Are You Up for the Challenge?
Jeff Myers, National ESP President

While there are a few of you who have been spared, I can safely say this has been a winter to ‘test’ most of us with cold temperatures that we have not faced for a long time. And the question always comes up, ‘are you up for the challenge’? Maybe you see where I am going with this thought…..being up for the challenge is rooted in what one had done to prepare in advance. For each of us as Extension professionals and Epsilon Sigma Phi members being prepared in part means engaging in professional development. We have many exceptional opportunities unfolding in 2014 that can be part of your professional development plan.

Just around the corner is the JCEP Leadership Conference in Memphis. I am looking forward to meeting some of you there! The conference, titled ‘Empowering Leaders for the Next Century,’ will be the first to include concurrent sessions by participants selected through an RFP process. JCEP’s goal is to build a conference that includes, yet goes beyond, Association leadership development to create greater value for all JCEP members. And then in less than two months, many of us will convene in Washington, DC for the JCEP 2014 Public Issues Leadership Workshop (PILD). This will be a particularly exciting year for PILD coinciding with the Extension’s Centennial Celebration of the Smith-Lever Act.

If you have not already made plans to attend PILD, please give consideration to join us for this extraordinary year!

It’s not too early to plan on joining us in Indianapolis beginning October 6 for our national conference, “Extension Professionals: Racing into the Future.” Our Purdue members are diligently working to host an outstanding national conference not to be missed. The RFP for concurrent sessions is available on the website and they are due March 15th.

(PILD & McKinney Scholarship Winners Announced)

ESP, through the Development Fund, funds over $16,000 a year in scholarships and stipends to provide opportunities for professional development for our members. We are proud to announce the following PILD and McKinney scholarship winners for 2014, which are a part of our annual scholarships:

PILD Scholarship Recipients - $600 each
Kate Shumaker – Ohio
Kevin Tatum – Georgia
Jennifer Wilson – Kansas
Mark Platten – Colorado
Lynda Zimmerman – Missouri

McKinney Scholarship Recipient - $500
Barbara Dunn Swanson
Check Out These Elevator Speech Contest Winners!
Luke Erickson, National Public Issues Committee Chair

The Public Issues Committee promoted an elevator speech contest at Galaxy. The purpose of the elevator speech was to briefly and accurately describe Extension to someone who is not familiar with Extension. Following are the winners of the contest, and each will receive a $25 gift card from the ESP National Board for their efforts. Congratulations to the winners!

Extension is the part of our University that fulfills the mission of land grant universities to bring the research and knowledge to the people and communities of Missouri. You may be familiar with our youth program – 4-H. We also work with farmers, help community governments teach nutrition to school children and provide resources for people who need information on just about anything. We have an Extension office in almost every county. Where do you live?

Meridith Berry
University of Missouri Extension

What is Extension? We provide not only research-based information from your land grant university, but help you to develop skills to use that research. We are here for you!

Sandra Wick
Kansas State University Extension

You have never heard of Purdue Extension? We are representatives of Purdue University housed in the county to provide informal education to the people of the county. We use science-based information to inform and assist people with the questions that they may have in everyday life. We offer program and educational assistance in agriculture, horticulture, family resource management, parenting and youth development, just to name a few. You may have heard of the 4-H program? 4-H is a very successful youth engaging program that we offer in this county. In short we live in the county, to know the county, and to use the educational resource of the land grant universities to make life better for the people of our county and state. Please call of stop by our office and learn more of what Purdue Extension can do for you. Here is my card.

Meridith Berry
University of Missouri Extension

Dr. Daryl Buchholz, Ruby Award winner at this year’s annual meeting, shared a great example of an elevator speech as part of his Ruby Lecture:

Extension provides practical education you can trust – to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future. Our focus in Kansas is on solving grand challenges in our state around water, health, feeding the world, vitalizing our communities, and growing tomorrow’s leaders. We are Kansas State University in your local community. We have numerous opportunities for you to get involved in making serious progress on each of these grand challenges. Will you join us?

Dr. Daryl Buchholz
Kansas State University Extension

These are terrific examples of elevator speeches, and should give us all some ideas in preparing our own elevator speeches for briefly and effectively describing Extension to local leaders and clientele.

Phil Sutton
Purdue Extension, St. Joseph County

Visit the ESP website at www.espnational.org
I will put another shout out for membership recruitment. Chapters submitted their rosters to the National Office by February 1st. This does not mean that membership recruitment ends on that date! When you think about the value that ESP has brought to you professionally, use that energy as your incentive to invite new colleagues to ESP (or returning members to the fold). Our strength is magnified by each new member and the expertise they bring to the organization.

Your National Board also wants you to know that while we are a year away from our new strategic plan, we are going to begin our efforts at our Mid-Year Board meeting in March. We have engaged Mary Ellen Waltemire, retired Regional Director, University of Maryland Extension, to facilitate this process. We are excited to have the results from the Marketing Committee’s Professional Development Survey to help provide background as we approach this process. We will also be intentionally gleaning input from your ESP representatives at the JCEP Leadership Conference. If you have any input you would like to provide on the future of ESP, please touch base with any one of us on the National Board.

