

# AGEP-NC NEWSLETTER

## Next Steps After the Grant: Sustaining the Legacy of the AGEP-NC Alliance

By Melvin (Jai) Jackson, Ph.D., Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Administration and Faculty Engagement within the Office for Faculty Excellence at NC State University. We are pleased to announce that Jai Jackson has joined our team as a co-PI on the NC State AGEP-NC leadership team.

### Next Steps After the Grant: Sustaining the Legacy of the AGEP-NC Alliance

As the AGEP-NC Grant concludes, its impact and promise remain enduring. Through collaborative efforts by North Carolina State University, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NC A&T), and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the AGEP-NC Alliance has set a robust foundation for transforming academic environments to be more accessible, equitable, and inclusive for historically underrepresented minority (URM) graduate students and faculty in STEM fields. The work accomplished under this grant provides a springboard for future efforts by institutional leaders and participants to create lasting systemic change.

### Continuing the Work: Building Accessible and Inclusive Academic Environments

The AGEP-NC Alliance has demonstrated that institutional change is possible when driven by evidence-based strategies and strong leadership at all levels. To continue this work, participants and institutional leaders can focus on the following strategies:

#### 1. Expand and Institutionalize Faculty Mentor Training

AGEP-NC's integrated research highlighted the importance of high-quality mentoring for URM graduate students and early-career faculty. Institutions should expand faculty mentor training programs, ensuring they address equity, cultural competence, and inclusive mentoring practices. Embedding these programs into institutional, professional development offerings can make mentoring excellence a sustained priority.

#### 2. Foster Department-Level Leadership and Accountability

The AGEP-NC model emphasized department-level leadership to drive climate and policy changes. Department heads, graduate directors, and faculty champions can serve as stewards of inclusive practices, holding themselves accountable for creating equitable hiring, retention, and advancement pathways for URM faculty. Regular climate assessments and progress tracking are essential for maintaining momentum.

#### 3. Strengthen Inter-Institutional Collaborations

One of AGEP-NC's strengths is its collaboration with three distinct universities. Institutions should continue this spirit of partnership, sharing resources, best practices, and research findings. This collective approach can amplify impact across campuses and beyond.

#### 4. Prioritize Career Development for Early- and Mid-Career Faculty

Equity and inclusion efforts must extend to career advancement opportunities for faculty. Institutions can develop programs that address the unique challenges URM faculty face, such as inequitable service burdens, limited access to leadership roles, and barriers to obtaining tenure. These programs should be tailored to foster faculty's professional growth and success throughout their careers.

#### 5. Create Sustainable Funding Models

The NSF grant provided critical funding to launch AGEP-NC initiatives. To ensure sustainability, universities should explore internal funding mechanisms and external partnerships to support ongoing efforts. Dedicated budget lines for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives reflect an institutional commitment to systemic change.

### Acknowledging the Impact of AGEP-NC

The work of AGEP-NC has enriched the academic pathways of URM graduate students and faculty and offered a replicable model for transforming STEM departments into hubs of inclusion and excellence. By engaging leadership at the institutional and department levels, the Alliance has fostered a shared responsibility for creating equitable academic environments.

As we look to the future, let us celebrate the achievements of the AGEP-NC Alliance and honor its legacy by continuing to champion equity and inclusion. Together, we can ensure that the pathways paved by AGEP-NC lead to a more diverse and thriving academic community in STEM and beyond.

For more information about AGEP-NC and its resources, visit <https://agep-nc.org/>

## AGEP-NC TIME UPDATE 2025 WINTER ALLIANCE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22

10:00 AM - 2:30 PM

NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY  
PLANT SCIENCES BUILDING

**REGISTER  
NOW**

**AGENDA TO FOLLOW**

