STRATEGIC PLAN 2025

Create – Seek – Enhance – Advance – Cultivate
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As we set our sights on the future, we are pleased to present the Louisiana State University College of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2025. The College of Agriculture began a strategic planning process in July 2019. We started with an internal committee within the dean’s office to lay the groundwork for the planning process and to help organize the key questions we needed to reflect on to move our college forward.

Department heads, school directors, and the dean’s office staff then came together to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses to create a focused structure on the crucial initiatives we want included in our plan. Subcommittees worked within five concentrated areas that developed into our overarching goals and helped create the metrics to measure our progress.

To help ensure that both internal and external stakeholders could provide guidance on experiences, challenges, goals, and future initiatives, we conducted a stakeholder survey in the fall of 2019. This feedback was compiled into the 2019 Stakeholder Survey Report and shared with our leadership as well as our internal and external stakeholders. The information provided in this report was critical to guiding our process in drafting out the strategic plan.

Our final step in this process before unveiling the plan you see today was to host a Virtual Stakeholder Summit in summer 2020. This event brought together faculty, staff, alumni, and other key stakeholders to participate in roundtable-style meetings to discuss the draft of the strategic plan, future initiatives within the departments and schools, and to reconnect our stakeholders with the mission and vision of the college.

The time and work that was put into this effort created a clear vision to guide us through the next five years. I would like to thank our leadership, faculty, staff, and stakeholders who engaged in this process, and I encourage you to stay involved and hold us accountable as we work with intention to meet the goals outlined in the LSU College of Agriculture Strategic Plan 2025.

Dr. William B. Richardson
Dean and Vice President for Agriculture

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

MISSION
The LSU College of Agriculture provides innovative academic programs, creates essential knowledge, advances collaborative research, and drives outreach to solve local and global agricultural challenges.

VISION
With a sharp focus on research, extension, and teaching, we are finding solutions and making advancements that will benefit future generations and establish a legacy of success.

VALUES
• SEEK intellectual and culturally diverse perspectives
• CREATE bold and transformative educational experiences
• ENHANCE the lives of others
• ADVANCE the land-grant mission
• CULTIVATE a community of engaged partners

An annual evaluation of the strategic plan will be conducted to measure the progress toward the outlined goals and ensure alignment with the overall mission and vision of the college. An annual report will be created and distributed to stakeholders to create transparency in our progress.
FIVE STRATEGIC GOALS

Strategic goals are the long-term objectives of the LSU College of Agriculture to be achieved by 2025.

Goal 1: Enhance the student experience to ensure success and create leaders prepared to engage in the complex global arena of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources.

Subcommittee: Dr. Allie Prest, Jennie Sparks, Brandon Guillory, Dr. Amanda L. Martin, Henry Hebert, Ashley Grant, Annabelle Stokes, Rocio Lopez, and Ivana Treganza

Goal 2: Seek to achieve a culture where everyone in the college is included, respected, and supported.

This goal is under review with the hiring of the new assistant vice president for diversity, inclusion, and opportunity. This section includes a summary of current initiatives in place.

Goal 3: Create premier academic programs designed to address future challenges of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources and to enhance the undergraduate student experience locally, nationally, and internationally.

Subcommittee: Dr. Bill Richardson, Dr. Phil Elzer, and Dr. Kristin Stair

Goal 4: Advance in our goal of developing a community of connected, collaborative, and committed faculty and staff.

Subcommittee: Dr. Bill Richardson, Dr. Phil Elzer, and Dr. Kristin Stair

Goal 5: Cultivate a community of engaged alumni, donors, and industry partners.

Subcommittee: Tracy Evans, Clayton Forbes, Andy Schade, Katherine D’Aquila, Allison Llorens, and Lindsey Kelly

*Subcommittees were formed to organize potential ideas for creative initiatives and metrics. These draft ideas were presented to the department heads for further review and discussion. An additional subcommittee of department heads/faculty representatives was created to review and refine the overall draft strategic plan for discussion at the Stakeholder Summit and continue to guide the process through the final draft.

Department Head/Faculty Representative Subcommittee: Dr. Don LaBonte, Dr. Michael Stout, Dr. Michael Burnett, Dr. Lawrence Datnoff, Dr. Bruce Cameron, Dr. Allen Rutherford, and Dr. Richard Cooper
GOAL 1

Enhance the student experience to ensure success and create leaders prepared to engage in the complex global arena of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources.
INITIATIVE 1.1 Emphasize experiential learning opportunities and professional development experiences through internships, undergraduate research, service-learning, and communication-intensive courses.

