As leaders, we are often required to adjust to the changing circumstances and make the most of opportunities as they are presented. However, with the current state of events in our Capitol and around the world, we can be left to wonder how to effectively lead through chaos.

A recent article in the Harvard Business Review (6 Strategies for Leading Through Uncertainty, Rebecca Zucker and Darin Rowell, April 2021) discussed how leaders should “Embrace the Discomfort of Not Knowing.” The premise was that throughout our careers, we are conditioned to come up with the answer — as in a single, definitive, correct answer. Given that our brains are hardwired to see uncertainty as a risk or threat, it’s physiologically normal to feel stress when faced with unfamiliar situations. This is especially true for high achievers who have built their career on knowing or finding the “right” answer.

Although avoiding these unpleasant feelings is a natural human tendency, it can become a significant barrier to learning, future growth, and ultimately performance. Rather than avoid these feelings, we must learn to acknowledge and embrace the discomfort as an expected and normal part of the learning process. As described by Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft, leaders must shift from a “know it all” to “learn it all” mindset. This shift in mindset can help ease the discomfort by taking the pressure off of you to have all the answers.

So, in spite of the discomfort in not knowing it all, work to be transparent and communicate clearly with your organization. Not actually having all the answers, but understanding the process, will greatly enhance your success as a leader.

In this edition:

- Washington Update from Lewis-Burke Associates
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- Cooperative Extension Awards in Extension Excellence and Diversity
• Welcome to Extension Foundation CEO, Beverly Coberly
• ESS/ESCOP agInnovation Rebrand & Webinar
• Upcoming Events
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**Washington Update**
*Prepared for the Board on Agriculture Assembly by Lewis-Burke Associates*

**Shutdown Averted, Speaker Challenge, and Farm Bill Update**

• Just hours before the federal government was expected to shut down, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund federal agencies at fiscal year (FY) 2023 levels through November 17th. While the CR provides a temporary reprieve, there is still no clarity on a path forward to resolve major political and spending issues.

• After a 216-210 vote to oust Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-NC) was subsequently named interim Speaker. On Wednesday afternoon in a closed session, the Republican conference selected Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) as the Republican nominee for Speaker. Scalise will need to secure 217 votes in his favor to become the next Speaker of the House.

• Leadership of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees have expressed their desire to complete a bipartisan Farm Bill reauthorization this year. However, with ongoing appropriations negotiations, and with floor time at a premium, members from both chambers are beginning to concede that the Farm Bill being punted into 2024 or beyond is a real possibility.
LEAD21 Call for Applications

The LEAD21 program is intended to meet the future needs for leadership development of faculty, specialists, district and regional directors, program and team leaders, research station and center directors, department heads and chairs, and others in the universities’ colleges of agricultural, environmental, natural resources, veterinary sciences, and human sciences and USDA/NIFA. Individuals from land-grant, NARRU institutions, and USDA are encouraged to participate.

Program goals are for participants to:

- Enhance application of skills and knowledge learned in four core leadership development areas (change, conflict, communication, and collaboration).
- Develop a peer leadership network in order to enhance personal leadership practice, collaboration, and diversity of perspective.
- Develop and implement an individual leadership development process.

Applications are due November 15, 2023. View the call for applications here.

USDA, Cooperative Extension & APLU Award Top Honors in Extension Excellence and Diversity

Recognizing visionary leadership and diversity in educational programming, the USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Cooperative Extension, and APLU announced the following 2023 awards:

- Excellence in Extension Award for an Individual: Mary Arnold, Oregon State University
- Excellence in Extension Team Award: The Growing Together Multi-State Collaborative
- National Extension Diversity Award: The University of Florida for the “Café Latino” project

The awards will be presented at the APLU Annual Meeting in November. Read the full press release here.

Welcome to Extension Foundation CEO, Beverly Coberly
Dr. Beverly Coberly has been officially announced as the new CEO of the Extension Foundation. She has been serving in the role in an interim capacity since Christine Nygren's retirement earlier this year. Prior to this appointment, Coberly served as the Extension Foundation Chief Operating Officer since 2016.

Her extensive career includes various leadership roles within the University of Missouri Extension, where she reached the position of Associate Chancellor and Associate Director, overseeing statewide programming, budgeting, staffing, and leadership development. With more than 35 years of experience in Missouri Extension, she worked in nearly every level of Extension operations—region, state and county; on-campus and off-campus; legislators, funders and other internal and external resource partners.

