

# espconnection

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## Make Professional Development a Priority

Mark Stillwell, National ESP President

University of Missouri Extension is one of many universities that are going through a major reorganization. I recently had a conversation with an early career Extension colleague who, like many Extension faculty, is trying to understand the impact of the reorganization on their future. "I'm going to focus on my programs," he said. "I don't have the time or money to be active in professional associations and attend national meetings," he said with regret. Professional development is often seen as an easy activity to drop in times of uncertainty. However, in today's rapidly changing world, I see professional development and networking with colleagues across the nation as more important than ever. The speed of technology advancement and access to

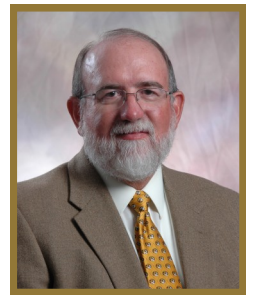
information continues to increase. Problems and opportunities we face change every day. Political and funding uncertainties require innovation and flexibility that was not required 25 years ago. If we have any hope of succeeding in a competitive environment as an individual, university or professional association, we must continually invest in ourselves and our career. If we don't we will quickly become out dated and less effective in our jobs.

ESP and JCEP offer many types of professional development opportunities including programmatic (specific to your field), leadership, political, and communication (verbal, written). They are all valuable and will play varying degrees in your success

depending on your professional objectives. I'll see a few of you at the JCEP Leadership Conference in Memphis next week. It's not too late to register for the Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) program in April. Galaxy IV is just around the corner in September. I encourage you not to overlook your professional development needs. They help you stay engaged and enthusiastic about your profession.

Don't forget to like us on Facebook!

Mark can be reached by email at [mstillwell@missouri.edu](mailto:mstillwell@missouri.edu)



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## JOE Representative Selected

Mark Stillwell, National ESP President

Congratulations to Stephen Brown, Associate Professor and District Agriculture Agent, University of Alaska, on his selection to represent ESP on the Journal of Extension (JOE) Board of Directors. Stephen brings a wealth of experience to JOE. He has authored or co-authored 8 articles in JOE. He has served as a peer reviewer for JOE the past 6 years reviewing 35 manuscripts. Stephen is in his final year as the National Chair and Editor of Journal of the National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA).

"I see the position as an opportunity to provide workshops at the annual meeting and articles in the ESP Connection on how to get published in JOE," Stephen said in his application.

## 2013 Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) Conference

Patricia Dawson, Western Region VP and Chair of the Public Issues Committee



If you are looking for an outstanding professional development experience mark April 21-24, 2013 on your calendar and plan to attend the annual PILD Conference. Sponsored by the Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) this conference is a fantastic way to enhance your network of Extension colleagues, interact with decision makers, strengthen your advocacy skills and see the historic sites of Washington D.C. This conference is available to ALL Extension professionals, not just those serving in chapter leadership positions.

The conference will be held near our National Capital in historic Alexandria, VA at the Westin Alexandria. Conference speakers include Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy, Director of NIFA, Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh, Kansas State University, Laura Kalambokidis from the University of Minnesota and Marshall Stewart from North Carolina State University. Topics such as "The Public Value of Cooperative Extension," "Telling the Cooperative Extension Story," "What You CAN do...a Look for Different Perspectives," will be addressed throughout

the conference. In addition, participants can look forward to an outstanding selection of breakout sessions ranging from "Working with Extension Advisory Councils" to "Evaluation Techniques" to "Immigration Reform in Agriculture." Key leaders from NIFA will spend time with us on Tuesday providing opportunity to discuss the direction of our respective programs. The final day of the conference is designed for PILD delegates to meet with state legislators and agencies on the Hill.

