From Our President: Mark Stewart

Welcome SPRING! I always enjoy spring but this year I feel like it was owed to me and I bet many of you feel the same way.

While it is natural to feel that way after an unusually (for Missouri) challenging number of winter weather events, is it in our best interests to feel we are “owed” spring? Instead, maybe it is better to appreciate this past winter for bringing us closer to our families (being snow/ice bound has a way of making that happen) and helping us learn to be more innovative and resourceful as we worked to find ways to minimize the impact weather cancelations had on our extension programming efforts.

Many of us will be participating in events this year that help celebrate our centennial with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. At the Public Issues Leadership Development Conference (PILD) last week, extension’s centennial was celebrated. At the same time, we were cautioned of not dwelling in our past. As we celebrate all our successes of the past 100 years, we need to be careful we do not develop the feeling we are “owed” another 100 years. The our Alpha Tau Chapter of ESP needs to be sure it does not dwell in the past, but instead uses our past to guide us as we look forward and plan for the future.

PILD – WOW! What a combination of professional development and celebration of our centennial. Over 320 extension professionals and lay volunteers attended making this the largest PILD conference ever. All six of Missouri’s extension professional associations were represented along with two state extension council members, one program director and our administrative cabinet. I want to thank the Alpha Tau membership for the opportunity to represent our association at the conference.

Breakout sessions addressed topics such as The Role of Extension in Controversial Issues, How to be an Effective Advocate for Extension, Addressing the Issue of Extension Relevancy Through Issue-Based Civic Engagement, and Promoting Innovative Program Development Through Collaboration as well as many other topics of specific interest to ESP members.

General session speakers included Dr. Jimmy Henning, Associate Director, University of Kentucky Extension and the chair of the national Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP); De Jerold Thomas, Leader of Innovation and Change for the Ohio State University; Dr. Nancy Franz, Director of Professional Development at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. The session closed with a very entertaining presentation by Steve Stark from Fargo, ND – an Illustrated Look at the Historic Timeline of Extension (see the picture below).
Dr. Henning’s take home points included:

- We have become a one and done society thus we always need to be ready as we may only get one chance — especially with new learners and clients.
- Issues facing extension’s users have become more complex. These issue need more than Google, they need people from multiple disciplines working together to provide practical educational solutions.

Dr. Thomas’s comments that we need to think about:

- We will need to meet our learners where they are at and that will change dramatically. He offered some of futurist Paul Soffo’s advice to help us understand what we face… Look back in our past 10 years then be sure we understand – we will see this same magnitude of change in learners, our program delivery and education in general within the next five years.
- “Technology as an educational tool is a given, not a debate.”

Dr. Franz shared:

- The private value of extension program efforts is well documented and understood – to garner increased public investment in extension we need to be sure the public value of extension program efforts is documented and as well understood by funders as is the private good.
- Her dream: In the future, the PILD conference is not needed as extension across the nation is so well funded, we are turning money down.

Here at home your ESP board has been busy. While my piece of the newsletter is unusually long be sure and keep reading below to see what your board and committees have been working on as they provide continued professional development for you.

### 2014 PILD Conference: The Perspective of a National PILD Scholarship Recipient

Lynda Zimmerman

The PILD conference was a very enjoyable and worthwhile experience. It provided insights about current and future trends of the national Cooperative Extension System, with presentations from federal partners, national program leaders and extension professionals from other states. The sessions included many interesting stories outlining the history of cooperative extension and effective strategies for addressing public issues in the community. One of the most memorable presentations was “100 Years and Counting: Telling the Cooperative Extension Story to Stakeholders,” by Marshall Stewart, Associate Director of North Carolina State University. One of his key points was that we should celebrate our past, but not be tethered by it. Moreover, extension continues to be valued by stakeholders because our programs are relevant to the economy, education and health. Another highlight of the conference was learning about extension’s advocacy role and how to best achieve this during Capitol Hill visits, as well as at state and local levels. Overall, this was a wonderful professional development opportunity that I highly recommend.

