



### **APLU's Academic Programs Section Announces Winners of 2017 Innovative Teaching Award**

Washington, DC— The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Board on Agriculture Assembly Academic Programs Section today named DR. JASON DE KOFF with TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY as a winner of its 2017 Innovative Teaching Award. In its fourth year, the awards are intended to bolster innovation in the post-secondary teaching of agriculture and related fields.

The awards program encourages new faculty to expand their scholarship of teaching and learning by creating projects with more senior faculty from other institutions. This supports institutional collaboration and the adoption of innovative teaching and learning experiences for students at more institutions. Awardees share \$3,000 to use on classroom aids, travel, or other project needs in the future.

“For junior faculty involved, this may be the first monetary award they receive, which, when combined with the mentoring by working with senior faculty on the project, should boost their abilities in the classroom,” said Wendy Fink, APLU Director of Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources.

Dr. Jason de Koff at Tennessee State University, along with Ms. Nicole Kraft with Ohio State University, developed a novel project to enhance agricultural literacy and communication, *“Ag Mashup: Blending Agricultural and Communications Students and Faculty in the Classroom to Increase Agricultural Communication and Literacy.”* This project would blend a Tennessee State University course related to agriculture with an Ohio State University course related to journalism. It is expected that the agriculture students will learn better communication skills and the journalism students will learn more about agricultural research and specific agriculture topics.

The APLU Board on Agriculture Assembly Academic Programs Section hopes these awards serve as a basis for continued innovation in agricultural education and as motivation to seek additional funding from other sources for continued innovation. As such, it substantially increased the number of awards given this year, providing \$33,000 worth of awards compared to \$10,000 last year.

*APLU is a research, policy, and advocacy organization dedicated to strengthening and advancing the work of public universities in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. With a membership of 236 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and affiliated organizations, APLU's agenda is built on the three pillars of increasing degree completion and academic success, advancing scientific research, and expanding engagement. Annually, member campuses enroll 4.9 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.2 million degrees, employ 1.3 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$43.8 billion in university-based research.*

*APLU's Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) promotes agriculture in all of its phases (food, environment, agriculture, natural resources, and international) in state universities and land-grant colleges. In addition it provides leadership in communicating about university-based programs and priorities with the U.S. Congress, federal agencies, and private organizations. The Academic Programs Section ensures developing human capital in agriculture, food, natural resources and related areas is a preeminent concern of land-grant and state university systems and its federal partners. APS is comprised of administrators of academic programs at colleges of agriculture.*