



SURA Members Receive Department of Energy Funding for R&D Partnership Pilots

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Washington, D.C. — The Department of Energy (DOE) has granted \$4.7 million in funding through thirty-five grants, which will support researchers as they advance foundational climate, Earth, and environmental science. Scientists from five SURA member universities have received funding through the Partnership Pilot program.

“These grants will allow scientists to advance research that will have a positive impact on our planet,” said Dr. Sean J. Hearne, President and CEO of the Southeastern Universities Research Association. “This program will help to build the research community of tomorrow in a way that better reflects the population of the United States.”

The [DOE Office of Science’s Partnership Pilots](#) will “diversify and expand the talent pool in climate and Earth science disciplines in order for institutions that have been historically under-represented in the office of Science funding portfolio to exert even greater impacts on society,” said Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, Director of the DOE Office of Science.

SURA is honored to have five advanced researchers representing member institutions from five states among this group of DOE Research & Development Partnership Pilot grant recipients:

[Dr. Henrique Barbosa](#), from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County was recognized for his work using LASSO to bridge the gap between model and observations, as well as to learn about atmospheric convection.

[Dr. Solomon Bililign](#) of North Carolina A&T State University received his grant to fund studies of optical and chemical properties of aged and fresh biomass burning absorbing aerosols for climate models.

[Dr. Sarah Ledford](#), from Georgia State University, received funding to advance research broadening participation in (sub)Urban watershed science in the Southeast (BUSS).

[Dr. Pallav Ray](#) of the Florida Institute of Technology was recognized for research on surface heat flux and its association with the MJO in the Tropical Western Pacific using ARM observations.

[Dr. Xi Yang](#) of the University of Virginia received funding to advance building interdisciplinary and interagency collaboration between DOE BER and UVA.

Projects were chosen by competitive merit review under the DOE Funding Opportunity Announcement, “[Research Development and Partnership Pilot \(RDPP\)](#),” sponsored by the Biological and Environmental Research (BER) program within the Department’s Office of

Science. Funding totals \$4.7 million in fiscal year 2022 dollars for projects lasting 18 to 22 months.

The [Southeastern Universities Research Association \(SURA\)](#) is a consortium of sixty member universities whose main purpose is to foster collaboration that enhances members' capabilities of undertaking significant, transformative scientific research projects that no single institution or small consortium can handle independently.

Contact: [Kerri Norris](#), Director of Communications at the Southeastern Universities Research Association at: knorris@sura.org