**Program Area – Summary Points on the 21st Century Extension Professional**

**Fall Conference – debrief session on September 5, 2013**

***[Notes from Tom Coon and Robin Shepard]***

**Human Resources:**

PRIMARY DISCUSSION QUESTION: *How should job descriptions be written in order to attract a 21st Century Extension employee?*

1. Frequently our job descriptions are written by committee and they end up being too long with too many details.
2. We should be giving more consideration to questions such as “Why work for Extension?”
3. We need more attention to why Millennials (Generation Y) find our work interesting and challenging – thus attractive to their career choice. Why does this position matter and/or appeal to their interests?
4. We need to give more attention to the hidden benefits of working for Cooperative Extension. (e.g., millenials are looking for flexibility, work culture, opportunity to be innovative and creative.)
5. Our job/position description need to be kept short – the information they contain should get to the point

**Ag and Natural Resources:**

PRIMARY DISCUSSION QUESTION: *How should recruitment strategies change in order to attract employees with 21st Century skills and attributes?*

1. Our candidate pools tend to be shallow; and not many candidates are available (e.g., shortage especially in plant-based ag).
2. We need to share resources/information across institutions.
3. We need to amplify work of HR offices.
   1. Job postings – lean on Human Resources.
   2. Clearinghouse web sites – make use of collaborative website such as the JoE Jobs bank.
   3. Utilize “LinkedIn” groups and networks.
   4. Utilize facebook pages – and enhance the way we tell the story of ANR (other program areas) Extension work.
4. Retention – the emphasis needs to occur in the first 3 – 6 years of employment.
   1. Need to understand interests of different generations.
   2. Many new hires are women – which means we need greater support for women in the profession (e.g, cohort support, safety, etc.).
   3. ANR Career academy – identify mid-career individuals.

**Community Resoruce and Economic Development**

PRIMARY DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What interview strategies might elicit key personal attributes of a 21st Century Extension employee?*

1. Include opportunity for candidates to visit the community, work site, stakeholders
2. Use interview questions that require problem solving, communications, adaptability, integrity, etc. (e.g., situational type questions).
3. Rather than thinking of these as interviews, think of them as a tryout.
4. Involve stakeholders in the interview process.

**Associate Directors**

PRIMARY DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What educational programming skills will be needed by future Extension professionals that should be taught across all program areas?*

1. Teaching skills – skills associated with program design, evaluation, and multiple platforms for delivery.
2. Public issues, public engagement – when to get involved; and when to step back.
3. E-educator skills – social media, new technologies for instruction, information sharing.
4. Strategic broker (e.g., the sales person).
5. Business 101 – cost recovery, grants & contracts, generating fees, soliciting sponsorships/gifts
6. Team context competency – office reflects a team, statewide teams.
7. Organization Development – cross-cultural competencies.
8. The use of technology (distinguished between those who know how to use it and those who are savvy about its usage in teaching).
9. Emotional intelligence – self-awareness, situational awareness.
10. Participatory action research – for identifying and prioritizing needs.
11. Reflecting changing diversity of the population we serve – this needs to happen in recruiting and retention:
    1. Consider affinity groups
    2. Recruit from student organizations
    3. Cross-cultural immersion experiences for current staff

**Family Consumer Science**

PRIMARY DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What orientation strategies are most critical in order to support the 21st Century Extension professional?*

1. Mentors need to be trained and carefully selected; such mentors should also reflect 21st Century Extension professionals.
2. Online program for teaching and learning.
3. Focus on quality in social media.
4. Exercise caution with stereotypes.
5. Use technology from day one.
6. Ensure subject matter expertise.
7. Share resources across state lines.

**4-H/Youth Development**

PRIMARY DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What types of staff development will be most important in order to support the 21st Century Extension Professional?*

1. We need to create an environment where there is an “on ramp” for new faculty/staff (vs. stoplight image). Elements could include:
   1. Apprenticeship model
   2. Spend time learning from high performers at beginning
   3. Academy approach – sharing across states
   4. Cohorts across stateliness through technology
   5. Seek research on developmental stages of Extension professional
2. Content areas for the next generation of Extension Professionals include:
   1. program planning
   2. volunteer development
   3. staff supervision
   4. working in digital space
   5. being able to tell our story and its public value
   6. budgeting

**Finance:**

PRIMARY DISCUSSION QUESTION: *What type and level of compensation is needed to hire the next generation Extension employee?*

1. We need greater flexiblily in work schedules, work locations.
2. Will need to pay competitively, but our work environment and opportunities should help to keep them as they encounter competing opportunities

**Deans/Directors:**

1. We need to enhance our approach to Extension graduate assistantships in ways that will appeal to the Millennials (Generation Y)/
2. We should recruit from other disciplines (e.g., the Rising Stars program at ISU involves teams of interns in community settings that conduct projects that serve communities; and also the Plant health management major at Ohio State).
3. Our organizational Culture nees to be welcoming to diverse recruits;
4. We also need to determine what parts of our culture do we want to keep and what parts do we want to sunset?
   1. How to get rid of entitlement culture?
   2. How to infuse entrepreneurial culture?
   3. How can we reduce/eliminate the classism between specialists and educators?
   4. We need to identify and reward excellence.
   5. Enhance our office climate – improve it in ways that make it more welcoming.
5. We need to evaluate our investments (e.g., how do they match up with program priorities?).
6. Accountability – how can we create systems to track the work and reward what we’re looking for?
7. We need more discussion about our emerging 21st Century performance model and expectations (e.g., how does it need to change for 21st century professional?).
8. What actions will help us achieve a more effective workforce in the 21st Century?
   1. Resources
   2. Opportunities
   3. Relationships

**Evaluation and Program Planning:**

1. The “substance” in our educational programs is critical (e.g, what is it that is missing in the list of skills of our professionals):
   1. We need to be able to develop, deliver and evaluate programs that make a difference in the lives of those we serve
   2. We need strong evaluation competencies
   3. We need to be able to conduct situational analysis, of:
      * Critical issues
      * Bringing research to bear on these issues
   4. We need to be able to conduct systematic inquiry:

* Documenting impacts and our contribution to those effects
  1. We need to be reflective in practice:
     + Not just improvement mind-set
     + Document, share and disseminate what they learn about best practices (and ineffectual practices)

1. Evaluation capacity is critical to 21st Century professionals and more emphasis should be placed on this within our state systems.