### Upcoming Scholarship Deadlines from National

- **Angus Scholarship** applications for professional development are due May 1, 2014. [http://scholarship.espnational.org/](http://scholarship.espnational.org/)
- **Mini-grant** applications for associations to plan and conduct a professional development activity are May 1, 2014. [http://scholarship.espnational.org/professional-development-grant/professional-development-grant-instructions](http://scholarship.espnational.org/professional-development-grant/professional-development-grant-instructions)
- **ESP Administrator/Leader** conference scholarship applications are due May 1, 2014. [http://scholarship.espnational.org/](http://scholarship.espnational.org/)
An Interview with Alpha Tau Member Melissa Scheer

Melissa Scheer is a 4-H Youth Development Specialist in the Urban Region, housed in Jefferson County. She started her career with MU Extension almost 10 years ago as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer in Perry County working on youth-adult partnerships through an after-school 4-H Club, mentoring program, and a youth philanthropy program. She followed this experience with obtaining her master’s degree at MU in Human Development and Family Studies (she has a B.S. in engineering) where she worked in HES and 4-H part-time. In 2006 she was hired as a 4-H Extension Associate at MU and then obtained her current regional specialist position in 2008. Melissa is a first year member of ESP.

Why did you join ESP?
They needed me. Jenny Flatt called and asked me to be a part of the Global Relations Committee. I really wanted to be a part of this. It is right up my alley and I wanted to support international engagement. What better way to learn about it than be a part of the committee. I joined ESP because I thought I could contribute. I really value all of the staff and specialists I have gotten to know better. It’s been absolutely worth it.

Tell me about your programming.
The neat thing about my county is the great diversity and variety. We have a community club model with a variety of clubs especially horsemanship and shooting sports. We also have some volunteers who conduct short-term programs. For example, there is a non-traditional 8-week first level 4-H horsemanship project for kids who have never touched a horse. Youth meet for 2 to 3 hours every Thursday. The older youth from the regular 4-H Club help. This short-term commitment to 4-H has produced new members for the regular 4-H club.

What do you really like about working as a regional specialist?
What I really like about my job is getting to do things that the community really needs and desires. For example I have a group of teens wanting to travel so we are doing an interstate exchange. It’s new for the county, so I am helping them raise money and plan their trip to Colorado.

What is one of the most rewarding aspects of your Extension work?
I really like the families and parents, kids, young people, and volunteers. I like seeing them grow and helping them with things they need. I am gratified to hear years later that they appreciated our program. Just the other day, a mother told me that because of the science activities in 4-H her daughter is finishing her degree to be a science teacher.

Challenge: 100 ESP Members in 2014!

Vivian Mason, Membership Committee Chair

Extension is celebrating its 100-year anniversary this year, so why not help Epsilon Sigma Phi celebrate by reaching 100 members in 2014!

How can you help? If you are a current ESP member, we ask that each member recruit just one person to become a member by Fall Conference.

If you are a new faculty member, your eligibility for joining ESP is three years. In the meantime, please take an opportunity to review the ESP website, read our chapter newsletters, and participate in the Global Connection webinars that are offered every month during your lunch hour. Hear some of your Extension professionals discuss their global Extension experiences. These webinars are an awesome addition to what ESP has to offer.

If you are contemplating retirement, or if you know of someone who is planning to retire, consider giving
him or her the gift of becoming a life member of ESP. What a wonderful gift to give someone or to give to
yourself.

The Missouri Chapter encourages you to check out our ESP website @
http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/home.aspx, read the newsletters that are posted, participate in the
global connection webinars, and in the fall, nominate yourself or an Extension colleague for one of ESP’s
annual awards. We all are doing some great work; let people know about it!! And, if that’s not enough,
consider serving on the Board when asked.

If you wish to talk to someone directly, contact any member on the board or speak to Mark Stewart, ESP
2014 president or contact me, Vivian Mason @ masonv@missouri.edu, as membership chair.

We can reach our 2014 membership goal, but we need everyone’s help to get there!

