



Andrew Muhammad is Professor and Blasingame Chair of Excellence in Agricultural Policy at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. His education includes: Ph.D., Food and Resource Economics (2000) Univ. Florida; M.S., Univ. Missouri (1996); and B.S., Southern Univ. (1993). He has University and Government experience, having been on faculty at Southern University and Mississippi State University. Additionally, he was Associate Director of the Market and Trade Economics Division (2016-2018) and Chief of the International Demand and Trade Branch (2013-2016) at USDA-ERS. Dr. Muhammad serves on several boards including C-FARE, USDA's Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee, and the International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium. His AAEA service – over the past 21 years – includes

COSBAE Chair, Quality of Communications Award Chair, and the AAEA Awards Committee. He has received awards and funding (>\$4 million) for teaching, research, and service and has written over 60 journal articles and 40 reports on agricultural trade and policy issues.

1. What is the biggest concern/problem facing AAEA?

AAEA reliably serves economists working in all three phases of the land-grant mission at 1890, 1862, and other universities, federal agencies, and non-academic organizations. How do we maintain relevancy to all, regardless of position or institution moving forward? I am particularly concerned about the relationship between the Economic Research Service (ERS) and broader profession. ERS employed nearly 200 researchers, accounting for a significant share of the AAEA membership and diversity (e.g., women account for about half of ERS staff), providing support and resources to most AAEA members. With the recent move to Kansas City and resulting staff loss, it is important that AAEA play an active role in ensuring the viability of ERS. The new White House Administration and USDA leadership offers an opportunity for improved relations between AAEA and USDA, and the federal government as a whole.

2. What actions would you initiate to improve the situation described in your response to the previous question?

AAEA has made efforts to improve government relations, particularly since the unexpected ERS and NIFA moves to Kansas City. USDA leadership has insisted that ERS's move was not punitive and that the activities of the agency will be maintained. If AAEA is going to play an active role, it must assist in developing formal networks between ERS and the broader profession to ensure that the needs of ERS are met. If elected, I would be particularly interested in working with the government relations effort to address overall and ERS-specific concerns. For instance, AAEA could play an active role in informing select programs on how to address staffing needs in ERS data and outlook programs.

Regarding the overall relevancy of AAEA, greater effort could be made to improve 1890 relations and participation in AAEA. If elected, it would be a pleasure to serve as an AAEA liaison to 1890 institutions and programs. Given the mandate and focus, there is a unique role for 1890's, Hispanic serving institutions (HACU), and Tribal Colleges and Universities within AAEA.

3. At the end of your three-year term, what changes/new initiatives would you have helped create?

A specific goal would be the establishment of formal networks between AAEA, Universities, and ERS to address specific needs and concerns. I envision, for instance, an informal working group of ERS, AAEA, and University representatives, meeting periodically to address pipeline issues and how ERS can support universities in this regard. Regarding 1890 and broader participation, the formation of an AAEA section addressing the needs of faculty at 1890's, HACU, and Tribal Universities would be a noteworthy achievement.