Diversity Discussions
Executive Summary

PURPOSE & PROCESS
The purpose of the Diversity Discussions was to gather input from diverse audiences across the state to expand information gathered in the stakeholder input plan of work process. The 12 Diversity Discussions, totaling 130 residents from varying racial and ethnic groups, were held across the eight regions.

QUESTIONS ASKED
The following questions were asked:
1. With which underserved audiences/populations should Extension work?
2. What needs do each of these audiences have? (personal/community betterment)
3. For each need, what results should be achieved?
4. How can Extension best connect with these audiences?
5. Can you tell us which needs are most important?

RESULTS
Participants indicated that extension should work with the following:

Racial/Ethnic Groups
- Hispanic/Latino Families
- African American Urban Youth
- Hmong Communities

Age Groups
- Urban Youth
- Elderly
- Teens

Status
- Parents
- Single Parents
- Under Employed/Displaced Workers

Income Level
- Persons with Low Incomes

Others
- Business Owners
- Service Providers
- Government Leaders
- Offenders (incarcerated/transiting as well as state/local)

Priority Needs Identified for Extension

**Adult Audiences**
- Nutrition education
- Personal finance education
- Business start-up assistance
- English as a second language programs
- Programs in Spanish for providers
- Accessible, affordable education
- Employment training

**Youth Audiences**
- Character building
- Life skills
- Career preparation
- Teen parenting
- Youth and teen pregnancy prevention

How can Extension best connect with these ADULT audiences?
Participants indicated that they are not best reached by brochures. They identified a number of places that are better for reaching them. The best way of reaching them was through radio and television. Other effective ways of reaching them are through:

- Churches & Libraries
- Word of mouth
- Key diversity leaders
- Phone calls
- Service providers
- Effective advertising through internet
- Spanish newspapers
- Unemployment agencies

How can Extension best connect with these YOUTH audiences?
Participants indicated that in order to reach youth, we must go where they spend their time. They are best reached by advertising in the following places:

- Schools
- Teen clubs & youth organizations
- Malls
- Media – TV and radio
- Community centers
- Parks
- Churches, libraries
- After school programs

SUMMARY
The most important finding was that diverse populations indicated that they had not been aware of extension and what it offered. Surprisingly, the programs that they named were much the same as those that were named by those participating in the phone survey and the plan of work discussions across the state; however, the participants did not realize that we offered such programs. With this in mind, the key to meeting the needs of these populations is to REACH them. Another idea that was widely expressed was the hope that faculty offering programs to diverse audiences learn more about their culture and their needs.