

*SOUTHERN REGION FCS PROGRAM LEADERS NETWORK (PLN)
CONFERENCE CALL
Minutes of April 23, 2009*

Attendees: **Carolyn Nobles** (Prairie View A&M University), **Ellen Murphy** (LSU Ag Center), **Monica A. Fields** (South Carolina State University), **Jorge Atilas** (University of Georgia), **Evelyn Crayton** (Auburn University), **Kasundra Cyrus** (Southern University), **Millie Ferrer** (University of Florida), **Rita Fleming** (Tennessee State University), **Shirley Hastings** (University of Tennessee), **Bonnie McGee** (Texas AgriLife Extension), **Javiette Samuel** (Tennessee State University), **Thelma Sanders-Hunter** (Tennessee State University), **Anne Sortor** (University of Arkansas), **Marshall Stewart** (North Carolina State University), **Nayda Torres** (University of Florida)

Welcome: A welcome was extended to the group by Carolyn Nobles, Chairperson of the Southern Region Family and Consumer Sciences Program Leaders Network.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted.

Advisor's Report: Millie Ferrer reported that the Southern Region Director's meeting was held on April 13 - 15, 2009 and states reported on their budgets. All institutions reported cuts of at least three to twenty percent. Tim Sanders from Cornerstone was also present at the meeting and addressed the group. He reported that the two items of particular interest to The land-grant university system is the Research, Education and Extension Office (REEO) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

After the Farm Bill was enacted, the Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) established an ad hoc panel. The Farm Bill Implementation Assistance Committee submitted recommendations to the Undersecretary for Agriculture that REEO:

1. Work as a team to enhance programmatic implementation and reduce duplication.
2. Utilize Extension to deliver research results.
3. Limit the number of staff positions to thirty. Personnel with family, youth, and community development experience should be represented throughout the REEO staff to ensure integration of these functions into the operations of the individual divisions and the Research, Education and Economics mission area as a whole.

NIFA is supposed to be established by October 1, 2009. Recommendations for NIFA included:

1. Directors should report to the Undersecretary.
2. Directors should coordinate with the Undersecretary to implement the roadmap. The roadmap should be established by September.
3. NIFA should be organized in 2 divisions – 1) Division of Research, Extension Education (administer capacity and infrastructure programs and 2) Division of Competitive Initiatives for REE.

4. In addition to the 2 divisions directors should create programmatic leadership offices to provide crosscutting programmatic planning and support functions.

Two examples of programmatic leadership offices that are related to FCS are:

1. Families, Youth, and Community Development
2. Food Safety, Nutrition, and Health

These offices are to provide crosscutting programmatic planning and support functions.

CSREES has received a \$45,000,000 increase in the 2010 budget. In 2010, the Budget Advisory Committee will change the budget lines. Themes for the budget are Food Systems, Nutrition, and Wellness. Workforce Development and Education includes subcategories. Millie will send this information to the list serve.

On April 8, 2009, the PLN had to do a review of its structure and benefits. The results have been reviewed and the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be more networking among members.
2. PLN should increase the number of multi-state projects.
3. PLN should share best practices.
4. PLN should discuss leadership challenges.

Directors voted to shift management and leadership decision-making. There will be no automatic succession.

ASRED has four committees that are working on pilot logic models. The logic models are due on August 9, 2009 with common indicators. Nutrition is the focus of the logic model for our group. There is a logic model that is already developed that can be used for this committee. The Southern Region Committee for the logic model includes **Carolyn Nobles, Kasundra Cyrus, Ellen Murphy, and Carolyn Dunn.**

Board on Human Sciences: Jorge Atilas reported that there is a review process in place and there is good transition time to have the modules published. During the ECOP meeting, the discussion was focused on how to function and the use of the Executive Director Model. They would like to rely on one person for support from NASULGC (APLU). They will provide the funds for the lobbying group, Cornerstone, with a one-year agreement.

A suggestion was made to talk to the Family and Consumer Sciences program leaders about the SNAP-Ed assessment fee. Fees cannot be charged from federal funds and state dollars have to be used and the value has not been seen. Another suggestion was made to appoint a liaison so that the fiasco from a few years ago can be prevented.

