



Cornelius Blanding began his career in development work as an economic development intern for the Florida Department of Commerce assigned to the City of Miami Beach and since then has gained a broad experience base including rural, international and cooperative economic development.

His experiences include business and project development, management and marketing. He has over 25 years of experience serving black farmers, landowners and limited resource cooperatives as well as rural communities in the South and internationally. He has worked as a small business development & management consultant, manager of a multi-million dollar revolving loan fund, domestic and international project director, Director of Field Operations & Special Projects, Deputy Director and has been serving as the Executive Director of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund since 2015.

Cornelius has also served and continues to serve on various boards and committees, including the Bipartisan Policy Center's Farm & Forest Carbon Solutions Task Force, Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance Steering Committee, Socially Disadvantaged Farmers & Ranchers Policy Research Center's Advisory Board, Nationwide's Board Council, National Cooperative Business Association's Board of Directors, Cooperative Development Foundation Board, Agricultural Safety & Health Council of America, Southeast Climate Consortium, Presbyterian Committee on the Self Development of People, USDA State Emergency Board (Georgia), a Blue Ribbon Panel for the Duke Endowment's Rural Church Program Area and was appointed by the US Secretary of Agriculture to serve on the Land Tenure Sub-Committee of the USDA Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers & Ranchers.