



2018

# HAM & EGG

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST &  
GEORGIA AGRICULTURAL SHOWCASE

Wednesday, April 4, 2018

8 a.m.

Fort Valley State University

1005 State University Drive • Fort Valley, GA 31030

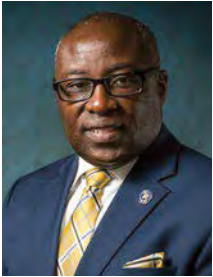
C. W. Pettigrew Farm & Community Life Center



**FORT VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY**  
A State and Land-Grant Institution • University System of Georgia



## Our Honored Guests



### **DR. PAUL JONES**

Paul A. Jones was appointed to serve as the 10th president of Fort Valley State University in December 2015. His higher education career spans more than three decades in Colorado, Maryland, Utah and Georgia.

Before joining FVSU, Dr. Jones served two years as interim president at Darton State College in Albany, Georgia. Prior to his interim presidential appointment, he served in numerous senior leadership roles at Georgia College & State University (GCSU), including senior vice president for finance and administration, vice president and chief of staff, vice president for institutional research and enrollment management, and several interim roles including interim vice president of academic affairs and president. President Jones was also Professor of Educational Administration at

Georgia College.

While serving in various positions at GCSU, President Jones played a key leadership role in helping the University transform student experiences. Some of these transformations include: expanding experiential learning opportunities (i.e., undergraduate research, study abroad, internships, civic engagement, and service learning), internationalizing the curriculum, and implementing student success programs that raised student retention rates to the top tier in the University System of Georgia

In 2007-08, President Jones served as an American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow at the University of West Florida.

Dr. Jones is also a member of several boards including, The Medical Center of Peach County, Navicent Health Board of Directors, ACE Council of Fellows Board of Directors, Fort Valley State University Foundation, Middle Georgia Goodwill Industries Education Committee, and the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Executive Board.

A native of California, Dr. Jones and his wife Sylvia were named 2012 Alumni of the Year at Utah State University. Utah State is where he earned his bachelor's and master's degree, and he also holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education and Human Resource Studies from Colorado State University.

Dr. & Mrs. Jones have two children, Isaiah and Daphne and have proudly called Middle Georgia home for well over a decade.



### **GA STATE SENATOR JOHN F. KENNEDY**

Senator John F. Kennedy was first elected to the Georgia State Senate in 2014 to represent Crawford, Monroe, Peach, and Upton counties as well as portions of Bibb and Houston counties.

Senator Kennedy is currently the majority caucus chairman and a member of the Judiciary, Appropriations, Banking and Financial Institutions, and Regulated Industries committees.

Senator Kennedy earned a degree in Economics from Mercer University in 1987. He completed his law degree at Mercer University School of Law in 1990.

Senator Kennedy is the immediate past Managing Partner of the Macon-based law firm of James-Bates-Brannan-Groover, LLP, specializing in commercial litigation, transactions, and business law.

Senator Kennedy currently serves on the executive board of directors for the Central Georgia Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Senator Kennedy previously served as president of the Macon Bar Association and is currently a member of the board of governors for the State Bar of Georgia.



### **GA STATE REPRESENTATIVE PATTY BENTLEY**

Rep. Patty James-Bentley began her career of public service while working as chief registrar for the Taylor County Board of Registrars in 1996. She was elected to the Taylor County Board of Commissioners in 2004 and re-elected in 2008. She is the first woman elected to this position in this district of the state. Rep. Bentley ran unopposed in 2014 and began her second term of office in the Georgia General Assembly in 2015. She represents House District 139 which includes Taylor, Macon and Dooly Counties and the south portion of Peach County. She serves on the following boards and committees: House Agriculture Committee, Ways & Means Committee, State Retirement Committee, Higher Education Committee, Intragovernmental Coordination Committee, Rural Caucus, Women Caucus, Council for Agriculture, Research, Extension, and

Teaching for the Fort Valley State University College of Agriculture, Fort Valley State University Foundation Board, and is one of the three chairs of the Working Families Caucus.





### ANNE HAZLETT

Anne Hazlett serves as the Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development at the United States Department of Agriculture. An Indiana native, she has a deep and lifelong passion for rural America, small towns and the people who call them home.

Anne has worked on agriculture and rural issues for over fifteen years. Serving as legal counsel for the Agriculture Committees in both the U.S. House and Senate, Anne has been an advocate for rural communities on many issues important to rural America from Farm Bill legislation to broadband and nutrition programs.

In addition to her service on Capitol Hill, Anne also served as Director of Agriculture for her home state of Indiana and Chief of Staff for Indiana Lt. Governor Becky Skillman. In these key leadership roles, she worked to ensure that Indiana's agriculture industry and rural business sector were a significant part of the state's economic revitalization.

