Awards DUE August 9th

Recognition and Awards Committee
Amy Patillo, Chair

It's not too late to join Epsilon Sigma Phi!

I urge you to encourage your colleagues to join our association. There is still time for them to join ESP. ESP welcomes all field and campus based faculty who have been with the organization for 3 years or more.

ESP provides professional development opportunities through monthly Chapter and National webinars, National conferences, Chapter newsletters, eligibility for professional recognition and awards, and access to Extension Loan and Fellowships.

On behalf of the Missouri Alpha Tau Chapter, we welcome you. Join ESP today!

ESP Award Nominations Due Tuesday August 9th

Epsilon Sigma Phi has many awards to recognize individuals and teams for their excellent work with University of Missouri Extension. Descriptions of the awards with eligibility requirements, nomination forms and past award recipients are available online: http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/awards.aspx The list of active ESP members is available at: http://extension.missouri.edu/esp/2015-16-members.aspx

Awards recognize Outstanding Regional Extension Faculty (Woman and Man), Outstanding State Extension Faculty, Early Career, Mid-Career and Distinguished Service Award, Continued Excellence Award, Administrative Leadership Award, Visionary Leadership Award, International Service Award, Diversity Multicultural Award (Individual and Team) and 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. There are 3 awards for **extension staff, retirees and volunteers**:

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

Both Individual and Team award nomination forms may be saved as a completed PDF file and emailed to Amy Patillo, patilloa@missouri.edu.

Please consider nominating someone for an ESP award. The deadline is Tuesday, August 9th. If you have questions, contact any of the awards committee members. (Amy Patillo, Andrew Zumwalt, Johanna Reed-Adams, Van Ayers, Pam Duitsman, Damaris Karanja, Janet Lafon, Tammy Roberts, Rebecca Travnichek)

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**A message from your ESP President**

Meridith Berry

Greetings to everyone.

School supplies have made their appearance on the store shelves. I am reminded of my own childhood and the anticipation of a new school year. I would organize and reorganize my new pencils, erasers, and crayons in the cigar box my grandpa saved for me. Can you imagine tobacco packaging being allowed in grade school today? The good news is I did not become a cigar smoker, but I digress. My school supplies held a promise of new learning, making new friends, and finding something about myself that was valuable. Funny, but that is a little how I felt in 2005 when I was inducted into ESP.

When I took the pledge for ESP members, I looked around the room in reverence knowing that I was being initiated into an organization which boasted the membership of the brightest leaders in extension. Seriously, I didn’t know if I could ever measure up to the excellence of Susan, Mark, Bev, Lisa, Joe, and so many others. I still don’t know if I am in their class, but ESP has been my best opportunity for professional growth and camaraderie. As President of the chapter, I have had the opportunity to travel and meet people from around the United States who represent the best of Extension from their states. I have had opportunities for professional growth, and personal fulfillment.

With that, I would like to encourage you to nominate yourself or another for one of the ESP awards.
The winners of our state awards go on to the regional level, and those winners will be recognized at the ESP conference. This year, I will be accepting the award for North Central Region for Mid-Career Service. I am honored. I would also encourage you to consider serving as an officer of ESP or on one of our committees. Mary Leuci will be recruiting people to complete the slate of officers for next year. If she contacts you, I would ask you consider the opportunity. If you wish to serve on a committee, all you need to do is contact the committee chair. Your offer will be welcomed.

Finally, look for colleagues who embody excellence in their programming and encourage them to part of the ESP organization. For those who have a passion for their job, ESP provides many great benefits.

Best regards,

Meridith Berry

A message from your ESP President Elect
Andrew Zumwalt

As I age, I reflect on how wise my mother was/is. I would like to share one bit of wisdom she gave me that I use often: Feedback is a gift.

I work with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program; volunteers prepare tax returns for lower income clients. I support sites across the state, and I also manage three sites in Columbia staffed with MU students. Campus sites prepare about 1,800 returns a year. If our tax preparation accuracy is 99%, then there will still be almost 20 people who have a tax error.