The PILD Conference also provides fun evening options for the delegation. Plan to arrive early enough on Sunday to participate in a Twilight bus tour of Washington or a boat tour on the Potomac. Enjoy getting to know your ESP colleagues during the Association Night Out slated for Monday evening. Time has also been built into the program for State delegates to work together in planning your trip to the Hill as well as an evening "State's Night Out" to provide you with time to visit the unique area. Registrations are now posted online at our JCEP site [www.jcep.org](http://www.jcep.org). The Early Bird Registration fee is \$350.00 which is due by March 15<sup>th</sup> with Regular Registration due by April 15<sup>th</sup>. Feel free to contact me at [patricia.dawson@oregonstate.edu](mailto:patricia.dawson@oregonstate.edu) if you would like additional information about the PILD Conference.

## Public Issues Leadership Development Conference—A Must!

Joe Bixler, Michigan State University Extension and Alpha Psi Chapter Member

The Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) will once again hold the Public Issues Leadership Development Conference April 21-24, 2013 at the Alexandria Westin Hotel in Alexandria, Virginia. If you haven't attended PILD in the past please consider attending this year's conference which is designed to assist Extension professionals become informed about the public issues and legislative matters

affecting Extension programs at the national level.

When I first attended PILD two years ago, I expected to engage other Extension professionals to learn about how our local Extension organizations and local chapters could make an impact on decision makers in Washington. It was so much more than that! The keynote presentations by our national partners like NIFA and the USDA provided a sound grounding

in how the legislative process operates and the connection that we all have to our federal partners. Additionally, the conference breakout sessions provided great choices to engage in conversation about public issues we face at home, program advocacy, and emerging issues. Certainly the legislative visits are a highlight as well in addition to the conference itself.

Joe Bixler can be reached by email at [bixlerj@anr.msu.edu](mailto:bixlerj@anr.msu.edu).

## Marketing Epsilon Sigma Phi

Ann Berry, National 2nd Vice President and Chair of the Marketing Committee



Do you need to increase your chapter membership? Do you need to recognize your members? Do you need to “sell” the benefits of our association to your administrators? Then help is just a mouse click away. The National ESP website offers a variety of promotional items at a nominal cost. Some of these items include lapel pins, pocket folders,

bookmarks, thank you notes, and Post-It® note pads. These can be found at: <http://espnational.org/resource/supply-order.html>

Additional great resources that the Marketing and Global Relations Committees created this past year are YouTube video personal testimonials and experiences through ESP. These can be downloaded from the Marketing section on the National website. The Marketing Committee is also working on a promotional video to debut at the Galaxy Conference in

September. And our ESP Facebook page and Twitter accounts are constantly being updated with leadership tips, association news, professional development opportunities, etc.

Of course, remember that the ESP exhibit panel is available for Chapter meetings and Extension Conferences to promote our association. Reserve the exhibit through the National Office for shipment in time for your event.

Ann Berry can be reached by email at [aaberry@utk.edu](mailto:aaberry@utk.edu).

## Take Advantage of YOUR Membership Benefits! Scholarships for Professional Development

Graham Cochran, Chairman of Scholarship, Grants, and Recognition (SGR) Committee and Alpha Eta Chapter Member

The Epsilon Sigma Phi mission is about professional development and providing scholarships is one way ESP supports professional development. If extra funds would help with your professional development, read on. We have several scholarship opportunities available for members with upcoming deadlines. These scholarships sometimes go unused so please consider applying. We on the SGR Committee would be happy to have many quality applications to choose from!

### Richard R. Angus Professional Development

**Scholarship:** Dick Angus devoted 45 years of his life to the Extension Service in Minnesota and Maryland along with state and national leadership in ESP. He is an active life member of ESP. As an outcome of his dedication to Extension professionalism and Epsilon Sigma Phi, the Richard R. Angus Professional Development Scholarship was established. Epsilon Sigma Phi, through the ESP Development Fund, provides \$2,000 annually to fund scholarships not to exceed \$500 per member to encourage, stimulate, and support professional development through participation in courses, seminars, conferences or workshops. **The submission deadline is March 1st.**

### ESP Administrator / Leader

**Scholarship:** Epsilon Sigma Phi, through the ESP Development Fund, has established this scholarship to promote continued professional development for eligible members to attend the National ESP Conference (*Galaxy IV in 2013*). The scholarship is to be used to defray the cost of attending the National ESP Conference. Four scholarships of \$500 each will be awarded annually to outstanding administrators/leaders based on accomplishments. ESP members whose dues are paid for the previous year and the current year (by February 1) and who are first-time attendees at the National ESP Conference are eligible. Eligible recipients include county, regional, state, national and program administrators/leaders. **The submission deadline is May 1.**

All applications and award criteria are available online at the National ESP website.

