

Epsilon Sigma Phi
Alpha Tau Chapter

2013 Award recipients

Awards presented at the annual meeting of ESP, October 30, 2013

Meritorious Support Service Award

Recognizes university or extension state or regional support staff or paraprofessionals who have significantly supported extension professionals or programs for a sustained period.

Ruth Jeffries

Ruth began employment at the Mark Twain NE region office in 1980. She was promoted to Senior Secretary in 1985 and then Administrative Associate in 1988.

Ruth has served on many committees throughout her career, including training for administrative assistants, the new statewide travel system and others. She helped develop the current travel system used in the Northeast region and was instrumental in starting direct deposit of travel checks. She goes above and beyond to support regional faculty and county support staff, working extra hours and assisting in any way possible. She has provided ITV support by facilitating programs, and maintains websites for the NE region and Northeast Missouri Beef Cattle Improvement Association. She has assisted with the bull sale for 25 years, the Show-Me Select Heifer Sale for 17 years and the Missouri Livestock Symposium in Kirksville for more than 10 years.

Ruth has been a critical asset to University of Missouri Extension. In her 33 years in the Northeast Regional Office she has been the constant through 6 Regional Directors and countless faculty members and support staff. She strives to make things more efficient for the NE region and supports programming in numerous ways. She serves the Regional Director, faculty, support staff and extension council members to promote and support University of Missouri Extension.

Ruth will be presented with this award at the Northeast Region faculty and staff conference in November.

Mid-Career Service Award

Recognizes the experienced extension professional who has consistently exhibited leadership and excellence in extension program planning, delivery and evaluation for over 10 years and less than 20 years.

Dr. Rebecca Travnichek

Rebecca was initiated into Epsilon Sigma Phi in 2002. She served as the Epsilon Sigma Phi Awards Committee Chair from 2003 to 2005. She received Epsilon Sigma Phi's Outstanding Regional Faculty Award in 2007.

In the past 17 years, Rebecca has conducted more than 200 6-hour and more than 500 2-hour workshops on a variety of financial management topics. Her programs have included "Road to Financial Success," "Money Action Plan," and others. One-on-one consultations were also provided in a counseling format. Through these efforts, Rebecca has reached over 10,000 learners. Follow-up evaluations show that knowledge was applied and positive actions were taken.

Rebecca co-led the development of "Consumer Savvy," a national 4-H curriculum designed to improve financial management and consumerism skills of youth in grades 4-12. This curriculum has been distributed world-wide and is used throughout Missouri.

In addition, Rebecca developed an expense tracker for use with incarcerated individuals in financial management programming. This teaching tool helped offenders develop smart spending and saving plans prior to release from prison.

Rebecca is passionate about providing financial education and counseling to individuals and families of NW Missouri. She develops and utilizes resources to reach the people she serves and meet their specific needs. If she doesn't know the answer to her learners' questions, she makes all effort to get the BEST answer possible. It is her goal to reach as many individuals as possible with effective financial education.

International Service Award

Recognizes an extension professional who has contributed significantly to the development and/or expansion of an extension program in another country or countries through in-state and/or overseas work.

Dr. Julie Middleton

Julie was initiated to Epsilon Sigma Phi in 2002. She currently is president, and has served on the Global Relations Committee for the past two years.

By participating in International programs, Julie has experienced Thailand with the GLE Leadership Exchange program, Costa Rica in the EGRET program and China as a Turner Global Fellow.

Julie has been very involved in the South African Exchange program since its inception, representing Extension at the 10th and 20th anniversary celebrations. She returned to South Africa to participate in the development of a tri partnership among the University of Western Cape, University of Missouri and the University of Gent. Later, she helped advance the partnership between the University of Western Cape and MU Extension. As a result, six MU Extension faculty, leaders, and a council member have engaged in South African learning experiences, and four jointly sponsored webinars have been held. Recently, Julie and other extension colleagues secured \$25,000 to fund a South African community leadership program.

Throughout her 17 year career with University of Missouri Extension, Julie has been an enthusiastic leader and supporter of international understanding and competence. She has expanded her own knowledge while providing opportunities for growth and development of others within extension. She has developed and nurtured partnerships with other countries and shared her work with national audiences. She is always looking for ways to create opportunities for others to benefit from global travel and international experiences.

Outstanding Regional Extension Faculty Award (Woman)

Recognizes regional extension faculty demonstrating success in program development, regional or campus activities, innovative methods used, use of evaluation, willingness to cooperate, and other activities.

Dr. Vivian Mason

Vivian Mason joined Epsilon Sigma Phi in October 2011. She is currently chair of the membership committee.

Vivian is president of UMEA and works on the Public Value and Marketing self-directed work teams. She is team leader and on the training team for MELD V and previously the training team of MELD IV. Vivian serves on the Strategic Plan Goal 6 (The People).

