Meeting Minutes with Written Reports
Lied Lodge & Conference Center
Nebraska City, Nebraska
March 14-15, 2018
Presiding – Chuck Hibberd, Chair

5 Big Idea Conversations:

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kglobal Return on Investment .............................................. 3
Theme-based Plan of Work Reporting .................................. 4
Strengthening AFRI Grant Application .................................. 6
Private Resource Mobilization (renamed-Extension Resource and Partnership Development) ........................................ 7

Agenda Attachments: January 2018 ECOP minutes (URL), CES Strategic Agenda (12-13), ECOP Finance Update (14-15), Guide to Big Idea about Plan of Work – Item #4 (16-17)

Written Reports:

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STOP
BEFORE U PRINT
37 pages long
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2018, 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

OPENING BUSINESS – Chuck Hibberd
Chuck Hibberd brought the meeting to order. Attendance is recorded on page 10. The minutes from last meeting (URL) were approved by unanimous consent.

1. How can Cooperative Extension contribute to the university-level mission of our land-grant university?

Chuck Hibberd: Introduced Mike Boehm, Vice Chancellor Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resource, University of Nebraska-Lincoln PowerPoint (URL): Big Ideas! Cooperative Extension – a look over the horizon. Changing demographics and complexity, huge issues. Collaboration and competition among land-grant universities and other universities. Feeding America and the world – food insecurity extends over urban and rural areas. Data management with respect to human biology, smart farms, health care, etc. Our work is about shifting not drifting, not linear progression; think about linear progression of classrooms. Trends – MSU work in Flint, telemedicine in Nebraska and New Mexico, engagement across teaching/research/extension, Lumina’s work, coordinated student attainment across all education institutions, etc. CE of today needs to be open, humble and cultural brokering within the institutions. It’s about culture, not program; evolution from county agent/educator to clinical faculty, professor of practice, university ambassador, etc. Changes at UNL – staff promotion policies on a statewide basis, engagement with higher education institutions, interstate cooperation for student attainment, regional education compacts, agents/educators as classroom instructors, etc. Degree completion strategies – credentialing, accreditation models, leveraging community education assets, interdisciplinary approaches, etc. Raising the value of extension in interim administrative environments – run the marathon, be humble, listen, understand the culture, focus on leadership transitions, empower interims.

a. Small Group Discussion (Click Title to view Online Summary; URL)
Jim Woodell: Welcome to register for CICEP/CEO Conference: Creative Placemaking for Healthy Communities, June 25-28. Two things learned from this discussion: 1) Move away from going “broadly” to accomplish good things. More about the having a seat rather than a table. 2) Should not fear to Engage community first which positions universities to align with challenges.

b. Next Step
Review summary Small Group Discussion; ECOP will move forward to decide how to engage on these issues.

2. Updates –

a. ECOP Budget FY2017 Final and 2018 – see 8.a.
Chuck Hibberd: Challenged committees to consider investment opportunities.

b. ESCOP – Godfrey
Bob Godfrey: Items discussed at the ESCOP meeting held on March 5, 2018 at the CARET/AHS meeting in Washington DC. ESCOP supports the “One Ask” relevant to NIFA capacity program funding for the FY 19 budget. Consolidation of lines in NIFA budget was discussed with a general agreement with the concept as along as it doesn’t cost any funding to any lines that are
consolidated. Gary Thompson, ESCOP Chair, will travel to Washington DC in April with ECOP Chair Chuck Hibberd, to meet with various funding agencies in efforts to enhance support and explore options for AES and CES activities. ESCOP announced a Diversity Award that is modeled after the ECOP Diversity award. There was discussion about the role of the Communications & Marketing Committee and what their charge is. Discussion took place on what is expected of them and kglobal, but there was no final resolution or action taken. Rick Klemme: 2019 Joint ESS/CES-NEDA planning is to begin soon.

c. Cornerstone (via Zoom) –
Jim Richards: FY 18 under Continuing Resolution (CR) that expires March 23. Committees completed review and Ag Appropriations has been reviewing budget. Report to be send as soon as possible. 2 week recess coming, FY19 will follow; resume April 1 under new Senate leadership. Likely another CR until after the election or later.

Hunt Shipman: SNAP-Ed Reforms the land-grants look forward to changes, seen as a phenomenal opportunity. Vonda Richardson – Will SNAP-Ed go through all land-grants or to states? Hunt Shipman: No details about states with more than 1 institution. Flow to states, but land-grant will have more administrative control, more clarity on this is to come.

Hunt Shipman: CARET/AHS Update – One pager will require some tweaking for next year; mindful of Non-land-grant colleges of agriculture.

3. Is kglobal meeting our expectations of social media engagement with decision-makers?
Ed Jones: Focus - Understand what kglobal is doing to address concerns on the Return on Investment. Committee was formed that will dig deeper into effectiveness. Sometimes we get stuck in a rut and better to periodically review investments. This is the spirit and guide for conversation.

$110K/yr investment for ECOP, a 3-way partnership. Intent has been a way to influence the influencers, those who determine our financial future. What does this mean in own institutions and what does it mean collectively?

Ed Jones: Q1 What are perceptions of kglobal’s work; any interaction?

• Bob Godfrey: ESCOP is having a similar conversation. No decision yet, waiting for ECOP. 
  AgIsAmerica campaign has not been as prominent as it once was. Perhaps need to look at other mechanisms.
• Coming out of the CARET meeting, a request a more formal proposal, touch points with communication specialists.
• Were there original measurable that determine success in the original contract?
• Very little if any. If capacity funding is the only measure, not much success. Activities in the states, not familiar with individual, underestimating the power of touchpoint with Congressional officials. The model of using Communications Specialist, therefore does not represent all institutions leading to under-representations. Not sure how it works now, therefore does not know what to ask for.
• Consistent with ESCOP, change charge for alignment, AgIsAmerica is speaking to the choir.
• Not all institutions have communication specialists. End target of capacity funding has historically been the focus. Often there has been any effort it requires significant effort to edit. Who are the
stakeholders who are willing to weigh-in on the conversation? Is there a way through social media who care and take action about a particular topic? – finding out how to do this well is key.

- Holding the line is a victory, but what is being done to connect to other advocacy efforts like CARET.
- There are some real scientific ways to track social meeting at National 4-H Council; Council engages with the metrics, sharing, 40K and 5K activities that are then shared out to institutions, as well as drawing in new partners (Microsoft).

Hunt Shipman: Quarterly reports available, used online advertising. At Communications and Marketing Committee meeting, more desire to have more outcome based analysis from kglobal. It is difficult. When we compare the ended 460 individual email contacts to members of Congress – this is the most ever. 20 email requests per year is the most members of Congress received in support of land-grant programs. Looking for more guidance on interacting with communicators or administrators.

Ed Jones: From Cornerstones perspective, what does success look like: Hunt Shipman: being able to have buy-in from all segments of BAA to have agreement on what is the right approach and what is being advocating. There are too many anecdotes, ideas, concerns, need more system-wide approaches.

Ed Jones: Q2 Are there other examples of success? Hunt Shipman: Kgloal is running a campaign, Twitter and Facebook, with pork producers. Kgloal used the bacon eaters for advocating for vaccine bank.

Ian Maw: Caution - Have realistic expectations; to increase funding from Federal Government is not realistic. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) seems to have no interest in capacity funding and would cut it out entirely. With the current contract, voices were heard, and came to the rescue.

Bill Hare: Comparing when having Cornerstone alone we held our own. When we added kgloal, we are still holding our own. Ian: Instead compare with other federal agencies. Doug Steele: National system has never spoken with one, unified voice and this is always an issue. There needs to be more engagement, the video campaign was a good experiment. Scott Reed: Consider design a purposeful evaluation (on the strategy) for behavior change. Mike Fitzner: Are specialists involved in the evaluations process? Chuck Hibberd: How this works may influence the outcome; Waits for the prompt by kgloal as opposed to reaching out to kgloal. Casey Mull/Rachel Welborn: Shared dismal social media activity of AgIsAmerica campaign. What if an RFP were considered with other marketing companies?

Next step? See 8. a. ii.

4. Can we redesign or refocus the current Plan of Work reporting model to achieve the above premises? – Hibberd (Guide found on 15-16)

Chuck Hibberd: Do you buy in these 2 points? Engage POW/REEport evolution conversation at NEROAC and beyond. NIFA wants to be engaged in this conversation – at the Director level (support by retiring Bart Hewitt).
Doug Steele – Not satisfying NIFA yet we are delivering what is being asked. Balancing the 2 and carefully not missing the target again. What is the tie in at NERAOC? Yes. Louie Tupas: POW portal is adaptable to a new reporting strategy sometime in the future, not immediately. Denise Eblen: Very open to this discussion with upcoming transition of leadership, Director. Is there interest in the thematic/priorities approaches to reporting?

Charge: Do we want to pursue and what is the path?

With a model if themes were targeted enough, copy likable programs already in existence. Working as a system, go together, or… Opportunity to narrow the number of descriptors for the National Impacts Database. The requirement of the report is the driver, not the substance of the report. How to align both perspectives. Hard to find Cooperative Extension mentioned in NIFA Annual Report. Maybe identify 10 issues and this changes over time. Systems approach, (like the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation partnership model) multiple ways to loosen up on the delivery in the states/institutions.

Louie Tupas: NSF – 10 big ideas; starts with big data, but not broad. If we could get this right will help ESCOP, too. Bob Godfrey: the duplicative effort is the biggest frustration.

Q - How are the “contacts” perceived by NIFA? A – Though valuing the effort, but knowing administration, the outcomes are relied upon. It is driven by administration. Example: Secretary’s charge for rural prosperity.

Robin Shepard: Multi-state approach through facilitation, across program-area, not too narrow by this, identifying the buckets. Can use the National Impacts Database to group impacts into themes, 3 or 4 survived. The challenge was that the reporting group, finesse was involved, only so much and not too fast.

Lou Swanson: Why don’t we focus on being nimble to respond rather than to focus on capacity funding for Smith-Lever and 1890s, which is often on the 10% of the total budget by institution.

