

# GRANT FURTHERS IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

The connections between Ray C. Anderson, IE 1956, HON Ph.D. 2011, the Ray C. Anderson Foundation, and the Institute are as strong and sustainable as the carbon-neutral flooring products he pioneered as founder and CEO of Interface. “Ray loved Georgia Tech, and he believed in what could be done through Tech to improve the world,” said John A. Lanier, executive director for the Ray C. Anderson Foundation as well as Anderson’s grandson.

Now, the Foundation is funding research led by Marilyn Brown, Regents Professor and Brook Byers Professor of Sustainable Systems in the School of Public Policy in the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts. The research supports Drawdown Georgia. Inspired by Project Drawdown, a broad, international initiative to mitigate the effects of climate change to the point where levels of greenhouse gasses stop rising and instead begin to decline, Drawdown Georgia is a targeted approach to implementing the climate change solutions that are best suited to the state.

“There is probably no better person on planet Earth than Marilyn Brown, because of her expertise in climate and energy systems, to manage this team of researchers around a common goal,” Lanier said.

According to Lanier, the Atlanta-based Ray C. Anderson Foundation was “challenged by our Advisory Board in 2016 to do more regarding climate change. I was also serving on the board of Project Drawdown, and we began thinking about how the assets of the Foundation could make a difference on climate in Georgia.”

In January 2019, the Anderson Foundation committed to a series of grants for Drawdown Georgia, with funding directed to Georgia Tech and sub grants to be distributed to Emory University, the University of Georgia, and Georgia State University. “Marilyn Brown took the lead on the Phase 1 research, and we are so grateful to her and the entire research team,” Lanier said. A major accomplishment from this phase was identifying 20 high-impact carbon reduction solutions applicable within Georgia. “Project Drawdown doesn’t have specific



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directives for any region’s best climate solutions, so we needed to identify the best ones for Georgia and how to scale them,” Lanier said.

This current grant will be directed to Phase 2, “which is meant to help build out the research backbone of Drawdown Georgia,” he said. Phase 2 includes development of a tool that will “aggregate county-level data to measure our greenhouse gas inventory month by month,” Lanier explained. Data generated will help establish a baseline for Georgia’s net carbon footprint and assist in measuring success as climate solutions scale within the state. The research team will also develop specific plans for what it will take to scale the 20 individual solutions, beginning with a pilot set of five.

“Marilyn Brown is also taking the lead in Phase 2, and that includes managing various pieces of the project across all the universities and entities involved,” Lanier said. “If all goes well with the first five, we will develop plans for the rest of the 15 solutions.” ///

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For more information about Drawdown Georgia, visit [drawdownga.org](http://drawdownga.org) or contact Marilyn A. Brown, Regents Professor and Brook Byers Professor of Sustainable Systems at [marilyn.brown@pubpolicy.gatech.edu](mailto:marilyn.brown@pubpolicy.gatech.edu).

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