**Global Connections Webinars**

**Jenny Flatt**, Global Relations Committee Chair

The Global Relations committee continues to provide the Virtual Brown Bag Lunch Adobe Global
Connections Webinars on the second Wednesday of each month from 12:00-12:45. Tim Safranski, State
Swine Specialist, speaking about his work experiences in China on May 14. We plan to take a summer
break for June and July and resume in August 2014 with Bob Broz sharing his EGRET experiences in
Costa Rica and his application to land use and watershed planning. Sign up through the ISE system for
this experience. Each of the webinar recordings can be found at: http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/global-
connections.aspx.

In late Spring, the committee is conducting a post-webinar survey via Survey Monkey of participants in
the webinars for June 2013-May 2014 to determine results from the webinars and obtain suggestions for
improvements. The survey results inform the proposed poster presentation for the 2014 National ESP
Conference in Indianapolis. The group has also proposed a presentation on the work done in South Africa
for the same conference.

We are working with MU Extension to develop a resource website with information about international
opportunities for faculty and staff.

Finally if you have ideas to share with the committee please send them to me! Your input makes our
committee work stronger.

**May 15: Another Great Professional Development & International Opportunity**

MU Extension and the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, will be co-sponsoring a joint webinar
on May, 15, 8:00-10:30 a.m. via Adobe Connect entitled **Successful Interventions to Create Positive
Futures for Youth at Risk**. Dr. Jody Squires and Alison Copeland, MU Extension, will present about inner-city after-school programs and Youth Futures, respectively. Mr. Charl Davis and Ms. Serena Isaacs,
UWC will present “Active Citizenship, Adversity and Youth Development.” UWC’s Prof. Julie Phillips will
present “The outcomes of a sports-based intervention on risky sexual behaviors among rural school-
going adolescents.” As in past webinars, discussion time will be included. You can learn more and sign
up to participate in this ISE on the MU Extension webapps site. Questions can be directed to Mary Leuci
or Julie Middleton.
Nominations Sought for ESP Awards

Lynda Zimmerman, Recognition and Awards Committee Chair

Epsilon Sigma Phi has many awards available to recognize individuals and teams for their excellent work with University of Missouri Extension. Many of these awards are not given each year because no one is nominated for them! Please help reverse this trend by nominating a colleague (or yourself) for an award.

The following 13 awards recognize state and/or regional faculty:

- Outstanding Regional Extension Faculty (Woman)
- Outstanding Regional Extension Faculty (Man)
- Outstanding State Extension Faculty
- Early Career Service Award
- Mid-Career Service Award
- Distinguished Service Award
- Continued Excellence Award
- Distinguished Service Award
- Administrative Leadership Award
- Visionary Leadership
- International Service Award
- Diversity Multicultural Award (Individual and Team)
- Distinguished Team Award

For individual awards, the nominee must be an Epsilon Sigma Phi member. Team awards require that 50% or more of the team members who are eligible for ESP membership are ESP members. The list of active ESP members is available at: http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/members_2012-13.aspx

Additionally, three awards recognize non-faculty including extension staff, retirees or volunteers:

- Meritorious Support Service Award
- Retiree Service Award
- Friend of Extension Award

Go to our ESP website to see descriptions of the awards with eligibility requirements, online nomination forms and past award recipients: http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/awards.html

The 2014 Recognition and Awards Committee members are: Johanna Reed Adams (Campus); Van Ayers (SE); Damaris Karanja (Urban); Janet LaFon (SW); Tammy Roberts (WC); Rebecca Travnichek (NW); Virgil Woolridge (NE).

We look forward to receiving your ESP award nominations! The deadline is Monday, September 22. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at zimmermanl@missouri.edu or any of the committee members.

