utilizes relevant current events to engage his entire class in a course-based



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Undergraduate Research Experience. He assisted in changing the face of the Office of Undergraduate Research Symposia by growing the number of non-STEM majors presenting research at symposia and through research collaborations with students in other non-STEM disciplines. His passion for undergraduate research and mentorship of students from his department is evident, and what he accomplished inspires others from non-STEM disciplines to emulate.

About the Division of Research and Economic Development (DORED)

DORED manages N.C. A&T's research enterprise. DORED provides services to faculty, postdoctoral research associates, student researchers, current and potential research partners, funding agencies, and economic development agencies. DORED serves the university and its research efforts through research services and project management, compliance and ethics guidelines, aiding in the submission of research proposals, handling financial and regulatory administration of all contracts and grants awarded to N.C. A&T, management of the university's technology transfer and commercialization programs and promoting opportunities for undergraduates to conduct research.



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