- Develop a tracking system to ensure all students participate in an internship, study abroad experience, undergraduate research, service-learning experience, or communication-intensive courses.

- Develop shared collegewide learning objectives and evaluation methods for internships.

- Enhance our ability to track postgraduate placement to inform future initiatives.

- Increase the number of career exploration and professional development programs available to students and increase the number of students participating in these programs; implement evaluation to measure the effectiveness of programs.

- Develop at least one faculty-led study abroad program for each degree program. Increase individual abroad experiences.
Enhance the student experience to ensure success and create leaders prepared to engage in the complex global arena of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources.

**INITIATIVE 1.2** Streamline and focus recruitment efforts to increase and diversify student enrollment.

- Use data from recruitment assessments conducted at student orientations to evaluate recruitment initiatives.
- Identify in- and out-of-state markets where additional recruitment efforts should be focused.
- Create training opportunities for alumni and other stakeholders to be involved in the recruitment process.
- Develop specialized recruiting events both on and off-campus to highlight specific majors identified for targeted growth.
- Identify strategies to enhance diversity recruitment initiatives.
- Support existing relationships with community colleges and work to develop stronger bonds with key community college partners to increase the transfer student population.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>2025 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment report to evaluate activities, target markets, diversity trends, areas, and programs for growth to drive initiatives</td>
<td>Fall 2019 formal report.</td>
<td>Strategy created, implemented, and evaluated annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate student enrollment</td>
<td>1,429 — Fall 2019</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment of transfer students</td>
<td>37 — Fall 2019</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni and stakeholder recruitment training</td>
<td>Beginning — Launch 2021</td>
<td>Measured annually with participant and impact/outreach numbers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**GOAL 1**

Enhance the student experience to ensure success and create leaders prepared to engage in the complex global arena of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources.

**INITIATIVE** Improve student retention initiatives.

**1.3**

- Continue to enhance the first-year seminar for College of Agriculture students.
- Increase efforts focused on early intervention strategies for retention.
- Increase student academic support initiatives and communication.
- Maintain a series of diverse programs for student engagement and inclusion.
- Continue to provide hands-on experiences and program and career awareness for each major through the Agriculture Residential College.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</th>
<th>BASELINE</th>
<th>2025 TARGET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retention rate for first-to-second-year undergraduates</td>
<td>84.7% — Fall 2018</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag Tiger Tutoring</td>
<td>2019 appointments scheduled</td>
<td>Annually modify support based on student need and feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIGA survey</td>
<td>Fall 2019 Part I and Part II</td>
<td>Annually review for student satisfaction, engagement, and support to modify initiatives (including the first-year seminar course)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-year awareness and use of the Office of Student Services</td>
<td>Fall 2019 TIGA I — 9% used, Fall 2019 TIGA II — 60% used</td>
<td>Annually review results of TIGA (Tiger Intrusive Group Advising survey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag Student Association</td>
<td>2019 annual event calendar and feedback assessment</td>
<td>Evaluate events annually for attendance and student satisfaction to determine changes for future years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation rate (four and six year)</td>
<td>48% in 2016 (four year), 66.6% in 2014 (six year), *LSU rates: 44.1% in 2016 (four year), 65.7% in 2014 (six year)</td>
<td>50% (four year), 70% (six year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of students on academic warning and probation</td>
<td>Spring 2020</td>
<td>5% decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast emails</td>
<td>Fall 2019 open rate — 74.6%</td>
<td>5% or less of student population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff training and development</td>
<td>Lighthouse; Safe Space; Pregnancy Advocates, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion trainings</td>
<td>100% of dean’s office staff trained in areas mentioned and annually participate in continued professional development areas focused on providing a supportive environment for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Academic Success Partnership</td>
<td>Spring 2020 IMPACT Participation</td>
<td>Annually review to assess student participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation on university committees and taskforces</td>
<td>Fall 2019</td>
<td>Annually review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOAL 2

Seek to achieve a culture where everyone in the college is included, respected, and supported.
Seek to achieve a culture where everyone in the college is included, respected, and supported.