Sometimes, the clients are not gentle in communicating their discomfort with tax errors. I have had clients yell, curse, threaten, and plead both in person and in voicemails. During these uncomfortable moments, I try to remember, “Feedback is a gift.” Clients that bring us the errors give us a chance to resolve the issue and provide examples where our processes, either in training or operations, are not working correctly. Now that we know what the error is, we can fix it! In providing feedback, clients are also expending time and energy in communicating the problem. We can best honor that effort by listening, apologizing, and thanking them for giving us the chance to resolve it.

When I explain this to my volunteers (mostly students), some just stare blankly at me. They are more accustomed to escalating with others instead of empathizing. I emphasize the point by asking the students about events where they experienced poor service, and how the front line employees and management addressed the situation. Invariably, good customer service treated feedback as a gift, and bad customer service either ignored the feedback or made the situation worse.
To close out the lesson with my students, I use an example of a college roommate’s cat. I was petting his cat, and both cat and I seemed to be doing fine. As I continued petting the cat, it turned, bit me, and ran away. I did not immediately express thankfulness for the cat’s feedback. And sometimes clients can be like that cat. If a client is abusive or overly exaggerating their outrage, then the right action might be to attempt to calm the client or even remove yourself from the situation. Feedback is a gift; abuse should not be tolerated. In the VITA sites, we use role play and real examples to help students know when to express empathy and when to summon the site manager.

So, the next time you have an unhappy client or participant, listen, apologize, and thank them for their feedback. You might even be surprised to have the client then apologize; they were having a bad day and decided to express their feelings poorly!

† I use was/is, because she was wise as I was growing up, and she is still wise today.

ESP Loan and Fellowship Committee

Beverly Maltsberger, Chair

Could You Use an Extra $1,000 for Professional Development?

Most of us enjoy traveling to professional association conferences. We meet new colleagues from across the country, learn about new programming ideas and share our own successes. Sometimes getting to the location as well as registration for these conferences can be pretty costly. That’s where the Extension Loan and Fellowship funds can help support your professional development experiences!

Active, full-time Extension employees with at least two years of consecutive employment with the University can apply to the loan and fellowship fund for up to $1,000 to help cover professional development expenses. Applications are accepted four times per year. Those application deadlines are: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.

To learn more about the fellowship go to the fellowship website at:

http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/AwardDetails.aspx?awardID=20

To download the Fellowship application go to:

Only email applications will be accepted. After completing the application, individuals must send it to their supervisor, who will forward it to the committee. Supervisors: send applications via email to MUExtawards@missouri.edu

Individuals selected to receive fellowships will be notified within 45 days. Be sure to submit your application this year!

Professional Development Committee

Mark Stewart, Chair

The Professional Development Committee has a chapter scholarship application in to national to fund a professional development session at the 2016 Summit around the development of multi-modal program delivery.

Final Thoughts

Andrew Zumwalt

Hey, thanks for reading this far! As I’ve mentioned my mother imparting wisdom to me, I would like to share something useful with you.

I recently had a grant-funded trip; the grant funder had an odd requirement though: I had to show a receipt for every expense. Meals, rental expense, gas, hotel, etc… all required documentation. MU Extension formerly reimbursed this way, so this wasn’t too much of a burden, but I was definitely missing the simplicity of a per diem!

I did some digging before the trip, and I found the Expensify service. Expensify has mobile apps (on iPhone (boo) or Android (yay)) that allow you to use the phone’s camera to capture receipts. The service then processes the receipts automatically finding the amount and date of the expense as well as categorizing the expense (food, fuel, lodging, etc.). The app wasn’t perfect, but it allowed me to easily track expenses and not worry about losing little slips of receipts of various sizes and paper quality. After the trip, I was able to export a pdf that listed all of my expenses by category and date with full color reproductions of the receipts for T&E and the picky grant funder.

The service is aimed at companies and teams more than individuals (I will do a jig the day we can submit expense reports through our phones!), but there is a free tier that met all of my needs. I had taken pictures of my receipts in the past, but there wasn’t enough organization to make the pictures useful. Expensify provided the scanning, storing, and organization that lowered my stress level. You might find it useful…(This is an honest review; I receive no compensation from Expensify.)