At USDA, Anne is leading the Rural Development mission area to create an environment for rural prosperity, from greater access to broadband connectivity and medical care to workforce training through distance learning. In this work, she is particularly passionate about helping families and community leaders touched by the opioid epidemic find hope and partnership in building a brighter future.

Hazlett is a graduate of Kansas State University and the Indiana University School of Law. She also holds a masters degree in agricultural law from the University of Arkansas.



### DR. JAMES SUTTON

Dr. James Sutton was born and raised in Griffin, Georgia. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia with both Bachelor of Science and Master of Science Degrees in Agronomy. In 1988, he earned his Doctor of Philosophy in Agronomy from Auburn University.

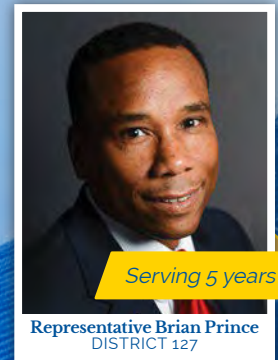
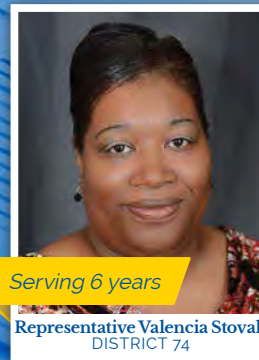
While in High School, Dr. Sutton began his agricultural career as a part-time employee at the University of Georgia – Griffin Experiment Station and continued there while working his way through college. Upon graduation, Dr. Sutton worked in the private seed industry as a plant breeder developing new varieties of peanut, soybean, cotton and canola.

In September of 2000, Dr. Sutton joined the Georgia Department of Agriculture as a Manager for the Georgia Seed Development Commission. Dr. Sutton was appointed to Assistant Commissioner over Plant Industry in August 2004. Upon Commissioner Gary Black's election to office, James has served as Director of Operations for the Department.

Dr. Sutton has served on several boards, committees and commissions throughout his career and has published as well as reviewed articles for scientific journals and other publications.

Dr. Sutton and his wife Karen are the proud parents of a daughter, Katie and a son, Drew. The Suttons are members of Griffin First Baptist Church where Dr. Sutton serves as a Deacon. He enjoys family time and is a novice beekeeper.

## Fort Valley State University Alumni Serving in Georgia's Legislature



# Agenda

## PRESIDING

**Dr. Mark Latimore Jr.**

Extension Administrator & Director of Land-Grant Affairs, CAFST

*Breakfast served at 8 a.m.*

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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## INVOCATION

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**Dr. James Brown**

Interim Extension Program Leader for Agriculture & Natural Resources,  
FVSU Cooperative Extension Program

## WELCOME

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**Dr. Paul Jones**

President, Fort Valley State University

## COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, RESEARCH & EXTENSION UPDATE

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**Dr. Govind Kannan**

Dean, FVSU College of Agriculture, Family Sciences and Technology (CAFST)

## GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE UPDATE

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**Dr. James Sutton**

Director of Operations

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE UPDATE

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**Anne Hazlett**

Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development, USDA

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

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**Senator John F. Kennedy**

Georgia State Senator, District 18

## RECOGNITION

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**Representative Patty Bentley**

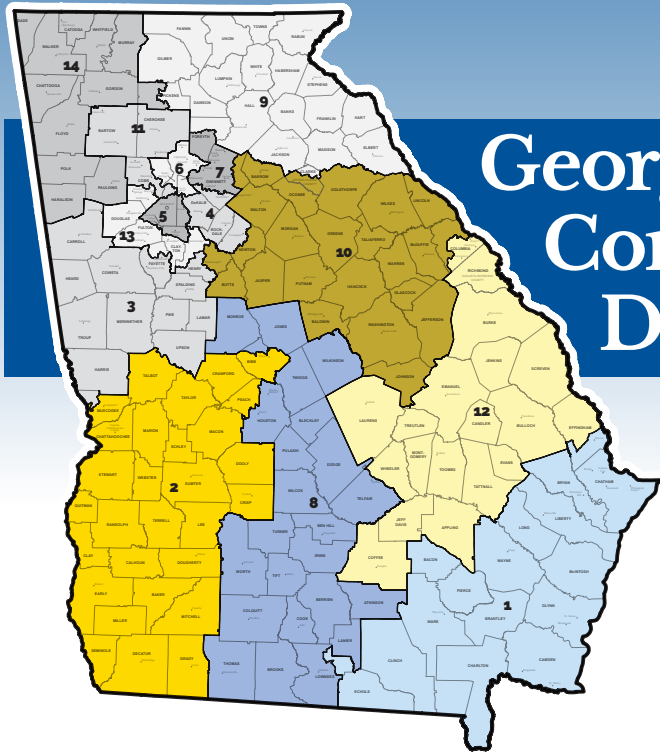
Georgia State Representative, District 139

