

Dr. Louis D. Whitesides

EXECUTIVE LEADER | INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION
STRATEGIST | LAND-GRANT ADMINISTRATOR

An Executive Profile & Strategic Impact Portfolio

Executive Summary: A Career of Measurable Transformation

Presidential-ready executive with nearly 30 years of experience leading complex HBCU and Land-Grant enterprises. Recognized for a leadership style that aligns mission, data, and accountability to deliver results in student success, research growth, and fiscal stewardship.

R2

CLASSIFICATION

Positioned institution for R2 Carnegie Classification three years ahead of schedule.

86%

GRADUATION RATE

Scaled success models to achieve 86% graduation and 94% post-grad placement.

\$150M+

TOTAL FUNDING

Managed combined external funding, appropriations, and capital with zero audit findings.

Core Identity: A catalyst for organizational culture change and governance reform.

Leadership Philosophy: The Convergence of Culture & Data

Institutional excellence emerges where Culture, Data, and Mission Alignment converge.

1. Collaborative Resilience

Building capacity through shared governance and cross-unit partnerships.

2. Disciplined Accountability

Moving from anecdotal success to data-driven performance management.

3. Student-Centered Outcomes

Every decision is measured by its impact on social mobility and workforce readiness.



Approach: Successfully shifted institutional culture to elevate research and accountability as shared priorities.

Accelerating Innovation & Research Classification

The Crown Jewel Achievement

Achieved R2 (High Research Activity) Carnegie Classification three years ahead of institutional projections.

Strategic Context

This was not a stand-alone research milestone; it was achieved through enterprise-wide cultural realignment, governance reform, and cross-unit collaboration.

Key Execution Points

- Created the new College of Agriculture, Family and Consumer Sciences to align academic units with state industry.
- Strengthened research governance and faculty competitiveness.
- Secured \$65M+ in new external grants and contracts.

86%

Four-Year Graduation Rate
(Outperforming regional benchmarks)

94%

Post-Graduation Placement Rate
(Employment or Graduate School)

Pillar II: Student Success as the North Star

Strategy: Designed and scaled retention and completion models that prioritize first-year persistence and career readiness.

Impact Initiative: Launched the Agriculture Innovation Scholarship Program, awarding \$5.8M in full scholarships, mentoring, and experiential learning to over 150 students.

Pillar III: Fiscal Stewardship, Compliance & Resource Growth

The Clean Sheet

Maintained Zero Audit Findings across complex annual federal and state portfolios exceeding \$23M.

23M\$

Capital Generation

Secured more than \$150M in combined external funding, appropriations, and capital investments.

150M\$

Record Breaking

Secured the largest single award in institutional history: \$35M.


35M\$


Methodology

Budgeting focuses on ROI, transparency, and audit integrity to strengthen public and donor trust.

Pillar IV: Workforce Alignment & Economic Impact



 **Strategic Goal:** Degrees must lead to social mobility and workforce readiness.

 **Action:** Aligned academic programs with the state's largest industry (Agribusiness) and high-growth sectors.

Pillar V: Infrastructure, Capacity & Modernization

Physical Infrastructure

- Directed acquisition, construction, and renovation of 10 facilities (~90,000 sq. ft).
- Secured and deployed \$30M in capital funding to modernize research, extension, and academic spaces.
- Completed comprehensive 1890 facilities master plan.