In the fall of 2019, the dean’s office began the discussion of strategic hires focused on diversity, inclusion, and opportunity initiatives. The decision was made to move forward with an AVP position that would serve over this area for both the LSU AgCenter and College of Agriculture. The AVP began on Feb. 1, 2021.

Since that time, additional efforts have been put forward to building a stronger foundation on the practices and culture created specifically for the student experiences within the College of Agriculture. This section includes some of the focused efforts that have been put into motion or have been created in previous years focused on diversity, inclusion, and opportunity.

At the direction and leadership of the new AVP, goal two of the College of Agriculture’s strategic plan will be outlined with specific initiatives and performance indicators to further guide the college’s practice in creating an inclusive culture. This information will be updated in the annual report for 2021.

Find more resources and information on our commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity, visit http://bit.ly/LSUCOADEI
Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

• Communication with students: In the summer of 2020, the CoA Dean’s Office staff worked on a statement with Dr. Richardson to be shared with the undergraduate students, faculty, and staff within the College of Agriculture (full statement can be found at bit.ly/LSUCOADEI).

  • Listening to current students — Dr. Richardson also conducted listening sessions with the MANRRS chapter as well as discussions with Les Voyageurs and Peer Mentors. He also addressed the focus of creating an inclusive environment with the Ag Student Association.

  • Communicating with future students — A welcome video from Dr. Richardson was created to be utilized at CoA recruitment events on campus. The message in this video was direct and highlighted that the CoA creates and values the diversity of our students.

• Resources for learning and reflection:

  • Independent/team learning — Sections of the dean’s office completed educational training on topics within diversity, equity, and inclusion over the summer. (Diversity and Resiliency Institute of El Paso modules and weekly debrief discussions by Recruitment and Student Development staff.)

  • Allyship discussion — The CoA Dean’s Office hosted two guest speakers in the summer of 2020 to discuss allyship and what that means for how we serve our students and other stakeholders. This was the start of continued discussion and focused on how we can develop additional training, discussion, and support efforts to ensure we are upholding inclusive excellence in our college.

  • Diversity and inclusion modules — A project emerged to pilot diversity and inclusion resource modules through Moodle in the summer of 2020. This project was worked on with campus partners, including the LSU Office of Multicultural Affairs. Representatives from the MANRRS chapter were also involved in the creation, editing, and continued development. The pilot was provided to the Peer Mentors, Les Voyageurs, and Ag Student Association for edits and feedback. With the creation of the recent Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, & Change Council in the CoA/AgCenter, members of this council have also reviewed the materials and provided critical feedback. The current state of this project has morphed to include personal interviews with current students on their experiences related to the topic areas to add to the materials. The projected launch date for the modules to be available collegewide will be January 2021.
Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

• **Staffing and student workers:**
  
  • A proposal in the fall of 2019 was provided to the deans regarding hiring a staff position associated with the first-year experience and diversity/inclusion initiatives. The position was tabled due to the spending freeze with COVID-19, but there are plans to revisit this after the AVP is hired.

  • The intentional focus has been on connecting with students of color and identifying student leaders to take on student employment positions within our College of Agriculture Dean’s Office. This has resulted in the hiring of three new student employees within the areas of retention, career development, and communications. Student services currently has plans underway to work strategically with the MANRRS chapter on promoting these professional opportunities for spring 2021.

• **Environmental audit:** In revisioning the way we create spaces for our students that are inclusive, the College of Agriculture Dean’s Office staff worked on some specific projects to ensure that we are helping students envision themselves as future successful alumni within the College of Agriculture and that we value our diverse population.

  • **Alumni posters** — Throughout the buildings that house our departments and schools, alumni posters were framed and put into places that are commonly accessed by students. This project was focused on the intention of highlighting our diverse majors and alumni in the field.

  • **Timeline and values** — In the main administrative building, an outline of key areas within the College of Agriculture’s mission and vision has been displayed. Within this display, our MANRRS chapter is highlighted as well as the overall values of the College of Agriculture. We also included a land acknowledgment statement to reflect on the lands that our campus resides.

  • **Major highlight videos** — For use in the AGRI 1001 class (intro to Agriculture). Major of the Day videos were created with the intention of highlighting diverse students and perspectives. These were shared weekly with students in the course.

GOAL

Seek to achieve a culture where everyone in the college is included, respected, and supported.
Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

• Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, & Change Council (DIECC): The council was created in the summer of 2020, and nominations were submitted to an internal committee within the LSU AgCenter and College of Agriculture for the council members. Council seats were also granted to representatives from MANRRS, and the Agriculture Student Association (ASA). Twenty-six members of both the LSU AgCenter and College of Agriculture serve on the council, with four additional ex officio members.