Graham Cochran can be reached by email at [cochran.99@osu.edu](mailto:cochran.99@osu.edu).



Visit the ESP website at  
[www.espnational.org](http://www.espnational.org)



## Extension Learning Exchange: Nicaragua

Submitted by the National Global Relations Committee



In September of 2012 a diverse group of Extension workers from the U.S. visited communities in Nicaragua during a nine day exploratory trip. Enfolded

in a larger cross-cultural learning initiative originating at Cornell Cooperative Extension, this initial “learning exchange” to Nicaragua was intended to build a foundation for future growth and collaboration. Trip participants were drawn from the fields of community development, agriculture and youth development. This diversity in participants created a fertile cross-discipline team that engaged with participants in Nicaragua across disciplinary boundaries.

During our time in Nicaragua we spent three days in San Ramon – a small community in the heart of the coffee producing region – and participated in the homestay experience. This allowed the group to experience a small taste of daily life in a rural community. Living with a family exposed some of the richness and diversity of life that is otherwise hidden to the visitor. While here, we visited a coffee cooperative (complete with fire ants), several small women’s economic development projects, a local youth development program and the local cooperative of cooperatives.

One of the lessons learned during our time in San Ramon was that Extension work happens in a variety of ways and in a diversity of settings that arise out of necessity. Without the long established infrastructure we enjoy here in the United States, Extension work in Nicaragua arises from a diversity of groups working within a community. Sometimes this is connected to a formal research program (often through informal channels), but often it is the result of a group or organization attempting to work through critical community issues with whatever resources are at hand.

We were able to see Extension in action during our visit to the UCA (Union of Farming Cooperatives). The UCA is a cooperative of cooperatives active across the municipality of San Ramon and has a member base that includes coffee, honey, milk and other agricultural producers. A recent law had been passed in Nicaragua addressing violence against women. The UCA was engaged in educating some of its member cooperative

constituents about violence against women. During our visit we witnessed an educational theater performance - theater being an effective and engaging method for conveying information when literacy is low. This performance provided a reminder of, and link to, the tradition of popular education which has been historically important across Latin America.

From San Ramon we traveled to Leon where we engaged with faculty and staff from UNAN Leon (The National Autonomous University of Nicaragua) around issues of community development and agriculture. During two very packed days we visited an iguana nursery, women’s economic development project, sustainable farming project and many faculty from the schools of agroecology and veterinary sciences. Whirlwind comes close to describing the experience. But it was a very rich and deep time with focused discussions on the potential for future collaboration around topics such as sustainable development, climate change and youth and community development.



We visited several research labs on the campus of UNAN Leon, which was an eye opening experience for everyone, regardless of their program focus. When we think of research at an academic institution we often picture pristine labs adorned with the latest high tech equipment. The reality, in Nicaragua, is starkly different. The scientists and researchers we met were as intent and dedicated as any you could find, but the labs and equipment they have to work with are limited. In the second poorest country in our hemisphere this probably isn’t all that surprising – but until you encounter the reality you don’t really understand how challenging the research conditions are. That being said, research was underway and results were having a direct and positive impact in Nicaragua and other Latin American countries. Necessity truly is the mother of invention and the faculty and staff at UNAN Leon play midwife on a continual basis, giving birth to necessary research and practical applications.

*(Extension Learning Continued on Page 5)*

## Benefits of ESP Membership or...Why I am an ESP Member and Why Others Should be Too!

*Donna R. Gillespie, Membership Recruitment & Retention Committee and Theta Chapter Member*



I don't know any Extension professional who has just one job. It seems we are all involved in several different programming disciplines, maybe some administrative tasks, opportunities for promotion and tenure and usually youth development. I think this is why I am an ESP member. In ESP I am able to partner, plan and program with other professionals across subject

matter and geographic lines. I know these types of partnerships make me a better Extension professional and have also allowed me to gain personal friends I would not have met otherwise.