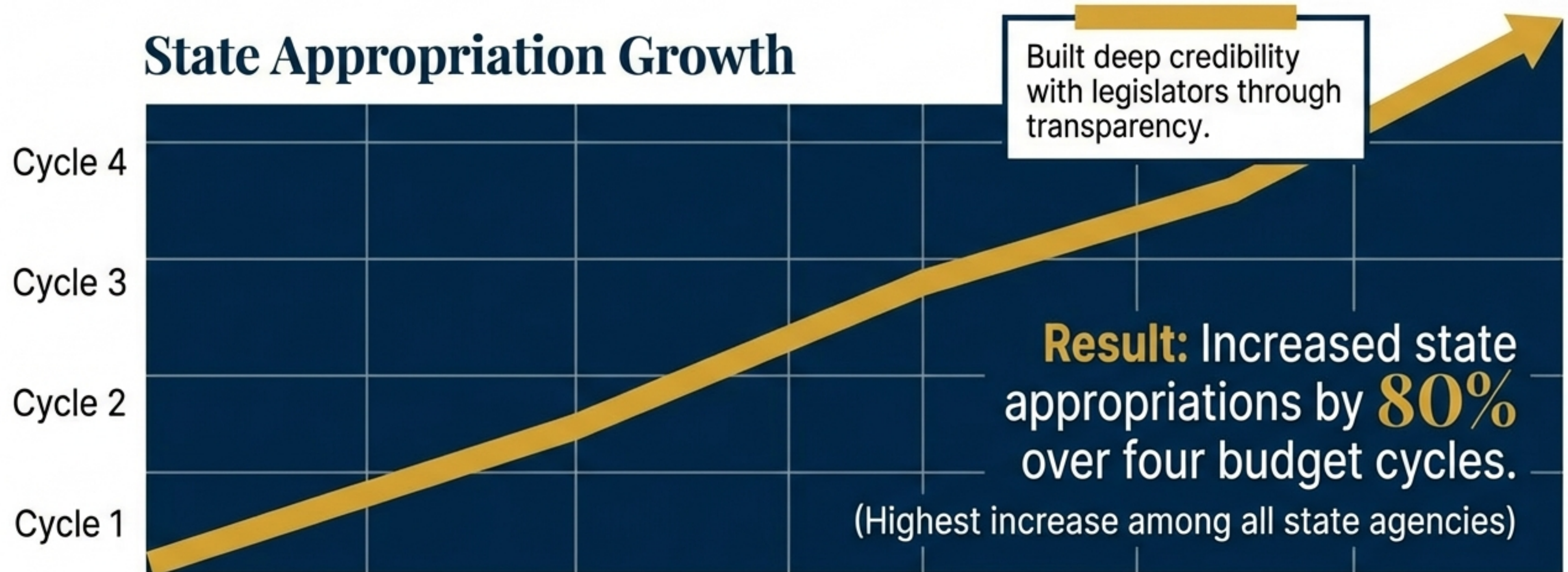
Digital Infrastructure

- Acquired and implemented Salesforce-based data systems.
- Modernized reporting accuracy, compliance tracking, and executive decision-making through enterprise-level data governance.



Legislative Relations & Public Trust

The Strategy: Redesigned federal and state reporting to move beyond basic compliance and instead emphasize ROI, economic impact, and workforce development.



Professional Trajectory

2023 – Present

Interim Vice President for Research

Leading the university's research enterprise and external funding strategy.

2019 – Present

VP for Public Service & Ag / Executive Director, 1890 Research & Extension

Cabinet-level executive managing research, extension, infrastructure, and compliance.

2010 – 2019

1890 Research Administrator

Directed strategic planning and budgeting for the research enterprise; principal liaison to USDA-NIFA.

2000 – 2009

Senior Extension Director

Led statewide community and economic development programming.

Education & Executive Preparation

Academic Degrees

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) – International Business

Master of Science (MS) – Management

Bachelor of Science (BS) – Computer Science / Minor: Math

Executive Certifications

Harvard University: Executive Certificate in Higher Education Leadership

Cornell University: Executive Leadership Certificate

Food Systems Leadership Institute: North Carolina State University

Scholarship & Academic Contribution

Focus Areas

International Trade |
Agricultural Economics |
Applied Policy | Food
Safety Harmonization

Selected Peer-Reviewed Works

Regional Free Trade Agreements and Exchange Rate Volatility in Global Agricultural Trade

Published in: International Journal of Food and Agricultural
Economics

Impact of US–EU Food Safety Harmonization on Agricultural Exports

Published in: Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy

Role: Peer-reviewed contributor to global agricultural discourse.

Board Leadership & National Service

Board Memberships

- South Carolina Research Authority
- Battelle Savannah River National Alliance
- South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium
- South Carolina EPSCoR

National Leadership

- APLU
- Association of 1890 Research Directors
- Association of 1890 Extension Administrators

Community Service

- Chairman, Citizens Against Sexual Assault (CASA)

Core Leadership Competencies

✓ Institutional Transformation & Culture Change	✓ Student Success, Retention & Completion	✓ Research & Land-Grant Enterprise Leadership	✓ Fiscal Stewardship, Compliance & Audit Integrity
✓ Legislative Relations & Public Accountability	✓ Workforce & Economic Development	✓ Infrastructure & Capital Project Oversight	✓ Data Systems & Performance Management

“To lead with integrity, urgency, and care—ensuring every student has a clear path to graduation, every program aligns with workforce needs, and every dollar entrusted delivers measurable public value.”

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