Iowa State University, located in Ames, Iowa, is one of the nation’s leading land-grant universities. Chartered in 1858 as the Iowa Agricultural College and Model Farm, it became the nation’s first land-grant institution when the Iowa General Assembly awarded it the state’s land-grant charter in 1864. The college opened in 1868-69, and a class of 26 was graduated at the first commencement in 1872. Graduate study was offered almost as soon as classes began, and the first graduate degree was conferred in 1877. The college was renamed Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts in 1898 and became Iowa State University of Science and Technology in 1959. Today, Iowa State University is a comprehensive research university of international stature with more than 33,000 students from 50 states and 101 other nations.

Iowa State has led the development of several fields of study that are central to the land-grant movement, including engineering, agriculture, human sciences, and veterinary medicine. Extension, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2003, traces its roots to Iowa and early outreach programs by Iowa State’s Adonijah Welch and Perry Holden. The legislation establishing the national Agricultural Experiment Station system was written by Iowa State faculty members Seaman Knapp and Charles Bessey in the 1880’s.

Today, Iowa State is a recognized leader in many areas including plant and animal genomics, materials sciences, analytical chemistry, biology, physics, behavioral studies, information assurance, virtual reality, engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, business, journalism, kinesiology, transportation and logistics, and education. Major research initiatives focus on the bioeconomy, food safety and security, combinatorial chemistry, human/computer interaction and animal health.

George Washington Carver, one of the nation’s most distinguished educators and agricultural researchers, received bachelor’s (1894) and master’s (1896) degrees from Iowa State. The electronic digital computer, one of the most important technological innovations of the 20th century, was invented at Iowa State in the late 1930s by John Vincent Atanasoff. Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of the League of Women Voters and a key strategist behind the final ratification of the 19th Amendment, graduated as valedictorian of the Iowa State Class of 1880.

Iowa State is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities (AAU), which consists of leading research universities in the U.S. and Canada.

Iowa State aspires to be the best university in the nation in advancing the land-grant ideals and putting science and technology to work. The University’s mission is to create, share, and apply knowledge to make Iowa and the world a better place.

http://www.add.lib.iastate.edu/spcl/exhibits/150/index.html

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