We have had several webinars produced recently by two of our committees. The first is ‘Scholarships, Grants and Recognition Made Easy’ developed by our SGR Committee. Second was ‘ESP Chapters Tracking Members and Paying Dues Demystified’ presented by the Membership, Recruitment and Retention Committee. Both webinars had excellent attendance! If you missed either one, you can find them on the National ESP website.

Lastly is a reminder to Chapters about the 2014 President’s Theme Award. This year’s President’s Theme is ‘Growing the Extension Professional – the next 100 years’ and is at the heart of the award. We hope you are being creative and recording your Chapter activities to put your Chapter ‘in the running’ for this award.

Here are the basic criteria:

- This is a Chapter Award,
- The theme, ‘Growing the Extension Professional – the next 100 years’ – that may mean a creative Chapter professional development venture, a Chapter marketing campaign, a unique membership drive,
- It will take place between now and September 1, 2014 – we welcome entries that are new for your Chapter or recurring,
- You will create a two-minute video and a one-page summary that can be loaded on ESP’s YouTube site, and
- The winning Chapter will be recognized at our National Conference in Indianapolis. The Chapter will receive a $500 cash award.

We hope each Chapter will join us in this opportunity to showcase the great work being done in your local Chapters!

Jeff Myers can be reached by email at jmyers15@umd.edu.

Showcase Our Logo With Pride!
Patricia Dawson, ESP National 2nd Vice President

Promoting our ESP Association can be done in a variety of ways. In addition to bookmarks, note cards, luggage tags, pens and more you can now “wear” our logo. ESP members can order polo shirts and windbreakers with the ESP logo! These new items were premiered at the ESP Galaxy IV exhibit and were well received. The polo shirts come in two different styles and fabrics. The shirts are available in green, white or tan in both women and men’s sizes. The pique mesh knit polo is $28 and the micro pique knit shirt is $32. The windbreaker is lightweight and available in green for $38. If you need an extra-large for any of the clothing items, please add $2 for each “X”.

Your shirt or jacket may be ordered by contacting our ESP National Office at espoffice@espnational.org. The order form for general supplies with the ESP logo such as notecards or logo pins is available on the website… click on the “Resource” tab and scroll to supplies for the PDF order form.
National Leadership Opportunities Available for You
Patricia Dawson, ESP National 2nd Vice President

Stepping up to serve as a National ESP committee member has been one of the best decisions of my professional career. It has provided me the opportunity for growth as a professional and more importantly, the opportunity to develop new skills and wonderful friendships by working with colleagues from across the nation. I would encourage each of you to step up to the plate and apply to serve in an ESP national committee leadership position – rest assured, you will gain far more than you give. The seven national committees include:

- Global Relations
- Membership Recruitment and Retention
- Marketing
- Professional Development
- Public Issues
- Resource Development and Management
- Scholarship, Grants & Recognition

To learn more about each of these committees and their duties, go to the ESP website and click on the “Resources” tab. Then click on the first item in the dropdown box – “Handbook” and scroll to the respective committee. To apply for a committee please click on the Committee Application under the “Applications/Report” tab and complete the respective online form. Your chapter president will also need to complete an online support form on your behalf. If you are currently serving in a committee role, don’t forget to complete the re-appointment online form in order to continue with the committee.

Most committees meet four to six times per year via conference call. A face-to-face meeting is held during the national meeting; however, we realize that not all committee members will be able to travel due to budget constraints. Those able to participate in the national meeting receive a small stipend ($200) towards the cost of attending the sessions. Our goal is to have Life Members and every region represented on each of our committees. The committees are limited in size, thus don’t delay… sign up today. Applications are due no later than April 1st…no fooling!!

Please feel free to contact me at patricia.dawson@oregonstate.edu if you have any questions.

“Revolutionary” Chapters Support the ESP Endowment Fund
Doug Harlan, Resource Development & Management Committee Member and Alpha Nu Chapter/IL Member

At our November 2012 Annual meeting, Illinois’ Alpha Nu Chapter found itself in an enviable position - the Chapter had accumulated a sizable amount of excess funds. During the Chapter’s business meeting, the Chapter membership began a serious discussion of what to do with those funds. After working our way through options such as providing additional scholarships, hosting a statewide professional development opportunity and supplementing member costs to attend national conferences, we still found ourselves with funds to distribute.

I then made a recommendation to donate a portion of the funds to the National ESP Endowment Fund. What a revolutionary idea!! Several chapter members offered testimonials regarding financial support for professional development received through National ESP. New chapter members began asking questions such as “how can I apply for funding for professional development.” It seemed that the revolution was catching hold.

I am happy to report that the revolutionary fires still burn within the Alpha Nu Chapter. In fact, the chapter will be voting at our spring meeting in March to make a “Revolutionary” donation to the National Endowment Fund.

The Alpha Nu Chapter now wonders what other “Revolutionist” chapters exist in ESP. Will your chapter become a member of the revolution and support the National Endowment Fund?