• Diversity & Inclusion Champions: A proposal for the council to review regarding identifying those faculty and staff leaders across the college who could serve as supporters and advocates for diversity and inclusion within their departments/schools. The application process was launched in November 2020, and applicants were selected in December 2020, with the official program launch set for January 2021.

• Cultivating Change Organization: Tigers for Cultivating Change was established for the expressed purpose of providing a safe, inclusive network for students interested in agricultural sciences who are a part of or allies of the LGBTQ+ community. Focusing efforts on advocacy, education, and community, this organization will strive to promote inclusion and visibility for LGBTQ+ individuals within the College of Agriculture and larger Louisiana State University community.

• MANRRS, (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences): MANRRS at LSU members promote the advancement of members of ethnic and cultural groups that are underrepresented in agricultural and related sciences. MANRRS is a national society that welcomes members from all racial and ethnic groups interested in careers in agricultural and related sciences. MANRRS supports professional development of minorities through its network, acting as a springboard for entry into and advancement of careers. The organization helps establish partnerships among its student and professional members while promoting scholarly achievement in a nurturing environment.

GOAL 2

Seek to achieve a culture where everyone in the college is included, respected, and supported.
GOAL 3
Create premier academic programs designed to address future challenges of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources and to enhance the undergraduate student experience locally, nationally, and internationally.
Create premier academic programs designed to address future challenges of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources and to enhance the undergraduate student experience locally, nationally, and internationally.

INITIATIVE 3.1: Academic and faculty engagement.

• Develop introductory courses that emphasize career options that students can take in their first year at LSU.

• Increase career awareness strategies that may include hands-on experiences, invited speakers, or field trips in undergraduate courses.

• Facilitate internship, field study, or formal research experiences for all students in the College of Agriculture with credit toward their degrees.

• Increase general scholarship support/opportunities for all students within the College of Agriculture.

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<th>PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</th>
<th>BASELINE</th>
<th>2025 TARGET</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate departmental introductory courses</td>
<td>Summer 2020</td>
<td>Courses developed, modified, and implemented as appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reorganization of undergraduate advising within departments with a goal of no less than one academic advisor for every 150 students</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
<td>Advisors allocated and advising training in place for new undergraduate advisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reorganization of undergraduate advising with enough advisors for every student to have the opportunity to be advised every semester</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
<td>Advisors allocated and advising training in place for new undergraduate advisors; advising plan developed for each department with a structure that allows for the advisement of all students every semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of professional activities to engage students, such as hands-on laboratories, guest speakers and/or field trips</td>
<td>May 2022</td>
<td>Each department facilitates multiple professional activity opportunities each semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of courses that count toward internship hours in each department</td>
<td>May 2022</td>
<td>Credit hour courses for internships passed through Courses and Curriculum and offered to students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**GOAL 3**

**Create** premier academic programs designed to address future challenges of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources and to enhance the undergraduate student experience locally, nationally, and internationally.

**INITIATIVE 3.2:** Provide courses that train students with the essential skills needed to be successful to address global challenges.

- Create an annual process to update stakeholders on the departments and schools and progress in achieving the goals outlined in the strategic plan.

- Periodically review courses and emerging career opportunities to design new courses as needed.

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<tr>
<td>Department advisory committees formed in each department consisting of faculty, alumni, and at least one industry representative for each concentration within the Department</td>
<td>Summer 2020</td>
<td>Committees meet yearly to provide input and feedback to the department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Along with consultation of the LSU Master Plan and AgCenter, all departments will review existing facilities and will evaluate how those can be better used for student experiences</td>
<td>Summer 2022</td>
<td>New laboratory spaces offered or utilized in each department in the College of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments with facility needs will meet with college leadership to discuss plans for the development of program and lab facilities and will discuss grants, university programs, existing space, and CoA budget opportunities to fund spaces</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plans for spaces developed and a timeline for funding those spaces put in place</td>
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GOAL 4

Advance in our goal of developing a community of connected, collaborative, and committed faculty, staff, and students.
Advance in our goal of developing a community of connected, collaborative, and committed faculty, staff, and students.

INITIATIVE 4.1: Develop opportunities for faculty and staff to enhance their scholarship and training.

