

March 5-6, 2020

**ITEM 187-2002-R0320**

**Authorization to Confer the Title of Professor Emeritus of Plant Sciences on Luther Talbert; Montana State University**

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**THAT**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Luther Talbert from Montana State University, the Board of Regents wishes to express its appreciation for his service to the University, the Montana University System and the people of the State of Montana.

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**EXPLANATION**

Dr. Talbert has served as the spring wheat breeder for the state since 1988. Varieties developed by his project have been planted on tens of millions of acres. Flour produced from these varieties has been used by bakers around the world to produce billions of loaves of bread. He introduced a key attribute into Montana wheat, the stay-green trait, whereby varieties continue to grow and produce healthy seed during hot, dry summer conditions. A second key attribute has been resistance to the wheat stem sawfly, the major pest for wheat in Montana.

A second component of Dr. Talbert's research project has been academic research aimed toward improving knowledge of wheat genetics. Competitive grant funding has included approximately \$2 million from NSF and over \$5 million from the USDA. Research supported by this funding resulted in publication of over 130 papers in refereed journals.

Dr. Talbert's initial classroom teaching responsibilities focused on the development of upper division and graduate courses in plant breeding and biotechnology. More recently, Dr. Talbert transitioned to instructing large enrollment undergraduate classes, including Freshman Biology and Introductory Genetics. Dr. Talbert has been the major advisor for approximately two dozen graduate students and advisor for hundreds of undergraduate students. Graduate students have typically been supported by competitive federal grants and have progressed to successful careers in academia and industry.

Finally, Dr. Talbert has provided service to the national wheat research community. He was the western US representative for the National Wheat Improvement Committee, director for a USDA-funded graduate student training project, and western coordinator for national research projects in wheat breeding and genetics. Dr. Talbert has served several terms on editorial boards for academic journals and on numerous grant panels. In recognition of his achievements in plant breeding and genetics, Dr. Talbert was named a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in November 2019.

For these and other contributions, the Board of Regents of Higher Education is pleased to confer upon Luther Talbert the rank of Professor Emeritus of Plant Sciences at Montana State University and wishes him well for many years in the future.

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**ATTACHMENTS**

None