Program Area Debriefs

Directors:

Next year’s conference is Sep. 8 – 10 in Fargo, ND

Goals for next year

1. Focus on 4-H recommendations and their implementations
2. Expanding use and contributions to the Measuring Excellence in Extension database
3. Evaluating leadership efforts – NC NELD & others – how are they meeting our needs

Evaluators: - Penny

1. Goals & Action plan
2. 8 individual, 6 states; network via phone conference periodically through the year – up to 19 participate, includes some state program leaders
3. Building evaluation capacity
   1. Involved in new staff orientation – 5 to 45 minutes – varies among states
   2. Involvement in working with local teams – especially on signature programs
4. Minnesota has five evaluators, one for each program area – work as a team
5. Two smaller issues –
   1. water quality evaluator (with R. Powers) for 0.25 fte;
   2. emergency response indicators
      1. will request directors appoint a small group to work on these

4-H – Barbara Stone

1. partnership agreement among NIFA, LGU/ECOP, National 4-H Council nearing signatures
2. common measures project advancing
3. new CEO at National 4-H Council – Jennifer Sirangelo – very supportive, very rigorous process
4. NC group seen as leaders and able to work collaboratively
5. Common measures – grounded in PYD, three mission areas; prioritized regional emphasis from among these to use for reporting against as a regional group
6. Efforts around feeding 9 billion people – follows on Battelle study; big idea: preparing youth for the most important jobs in a competitive global economy, through the lenses of science and agriculture – building logic model around this – they think this should be fundable
7. Growth goal for NC Region – 10% annual growth in sustained and short term youth numbers; try to reach 35 million by 2050 (? – for the region, cumulative vs. annual?);
8. emphasis on capacity building in metro areas and educators based in them

ANR – John Shutske

1. Relationships
   1. With private sector – spinoff of Battelle study (summer, 2012)
   2. With NSF, USAID, EPA in addition to USDA/NIFA
2. Readiness
3. Resources
4. Recruiting
5. Retention
6. Major efforts – ANR Academy – mid-career Extension professionals
7. Support & Build out Regional Water program –
   1. Effort of all program areas – ongoing support & attention needed
   2. Focus on leveraging new network for future growth
8. Follow up and pursue resources connected to new relationships
   1. EPA and private industry – wise use of new technologies
   2. USAID and others engaged in Internationalizing Extension (including R. Pardello in Minnesota)
   3. Maintaining robust “inventory” of specialist capacity and sharing resources/considering capacities in making hiring decisions – spreadsheet on dropbox site
9. Evaluating our results
   1. New relationships and connections, synergies
   2. New resources (dollars, ideas, diversifying our portfolio)
   3. Engagement of our faculty/educators – e.g. in new relationships under 3. Above
   4. Ultimately impact on acres, sustainability, dollars, quality of life/environment

FCS – Paula Peters

1. SNAP-Ed – issues revolving around funding and potential defunding; how are different states handling the unknown around SNAP-Ed funding – some with action plans in place; resulting in reduced positions in SNAP-Ed
   1. Still one of the largest sources of funding for Extension across the nation
   2. Estimate 1,100 employees in NCR related to SNAP-Ed
   3. As a result of recent publicity, are becoming more known by residents
   4. Need to share success stories and impact reports; need to put into a database and have training on writing impact stories
2. Health task force – Karen Bruns, Linda Cronk
   1. Health promotion strategy
3. A new Battelle study on human sciences
   1. Use the information to seek expanded funding of Extension work in this area

CRED – Greg Davis

1. 21st Century professional discussion – how to work together as a team to building collaborative professional development across state lines
2. Multi-state programming – working on revenue generation models – to foster working regionally; sharing programming resources, sharing staffing
3. Brent Elrod – new NPL for community & rural development

HR – Stacy Warner, KSU

1. Relationship to campus HR offices – vary by state, learned from those differences
2. Sarah Conley joined the group and contributed
3. Action plan – nothing created yet; but will be following up with each other on sharing resources, learning from each other

Business managers – Jeff Bassford, Nebraska

1. Discussed current budget situations in each state, salary increase plans, etc.
   1. Carry forward balances an issue this year – WI had a particular challenge this year
2. Conference call with federal contacts
   1. REEPort issues – how to manage & utilize – shared challenges with federal partners – few answers available to date
   2. Perspective on farm bill, appropriation, sequestration – don’t know much, but reinforced need to remain connected and share information – have a list-serve for that purpose
3. Discussion questions about 21st Century Extension professional – Dan Malacara reported earlier; noted that being competitive in salary is important, but don’t need to exceed competitors – environment can make a difference at that point.
4. Meeting next year planning.
5. Need to find ways to help support programming and not make financial processes an impediment to mission – growth opportunities

Associate Directors – no report