The Board on Agriculture Assembly (BAA) will host a webinar for Extension Administrators to explain the implications and outcomes of restructuring. The Board on Human Sciences learned that the BAA has a task force and will limit voting privileges. EFNEP and CYFAR are two important programs that will not have a vote. There is a need for controlling outcomes but this could be an opportunity to move forward and establish our own lobbying group.

Is there enough money to do this on our own? University officials are trying to maximize their dollars. ECOP has proven to be a friend to Extension. New appointments at USDA may also provide good opportunities for Family and Consumer Sciences.

PLN Update: Kasundra Cyrus reported that she has secured speakers for the Grant Opportunities portion of the opening session. The PLN meeting will be held in Orlando, Fla., on August 24 - 28, 2009. Debra Sheely – Deputy Administrator Competitive Program Unit will be the speaker for the opening session. States' Night Out will be held on Tuesday and Committees' Night out will be held on Wednesday. The theme is "Meeting the Challenges of the Changing World". Reports will be placed on flash drives.

Carolyn Nobles received an e-mail from Mitch Owens to list major issues that are relevant to the public or Extension colleagues. This information will be presented on May 22, 2009. Each committee has to identify at least two issues. The topics to choose from discussed were:

1. Tough Economic Times
2. Obesity
3. The Economic Viability of Extension
4. Marketing Programs to State and Federal Partners

A coherent, succinct message should be developed for human development, nutrition, and Family and Consumer Sciences in general. Food, Family, and Finances was suggested as a central topic. There is funding available through AFRI for these topics.

Evelyn Crayton reported that the Priester Conference will be held in Mobile, Ala., in 2010. The Priester Conference and Health Disparities will be combined. The potential date is April 19, 2010. Priester will target diabetes, obesity, financial management, and food safety. There will be a meeting at the end of April to discuss the financial commitment for this conference. The committee is trying to include a cruise at the end of the conference.

Caring Hands Update: Bonnie McGee asked if names should remain on the list if there has been no activity for four years. The account has a balance of \$1508.25. If there is a need for cards or gifts for retirement then please contact Bonnie.

Nominating Committee Report: Nayda Torres reported that the nominating committee recommends the following people for Chair and Vice-Chair for the next two years:

1. Ellen Murphy
2. Kasundra Cyrus
3. Anne Sortor

The recommendations were accepted.

Agenda Discussion for August Meeting: There was a suggestion to have a joint meeting with the 4-H committee. The agenda should be confirmed by July. 4-H is receptive to having a joint session. Marshall has been communicating with the 4-H Committee Chair and future conference calls will be planned to include Family and Consumer Sciences committee members. One topic should be chosen, like childhood obesity, and then the focus should

shift to multi-state projects. The Committee for the joint session includes **Carolyn Nobles, Ellen Murphy, and Marshall Stewart.**

A suggestion was made to streamline funding of EFNEP and SNAP-Ed by letting all of the funds come through EFNEP. The programs have different reporting systems and legislation could possibly be crafted to support this proposal. The funding would come directly to the Family and Consumer Sciences director.

Dan Kugler explained that the new structure for AFRI started with CREATE-21. This suggestion may not work because EFNEP could become competitive. The educational component of SNAP-Ed needs to be changed.

A suggestion was made to complete the Plan of Work (POW) before the meeting. The incoming leadership will work on the POW.

Evelyn Crayton reported that some employees in the Extension system are able to sit for the registered dietitian exam. The American Dietetic Association is exploring the possibility of housing an internship within Extension and partnering with a hospital for the clinical experience. **Evelyn Crayton, Susan Welch, and Shirley Gerrior** will work on this project.

Nayda Torres said that the financial group was not able to change their schedule to meet with the Family and Consumer Sciences group in Birmingham, Ala. Caroline Crocoll is supposed to be handling the arrangements for NEAFCS. Nayda can assist with the Family and Consumer Sciences program outline and draft agenda for the fall meeting. There was an agreement to move forward with the suggestion to submit the state reports electronically.

State Updates

Kentucky (Electronic Submission): Kentucky is managing well under the current economic conditions but bracing for expected cuts in July. The county staff is managing with an increased cost share. The state level has lost vacant positions and there are currently eight faculty specialists. Stimulus grants are being written in hopes of increasing revenue. The Second Sunday Initiative to boost interest in a built environment is growing in momentum.

Submitted By: Monica A. Fields

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