Coberly holds a Bachelor of Science from the College of the Ozarks, a Master of Science from University of Missouri-Columbia and completed a PhD in Architectural Studies, Human Environmental Sciences, at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Read the full press release here.

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**ESS/ESCOP agInnovation Rebrand & Webinar**

agInnovation, the rebranded Experiment Station Section (ESS), invites land-grant university communicators to the Communicator’s Focus: agInnovation Rebrand Webinar on October 19, 3 pm ET. The webinar will be recorded for those unable to attend. View the full invitation here.

Contact Rick Rhodes at rcrhodes@uri.edu for more information.

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**APLU / FANR EVENTS**
The APLU Annual Meeting is the premier gathering of senior leaders from public research universities, land-grant institutions, and state university systems. The theme of this year’s meeting is *Innovation for Impact*.

This year’s meeting schedule includes added time for networking with colleagues from the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Join senior public university leaders from across North America as we tackle subjects related to:

- Institutional strategies on AI and its impact on pedagogy, research, and workforce development
- Faculty development and retention
- Establishing a proactive and systemic approach to responding to the next campus crisis
- International partnerships around innovation
- Research integrity and security
- Partnering with industry and government leaders to meet workforce needs
- Creating a sense of belonging for all students
- And much, much more! (The full agenda will be released in the weeks ahead)

**Specific to the Office of Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources, FANR staff are preparing the following sessions for our members:**

- Awards Ceremony for the USDA Teaching, Extension and Research winners
- The Seaman A. Knapp Memorial Lecture
- BAA USDA Partnership Update
- BAA General Membership Session
- Administrative Heads Section (AHS) General Membership Meeting
- Academic Programs Section (APS) General Membership Meetings
- BAA Reception
- Board on Health and Human Sciences Meetings

**Most FANR sessions will occur between Sunday, Nov. 12 at noon - Monday, Nov. 13 evening.**

Some executive business meetings will occur Sunday morning or on Tuesday. A complete schedule will be sent soon.

[REGISTER HERE]
SAVE THE DATE

BHHS | CAFCS Joint Spring Meeting
February 20-22, 2024
Omni Shoreham Hotel
Washington, DC

CARET/AHS Joint Annual Meeting
February 25-28, 2024
Omni Shoreham Hotel
Washington, DC

APS/NARRU Joint Winter Meeting
February 27 - March 1, 2024
Washington, DC

ECOP Spring Meeting
March 12-14, 2024
Central USA

PARTNER EVENTS

• **GROW (Generating Research Opportunities Workshop) Urban Agriculture Conference**
  Virtual | November 1-3, 2023 & January 17-19, 2024 | Register Here

The GROW (Generating Research Opportunities Workshop) Urban Agriculture Conference strives to enhance urban agriculture and food systems through developing collaborative proposals that tackle critical issues. Working at the intersection of urban agriculture and food systems, we seek to identify value chain concerns and assess their economic, social, and environmental impacts on communities. Join us as we support the development of interdisciplinary REE proposals, bridging disciplinary and geographic divides.

The GROW Urban Agriculture virtual conference is designed to engage researchers, extension professionals, educators, industry representatives, and community collaborators in the development of integrated urban agriculture funding proposals.
During this conference interdisciplinary teams will collaborate to create creative and effective proposals rather than spend resources competing against one another. This conference will occur in 3 phases:

- Phase I: November 1-3, 2023, will focus on developing teams,
- Phase II: November 4, 2023 to January 16, 2024, will be a time for teams to work together on proposals at their own pace, and
- Phase III: January 17-19, 2024, will include an opportunity for teams to present their proposals to a mock grant review panel and have time to incorporate and refine their proposals.

RESOURCES

**USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Funding Opportunities**

View the NIFA Upcoming RFA Calendar for the latest timeline for grant programs.

**APLU Member Job Postings**

APLU has a job board on which member institutions may list available positions for which they are recruiting.

**FOCUS** is an update from the Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources office of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) to provide timely, relevant information and actions items to the membership of the Commission on Food, Environment, and Renewable Resources (CFERR) and its member boards and sections.

If you know of someone who would like to receive our newsletter, please ask them to sign up here: **FANR Focus Newsletter**
Doug

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