Louie: Suggests talking about this by region; responsive to state/regional specific issue; like managing listeria outbreak in Colorado

Chuck: Moving forward?

Lyla Houglum: Go through an exercise to determine the value of capacity funds to respond to vexing problems. Denise Eblen: Should be useful for NIFA and to Extension.

Carolyn Williams: Sees an urgency to not “drift” but “shift” on this topic.

Bill Hare: Asked if NIFA there could be a review of NIFA Annual Report by Extension. Denise Eblen: with a new Communications Director coming aboard, she can pursue a process for this.

Next steps: Reporting is a #1 topic. Each committee to come up with some guidance this afternoon. Discuss again at committee reports. See 11. e.
5. How can Extension Directors/Administrators strengthen applications for ARFI projects? – Fitzner/Eblen/Tupas

Mike Fitzner: In 2017 integrated opportunities 40% were integrated, $150M. Critical Agricultural Research and Extension (CARE) is still a great opportunity, 60% of projects submitted and funded with extension lead, though applications are falling off.

Tips:

- Assign someone to search for grant opportunities, staying on top of existing and emerging and Communicate with faculty
- Challenge individual faculty to apply
- Get in direct contact with program leader and understand if it is competitive opportunity
- Know the rules (workshops from past awardees)
- Remind how important in the integrated teams and the role of Extension faculty to understand the need and relationships
- Success depends on compelling application
- Encourage faculty – can be very discouraging (30% success). Take criticism as constructive and build on lesson learned for the next attempt.
- Volunteer and serve on review panel to understand the process better. Virtual panels are growing.
- Keep websites up to date.

Q/A –

- No restrictions on sharing the details that might help another individual how to apply.
- Kathy Tweeten: Make the initial paragraph very lay-friendly.
- Louie Tupas: Strengthening relationships with the Liaison, should receive letters of introduction. The approach is team-based. Request for exploratory funding is also available. Building a method of rapid communication of new funding opportunities. Let’s continue the conversation to share what helps.
- There are 2 programs in human resources.
- Have requests for applications changed to include Extension? Yes. Currently, in the front to state what problem is being solved.
- Of the projects are funding, which ones primarily focus on Extension work? Data tracking break in basic, applied, and Extension. Work is underway to leverage this information which will get a handle on this.

6. APLU BAA Update –

Ian Maw:

- Educational opportunities animal science, veterinarians and MDs. Significant recommendations, Establish a university research organization bringing together antimicrobial resistance. An institute is being form, proposals are out, targeted veterinary schools and others with Ag, Medical, and Veterinary Medicine. Due April 1. Screening committee is formed, headed with Cathie Woteki. Will go quickly following the deadline.
Happy to answer questions. Will be a subscription based network. Conversation are in play with a few charitable trusts and FFAR.

- North American Membership – Extensive discussion about Extension in Mexico. Promising. In the US is participating with Canada, Europe mutual exchange for educational conferences. Venue in Europe is to be determined.
- Changes in membership of Policy Board, assumed by Orlando Means. Special election was held to fill vacancy of Chair-elect. Mark Reiger has been elected.
- Chuck Hibberd is serving on the search committee to fill VP after Ian’s retirement, Alan Grant is chair. Will move forward beginning, the first part of April.

Rachel Welborn: Update on investment of Rapid Response for Civil Dialogue – Announced Coming Together Collaboration; Promoting racial understanding
  - Training session in August
  - Webinar in April
  - Boot camp after PILD in April

Jo Britt-Rankin: Missouri State University Extension reorganization, new staffing model, update. In all 114 counties and St. Louis, a Community Development Specialist, half-time convening, other half working in trios or pairs to develop program planning. Final version will roll out very soon. Transition begins in summer. Full implementation by Jan. 1, 2019. Overall, everyone is ready for the transition to the implemented, though emotions are mixed.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018, 8:00 A.M. - NOON

7. What opportunities does Private Resource Mobilization (PRM) bring to Cooperative Extension and how do we get there?

Tom Dobbin: Private Resource Mobilization Report:

Motion from committee: Request ECOP endorsement to continue the work of the committee so that we can further refine the Framework; meet jointly with the EDA Team for the Committee’s second meeting so that we can co-create and refine the Framework; request that each region seek alignment for a national enterprise and regional budgets to determine if it’s advancing the national priorities. Approved.

8. Committee Reports
   a. Executive – Hibberd

Touching base on the financial report. The carryover is mainly due to hiring a part-time Executive Director. Ed Jones will work with Rick Klemme and Sandy Ruble to develop a job description for a National Office Assistant/Associate Director. In a motion by Bill Hare and second Vonda Richardson,
ECOP received the finance reports and information and affirmed the decision of the ECOP Executive Committee.

i. 4-H Leadership Committee –
Ed Jones: 1) The EDA Team will receive talking points/questions for Regional Meeting agendas regarding National Congress 2) ECOP Executive Committee affirmed the stance of the 4-H National Leadership Committee that “all youth programming in Extension is by definition 4-H and that the preferred name for Extension Youth Development programming is 4-H Youth Development.” Discussion: Stance is intended to be broad so that 4-H activities outside of “club meetings” would fall into the context and included in step 2, accurate reporting. Also, the importance of training in risk management. 3) Name and emblem; 4 applications were submitted for use and were denied based on implied endorsement; Tractor Supply, Joann, Deeds, Subway (new). Sonny Ramaswamy asked ECOP to weigh in. 4-H Leadership Committee endorsed unanimously as a way of making 4-H more visible and resources available. A proper motion from Executive Committee for the 4-H Leadership Committee to go back and ask USDA to reconsider this decision was unanimously approved by ECOP. Motion by Ed Jones, for the 4-H National Leadership Committee to be involved in the screening of future applications of 4-H Name and Emblem use; second by Fred Schlutt; unanimously approved.

ii. 2018-2019 ECOP Investment Options
Chuck Hibberd – Alignment around the land-grant mission. Small group (3) needed to do this. Fred Schlutt, Marshall Stewart, Chuck Hibberd, Bill Hare, plus Lou Swanson volunteered, assign as a special workgroup. ECOP working with ESCOP: kglobal will have a push April-May for Farm Bill. See how it goes; monitoring the upcoming farm bill campaign. Connect with ESCOP. Submit a notice to BAA that ECOP/Cooperative Extension Section is considering withdrawing support beginning in 2019. Cornerstone does a good job, but what is missing is a help with strategic messaging with Congress in the context of what matters, help same with CARET and PILD. Rigid timing of the CARET meeting is not making sense anymore. Who is involved in making the decision. Bob Godfrey will work on contacting Gary Thompson. Ian has requested a meeting with Chuck Hibberd, Gary Thompson, and Cornerstone. kglobal review committee headed by Ed Jones is shifting to a conversation of what strategic partner expectations look like.

Chris Watkins – Considering 2 distinct Excellence in Extension awards so that field-based educators can receive National recognition. Will put for a proposal after this award cycle. New Director/Administrator Orientation at NEDA – Be sure to not be duplicative of visits to DC by Chuck Hibberd and BAA/NIFA Administrators Orientation. EDA Team will form the panel – What do we wish we knew? LEAD21 Chair is Brian Kowalkowski, College of the Menominee; Class 15 will open in November 2018.

10. Program – Boerboom
Chris Boerboom: Rapid Response to Civil Dialogue: Train the trainer plan to meet 20 states developing teams. Thanks to ECOP support to bring national effort to fruition. Final success. Request: Scholarship to ensure that 1890 and 1994 are engaged in process. 20 scholarship/$500 up to $10K intent to have available. Pilot support for implementation and evaluation back to the
states. Mississippi for $5K for 3 additional states for the coming together program. Motion from committee is to use up to $25K by ECOP. Administrative arrangement through Mississippi State. Motion approved.

11. Other Actions/Updates
   a. RWJF Partnership
      Michelle Rodgers –is renamed – Well Connected Communities. April 6, how other states can become ready to apply for the next Phase. Getting to know Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The system goal is to have 66 institutions, 13 currently, site visits are in progress. Questions about transparency. Being recognized by Harken with an award, among 60 applicants, top wellness programs in the nation – recognition as the Cooperative Extension System. Example: In Lincoln, county health ranking, 10 by 10 block life expectancy is age 60.
   b. 1994 Tribal Colleges–
      Brian Kowalkowski – NIFA is making tribal college repetition at ECOP meeting possible; important move forward. Federal funding stayed the same, while the number of intuition increases; 34, 36 and perhaps 37; funding shrinks every time this number increases. Challenge: personnel/staffing changes. Minneapolis November 3-5, 2018 will meet in conjunction with – Seeking ways for more significant ways to partner
   c. Regional Rural Development Centers –
      Rachel Welborn: Presented as information: http://rrdc.info/rural_america_counts.html
      Chuck Hibberd: Lift up webinar on April 20, 2018 – Help to inform Cooperative Extension Section on the rural prosperity initiative
   d. 2018 NEDA Planning
      Fred Schlutt – Will be held in Portland, Oregon encouraging use of the Max from the airport and Tram system runs in the city. NUEL activity, Learners Environments, eXtension Foundation, Business Meeting, Rural-Urban Divide,
   e. Theme-Oriented Reporting Task Force
      Asked Brian Kowalkowski from 1994’s, Carolyn Williams from 1890s, Chris Boerboom or someone else from the Program Committee help frame this moving forward. EDA Team member for support.
   f. CES Capital Quest
      Insightful DC experience. May 29 beginning at 1:00 p.m. on the morning of May 30. Engage with Rural Development, NACo, evening will be a social, look at eXtension Basics, for new directors and administrators’ orientation landing page redesign.
   g. Opioid initiative
      Rick Klemme: Mark Skidmore is organizing a meeting in the next week or so. Mark is using a Post Doc form Michigan State University. Ahlishia Shipley, NIFA has an in-house proposal for more support. Materials sharing.
      Chuck Ross: Catalog of resources. Iowa and Penn State and UVM, sprout prosper program. In the process of conversations on The Hill some type of pilot, short timeframe. USDA-NIFA interest is key to addressing the issue that haunting communities, other agencies might use Extension as well.
      Robin Shepard: Primary topic of North Central Region – Mark Skidmore Columbus April 24-25. Trying to map the relationships/activities that are taking place.
      Chris Boerboom indicated that the Qualtrics survey to collect Opioid programs is still running. It may be found at http://ecopmondayminute.blogspot.com/p/blog-page.html
Remaining 2018 ECOP Meeting Dates:

