



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education, and Economics  
Agricultural Research Service

March 3, 2020

SUBJECT: 2020 Employee Recognition Program Winners from NEA

TO: All-Northeast Area Employees

FROM: Dariusz M. Swietlik, Area Director

I am happy to announce the names of the Northeast Area employees who have won the previously announced 2020 Agency Employee Recognition Program Awards and those who won the Northeast Area (NEA) Recognition Awards. I would like to congratulate and thank all the winners for their exceptional contributions and excellent service.

## Agency Awards

### *Science Hall of Fame Inductee*

**Paul M. VanRaden**

*Animal Genomics and Improvement Laboratory, Beltsville, MD*

“For development and implementation of genomic prediction methodology that revolutionized animal breeding and advanced genetic progress for economically important traits of animals and plants worldwide.”

### *Research Leadership/Center Directorship Award*

**Peter J. Kleinman**

*Pasture Systems and Watershed Management Research Unit,  
University Park, PA*

“For leadership and vision in building collaborative, consensus-based teams within his Unit, across USDA-ARS, and among the global nutrient management research community.”

Northeast Area Director's Office  
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Building 003, Room 223  
Beltsville, Maryland 20705-2350  
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***Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity Award Supervisory/  
Managerial Category***

**Patricia D. Millner**

*Environmental Microbial and Food Safety Laboratory, Beltsville, MD*

“For outstanding accomplishments in coordinating, conducting, and fostering collaborative food safety research and experiential training opportunities for students and faculty between ARS scientists and 1980 land-grant institutions”.

***Outreach, Diversity, and Equal Opportunity Award Non-Supervisory/  
Non-Managerial Category***

**Special Emphasis Subcommittee-Beltsville**

**Jenny Allen<sup>1</sup>, Mary E. Dailey<sup>2</sup>, Jay D. Evans<sup>2</sup>, Pamela D. Farley<sup>2</sup>, Eunhee Park<sup>2</sup>, Catherine B. Parsons<sup>2</sup>, Benjamin M. Rosenthal<sup>2</sup>, Emely D. Schuck<sup>2</sup>, Susan Soucoup<sup>2</sup>, Tasha C. Sprague<sup>2</sup>, Kate E. White<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Northeast Area Office*

<sup>2</sup>*Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, MD*

“For their collective talent, passion, and commitment to inclusion, which has orchestrated cultural observances and programs to honor and celebrate the varied representation in our workplace”.

## **Northeast Area Awards**

***NEA Senior Research Scientist of the Year***

**Martha C. Anderson**

*Hydrology and Remote Sensing Laboratory, Beltsville, MD*

“For pioneering research in the global application of satellite remote sensing of vegetation water use and stress in agroecosystems.”

***NEA Early Career Scientist of the Year***

**Christopher R. Clarke**

*Genetic Improvement of Fruits and Vegetables Laboratory, Beltsville, MD*

“For outstanding creative efforts, scientific leadership, and significant research in vegetable crop production.”

***Technology Transfer Award***

**John Finley<sup>1</sup>, Naomi K. Fukagawa<sup>2</sup>, James M. Harnly<sup>2</sup>, David Haytowitz<sup>2</sup>,  
Kyle Mckillop<sup>3</sup>, Gary Moore<sup>4</sup>, Suzanne Morton<sup>2</sup>, Alanna J. Moshfegh<sup>2</sup>,  
Melissa Nickle<sup>2</sup>, Kristine Patterson<sup>2</sup>, Pamela R. Pehrsson<sup>2</sup>, Lois C. Steinfeldt<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> *Agricultural Research Service, Office of National Programs, Beltsville, MD*

<sup>2</sup> *Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, Beltsville, MD*

<sup>3</sup> *Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, College Park, MD*

<sup>4</sup> *Agricultural Research Service, National Agricultural Library*

“For unprecedented expansion and modernization of USDA food composition data and accessibility as executed with the launch of Food Data Central.”

***Office Professional of the Year***

**Nichelle “Nickki” LaCour**

*Northeast Area Office, Beltsville, MD*

“For extraordinary organization, service, accomplishments, and teamwork to two research units and Northeast Area Office.”

***Scientific Support Award***

**Jonathan Shao**

*Northeast Area Office, Beltsville, MD*

“For excellence in supporting ARS Big Data Initiative, use of advance computing, including SCInet and CERES, and bio-informatics training that resulted in significant scientific advances.”

***Location and Administrative Staff Award***

**Dionne Penny Berry**

*Foreign Animal Disease Research Unit, Plum Island, NY*

“For outstanding achievements providing administrative functions for the critical biodefense research program at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center despite severe personnel shortages.”

***Administrative and Program Management Award  
Customer Service and Technical Expertise***

**Donna Geiman**

*Northeast Area Office, Beltsville, MD*

“For outstanding and exemplary customer service, professionalism, expertise, dedication and willingness to resolve issues way beyond the assigned responsibilities.”