Vivian has collaborated with extension colleagues to develop program materials, such as the "Money U" financial resource book. She also has developed web pages for counties she serves and included recorded financial information, such as "When Your Income Drops." These webpages provide timely financial education answers and resources at clients' fingertips 24/7. Another program accomplishment is demonstrated by Vivian's co-teaching of 13 workshops, "Take Control of Your Finances," that reached 186 individuals during the past two years.

Through the VITA (volunteer income tax assistance) program, Vivian provided free tax preparation to citizens in Audrain County. The VITA site prepared more than 270 tax preparations with total refunds of \$403,375 and earned income credits of \$160,989. These refunds help citizens pay bills, save for the future and stabilize the local economy and tax base.

Since becoming a family financial education specialist, Vivian Mason has had the opportunity and privilege to offer a number of financial education classes that are helping local citizens solve their financial issues.

Distinguished Team Award

Recognizes outstanding efforts of an extension staff team for responding to and incorporating into a specific educational program one or more critical issues. Critical issues may be defined by local, regional, state or national needs.

“Composting 101 – A Train-the-Trainer program for Master Gardeners”

Sarah Hultine Massengale, Sarah Denkler and Patrick Greenwald

Composting is a critical component for sustainability, green living, home food production and waste reduction. While the demand for composting education has increased, Extension staffing limit the number workshops available. Master Gardeners are content experts on gardening topics, yet often are not comfortable teaching groups of people. This limits the extent their knowledge is shared within the community. The goals of this project were to increase the knowledge, skills and understanding of composting for residents in the region; and to increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of Master Gardeners to effectively teach public composting workshops. Funding was provided by a \$10,000 grant from Ozark Rivers Solid Waste Management District and Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Twelve Master Gardeners were trained on the program in June 2013 and have begun providing composting workshops in the region. As of September 2013, 198 people participated. Demonstration composters have been built at community garden sites in six communities for future composting workshops and demonstrations.

This project allowed MU Extension to build on their partnership with Master Gardeners, develop their skills to teach effective composting workshops, and extend the reach of Extension programming. As a result of this train-the-trainer program, homeowners have benefited by learning effective composting techniques.

Visionary Leadership Award

Recognizes an extension professional whose significant accomplishments have resulted in leading extension forward in new directions. This person’s visionary leadership enabled extension to anticipate a significant new opportunity and developed support to implement program organizational changes necessary to achieve success.

Dr. Michael Quart

Michael Quart is a visionary leader and creative thinker who does not stop with ideas. From his first day in December 2006, he began to strategize how the non-tenure promotion system could best be implemented. Using a creative approach he guided the process until the system was approved. Other projects that he advanced include:

- Organizational Realignment (8 regions to 7, plus an Urban Region)
- County funding-district bill, allowing Extension to establish single or multi-county funding districts
- Program Integration
- one Mizzou
- Global Initiatives (South African Project)

Dr. Quart is an exemplary vice provost and director of extension who has led with integrity, conviction and caring. He has made a tremendous difference in Extension since he has assumed leadership of this organization. He has tackled tough projects for the betterment of all. Using his networks and proactive approach, he has created a 21st Century Extension where programs are relevant, reliable and responsive, faculty is supported and stakeholders are informed. Dr. Quart has promoted and ensured policies that have strengthened Extension's standing on the campus, across the country and around the world.

Distinguished Service Award

Recognizes an experienced extension professional who consistently exhibits continuing leadership, initiative, and excellence in extension program planning, delivery, and evaluation over a career of more than 20 years.

Vera Massey

Vera Massey was inducted into Epsilon Sigma Phi in 1979. She was a board member from 1988 to 1990 and Awards Committee Chair from 2010 to 2012. She has represented Epsilon Sigma Phi on the MU Extension Loan and Fellowship Awards Committee since 2011. She received the Epsilon Sigma Phi Outstanding Regional Extension Faculty Award in 1989.

In her 39 years with University of Missouri Extension, Vera has held numerous leadership positions. She has served on several statewide teams both within and outside of extension. She was a member of the first Healthy Lifestyle Initiative cohort, leading this initiative in Boone County.

Vera has been a leader in the development of many innovative award-winning statewide educational programs. These include "Taking Care of You: Body, Mind and Spirit," "Stay Strong Stay Healthy," "Health for Every Body," and "Food Safety Express." She helped train regional colleagues and other professionals on these programs at state and national conferences. These programs have been successful because she has the ability to see new approaches for the critical challenges faced by individuals and communities and to bring research-based knowledge to address them. Vera has shared these innovative programs beyond the borders of her region by making presentations at state, national and international conferences.

Vera is an experienced extension professional who consistently exhibits leadership, initiative and excellence in extension program planning, delivery and evaluation. Her work has been recognized with many national and state awards. Without a doubt, Vera Massey is a distinguished professional.