- Thursday, 4/19/18, 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time via Zoom
- Thursday, 6/21/18, 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time via Zoom
- Monday and either Tuesday or Wednesday, July 16-18 in conjunction with Joint COPs meeting in Guadalajara, Mexico
- Thursday, 9/20/18, 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time via Zoom
- Wednesday-Thursday, October 3, 1-5 p.m. and October 4, 8 a.m. – noon in conjunction with NEDA/CES Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon
ECOP Membership

Voting Members
- Chuck Hibberd, Executive Committee Chair, University of Nebraska
- Ed Jones, Executive Committee, Chair-elect, Virginia Tech
- Fred Schlutt, Executive Committee Past-chair, University of Alaska
- Chris Boerboom, Program Committee Chair, North Dakota State University
- Tom Dobbins, Personnel Committee & Chair of Private Resource Mobilization Program Oversight Committee, Clemson University
- Beverly Durgan, Personnel Committee, University of Minnesota Extension
- Bill Hare, Executive Committee, University of District of Columbia
- Gary Jackson, Program Committee, Mississippi State Extension Service
- Mark Latimore, Executive Committee, Fort Valley State University
- Scott Reed, Program Committee, Oregon State University
- Vonda Richardson, Personnel Committee, Florida A&M University
- Chuck Ross, Program Committee, University of Vermont
- Louis Swanson, Personnel Committee, Colorado State University
- Chris Watkins, Personnel Committee Chair, Cornell University
- Carolyn Williams, Program Committee Vice-Chair, Prairie View A&M University

Ex-officio, Non-voting Members
- Rick Klemme, ECOP Executive Director, Cooperative Extension/ECOP
- Doug Steele, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension – ECOP Budget & Legislative Committee, Chair, ECOP Representative to BAA Policy Board of Directors
- Louie Tupas, Denise Eblen, and Mike Fitzner – USDA-NIFA
- Jo Britt-Rankin, Board on Human Sciences, University of Missouri
- Michelle Rodgers, Program Manager, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Culture of Health Partnership, University of Delaware
- Chris Geith, CEO, and eXtension Foundation
- Robert “Bob” Godfrey, Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy, University of Virgin Islands
  - Jason Henderson, eXtension Foundation Board Chair, Purdue University
- Jennifer Sirangelo, National 4-H Council
- Jake Tibbitts, Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching

Executive Director and Administrator Team
- Ron Brown, Southern Region
- Lyla Houglum, Western Region
- Rick Klemme, DC Office
- Albert Essel, 1890 Region
- Sandy Ruble, DC Office
- Robin Shepard, North Central Region
- Ami Mitchell, Northeast Region
  - beginning April 1, 2018

Back to Agenda

Guests
- Mike Boehm, University of Nebraska, Lincoln
- Brian Kowalkowski, College of Menominee Nation
- Ian Maw, APLU
- Casey Mull, JCEP
- Patrick Proden, NUEL, Oregon State University
- Jim Richards, Cornerstone Government Affairs, (Via Zoom)
- Kathy Tweeten, JCEP
- Rachel Welborn, SRRDC, Civil Dialogue Rapid Response
- Jim Woodell, APLU (Via Zoom)
Emphasis Areas and Ongoing Priorities for the Cooperative Extension Section
Chuck Hibberd, 2018 Chair

Overall Theme: Science-informed decisions and policy

The Cooperative Extension Section (CES) is led by Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), a 15-member board representing the five Cooperative Extension regions. ECOP’s role is to identify and implement member-driven opportunities designed to enhance resources, relationships and recognition for Cooperative Extension nationally. ECOP’s work addresses four core themes:

1) building partnerships and acquiring resources,
2) increasing strategic marketing and communications,
3) enhancing leadership and professional development,
4) strengthening organizational functioning.

EMPHASIS AREAS

Capacity Funding (Steele/Hibberd) – Build on advocacy strategies to increase federal capacity funding (Smith-Lever and 1890s Extension) initiated by Fred Schlutt and Bret Hess (2016-17 ECOP and ESCOP Chairs, respectively). Promote and expand participation in the Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) program as a major Extension advocacy tool. Advocacy messaging will be focused on Cooperative Extension’s value relative to:

- Science in action – continue to leverage the research and engagement initiatives of Land-grant universities.
- Proactive, flexible and collaborative action on disasters, threats, emerging opportunities, etc.
- Extension provides a national reach with the opportunity for meaningful local impact.
- Opportunities to expand high impact programs such as 4-H youth development or water or health.
- Provide value for federal partners (as the outreach/engagement arm of the federal government).

Note: This messaging could be strengthened with a mission statement and core values reflecting the intent of the Cooperative Extension Section.

Private Resource Mobilization (Dobbins) – Establish and implement a model for private funding of national initiatives as a complement to public funding for Extension.

Collaboration with Federal Entities (Hibberd/Jones/Latimore) – Focus on clarifying roles for Cooperative Extension with federal agencies. Specific examples include NRCS, NSF – Broader Impacts, the Departments of Health & Human Services (CDC, FDA/FSMA) and Housing and Urban Development as well as the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research. Frame these conversations around emerging opportunities in the following areas:

- Nutrition, health and wellness
- Positive youth development
- Water
- Food production and food security
- Community development

Priority outcomes for these conversations include collaboration opportunities as well as programmatic and/or capacity funding.

Farm Bill Initiatives (Schlutt/Steele/Hibberd/Essel) – Engage appropriate parties to address:

- SNAP-Ed/EFNEP:
  - Present a coherent argument to grow funding for SNAP-Ed and EFNEP.
  - Funding directed to LGU-based Cooperative Extension.
  - Seek increases to support 1890’s and 1994’s, as well as 1862s.
• 1890s - change carryover provision language of 1444 to be consistent with the Smith-Lever carryover provision.
• Clarify role of NRCS and Cooperative Extension relative to conservation education.
• Extension Farm Bill training through Farm Service Agency

**Strengthen our Working Relationship with NIFA** (Hibberd/Jones/Latimore)
• Seek a streamlined, impactful reporting framework that aligns state and NIFA needs.
• Strengthen collaborative relationships with NIFA leadership and NPLs with monthly on-site conversations and seminars (Extension Directors/Administrators invited).
• Explore and provide input on NPL priorities for AFRI-funded Extension projects as well as Extension Director/Administrator participation on these review panels.
• Work with NIFA leadership to strengthen state liaison roles.

**Integration With Key Partners**
• Consider a reciprocal liaison relationship with the National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) to strengthen our engagement with urban Extension.
• Invite our 1994 Tribal College Cooperative Extension Service partners to identify a liaison to ECOP.

**ONGOING PRIORITIES**
• In collaboration with ESCOP, review the value of the ESS-CES-AHS Communications and Marketing (CMC) Project to Cooperative Extension and identify the most appropriate path forward (Ed Jones).
• Collaborate with ESCOP to strengthen the Land-grant message of accomplishment and impact. Enhance our visibility by strengthening participation in [www.landgrantimpacts.org](http://www.landgrantimpacts.org). And, work with NIFA to make the database more useful to our federal partner.
• Continue our commitment to collaboration with ESCOP and the ESCOP Science and Technical Committee by establishing a strong working relationship with new ESCOP Chair Gary Thompson.
• Expand strategic alliances that benefit Cooperative Extension with national partners (e.g. NASDA, NC-FAR, NACo, SoAR, CFARE, ESCOP, APLU BAA, National Academy of Science-Breakthrough 2030 project and others).
• Identify ways to support the Innovation Initiative led by eXtension.
• Through the eXtension Foundation Board of Directors, assure that eXtension is an active contributor to the advancement of Extension education across the nation.
• Enhance leadership for and increase participation in 4-H positive youth development through collaboration among Extension Directors/Administrators, NIFA 4-H Headquarters and National 4-H Council through the work of the ECOP 4-H Leadership Committee.

Specific initiatives or efforts designed to strengthen Cooperative Extension and ECOP’s operations and value:
• Demonstrate ECOP’s value to the members of the Cooperative Extension Section.
• Strengthen ECOP functions by moving from a reporting model to a deliberative, forward-looking, action-oriented framework. Similarly, review the effectiveness of ECOP’s committee structure and consider alternatives.
• Provide opportunities for directors/administrators to improve personal, organizational and system leadership skills, including an annual conference and a monthly Next Generation Extension – Learning for Leaders webinar series.
• Implement national Excellence in Extension as well as Diversity Awards.
• Partner with JCEP to strengthen national leadership of Extension’s professional associations.
• On-board a new Executive Director for the Cooperative Extension System.
2017 ECOP National Leadership FINAL

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<th>ECOP Carryover (Holdings)--&gt;</th>
<th>Budgeted Amount</th>
<th>ACTUAL AMOUNTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>2016: $477,527</td>
<td>Income-Expense</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<td>2017: $603,148</td>
<td>Only 1 assessment unpaid</td>
<td>Income</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Expense</td>
<td>$637,200</td>
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<th>ECOP National Office Operations</th>
<th>$414,143</th>
<th>$308,177</th>
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<tr>
<td>Committee, Task Force and Liaison Travel and Expenses</td>
<td>$9,325</td>
<td>$3,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOP Executive Committee</td>
<td>$6,800</td>
<td>$23,391</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Lighthouse, ED Search, NC-FAR, SoAR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personnel Committee Excellence in Extension Award (1 recipient did not attend)</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$11,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>** Program Committee (Award, Health, Civil Discourse)</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
<td>$21,663</td>
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<tr>
<td>4-H Leadership Committee</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Priorities</td>
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<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Impacts Database Committee</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
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</table>

ESS-CES-AHS Communications and Marketing Effort

111,331

kglobal

Cornerstone Government Affairs

22,000

* 1 institution did not pay assessment. Interest will increase this amount slightly. Due to extraordinary attendance and concessions offered by The Essex for NEDA, ECOP received more income than anticipated.

** At the request of the Program Committee, ECOP Revised the budget on July 17 to include $10,000 toward the Rapid Response on Civil Discourse.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) Account
Assessment supports the work of the Program Development Team national office at South Dakota State University. On 9/22/16 ECOP approved this assessment in the total amount of $150,000 annually for 2017, 2018, and 2019, billed to participating institutions based on a one-year amount of SNAP-Ed receipts obtained through the federal competitive process. In the fall of each year, institutions are surveyed to determine participation in SNAP-Ed and the amount of money received. Billing occurs in January along with other assessments from APLU. Computations are based on the percentage of funding received among the participating institutions. The SNAP-Ed Program Development Team is responsible for contacting institutions to encourage payment. Quarterly receipts are paid in full, so the account carries a zero balance. The outstanding balance for 2017 SNAP-Ed assessment was $7,660 owed by 2 institutions.

Go to next page for 2018 Finance Report
ECOP National Leadership 2018

2017 ECOP Holdings by APLU Holdings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Approved Budget</th>
<th>Actual Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Beginning Balance</td>
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<td>Assessments</td>
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<td><strong>Expense (explained below)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ECOP National Office Operations</strong></td>
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<td>* Salary and benefits (originally calculated for full time ED)</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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<td>APLU Support for ECOP (same as FY17 based on 1.065 FTE)</td>
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<td>(Office space, conference/meeting support, human resources, payroll, IT Help, legal assistance, etc.)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECOP Executive Committee</strong></td>
<td>$6,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting support</td>
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<td>Memberships &amp; related fees</td>
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<td><strong>Personnel Committee Excellence in Extension Award</strong></td>
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<td>kglobal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cornerstone Government Affairs</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>3,667</td>
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*On December 14, 2017 ECOP Executive Committee extended the contract with Executive Director Rick Klemme until April 30, 2020 at 0.60 FTE. Signed agreement is pending with APLU. A list of Executive level projects are under review by Rick and ECOP Chair Chuck Hibbard for additional contracts outsourcing.

**This budget line is designed to support efforts of ECOP in order to advance strategic priorities. Every effort is made to use funds from annual income. If needed, reserves can be used as long as a $200,000 carryover is retained in order to cover approximately six months of ECOP National Office staffing and related costs (Approved by ECOP July 2016).

***On October 15, 2017 ECOP voted to spend $5,000 for travel expenses for the National impacts Database Content Writing Team to meet face-to-face, matching ESCOP contribution.

2018 Budget was approved by ECOP on July 18, 2017.
Big Idea topic: 2018 ECOP Spring Meeting Agenda #4
March 14, 2018, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Topic: Plan of Work Reporting Opportunities

Premise:
The purpose of Plan of Work reporting is twofold:
2. Providing NIFA with information to be used to advocate for Smith-Lever funding with USDA leadership and Congress.

Proposition:
Can we redesign or refocus the current Plan of Work reporting model to achieve the above premises?

Key points:
1. Federal reporting was identified as a key issue in the development of the ECOP Strategic Agenda.
2. The current reporting format can result in much detailed work and long reports.
3. A theme-oriented reporting model could provide USDA-NIFA with better quality, higher impact products to inform their advocacy with USDA leadership and Congress. For example, “xx Extension programs are engaged in the opioid issue and here are three great examples of the work being done in this area.”
   Note: Broad themes might be difficult to summarize, narrow themes could provide more focused information.
4. In exchange for increased reporting expectations relative to time and effort, a more streamlined Plan of Work reporting format could provide some relief to Extension Directors/Administrators.
5. Extension Directors/Administrators would need to consider being open to the idea that they would focus on fewer topic, but higher quality reports that may not cover everything that we do.
6. Engagement with ESCOP and their scientific roadmap could help align integrated research/extension efforts.
7. USDA-NIFA leadership has expressed enthusiasm for this approach.

Concept:
1. Develop a process to identify 8-12 big themes or questions to focus our reporting.
2. Reframe our Plan of Work documents to reflect these 8-12 big themes.
3. Initiate this reporting format in FY19?

Agenda:
1:00 pm  Framing conversation
What is your reaction to the premises stated above?
What would you need to consider adopting a theme-oriented Plan of Work reporting model?

1:20 pm How should we approach to theme identification?

Frameworks already in place:

Land-grant Impacts (each priority has numerous tags):
1. Agricultural Systems
2. Energy and Byproducts
3. Environmental Stewardship
4. Food Security
5. Nutrition and Health
6. Youth, Families and Communities

NIFA Science Emphasis Areas:
1. Agroclimate Science
2. Bioeconomy, Bioenergy, Bioproducts
3. Education & Multicultural Systems
4. Environmental Systems
5. Family & Consumer Sciences
6. Food Safety
7. Human nutrition
8. Sustainable Ag Production Systems
9. Youth Development

Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity
1. eConnectivity for rural America
2. Improving quality of life
3. Supporting a rural workforce
4. Harnessing technological innovation
5. Economic development

Discussion questions:
1. Should we approach this from the perspective of Themes or Issues (challenges, problems or opportunities) or something else?
2. What challenges do we need to address to move this idea forward?

1:50 pm Wrap-up
What next steps might position this question for progress?
Who should participate in this discussion?
Is someone willing to propose a motion to formalize our interest in moving this conversation forward?

2:00 pm Conclude
Date: Monday, October 1st (6 pm) through October 4th (12 Noon)  
Embassy Suites Downtown Portland, Oregon (309 SW Pine Street)

Note:  NEED and WEDA Meetings – Monday, October 1st - 8:30 am to 5 pm  
      Registration Opens at 1 pm on Monday, October 1st.  
      Welcome Reception – 6 pm, Monday, October 1st.

Transportation:  
TriMet Metro Service - $2.50/day  
Parking - $35/Day  
Taxi - $35/one way

Planning Committee:  
Amy Ouellette (New Hampshire)  
Laura Perry Johnson (Georgia)  
Scott Reed (Oregon)  
Dawn Mellion-Patin (Southern University)  
Marshall Stewart (Missouri)  
Fred Schlutt (Alaska, ECOP - Past Chair)

Themes:  
Developing a Learners Environment  
The Rural Urban Divide  
Urban Extension by NUEL
The House version of the draft Farm Bill proposal is expected to be released in March 2018. The information provided here is current as of today. The Senate version of the Farm Bill is traditionally behind and released after the House version.

Extension and the entire land-grant system are funded in the research title of the Farm Bill. The primary focus for the Extension Section in this year’s research title has been on nutrition education. To understand the direction this effort is going, two points must be acknowledged:

1. There is going to be significant change in the two national nutrition education programs (EFNEP and SNAP-Ed).
2. The House Agriculture Appropriations Committee contacted ECOP leadership and asked for assistance in giving Extension a larger role in national nutrition education programs.

In addition, after reading and following the Farm Bill deliberations, I assume that SNAP and SNAP-Ed will see reduced funding. It has never been clear to me what the future status of EFNEP is going to be in any discussions.

During the past 14 months, we have provided the House Appropriations Committee the information and ideas it requested. The past 14 months can be easily characterized as hurry up and give us information yesterday, but there have been months without any communications. We have been steady in our recommendations to the House Committee:

1. That the revenue go through Extension (land-grant system) to manage and allocate.
2. That Extension manage the current state partnerships and create new partnerships.
3. All partners use Extension-approved, research-based curriculum.
4. All local/regional/state nutritional educations programs be thoroughly evaluated and a comprehensive annual report be submitted.

We have no idea what the committee is going to recommend. Many competing groups have their own ideas and proposals. Until the committee releases its draft copy, I would recommend the following philosophy:

“Those who know are not talking and those who are talking do not know.”

One other item related to the 2018 Farm Bill is the work ECOP is doing with NRCS, primarily related to soil science. Robin Shepard, NCCEA executive director, along with his cohort, Jeff Jacobsen, NCRA executive director, have been in conversation with NRCS leadership to identify potential funding, teaching and collaborative relationships at the national and state level. NRCS is funded in the conservation title of the Farm Bill. Cooperative Extension has never received funding outside the research title.

Fred Schlutt
Chair ECOP CLP
Summary of Accomplishments

Wave 1 Pilot States:
There has been two national convenings for the 5 pilot states and 8 self-funded states. The December convening included the principal investigator, some staff, and community members and focused on the mission and vision of the RWJF-CES partnership as well as a focus on how to work in and with communities and community coalitions.

Communities - Each institution is working with these three communities:
- Planner Community - does not have a task force or council in place focused on health
- Implementer Community - has some level of council in place but may not be representative of the community; may need a youth component, ready to explore community needs
- Innovator Community - has a mostly representative council in place, conducting community needs assessment and ready to develop and implement an action plan

A second convening in mid-February focused on positive youth adult relationships and volunteer development program. Participants included youth and community members. This training was held in conjunction with the Youth Health Summit. In total over 300 youth were involved in developing an action plan for their state.

Site visits for the five pilot states will occur March-May 2018. A national steering committee will also meet during this time frame. Planning sessions for the second year of Wave 1 will also occur.

Upcoming Plans
The April 6 ECOP Next Generation-Learning for Leaders webinar will feature this project with a focus on System Readiness-professional development opportunities to prepare states for involvement in future waves.

The ECOP Health Implementation Teams will be meeting with the Professional development team of this initiative to share people and content resources that can contribute to the readiness plan. A printed journal will be provided to the participants of the National Health Outreach Conference that provides of summary of the ECOP Health Implementation teams findings.