Doug Harlan can be reached by email at dharlan@illinois.edu.
The Alpha Xi Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi received a $1,000 mini-grant from National ESP to conduct a full day conference called T5: Teaching Technology Tools and Tips Together. A modest registration fee was also charged with a reduced fee for ESP chapter members. Part of this money was used to purchase flash drives, branded with the ESP logo, for each participant. The purpose of the T5 conference was to build the knowledge and skills of Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) faculty and staff to use technological tools including distance education platforms, educational videos, and social media.

A total of 61 persons attended the conference representing all facets of RCE (e.g., support staff, county faculty, and state specialists) as well as a few faculty members of the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS) who are not employed by Cooperative Extension. The program included a keynote speaker, workshops conducted by RCE faculty (selected following an RFP and peer review process) and roundtable discussions facilitated by staff of the SEBS Office of Communications.

All of the conference presentations are archived at https://sites.google.com/site/espalphaxi/home/news-and-announcements/upcoming-events. Thus, the information presented at the T5 conference has a longer shelf life beyond the day of the event. The T5 conference format was also replicated at the Extension preconference to the 2013 Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education (AFCPE) meeting.

(Alpha Xi Mini Grant Continued on page 6)
Participants at that conference were provided access to the Rutgers ESP T5 materials and vice versa. Of the 61 persons who attended, 22 responded to an online evaluation survey, a 36% response rate. Incentives (gift cards) were used to encourage participation. Over half of the respondents rated the conference "very valuable" and "extremely valuable" and a third rated it "very valuable." Four in ten respondents (41%) said they learned a lot and 54% reported some knowledge gain. Over half (55%) of respondents gave the conference an overall rating of "very good" and 13% rated it "excellent." The weakest part of the conference, according to both evaluation scores and comments, were the roundtable discussions facilitated by the Office of Communications. In hindsight, they needed to have more structure. Many respondents gave specific examples of how they planned to use information from the T5 conference. Some examples include hosting a webinar, using smartphone apps, trying Dropbox, and launching a Twitter page. A follow-up evaluation to assess behavior change will be conducted in early February.

Barbara O’Neill can be reached by email at oneill@aesop.rutgers.edu.
Just a reminder that Life Members can access any of the ESP Connection newsletters online at espnational.org. If you have internet capability and would be willing to receive notifications that the newsletter is online it would save us about $4.00 per Life Member per year and reduce paper waste. If you’re willing to receive your newsletter in this format all you need to do is to send us your email address at espoffice@espnational.org and we will add you to our notification list. Thank you!

If you have something of interest to share with your fellow Life Members you can send it to the National ESP Office and we will be happy to use it in the Life Member Corner of the ESP Connection. We have received some interesting letters from Life Members over the years and are happy to share them with others.

Often times we receive word of the passing of our former members from Life Members who have kept in contact with their former colleagues. This is very helpful as we try diligently to see that all of our members who have passed away are included in our annual Memorial Service that we hold at national conference each year.

Keep in mind that as a Life Member you have all the rights and privileges of an annual member. We have several Life Members who continue to serve on national committees. We strive to have at least one Life Member on each one of the national committees to provide a perspective that can only come from one who is retired.

Most Life Members are probably not interested in recognition and awards, but we do have scholarships for professional development and for opportunities to attend national conference. It’s always good to see our Life Members at annual conference to be able to share in the experiences they had while they were working and the experiences that they have gained after leaving Extension. Many retirees have done a lot of travel after they retired, but there are also a lot of retirees who have gone on to new careers in their retirement.

Remember if you have anything to share please feel free to contact us at the National ESP Office at (208) 736-4495 or ESP National Office, 450 Falls Avenue, Suite 106, Twin Falls, ID 83301 or email us at espoffice@espnational.org.

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Important dates for Your Calendar!

**FEBRUARY**
- January/February Issue of ESP Connection distributed
- February 1, Postmark Deadline for Payment of 2014 ESP Membership dues to determine voting delegates at National Council Meeting and eligibility for Recognition Programs and Scholarships
- February 9-11, JCEP Winter Board Meeting
- February 11-13, JCEP Leadership Conference, Sheraton Memphis Downtown, Memphis, TN

**MARCH**
- March 1, Deadline for Electronic Submission of Recognition Nominations including the online National Recognition Submission Form
- March 1, Deadline for Electronic Submissions of Scholarship Applications (Angus Professional Development Scholarship)
- March 1, Deadline for Electronic Submission of Friends of Extension Nominations
- March 18-20, Mid Year Board Meeting—Baltimore, MD
- March 25, Deadline for ESP Connection articles to the National Office

**APRIL**
- March/April Issue of ESP Connection distributed
- April 1, Deadline for Electronic Submissions of Nominations for National Committees
- April 1, Deadline for applications for Regional Vice Presidents (Southern Region and North Central Region) and 2nd National Vice President.
- April 6-9, PILD Conference, Westin, Alexandria, VA
Don’t miss the 2014 ESP National Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana!