



Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service

NEWS RELEASE

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Media Contact: Audrey Alwell

888-90-MOSES, ext. 701 | audrey@mosesorganic.org

New award honors ‘Changemakers’ in organic movement

LA CROSSE, WI – The Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) will present a new award at the MOSES Organic Farming Conference Feb. 27 in La Crosse, Wisconsin, to recognize “Changemakers” who break down barriers and empower others to farm in ways that are environmentally responsible, socially just, and economically viable. The 2020 Changemaker awards will go to Steve Acheson, Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin, Loretta Livingston, and Joy Schelble.

“These Changemakers are creatively overcoming systemic challenges to nurture a thriving agricultural future for all,” explained Sara Tedeschi, a member of the MOSES Board of Directors who helped create the award.

Acheson is an Iraq war veteran from Blanchardville, Wisconsin. After his honorable discharge from the military due to an injury, he started Peacefully Organic Produce, a certified organic produce farm with the mission to grow healthy food for his community and to employ and train veterans to farm organically. In 2016, his war injuries made it impossible to continue vegetable farming, but he continues to advocate for veterans and farmers, and recently co-founded the South Central WI Hemp Producers Cooperative, helping growers in his economically depressed area of the state to leverage group power for buying seed and marketing crops.

Haslett-Marroquin is a native Guatemalan who came to the U.S. in 1992 and now lives in Northfield, Minnesota. He has worked in rural development and been an advocate for fair trade for over 30 years. While working for Main Street Project, he designed a system for pastured poultry that offers a “weed-eating, bug-killing, soil-enhancing replacement for the counterproductive synthetic pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers” used in conventional farming. He’s a founder of Peace Coffee, a Minnesota-based fair-trade coffee company, and the Regenerative Agriculture Alliance.

The Bad River Food Sovereignty Program is a joint program of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in northern Wisconsin, represented by Loretta Livingston, and University of Wisconsin-Extension Agent Joy Schelble. For the past five years, the program has re-educated tribal members on

harvesting and preparing wild foods as well as growing food for the tribe in gardens and high tunnels. The program includes classes on cooking, food preservation, and native language. It has re-connected tribal youth and elders to their native heritage and wisdom while providing access to healthy food to help reduce type 2 diabetes, which has been prevalent on the reservation.

These Changemakers will receive their awards at the kick-off to the MOSES Conference, Thursday, Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. at the La Crosse Center. The conference continues through Saturday, Feb. 29 with workshops on organic farming topics, a two-floor trade show, roundtable discussions, and other opportunities to network and learn. For details, see mosesorganic.org/conference.

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Photos available [via Dropbox](#).