MU Extension launches Health Insurance Education Initiative

Nellie Lammers, Public Issues Committee Chair

One of the most important current public issues MU Extension is involved in is educating the public and businesses on their rights and responsibilities under the Affordable Care Act law. I contacted Brenda Procter, M.S., Extension Associate Professor, and a member of the MU Extension State Team that is leading this education initiative to get an update on the progress and current status of it. Here is her article.
The Affordable Care Act that passed in 2010 created health insurance reforms and regulations that now affect all Missourians, whether directly or indirectly. The new law mandated that everyone, except those with a hardship exemption, enroll in health insurance or pay a penalty. It further required that, by 2015, all businesses with 50 or more full-time employees offer them affordable health insurance or make a shared responsibility payment to the government. Businesses with fewer than 25 employees can now get a tax credit for offering affordable health insurance to their employees.

MU Extension created the Health Insurance Education Initiative to help individuals and business owners understand their options and responsibilities under the Affordable Care Act and provide resources to help them make fully informed health insurance decisions.

State MU Extension faculty, Molly Vetter-Smith, health education specialist, Brenda Procter, personal financial planning associate professor, and Graham McCaulley, personal financial planning extension associate, lead the Initiative. They created a curriculum covering basic components of the new law, including a range of coverage and payment options, tax credits and penalties, unique effects on different groups, how employer-based insurance affects employees, changes to Medicare, and how to get enrollment assistance. The curriculum includes speaker notes that provide a high level of detail and background information and make the curriculum a helpful training resource for those working with consumers. It is available for purchase outside Missouri and is designed for use by extension or community agencies that have a nonpartisan mission.

The Initiative is an integrated program that taps into all appropriate program areas within MU Extension. Eighty faculty from family financial education, nutrition and health, human development, agriculture, business development, community development, labor education and 4-H youth development are trained to deliver the program in all 114 Missouri counties. MU Extension already has offered over 193 workshops, reaching approximately 3,000 Missourians. Nearly 295,000 people received information through other events, radio and TV broadcasts, newspapers and the web.

- Brenda Procter, Extension Associate Professor & State Consumer & Family Economics Specialist

**Extension Fellowships: Rev Up your Professional Development!**

Beverly Maltsberger, Loan and Fellowship Committee Chair

As you begin to look for funds to support professional development opportunities, don’t forget to apply through the Extension Loan and Fellowship Fund. The Extension Loan and Fellowship fund provides financial support for ESP members and others who are seeking personal professional development. These funds may be used for attendance at a professional meeting, obtaining professional certification, or seeking an advanced degree. Applications are accepted and reviewed quarterly. Individuals can apply for an award of up to $1000 for one award. The total amount individuals may receive during their tenure with the University is $3,000. The criteria for application are:

1. Applicants must be currently employed as a university faculty or professional staff member (Members of the Extension Vice Provost's immediate administrative staff, regional directors, campus extension administrators, and Fellowship and Awards Committee members are not eligible.)
2. Have two years of consecutive employment with the University of Missouri.
3. Successful applicants must wait five years to apply for additional fellowship dollars.

These are free funds just waiting for you!!
ESP National Conference – October 6-9, 2014, Indianapolis, IN

The 2014 ESP Annual Conference will be hosted by the Purdue University / Alpha Lambda Chapter. The conference will be held on October 6-9, 2014. The Conference Theme will be “Extension Professionals: Racing into the Future,” featuring workshops on technology and using mass media, programming for shifts in population demographics and generational changes, and marketing for the future. Watch for early bird registration in May and June, ending July 31.

Missouri Alpha Tau Officers and Committee Chairs for 2014

President          Mark Stewart
Treasurer          Joe Koenen
Annalist          Tim Baker
Recognition/Awards  Lynda Zimmerman
Loans/Fellowships  Beverly Maltsberger
Membership         Vivian Mason
Public Issues      Nellie Lammers
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Global Relations   Jenny Flatt
Nominations        Julie Middleton
Retirees/Life Members Vera Massey
Professional Improvement Meridith Berry

Complete contact information at: http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/officers.aspx

ESP is dedicated to fostering standards of excellence in the land-grant extension system and developing the extension profession and professional.

http://espnational.org  http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/

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Missouri PILD 2014: Photos courtesy of Van Ayers