Dr. Besser, CEO of Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will be the plenary speaker at the National Health Outreach Conference. There will be an ignite presentation as well as a concurrent session featuring a panel of the PI’s from pilot states offering lessons learned and preparation strategies for future waves.
Culture of Health Initiative:  
Well Connected Communities

America’s land-grant universities and Cooperative Extension System, including the 4-H youth development program, with its unparalleled infrastructure, reach and impact, play an important role in fostering a Culture of Health across the nation.

With the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the nation’s largest philanthropy dedicated solely to health, National 4-H Council and Cooperative Extension are empowering communities to come together to help their residents be healthier at every stage of life.

Land-grant universities have identified a minimum of three communities to engage and support in this effort. Within each community, local Health Councils will develop and implement action plans to address top public health priorities in their area. Leveraging the proven power and innovation of 4-H youth leadership, young people will work alongside the Health Councils to provide their ideas and perspective to help create and drive change.

Communities will connect with at least 150 volunteers to mentor youth leaders, build local capacity, and ensure successful implementation of the action plan. Resources and training will be made available to the participating land-grant universities and communities.

The original intention was to start with five land-grant universities, but given great interest and excitement, ten additional universities have joined in this effort. Together, we can show how young people can lead the way in spurring community change with a focus on promoting health and well-being where they live.

**Participating Land-Grant Universities**

RWJF-Funded Pilot Land Grant Universities:
- South Dakota State University
- University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- University of Minnesota
- University of Tennessee
- Utah State University

Self-Funded Land Grant Universities:
- Penn State University
- Purdue University
- University of Delaware
- University of Georgia
- University of Idaho
- University of Kentucky
- University of Maryland College Park
- University of Nebraska
Strategy
This effort hinges on four key strategies:

1. Applying 4-H’s proven Youth Leadership Model – youth will work alongside community members, local public health and non-profit organizations, businesses, and government entities to address top public health priorities.
   • This is a new component for local Health Councils that is expected to serve as a catalyst for innovation and impact.

2. Leveraging the Applied Research Foundation of Cooperative Extension – with leading land-grant universities contributing applied research about public health innovations and best practices.
   • This is a valuable resource that many communities and local Health Councils do not have currently.

3. Engaging Expert Community Volunteers – the Extension’s proven Master Volunteer framework will provide a way for community volunteers to play an active role in implementing community action plans.
   • This will provide a critical grassroots infrastructure that has proven as a key factor in Extension’s success with community development.

4. Extending impact through Technical Assistance – packaging the resources and best practices from the work of the lead communities to provide technical assistance that can spread the innovation and impact to more communities.

Communications Timeline

Back to page 1
I was recently appointed as the CARET liaison to ECOP at the end of 2017. This will be my first report and I will report since Susan Crowell last reported to you in July, 2017. I want to thank Susan Crowell, Louise Beaman, Eddie Gouge, and Rick Klemme on assisting me in cobbling this report together.

Summary of Accomplishments
The CARET Executive Committee met in November 2017. At this meeting the CARET Executive Committee:

- Revised the Scope of Work for CARET liaisons (to better reflect expectations);
- Reviewed the 2018 draft of the CARET budget;
- Heard liaison reports;
- Heard updates from Cornerstone representatives regarding ramifications of the mid-term election: Their “read” is that the House side can lose 24 seats in 2018 (the R-D split is now 240-195); 37 members’ seats are known to be up or open; of those, 10 are Democrats. In Senate, 34 up now for re-election- 24 held by D, 9 by R.
- Discussed tax reform, farm bill, appropriations and debt ceiling;
- Heard about “hot topics” from APLU Vice President for Congressional and Governmental Affairs, Jennifer Poulakidas, including tax reform, immigration, and FY18 spending bills;
- Received presentation from APLU’s Samantha Alvis, International Programs, on the executive summary from the “Challenge of Change,” which examined food security challenges and made recommendations on the actions required by public research universities to meet global food needs by 2050:
- Received brief update from Arthur Scott, associate legislative director/political outreach manager for the National Association of Counties (NACo). Board members and Mr. Scott discussed ways to improve communication and efforts that mutually benefit both NACo and the land-grant system;
- Received an update on the HEARD act, H.R. 5836, the Hunting, Education and Recreational Development, which establishes a process for the sale or exchange of federal lands not being used by public land management agencies and already identified as suitable for disposal. This proposed legislation includes a plan for distribution of revenues to benefit various agencies and education, including the land-grant system; and
- Considered nominations for the CARET Lifetime of Service Award.

Eddie Gouge, CARET Executive Direction, continues to represent CARET well by provided information on land-grant advocacy to various groups, monitoring related legislative and agency activity (updates are communicated to delegates), and attending various meetings related to food and agriculture in D.C.

Besides the upcoming Joint CARET/AHS meeting next week, the next CARET Executive Committee Meeting will be held June 6-7, 2018, at the Hyatt Place Washington DC. At the Joint CARET/AHS meeting next week, Extension will be well represented with CARET as Dr. Chuck Hibberd, chair of ECOP, will be presenting the 2018 Priorities of Cooperative Extension as well as Dr. Jason Henderson, Purdue Extension Director and Suzanne Pish, Family Life Educator with Michigan State Extension both speaking on panels.
Recognizing that there are several new Extension directors I’m providing two links below - one to the revised CARET orientation video and one to the CARET delegate directory on the APLU website.


ECOP 4-H National Leadership Committee (including National 4-H Council)
Submitted by Jen McIver

Go to

Winter/Spring Update:
https://www.dropbox.com/s/wxfntntznwiw3tg/CouncilUpdate_WInterSpring18-FINAL.pdf?dl=0

and

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Update:
https://www.dropbox.com/s/ywqceizgwxs0qo/4-H%20Council%20-%20OJJDP%20update%20for%20ECOP.PDF?dl=0
ECOP Program Committee
Submitted by Chris Boerboom

Civil Dialogue on Race Relations (Submitted by Rachel Welborn, Southern Rural Development Center)

Background information or accomplishments

In late 2016, the Extension Committee on Operations and Policy (ECOP) Program Committee charged a small team of CES and non-Land Grant University professionals (referred to as a Rapid Response Team) with examining the current capacity of CES to respond to the need for these dialogues, and to provide recommendations on next steps for building CES capacity in this area. Following the April 2017 report to ECOP, the Rapid Response Team began work on exploring training options for civil dialogue on race relations, given the high consensus around this need in order to expand capacity. A team of 23 specialists both within and outside the Land Grant University system have been working in recent months to identify, organize, and refine a training process designed to prepare teams in participating states to serve as trainers within their own states.

To date, these steps have been completed:

- A Pilot Process has been framed that includes three phases: (1) Train-the-Trainer Workshop, (2) In-state CES workshop led by participants in the train-the-trainer with support from the national training team, (3) community dialogues using one of two identified models.
- An outline of the week long Train-the-Trainer event has been completed and work is underway to flesh out each component. ECOP’s $10,000 grant funded this work’s initiation. The Southern Rural Development Center will fund a second meeting of a sub-group of the training team to finalize materials in late March.
- A contract with 4H National Conference Center is in process for tentative dates (August 27-31).
- Partial support has been received to help offset costs for the Train-the-Trainer Workshop. These cost savings will be passed on to participants through a reduction of the registration costs. The support sources are:
  o 4H Foundation has made a generous offer to host the event at a fraction of the cost we would have experienced if using a hotel conference setting.
  o W. K. Kellogg provided $4,000 specifically to offset expenses for the training.
  o Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation provided $5,000 specifically to offset expenses for the training.

Upcoming plans

- Host a webinar for CES Directors/Administrators to explain the process for the pilot and the content of the Train-the-Trainer event. March, 2018
- Set up a registration site with all final details. March, 2018
- Host a final meeting of the curriculum team. March, 2018
- Finalize all materials. June 2018
- Host a preview webinar for individuals registered for the Train-the-Trainer workshop. August, 2018
- Conduct the Train-the-Trainer Workshop. August 2018
- Mentor Trainees. August 2018 and following as they walk through the planning and training stages within their home states
ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee (DCC) Update
Submitted by Brian Raison, the Ohio State University

Summary of Accomplishments
Strategic Focus of DCC: We’re interested in knowing of activities going on at our Land-grant institutions. To that end, David Leibovitz attended the 14th Annual National Land-grant Diversity Conference in Hebron, KY – February 15 & 16, 2018. He was welcomed and participated in the post-conference 2019 Planning Team meeting.
Completed a brief update of Rules of Operation: A lot of work that gets done by this committee is a result of what the regional association members do that serve hereon. Hence, the consensus was to keep them.
Change ESS/ARD Directors/Administrators from 5 to 3 and ensure that the Chair and Vice-Chair are directors from regions other than the above-mentioned 3 reps.
Removed APS and ARD representative and may refocus this membership to 1890 APS representative.
Change APS representative to APS 1862 representative.

Upcoming Plans
National Experiment Station Section Diversity and Inclusion Award - ESCOP is seeking nominations for the new National Experiment Station Section Diversity and Inclusion Award. Extension Directors and Administrators are encouraged to share this announcement widely. The award recognizes experiment station research initiatives that support the creation of diverse and inclusive efforts and is dedicated to individuals, teams or organizations that go beyond meeting EEO/AA program requirements. The request for nominations is posted on the ESCOP website at 2018 Call for Nominations. (http://escop.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/National_Research_Diversity_Award_FINAL_20180122.pdf) The award comes with paid travel to the Annual ESS/SAES/ARD meeting, recognition with a commemorative plaque and a $1,000 cash award. Questions about the nomination should be forwarded to Jeff Jacobsen, Executive Vice Chair, ESCOP Diversity Catalyst Committee (jjacobsn@anr.msu.edu or 517-884-7965). Jeff is accepting nominations by 8:00 PM EDT on March 30, 2018 at the email address provided.

Thank you.
Website Redesign
This fiscal year, EDEN is investing in a website redesign to create a more robust and dynamic national EDEN website.