- Recruit and retain high-performing, diverse faculty and staff.
- Promote excellence in research, teaching, extension, and leadership.
- Provide professional development opportunities for graduate students, staff, and faculty.
- Create teaching awards aimed to recognize excellence in teaching/advising.

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<tr>
<td>Prioritize faculty and staff positions based on the strategic planning goals</td>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>Develop an annual departmental staffing plan utilizing feedback from the Advisory Council and current faculty and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance the collaboration between research, teaching, and extension faculty</td>
<td>Spring 2022</td>
<td>Evaluate current appointments and focus hiring practices to include joint appointments with the college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase CxC and service-learning courses offered at the College of Agriculture</td>
<td>Spring 2021</td>
<td>100% of schools/departments offering at least one communication-intensive course certified by CxC and one service-learning course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff</td>
<td>Establish a faculty planning committee for an annual teaching conference in spring 2021</td>
<td>Create an annual teaching conference. All faculty and staff members attend at least one conference or professional development activity annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop additional awards to recognize excellence in advising and teaching</td>
<td>Fall 2021</td>
<td>Annually recognize “excellence in teaching” through a program and certificate from the CoA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek funding sources to award Outstanding Faculty Awards (i.e., $1,000 to $5,000 gift levels)</td>
<td>Spring 2021: Identify former faculty members interested in starting awards; identify corporate and/or research partners; explore awards funded by alumni; explore awards funded by CoA Alumni Association; identify existing donors giving to AgCenter and college to ask for an increase in giving</td>
<td>Five to seven new ($5,000) awards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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GOAL 5

Cultivate a community of engaged alumni, donors, and industry partners.
**GOAL 5**

Cultivate a community of engaged alumni, donors, and industry partners.

**INITIATIVE 5.1:** Raise private philanthropic support toward strategic initiatives for the College of Agriculture and LSU AgCenter.

- Through grants, university funding awards, and development projects, all departments will have laboratories that allow for innovative undergraduate and graduate hands-on experiences.

- Increase funding for academic and research program support.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of stewardship plans for donors to the College of Agriculture</td>
<td>Each development director to identify major donors to the college and create customized stewardship plans to appropriately recognize previous giving</td>
<td>Selected major donors will have given or indicated additional major contributions to the college or will have declined a proposal by the end of 2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify alumni and friends with an affinity for academic and research programs</td>
<td>Development directors work to build relationships with alumni and friends who have financial capacity to make transformational donations to the college</td>
<td>Top 40 people, companies, and organizations (some new relationships and some existing) will have engaging experiences with college development directors and be presented with an opportunity to make transformational gift by the end of 2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify alumni and friends who have consistently given smaller donations over a number of years</td>
<td>Directors of development build relationships with longtime loyal donors to the college to determine interest in and ability to make a major current-use gift or a significant gift through their estate plans</td>
<td>Forty people, who have previously not given a major gift or estate plan gift, will be presented with an opportunity to consider supporting the college with a major gift of estate plan gift by the end of 2025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GOAL 5

**Cultivate** a community of engaged alumni, donors, and industry partners.

**INITIATIVE 5.2:** Provide lasting enrichment opportunities for alumni and friends through events and programming.

- Integrate alumni into the undergraduate experience by encouraging participation in Ag Mentoring Program, Alumni Speaker Series, and other student-driven initiatives.

- Increase awareness of the College of Agriculture Alumni Association and celebrate alumni achievements through programming and communications.

- Recruit and continue to develop an engaged alumni board that is diverse in terms of age, geography, affinity, gender, and ethnicity.

- Collaborate with the manager of recruitment on ways to utilize alumni in recruitment initiatives.

- Increase communication and diversify platforms in which alumni engage with the college.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring Program</td>
<td>Fall 2020 — 34 mentors within a class format</td>
<td>50% increase in mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni board diversity</td>
<td>Current representation of schools/departments. Majority identify as white males greater than 40 years old (72%)</td>
<td>Board consists of a representative from each school/department; diverse in age, geography, gender and ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website and social media presence</td>
<td>Review 2020 social media engagement and website views.</td>
<td>Increased presence on website and social media using alumni profiles, highlighting alumni achievements and promoting events, increase social media posts to approximately one per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni events</td>
<td>Four events held annually</td>
<td>Add two events outside 100-mile radius of Baton Rouge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DEANS

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