



RURAL RENEWAL INITIATIVE

Seeking Nominations: Rural Renewal Research Prize

The Oklahoma State University [Rural Renewal Initiative](#) inspires, empowers, and coordinates rural renewal research in Oklahoma and beyond. The Rural Renewal Initiative (RRI) will host its annual Rural Renewal Symposium at the Lodge at Sequoyah State Park in Hulbert, Oklahoma, October 27-28 2026, to expand and empower its network of collaborating faculty, students, and community leaders. The symposium will feature new insights from recent research with, in, or for rural communities. At the symposium, RRI will award the **Rural Renewal Research Prize**. This award honors a world leader in rural renewal research, education, and engagement. RRI is now accepting nominations for this prize recognizing a distinguished scholar in rural renewal.

Previous Rural Renewal Research Prize Winners

- 2025 Dr. John Green
Director of the Southern Rural Development Center, Professor, Agricultural Economics,
Mississippi State University
- 2024 Dr. Alex Red Corn
Director of University of Kansas's Indigenous Studies Program
- 2023 Dr. Mary Emery
Director of Rural Prosperity Nebraska, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- 2022 Dr. Amy Azano
Associate Professor, Adolescent Literacy and Rural Education, Virginia Tech University
- 2021 Ben Winchester,
Extension Educator, Community Economics, University of Minnesota Extension
- 2020 Dr. Steven Deller
Professor, Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Nomination materials include:

1. A one- or two-page **letter of nomination** indicating the nominee's name, an explanation of the nominee's contributions to rural renewal, and other information which might be helpful to the review committee. The name, address, email, and phone number of the person making the nomination should also be included.
2. A two-page **curriculum vitae** for the individual nominated, which showcases the nominee's research accomplishments working with, in, or for rural communities. This can include, but is not limited to, educational background, places of employment, publications, research grants/projects, positions held with professional organizations, awards received, volunteer activities, special projects undertaken, courses taught, and other information which may assist the review committee.
3. Three one-page **letters of support** for the nominee that demonstrate his or her work and its impact on rural communities.

The nominating materials must be received as a **single pdf file** sent to ruralrenewal@okstate.edu by **July 6, 2026**. The nominations will be reviewed by an external review committee. The winner will be notified by approximately August 17, 2026. The awardee must participate **in person** in the Rural Renewal Symposium and will provide the keynote address. The prize will include a \$5,000 stipend.