For a more formal explanation of ESP membership benefits the website has great resources. Go to [espnational.org](http://espnational.org) and click on the Membership Benefits link on the left. Here you will find three very nice, professionally done handouts you can use to encourage current members to renew their memberships or recruit new members to our organization.

Some membership benefits are:

- Scholarships for individual professional development opportunities
- Professional Development Mini-Grants for Chapters
- Chapter and national recognition programs for member individuals and teams
- National Conference for peer reviewed scholarly presentation opportunities
- Numerous and varied professional development opportunities
- Chapter and national leadership opportunities
- Chapter officer/member training support

... and many more.

Any way you look at it, personally or professionally, ESP has opportunities, assistance and support for the Extension professional. Spread the word and encourage others to join you as an ESP member!

*Donna can be reached by email at [donna@uidaho.edu](mailto:donna@uidaho.edu).*



*(Extension Learning Continued from Page 4)*

In both San Ramon and Leon we encountered hope and a conviction that it is possible to change the world. This animating hope often breaks through material or economic restrictions and powers small engines of transformation. While we saw this in the labs, it was also apparent in the women's economic development project we encountered in Leon.

Our time visiting the women's group in Pueblo Redondo offered a glimpse at the challenges they face. Layered beneath poverty, and a historical reality of machismo, these women are seeking and dreaming of a better life for their children and communities. Small scale, often micro, enterprises are being explored by the women as means of increasing income, which will lead to increased food security and health. Staff from UNAN Leon are facilitating these explorations and helping to map out the unique needs and niches of each community.

During our time in Nicaragua we encountered many women who were actively pushing against the boundaries of traditional roles, moving forward with a conviction that things can change. Efforts to support these women, to re-cast community in a new light, were often supported by work that we would call Extension. Likewise, youth development is facilitated by a variety of groups and organizations that have no formal designation as Extension, but are doing Extension work.

Our goals in engaging in an international learning exchange included creating a foundation for future international collaboration. There was also a lot of interest and enthusiasm for the work of 4-H among the groups we met with in September. We hope that we can kickstart the development of several 4-H groups in the San Ramon region by bringing one or two younger Nicaraguans here for training in June and July. We are also exploring the potential for reciprocal visits by some members of UNAN Leon. In March of 2013 a group comprised of Landscape Architecture and Planning students from Cornell University, as well as several Extension professionals, will return to San Ramon to begin work on a project we are calling Semillas de Verde (Seeds of Green). And in August we are organizing a longer (11 day) trip to Nicaragua that will be project focused. We are hoping this trip will include pairings of Extension professionals with university students who will engage in short term research projects while in Nicaragua. If you are interested in learning more about upcoming trips please email Paul Treadwell – [pt36@cornell.edu](mailto:pt36@cornell.edu)  
Visit our photo gallery: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/87309440@N02/>

## Where Can You Get a 400% Return on Your Money?

Jane Gault, Southern Region VP and Chair of the Resource Development & Management Committee



Where can you get one of the best returns on a \$40.00 investment? National Epsilon Sigma Phi is the answer. For your \$40.00 national dues, you have the opportunity to receive a 400% return. Yes, that's 400%. ESP member benefits are incredible. Attend the National ESP Conference as a

voting delegate, fulfill your voting delegate duties, and receive a \$200 stipend! There are numerous ways to receive an unbelievable return on your membership dues.

Present a workshop or a poster at the national conference and receive a \$200 or \$100 stipend, respectively. Serve as a national committee member and attend the committee meeting at national conference and receive a \$200 stipend. A member is eligible for one national conference stipend. However, there are several ways to increase your chances for receiving one. You just have to be actively involved.

Financial member benefits are not limited to national conference. National ESP offers up to eight professional development scholarships ranging from \$500-\$600. Attending Public Issues Leadership Development Conference for the first time, there's a \$600 scholarship available. Want to do a special professional development project in your chapter/state? Four, \$1000, Professional Development mini grants are offered.