Louisiana State University continues to be the go-to EDEN institution for network (inter- and intra-net) systems that support resource sharing and collaborative multistate programming within Extension and between Extension and partners, other networks and voluntary organizations. LSU successfully revamped the EDEN website into a modern, state-of-the art platform, and continue to add dynamic features which will better enable Extension professionals to obtain timely resources during disasters.

New Mexico State University subcontracted with Purdue to migrate existing information into the new website platform, build and assist in maintaining pages for the EDEN Standing Committees, and assist the Louisiana State University (LSU) technology team with website design.

Partnership with FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute
EDEN has become the premiere provider of national-level food and agricultural exercises for FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute (EMI). Since 2015, EDEN has developed virtual tabletop exercises for EMI; the 2018 exercise has already been written and submitted to EMI. The virtual tabletop exercise is likely to occur in June or July 2018.

Enhancing 1890 Extension’s Capacity to Implement Disaster Programming
In 2017, EDEN invested in a think tank workgroup to identify ways to improve disaster response and recovery through the 1890 Extension system. As a result, the 1890 institutions increased their participation in EDEN at all levels. Specific institutions involved include: Alabama A&M University, Alcorn State University, Central State University, Florida A&M University, Fort Valley State University, Kentucky State University, Langston University, Lincoln University, North Carolina A&T State University, Prairie View A&M University, Southern University System, Tennessee State University, Tuskegee University, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff, West Virginia State University.
The workgroup assigned priorities for projects to enhance the 1890s delivery of disaster education to vulnerable populations and communities. The group continues to develop new materials and further the mission aligned with the group’s strategic plan. The group will reconvene in May 2018.

Outcome Indicators for Community Development Educators
In the wake of Knowledge Area 807 (KA 807: Preparedness, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery) being approved by USDA-NIFA, the EDEN Community and Economic Development Program Area Workgroup has developed a series of outcome indicators to assist community development educators collect reportable data. The outcome indicators are currently being reviewed by community development peers and should be presented at the 2018 EDEN Annual Meeting.

Surviving a Disaster Course
A new course developed for Extension educators to deliver to local audiences is set to be released in the spring of 2018. Surviving a Disaster addresses proper food handling and preparation without power, generator safety, and how families can prepare to survive on their own for the first 72 hours following a disaster. This course was developed as part of the efforts of EDEN’s Family and Consumer Science Program Area Workgroup.
Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP)
Submitted by Kathleen Tweeten

Summary of Accomplishments
A huge thank you to ECOP Chair, Chuck Hibberd, for appointing Scott Reed as the ECOP liaison to JCEP. JCEP’s seven professional organizations have approximately 10,000 Extension professionals!

2018 JCEP Leadership conference - Approximately 290 on-site participants and 270 virtual participants took part in the Virtual Town Hall meeting with Chuck Hibberd, ECOP chair, as moderator. Evaluations are not yet compiled but we will evaluate the success of the town hall to see if it should be included in the 2019 conference. We thank ECOP again for their generous support in making this effort possible.

Board member transition to change to January 1 rather than when leadership changes in the individual association. For current past presidents, it means 1 to 6 months more service on the board.

Upcoming Plans
- By-laws and policies and procedures will be updated and playbooks for all JCEP leadership positions will be created for consistency in operations by summer board, May 16-17, Fort Worth, TX.
- Discussion and poll of members to explore regional professional leadership development conferences to better serve our members. Exploring 2 or 4 regional conferences followed by a national leadership conference every third year. The national Leadership Conference sponsored by JCEP in 2019 will be held in San Antonio, Feb 6-7.
- The 2018 PILD Conference - April 8-12, 2018, Cultivating a Climate of Civil Dialogue; Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, VA
  - New This Year - Optional Post-Conference Workshop, “Civil Dialogue in the Public Arena” (Result of meeting with Rachel Welborn at last spring’s ECOP meeting.)
  - Sunday, April 8th - First Timer Event; Washington Twilight Tour
- The JCEP board has decided to send only one person to the fall ECOP NEDA meeting because of costs. We are exploring other possible professional development which would provide additional income. Note: For 2018 NEDA dates are at the same time as the ESP national conference, October 1-4, 2018.
- Future zoom board meetings will devote 15-20 minutes on discussing areas of common interest to all associations such as funding association activities and awards.
- The JCEP Creative Excellence Award will be retired in 2019. The award will be replaced with an association award that is sponsored by JCEP. JCEP will provide $250 for each association for sponsorship.

Association Meeting Dates - 2018
- April 29-May2, 2018 - ANREP, Biloxi, Mississippi
- June 10-13, 2018 - NACDEP, Cleveland, Ohio
- July 29-August 2, 2018 - NACAA, Chattanooga, Tennessee
- September 24-27, 2018 - NEAFCS, San Antonio, Texas
- October 1-October 4, 2018 - ESP, Manhattan, Kansas
- October 7-11, 2018 - NAE4-HA, Columbus, Ohio
- December 11-13, 2018 - NAEPSDP, Alexandria, Virginia

Association activities are attached in full report.
https://www.dropbox.com/s/2argt32z5vq2j8y/ECOP%202018%20Spring%20Report%20from%20JCEP.pdf?dl=0
Summary of Accomplishments

1) Green Infrastructure Summit:
An invitational Urban Summit focused on ‘Green Infrastructure’ on February 20-22, 2018. This
effort placed an emphasis on building greater relationships with municipalities and other partners.
It also demonstrated NUEL’s effort to convene ‘off year’ urban conference opportunities that
elevate Extension’s work in urban areas aligned with the ‘Green Infrastructure’ initiative
paper in partnership with the Western Center for Metropolitan Extension and Research, OSU and
WSU. Through NUEL the Western Region gained a strong connection to Rutgers University who
presented at the summit to share their expertise.

2) Regional Caucuses Establishment:
Growing the regional caucuses in each of the five ECOP regions as we build the bench of Extension
personnel working in urban. All 5 regions have face to face Urban Summits planned in 2018.

3) Action Teams:
Strengthen Action Team engagement to focus their efforts and support regional caucuses. New
leadership has been selected for each of the NUEL Action Teams and a Liaison position appointed
from the NUEL Executive Committee. NUEL is working to through the Action Teams to mobilize
Regional Caucus membership in support of 2018 Priority Actions.

4) 2018 NEDA Meeting:
Session plan is in place for ECOP Program Committee feedback as it is finalized.

Upcoming Plans

2) NUEL’s semi-annual meeting is scheduled May 7-8, 2018 in St. Louis, MO. Regional Caucus’
and SC are highly encouraged to attend.

3) Further growth in NUEL engagement at the Regional Caucus level. Three Regional Caucus
meetings are scheduled in the Northeast Region, April 3-4, in the North Central Region,
May 9-10 and the 1890/Southern Region Summit has been moved to Chattanooga

4) 2018 priorities for NUEL include:
a) Regional Caucuses-building the bench and strengthen Action Team engagement
b) Urban Extension implementation plan
c) 2019 NUEC Planning
d) Internal Communications
e) Partnerships
f) Interdependence across CES
g) NEDA engagement
h) eXtension, fellow etc.

NUEL appreciates the support and advocacy of ECOP as we work within CES to support the needs
of community. Thank you!
UPDATES FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
Submitted by NIFA Liaisons to the ECOP

- Denise Eblen, denise.r.eblen@nifa.usda.gov, 202-720-5004
  Deputy Director, Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition
- Michael (Mike) Fitzner, mfitzner@nifa.usda.gov, 202-450-9579
  Director, Plant Protection Division/Institute of Food Production & Sustainability
- Louis (Louie) Tupas, ltupas@nifa.usda.gov, 202-445-5413
  Deputy Director, Institute of Bioenergy and Climate

Jump to: Partner Engagement (30-31), Administrative and Organization Updates (31-34), Reporting and Communications (34), Program Updates (34-37)

Key Dates

- March 23: Continuing resolution expires
- April 2: Deadline for FY 2017 AREERA annual reports
- April 22-25: NERAOC
- July-August: Requests for applications issued for capacity funding
- August-September: Deadline for submission of capacity applications
- Sept. 30: 2014 farm bill expires
- Oct. 1: Start of FY 2019
- November 1: Expected deployment of the new AREERA plan of work system
- Dec. 29: Deadline for submission of standard financial reports (SF-425) for capacity funding
- April 1, 2019: Deadline for submission of FY 2020-2024 AREERA plan of work institutional profile
- Late summer: Deadline for establishing Smith-Lever and 1890 Extension programs that will be included in the 2020 plan of work

Partner Engagement Updates

Extension Needs Identified at NIFA Listens

NIFA Listens: Investing in Science to Transform Lives was a stakeholder listening session organized to obtain input on emerging needs and opportunities in food and agricultural sciences. Input was solicited from four in-person sessions, an online survey, and email. We received 156 comments containing the word “extension” from our in-person, online survey or email feedback mechanisms (97 represented organizational comments and 59 were personal). We heard from the national organizations representing extension as well as land-grant 1890 and 1994 institutions, IPM centers, and groups specializing in areas such as organic agriculture, feed, or plant breeding. There was recognition and appreciation from extension stakeholders that NIFA is engaging in a stakeholder listening activity. Continued and increased support for existing extension programs was a major theme. Including support for Consumer and Family Sciences, IPM, 4-H, Master Gardeners, EFNEP, and the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative. The most common themes raised by extension partners include: community development and public policy, food and nutrition literacy, healthy lifestyles, positive youth development, and scientific literacy. Stakeholders emphasized that extension activities can help both urban and rural residents gain the power and means to shape their lives, families, and communities and sustain behavior change. For agricultural and vulnerable communities, managing the impacts from climate change, emphasizing efficient water use, and fire prevention were mentioned multiple times. Extension stakeholders were clear that their top priorities are to create public value by catalyzing innovation and community change by providing science-based assistance and building strategic partnerships, informing public policy, and providing focus
and direction for community coalitions and projects. Promoting community capacity-building with underrepresented and new cultural audiences was also emphasized. Another NIFA Listens is being planned for the fall of 2018. Go to www.nifa.usda.gov/nifalistens for more information.

Calls to Conversation
We conducted a series of “Calls to Conversation” with partners and stakeholders to seek a shared vision for four topic areas: collaboration between 1994 and 1962 land-grant institutions, tactical science programs, the expansion of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program, and positive youth development. Reports from three of the four topics covered by the series are available at www.nifa.usda.gov/nifa-calls-conversation-meeting-series.

NIFA Liaison Program
The NPL liaison program was established in 2000 when national program leaders began reviewing AREERA plans of work and annual reports. The goal is to strengthen relationships with partner institutions based on a recognition that we can’t accomplish our mission without effective partnerships. NPL liaisons have three core responsibilities: 1) provide timely review of annual plans of work and reports for the institution’s Hatch, Smith-Lever, Evans-Allen and 1890 extension formula programs, and make recommendations on appropriate agency and institutional action; 2) build and maintain effective relationships with partner institutions; and 3) prepare an annual summary of liaison activities. A summary of liaison roles and responsibilities will be available in March. A list of current NPL liaisons is available at www.nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa-state- liaison- assignments. A list of agency liaisons to key administrative groups associated with APLU is available at www.nifa.usda.gov/resource/nifa- liaison-regional- administrative-groups-associated-association-public-and-land-grant.

USDA Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement
USDA created this office to ensure a more coordinated and consistent approach to customer-focused engagement. The new office combines four previous offices: Office of Advocacy and Outreach; Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships; Office of Tribal Relations; and Military Veterans Liaison. Go to www.obpa.usda.gov/03oppe2019notes.pdf for more information. Other stakeholder groups not listed above are encouraged to engage with the Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs within the Office of Congressional Relations; go to www.usda.gov/our-agency/staff-offices/office-congressional-relations-ocr/ocr-staff for contact information.

Administrative and Organizational Updates

Staff Changes
Departures:
- Dr. Catalino Blanche, national program leader for forest resources, passed away on January 29; his responsibilities for the McIntire-Stennis program have been reassigned to Dr. Daniel Cassidy
- Virginia (Ginny) Bueno, director of the communications staff, retired in January; Tara Weaver-Missick will serve as the acting director until May 25
- Bart Hewitt, director of the planning, accountability & reporting (PARS) staff, will retire on March 30; an acting director has not been named
- Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy’s six-year appointment as agency director will end in May 2018
- Judy Rude, public affairs specialist with the communications staff, retired in January
- Dr. Jan Singleton, director of the food safety division, retired in January; Dr. Jodi Williams, national program leader for food safety, is acting through June

New Hires: (Go to www.nifa.usda.gov/contact-us for contact information)
- Dr. Michelle Colby, national program leader for animal biosecurity
- Dr. Paul Cotton, director of the nutrition division
Dr. Alicia Frame, national program leader for data science
Dr. Tesfamariam (Tesfa) Mengistu, national program leader for plant pathology (nematology); first day is March 19
Barbara (Bobbie) Moore, director of the equal opportunity staff
Dr. Joyce Parker, national program leader for education programs
Erin Riley, national program leader for tribal programs

Budget Overview
Information on NIFA’s budget is available at www.nifa.usda.gov/budget. Please contact our budget officer (Paula Geiger, pgeiger@nifa.usda.gov) or congressional & stakeholder affairs officer (Josh Stull, jstull@nifa.usda.gov) if you have questions about NIFA’s current budget, budget proposals, or congressional action on appropriations bills.

FY 2018: NIFA is working under a continuing resolution (CR) that expires on March 23; agency expenditures are limited to 47% of its FY 2017 appropriation through the end of the CR. NIFA will continue to make quarterly payments for most capacity programs and we will continue to release requests for applications based on estimated 2018 funding levels for competitive programs. Note that the CR does not impact the funding amounts for NIFA’s mandatory programs, however mandatory programs are impacted by a 6.6% reduction due to a sequestration order for FY 2018. The President’s budget proposal for NIFA is available at https://www.obpa.usda.gov/19nifaexnotes2018.pdf.


FY 2020: Development of the President’s FY 2020 budget proposal has started but we are not able to share details with partner institutions at this time. An overview of the budget process is available at www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ap_8_concepts-fy2019.pdf.

LEAD21
LEAD21 is designed to develop leaders in land grant institutions and their strategic partners who link research, academics, and extension in order to lead more effectively in an increasingly complex environment, either in their current position or as they aspire to other positions. The LEAD21 board of directors is concerned that land-grant universities are not taking advantage of the LEAD21 program because new administrators may not be familiar with the program; Louie Tupas is our representative on the board. Go to www.lead-21.org for more information.

Farm Bill
The 2014 Farm Bill (the Agricultural Act of 2014) expires on Sept. 30, 2018. The House Committee on Agriculture and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry continue to hold hearings on a range of topics including research, nutrition, conservation, commodities, international food aid, credit programs, rural development, energy programs, and specialty crops. USDA has announced five 2018 farm bill and legislative principles that pertain to the research, education and economics mission area (go to www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2018-farm-bill-and-legislative-principles.pdf for more information):

- Commit to a public research agenda that places the United States at the forefront of food and agriculture scientific development.
- Develop an impact evaluation approach, including the use of industry panels, to align research priorities to invest in high priority innovation, technology, and education networks.
Empower public-private partnerships to leverage federal dollars, increase capacity, and investments in infrastructure for modern food and agricultural science.

Prioritize investments in education, training and the development of human capital to ensure a workforce capable of meeting the growing demands of food and agriculture science.

Develop and apply integrated advancement in technology needed to feed a growing and hungry world.

Time and Effort Reporting
We have been working with an APLU workgroup, with Rick Klemme as the key point of contact, to continue looking at the issues surrounding time and effort reporting and make updates to the NIFA fact sheet to improve clarity. The fact sheet focuses on frequent areas of concern around time and effort reporting, including documentation of personnel expenses, reconciliation of estimates, allowances for institutions of higher education, expectations for institutions regarding written policies and procedures, NIFA’s common monitoring findings, and NIFA recommended corrective actions; go to www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Time%20and%20Effort%20Reporting%20Fact%20Sheet%20Final%20508.pdf for the current version of the fact sheet. Maggie Ewell from NIFA and Natalie Bush from the University of Illinois will be co-leading a session on time and effort reporting at NERAOC 2018. Leading up to that, APLU will hold a webinar for non-administrative university staff who do not typically attend NERAOC so they can hear the NERAOC presentation and participate in discussions about this important topic.

NERAOC
The agenda and registration instructions for NERAOC 2018 is available at www.canr.msu.edu/neraoc/conference-agenda/-; the conference will be held April 22-25 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. There are many sessions that may be of interest to Extension directors and administrators, including sessions on ezFedGrants, time and effort reporting, evaluation plan design, AREERA plan of work and reporting, farm bill update, and best practices for working with 1994 land-grant institutions. Session speakers have the option of making their presentations available on the registration website. Gina Eubanks (geubanks@agcenter.lsu.edu) is serving as ECOP’s liaison on the NERAOC planning committee.

NIFA Policy Guide
We have been updating the NIFA policy guide, which was last revised in 2014. The revised version will have a new structure, new and updated content, a glossary with bookmarks and hyperlinks, as well as a labeling system to better denote which sections are applicable to all grants versus just competitive or capacity grants. Once a revised draft is ready we will schedule webinars to review the key changes and provide partner institutions with an opportunity to review and provide comments. The target date for release of the new version of the policy guide is summer 2018.

OneUSDA Initiative
This initiative creates an opportunity to revisit USDA relationships with cooperative extension and land-grant universities at the national, state, and local levels. The goals of the initiative are to:

- Modernize USDA mission support activities to be more efficient and effective by utilizing enterprise solutions;
- Reduce burdens we place on our stakeholders and ourselves;
- Create an enduring culture of humble service to each other and the nation;
- Serve customers and improve the delivery of USDA’s core missions;
- Ensure our commitment to the responsible use of resources; and
- Champion transformative, collective leadership through empowerment and accountability.

One result of the OneUSDA initiative is the creation of the Farm Production and Conservation Service, which combines the department’s two largest service-center agencies (the Farm Service Agency and NRCS) and the Risk Management Agency under an umbrella structure. The department’s third service-center
agency, Rural Development, now reports directly to the Office of the Secretary. Rural Development is currently the departmental lead in USDA’s response to the opiate crisis and NIFA is keeping that agency informed of efforts by our agency and its cooperative extension partners. It is very likely that the head of your state’s Farm Service Agency and Rural Development Agency heads were appointed within the past several months so this would be a good time for cooperative extension leadership to reach-out to them. Conversations are also underway at the departmental level regarding the best ways to create synergies among the department’s youth programming, including 4-H, FSA Youth Loans, NRCS Youth Conservation Corps, and United States Forest Service programs.

Reporting and Communications Updates

Communication Products
- NIFA annual reports are available at www.nifa.usda.gov/nifa-annual-report-archives; the report for 2017 was just released
- Go to www.nifa.usda.gov/impacts for impact stories and links to our annual report and Fresh from the Field
  Subscribe to news of interest by topic or newsletters (NIFA Update and Fresh from the Field)

Plan of Work and REEport Integration
We are working on the design of an integrated platform for the plan of work (POW) and REEport systems, including initial design concepts for the homepage, user roles and permissions, and creation of a user portal. We are on-schedule to have the integrated platform available for submissions by March 2019. System progress and design concepts have been routinely shared with all members of the original team of land-grant representatives (panel of experts) and to system users at large via bi-monthly web conferences, conference presentations, and email blasts. We obtained general feedback from participants at NERAOC 2017 and the NIFA Reporting Web Conference held in June 2017. Continuing discussion has been ongoing in all subsequent bi-monthly web conferences. We provided updates on the POW redesign at the National Association of Extension Program & Staff Development Professionals conference in December and will demonstrate the system at NERAOC 2018. In late February 2018 we started testing the software and its content with volunteer users to help us assess the usability of the new system. Go to www.nifa.usda.gov/tool/pow for more information about the redesign and the reporting web conference series.