## CLOSING REMARKS

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**Dr. Mark Latimore, Jr.**

Extension Administrator & Director of Land-Grant Affairs, CAFST



# Georgia's U.S. Congressional Delegation



SEN. JOHN "JOHNNY" ISAKSON  
SENIOR SENATOR



SEN. DAVID PERDUE  
JUNIOR SENATOR



REP. BUDDY CARTER  
1ST DISTRICT



REP. SANFORD BISHOP, JR.  
2ND DISTRICT



REP. DREW FERGUSON IV  
3RD DISTRICT



REP. HENRY "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.  
4TH DISTRICT



REP. JOHN LEWIS  
5TH DISTRICT



REP. KAREN HANDEL  
6TH DISTRICT



REP. ROB WOODALL  
7TH DISTRICT



REP. AUSTIN SCOTT  
8TH DISTRICT



REP. DOUG COLLINS  
9TH DISTRICT



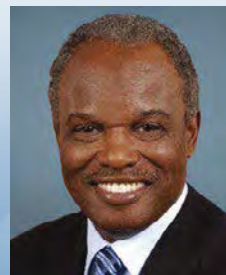
REP. JODY HICE  
10TH DISTRICT



REP. BARRY LOUDERMILK  
11TH DISTRICT



REP. RICK ALLEN  
12TH DISTRICT



REP. DAVID SCOTT  
13TH DISTRICT



REP. TOM GRAVES  
14TH DISTRICT



# The Fort Valley Ham & Egg Show

During the principalship of Henry Alexander Hunt (1904-1938) at the Fort Valley High and Industrial School (FVHIS) 101 years ago, Otis Samuel O’Neal started the proud tradition of the Ham & Egg Show. O’Neal initially worked with his wife at the time, Jennie, the Houston County home demonstration agent, on the event, which first took place on February 2, 1916, on the FVHIS campus. The initial show featured 27 “poorly trimmed, ragged hams, shoulders, and sides, and 17 dozen dirty mixed eggs,” and had low attendance. However the event soon grew, and within a few years, the Ham and Egg Show was drawing thousands to the Fort Valley campus. The death of O’Neal’s wife led to the hiring of a new Home Demonstration Agent Margaret Toomer who became O’Neal’s longtime partner in the show and known as “Mother of Egg.” As the show evolved, and largely thanks to Toomer, a 4-H celebration was added to incorporate youth, allowing them an opportunity to display their talents through oratorical contests, plays, and musical performances.

During the presidency of Horace Mann Bond (1939-1945), a Folk Music Festival was added which brought to Middle Georgia the best folk and gospel musicians—blues pioneer W.C. Handy was a regular attendee—as well as story tellers. The United States government recognized that the Folk Music Festival represented the best in African American folk art and sent representatives down to record performances. The success of Fort Valley’s Ham and Egg Show led other states including Alabama, Arkansas, and North Carolina, to duplicate it. The program drew national attention when it was featured in Life magazine, in 1943, and on the CBS radio program *Country Journal*, in 1945, and it remained a mainstay on the Fort Valley campus until it ceased operating in 1966. The centennial celebration of this groundbreaking agricultural event must be noted because it taught rural African-American farmers how to properly cure pigs, addressed how to get more and better eggs from their laying hens, and demonstrated the latest methods of safely preserving



locally grown fruits and vegetables. Fortunately, the legacy of the Ham and Egg Show is still evident at the Lowndes County Ham and Egg Show, which takes place every February.

## OTIS SAMUEL O’NEAL

Otis Samuel O’Neal was born on November 20, 1884 in Upson County, Georgia and was the fifth of 17 children. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jasper O’Neal, were born in slavery. In 1902, he entered Fort Valley High and Industrial School, and graduated in 1908. He later attended Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. George Washington Carver, his professor at Tuskegee, became his inspiration and O’Neal brought Carver’s ideas and techniques back to his alma mater.



On November 6, 1914, O’Neal became the Negro county agent for Houston County and later Peach County when it was created in 1924. O’Neal taught the farmers to diversify their crops rather than depend on cotton alone. He found idle land which tenant farmers could buy and arranged loans for them. He organized his territory into communities with a “key farmer” as leader of each.

In 1937, he was offered a full professorship opportunity from the faculty of Tuskegee Institute; however, he declined the opportunity. He later would become a professor at Fort Valley State College. Due to his contributions to the agricultural profession, O’Neal received the Superior Service Award for Distinguished Service in Agriculture from U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Charles F. Brannan in 1949. When he retired in 1951, over 1,000 pieces of pork – 600 hams, 300 shoulders, 100 sides of bacon, 200 quarts of canned pork and 100 pounds of sausage – and 200 dozen eggs decorated the Founder’s Hall auditorium at the thirty-sixth Show. He died in September 1957, survived by his wife Mrs. Addie Perdue O’Neal. Today, he is still known as the Father of the Ham & Egg Show.