The ESP Development Fund is the source for funding these membership benefits. That's why giving to the Development Fund is so important. We encourage all members to support the Development Fund. Whatever amount you can give is appreciated. Let 2013 be the year you give to ESP and the year you receive from ESP. Support the Development Fund and apply for at least one of the many membership benefits.

Have you taken advantage of the opportunity to receive a fantastic return on your ESP membership dues? If not, make 2013 the year that you do.

Jane can be reached by email at [jgault@utk.edu](mailto:jgault@utk.edu).

### Important Dates Ahead – Mark Your Calendar!

#### FEBRUARY

- February 10-12 JCEP Winter Board Meeting
- February 12-14, JCEP Leadership Conference, Marriott 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 Submission Richard R. Angus Professional Development Scholarship & Support Letters
- March 1 Deadline for Electronic Submission of Friends of Extension Nominations
- March 25, Deadline for *ESP Connection* articles to the National Office

#### April

- April 2-4, Mid-Year Board Meeting, Kansas City, MO
- March/April Issue of *ESP Connection* Distributed
- April 1, Deadline for Electronic Submissions of Nominations for National Committees
- April 21-24, PILD Conference, Westin, Alexandria, VA





# Life Member Corner



## Why Become a Life Member?

*Bob Ohlensehlen, National Executive Director*

Why did I become a Life Member? I had the opportunity to be involved with Epsilon Sigma Phi for about 20 years before I retired from Extension. I found my affiliation with the organization to have been rewarding. When I retired I thought that becoming a Life Member would be a way to remain connected with the profession where I spent 30 years of my life. I always heard that Extension was more than a job, it was a "way of life." I believe that is true and since it was a way of life for me, I wasn't ready to completely cut the ties when I retired.

I have spoken to retirees from other states and have found others who agree that when they retired there was no further contact with their former employers. I find this to be ironic since as Extension educators or, county agents (or whatever your title

was), you spent most of your career working with volunteers of one kind or another. Many retirees would be glad to lend a hand but few are given the opportunity.

I hope that as an organization we can provide, in some small way, a link for those who have retired to that "way of life" that they were a part of for so many years. Like Extension we aren't able to be everything to everyone, but hopefully we can help.

I have appreciated the notes that we have received here in the National Office from our Life Members. We will share some of those in the Life Member Corner in the coming issues, so if you have something to share, please send them to the National Office.

## Life Member Katherine Humphrey Reports on "Retirement" Life

This day I am playing "catch-up" on my reading of the mail, and particularly the *ESP Connection*, which I enjoy. Wanted to give my email address to the ESP Office to save that \$3/year on postage and printing. I prefer the printed hard copy, but realize I should reduce the organization's costs, and my paper piles.

Besides being a Christmas tree grower on a farm since 1968 [married in '66 to William E. Humphrey (1930-2009) and am now a Grandmother], I am still working temporarily part-time for Cornell Cooperative Extension with retired educator Judy Price from Monroe County. The two of us are training Master Food Preservers in Home Food Preservation . . . 2013 will be my 22nd year of training educators in the area of food preservation around the state since I retired from a full time position as Program Leader in Livingston County in August 1991 after 22 years there; previously working 8 years as a Dietitian in College and University Food Service (Penn State (1958-1963) and the University of Buffalo (1964-66), and doing graduate work at Cornell University (1963-64), dietetic internship at the USPHS Hospital on Staten Island (1957-58), undergraduate work at Texas Tech (1956-57) and University of Texas at El Paso (1952-55), graduate of El Paso High School (I can't believe it has been 60 years since I graduated in 1952!).



## Cecil Daniels, Georgia

I have been a LIFE member since retirement at the end of 1988. I enjoy the newsletter; however, I am open to an email issue if that would save vital funds.

My 28 years was with four counties in Georgia. I retired in 1989. I am now 82 and we still live in our own home of 40 years. Have a good day.

*Cecil can be reached by email at [johncecidaniels@gmail.com](mailto:johncecidaniels@gmail.com)*