Financial Reports in REEport
We implemented automated emails and expanded management functions for the financial report module in REEport. This will help competitively-awarded grantees significantly since they will now receive reminders for financial reports that are due or overdue. We will be able to track and respond to grantees who are overdue to help get their financial reports submitted. Later this year, we will focus on fixing glitches and errors in the system that are reported by customers.

Share Your Science
Share Your Science is an effort to put a spotlight on the efforts of our partners to address societal challenges, such as food security and hunger, climate change, food safety, childhood obesity, and sustainable energy. We encourage partners share their exciting stories, news, photos, and outcomes so we can publicize success stories to important audiences to demonstrate vast benefits of NIFA funding. Contributions can be submitted to impactstories@nifa.usda.gov or tweeted using #NIFAimpacts and mentioning @USDA_NIFA. Go to https://nifa.usda.gov/share-your-science for more information.
Substance Abuse Epidemic in Rural Communities
In 2014, more than 28,000 people died from opioid overdose, and at least half of those deaths involved a prescription opioid. The U.S. healthcare system plays a pivotal role in treatment and prevention of addiction, but its outreach education resources are finite, particularly in rural areas, and more time is spent on clinical care and treatment. For this reason, a collaborative approach building on the strengths of the healthcare delivery system and the outreach capacity of cooperative extension outreach may be needed since Extension is uniquely positioned to contribute to prevention and education efforts. We are working with cooperative extension and other partners to increase awareness about opioid abuse and connect rural residents to quality evidence-based support, educational programs, and training. NIFA’s Rural Health and Safety Education program funded six projects focused on the prevention of opioid misuse and abuse in rural communities through research-informed and evidence-based approaches and programs; descriptions of these projects are available at https://cris.nifa.usda.gov/cgi-bin/starfinder/0?path=fastlink1.txt&id=anon&pass=&search=CG=(*-46100-*)%20&format=WEBTITLESG. Go to www.nifa.usda.gov/blog/opioid-crisis-affects-all-americans-rural-and-urban for more information.

Big Data in Communities
The Food and Agricultural Cyber-Informatics and Tools (FACT) initiative is a new AFRI program intended to fund both domain specific and interdisciplinary research, education, and extension in data driven agriculture. Data science has the potential to help farmers minimize their inputs (chemicals, energy, and water), maximize yields, reduce waste and create efficiencies in the agricultural supply chain through improved models, decision support tools, and big data insights, while simultaneously providing workforce development opportunities in rural communities, but there are significant barriers to adoption in the agricultural sector. NIFA’s FACT team (Alicia Frame and Robbin Shoemaker) would like to work with the extension community to understand their needs and connect them with the tools, training, and resources they need to embrace a data driven future. We would like to evaluate the possibility of expanding academic research partnerships, empowering extension staff with access to high quality interoperable data, partnering with big agricultural firms or academic institutions to provide training, providing access to free software licenses, and leveraging other existing relationships to ensure that data science advancement are translated from the lab (or hard drive) to the field. On March 1 we met with the Regional Rural Development Center coordinators and the Virginia Tech Social and Decision Analytics lab on March 1 to discuss their project, “Enhancing Rural Prosperity through Data Science.” Virginia Tech partnered with Iowa State to collect and analyze interdisciplinary data sources to identify key insights about behavior in rural communities (specifically around access to community resources, educational outcomes and teen pregnancy), and they hope to leverage their pilot project to begin a broader discussion with the extension community about the role of data driven insights to support rural communities.

Youth Programs
▪ USDA is developing a youth framework that emphasizes cross-collaborative work from early childhood to early adulthood and emphasizes the themes of education, employability, engagement and empowerment. Positive youth development is being addressed by a federal interagency working group comprised of NIFA and 21 other agencies; the working group is also discussing common goals, measures and data.
▪ As a result of recent gun violence the 4-H shooting sports program is working with NIFA and the 4-H council to prepare talking points on the program to be used for inquiries by the public or media.
▪ There is discussion about the adoption of the 4-H thrive model as a national program model.
▪ The 2018 National 4-H Conference will be held April 7-12 in Washington, DC. The agenda includes 12 youth presentations at 15 federal agencies, House Ag Committee staff and (for the first time) Senate Ag Committee staff. Go to www.4-h.org/parents/national-4-h-conference for more information.

External Review of Family and Consumer Sciences Efforts
The relevance, quality and performance of NIFA’s family & consumer sciences emphasis area was assessed by an external panel of experts in September 2017. The goal of this emphasis area is to strengthen families, farms, communities, and the economy by focusing on the human and community dimensions of food and agriculture; it is the third largest in the agency with $65 million of investments. The panel’s report will soon be released via the NIFA website and other media. Their recommendations, along with stakeholder input from NIFA Listens and other annual stakeholder input opportunities, will be used in the development of a five-year strategic plan. It is likely that the plan will include an emphasis on rural prosperity and quality of life, with a strong focus on opioid addiction in partnership with cooperative extension and other relevant organizations.

Military Family Support Research and Extension Programs
For more than 30 years, we have worked with land-grant universities, cooperative extension, the Department of Defense and military service components to support service members and their families. NIFA has provided a total of $103 million in grant funding to support this effort since 2012. In FY 2018 support will be provided for 12 projects, including Military REACH, Military Families Learning Network, the Virtual Lab School, Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness, Child Care Evaluation, Air Force Mental Health Psychological Health/Research, and Air Force Financial Readiness Program Evaluation. Go to www.nifa.usda.gov/program/military-and-veterans-programs for more information.

International Extension
We continue to partner with cooperative extension on global engagement activities. Since many of the challenges our nation faces transcend national borders we can better serve local communities through strong international engagement. Go to www.nifa.usda.gov/enhancing-nifas-effectiveness-global-engagement for more information. Our current projects include:

- Sponsoring a webinar on the Farmer-to-Farmer program on March 15; the program is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. The organizations that implement the program are interested in attracting more extension agents for three-week assignments. This is an opportunity for extension personnel to gain personal and professional growth that enables them to effectively serve their clientele in a global economy.
- Helping Mexico’s department of agriculture explore the transition to a university-based extension model. APLU and USDA’s Foreign Agriculture Service have been involved with this effort, along with New Mexico State University and several other land-grant universities in the southwestern United States. We recently hosted Mexico’s undersecretary for rural development and the national extension director. They have a special interest in youth development and the 4-H program.
- In collaboration with eXtension, we are coordinating a project with an extension agent in Colorado (Jennifer Cook) to adapt technologies developed by Digital Green to enhance the effectiveness of extension here in the United States. Digital Green is a global NGO that uses locally-produced videos and other Information and Communication Technologies to reach rural stakeholders.
- We continue to work with state extension services interested in bringing an international perspective to their state and local programs. This has been especially effective when applying cross-cultural lessons learned abroad to better serve extension’s diverse clientele here in the United States, including new immigrant populations. Chuck Hibberd, ECOP chair, presented an excellent webinar at NIFA on the domestic benefits for extension from global engagement.
- We completed the final phase of the Afghanistan Agricultural Extension project in 2017, in collaboration with a consortium of land-grant universities (Univ. of California at Davis, Purdue Univ., Washington State Univ., the Univ. of Maryland and Texas A&M Univ.). This was the most recent of several NIFA projects aimed at strengthening extension systems in developing countries and further testimony to the capacity and dedication of our land-grant extension partners.
Urban Agriculture

USDA’s Urban and Community Agriculture Working Group includes representatives from fourteen agencies and various offices within the Office of the Secretary that assist urban farmers. The working group published a comprehensive urban agriculture best practices guide (currently being revised); the guide is available at [www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/urban-agriculture-toolkit.pdf](http://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/urban-agriculture-toolkit.pdf). NIFA supports a broad spectrum of urban and community based agricultural projects through competitive grant programs, capacity funds, and indirectly through grants awarded and administered through regional centers. An analysis of our FY 2015 investments identified 127 projects related to urban and community based agriculture at a value of $34.8 million.

Soybean Weed Seed

NIFA is collaborating with USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on a two-year initiative to reduce foreign material content and weed seeds in shipments of U.S. soybeans to China, which were valued at $12.4 billion in 2017. The foreign material content in shipments has been exceeding the 1% standard and there have been increased interceptions of quarantine weed seeds. USDA and the U.S. soy industry have identified several opportunities along the supply chain, from farm to export terminal, to reduce foreign material and weed seeds in soybean exports. This includes implementing a series of measures reduce the amount of foreign material and weed seed included with soybean shipments. Go to [www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/lut/p/z1/fYzBDolwDIbvPAUXx6ZijHoFQ4xGY6lX2GUpZMp02cY2DLy9EtEFxvrm1b_sVSBCGQQC5h2_G8iEQiQ9-RceVRAE5FGR898f5epeal88sjZLstDxk2TberGLYDeLPf334b-SjMZ5_AQW_Q1jgFRK0tY5yFHX3NlhSkcFLw2afhJZpKo19KKq1g5JC_T7mqFw9TBgnVbG-Vb1JUM5fWcL-k6KJ3JxXaUI/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/lut/p/z1/fYzBDolwDIbvPAUXx6ZijHoFQ4xGY6lX2GUpZMp02cY2DLy9EtEFxvrm1b_sVSBCGQQC5h2_G8iEQiQ9-RceVRAE5FGR898f5epeal88sjZLstDxk2TberGLYDeLPf334b-SjMZ5_AQW_Q1jgFRK0tY5yFHX3NlhSkcFLw2afhJZpKo19KKq1g5JC_T7mqFw9TBgnVbG-Vb1JUM5fWcL-k6KJ3JxXaUI/) for more information.

National Sustainability and Energy Summits

The University of Florida will host the National Sustainability Summit and National Extension Energy Summit on April 16-20, 2019. This national conference will include the launch of activities in support of a strategic plan on sustainability on behalf of the cooperative extension System and land-grant university partners. NIFA and the Southern Rural Development Center are providing support. Contact M. Jennison Kipp-Searcy (mjkipp@ufl.edu) for more information.