

Acknowledgments

This conference like the previous two was a cooperative undertaking. As with all undertakings, there are many people who, without their help and dedication, the enormous success of the conference would not have been realized. For their singular commitment and work, the Expanding Opportunities Steering Committee from start to finish was a network of “can doers” second to none. I am mindful that the NOAA Conference Planning Committee was very helpful and instrumental in the linkages among NOAA, JSU, and other sponsors and institutions.

We are tremendously grateful for and indebted to Jackson State University for hosting the conference. I would like to especially acknowledge the unparalleled work and commitment abundantly demonstrated by members of the JSU Planning Committee in hosting an outstanding conference. Words are not sufficient alone to describe the tone and quality of the conference environment when one considers the history of this Mississippi University. There was excitement, enlighten anticipation and un-yielding commitment from start to finish by the entire Jackson State University family. The spillover of excitement in the wider community included Jackson’s Mayor Harvey Johnson, and state Congressional representatives led by Hon. Bennie B. Thompson. We are grateful to all for their participation in the conference. From the University President, Ronald Mason, Jr. on through the administrators, faculty, staff, students and friends of the university, it was clear that the NOAA-led conference was special and welcomed. There was no doubt about it, the entire JSU community let it be known in its Mississippi style, greeting throughout the conference, it was a fine time and pleasure to host NOAA and other Federal agencies, visitors from academia, industry, NGOs, state, regional and city officials during the three day conference. Everywhere one looked there were signs, banners and personnel to help one know that this was a NOAA Conference and how to find one’s way on and about the campus.

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