## MARGARET LOUISE TOOMER



Margaret Louise Jordan Toomer, a native of Fort Valley, was born on December 20, 1894. Toomer attended Fort Valley High and Industrial School. Upon graduation in 1915, Toomer attended Morris Brown College in Atlanta for one year before transferring to Tuskegee Institute in Alabama to complete her baccalaureate

degree. In 1922, Toomer returned to Georgia and began her career as a teacher, becoming a home demonstration agent in 1926.

As the home demonstration agent for Peach and Houston Counties, Toomer provided chicks and helped raise them to be layers (not to mention fryers) that won prizes at the Ham and Egg Show. By 1948, Toomer's last year of involvement, the number of eggs shown had doubled to 300 dozen. Toomer also taught the way to can safely so that families could save produce for the lean winter months, expanding and developing a tradition at Fort Valley High and Industrial School. By the early 1930's, farmers describing their successful efforts to provide adequately for their families year-round were a regular part of the Ham and Egg Shows. Additionally while food remained central, Toomer's influence can be seen from the inclusion of subjects like nutrition, syphilis, tuberculosis hookworms, and homemaking topics.

After broadening the shows to domestic life, in those days largely the province of wives, Toomer also began to include young people to help ensure that the next generation of rural Middle Georgians got off on the right foot. She arranged for farm wives to make presentations about improvements in their lives, and starting in 1929, 4-H Club members to demonstrate agricultural achievements and later to compete in essay and oratorical contests to present their compositions.

Toomer worked the shows for more than twenty years as a home demonstration agent; however, after two decades, illness pushed her to decrease her load until her retirement in January 1950. Ms. Toomer died in May 1972. Today, Margret Toomer is still known as the Mother of the Ham & Egg Show.

## ROBERT T. CHURCH, SR.

Robert Thomas Church, Sr., was born in Athens, Georgia, on September 26, 1909. Since his father was a sharecropper, Church learned how to plow a field, pick cotton, cut hay, and raise hogs. He attended elementary and junior high school in Athens before earning



an undergraduate degree at Hampton Institute in Virginia in 1934. After his return to Georgia, Church worked as a high school agriculture teacher and assistant principal in Wilkes County. In 1937, he relocated to Jenkins County to become principal and agriculture teacher, where he also met his wife, Ruby Summers. To that union Robert T. Church, Jr. and Ruby Annette Church were born.

Church became familiar with the Fort Valley Ham and Egg Show through his agricultural work; having heard how outstanding the program was. He initially held his own Ham and Egg Shows in Jenkins and Clarke Counties and, when selected to become the extension agent in Peach County in 1938, he began assisting with the Fort Valley show. In 1949 he was selected to lead it. Church used the Ham and Egg show to raise issues not only about product quality, but also about social policies; he wanted African American 4-H members to have the same opportunities as white ones, and he fought for equal pay for African-American extension agents.

Church led the show until it ceased in 1966, and he retired from extension work in 1969. After his retirement, Church continued to help the community by serving on the Fort Valley City Council from 1974-1982, working with the Department of Family and Children Services, assisting African-American farmers in obtaining loans, and donating scholarship funds to Fort Valley State. Robert T. Church died in December 2008 at the age of 99.



## JOHN W. SAUNDERS

In 1950, John W. Saunders and the Black Farm Bureau established the first Ham and Egg Show and Sale in Lowndes County. Saunders was the first African-American County Extension Agent appointed in Lowndes County. He retired in 1975 and died in 1987. Sanders was instrumental in the development of the agricultural and human resources in the region. In 2005, the City of Valdosta invested \$1.5M in special purpose local option sales tax funds to renovate and rename the City's Barber Park in his honor. Today, Lowndes County is the last county holding an annual Ham and Egg show. On February 14th and 15th 2017, Lowndes County celebrated its 67th year of hosting the show at the Lowndes County Extension Office.

Sources: Dr. Dawn Herd-Clark, Dr. Fred van Hartesveldt, Joy Moten-Thomas, Kymara Sneed, and Kenneth Wilkerson. Photos courtesy of Hunt Memorial Public Library.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Marquinta Gonzalez, Fort Valley State University  
Shavonda Hill, Office of Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Greg Ziesenhene, Office of Senator David Perdue  
Marc Thomas, Fort Valley State University  
Charles Jones, Fort Valley State University  
Kena Torbert, Fort Valley State University  
Representative Patty Bentley, Georgia House District 139  
Senator John F. Kennedy, Georgia Senate District 19  
Andrew Ross, Office of Senator Johnny Isakson  
Representative Robert Dickey, Georgia House District 140  
Joy Moten-Thomas



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