Inaugural News Update for Urban Initiative Counties

Last spring I had the wonderful opportunity to visit with each of the 20 urban initiative counties and learn more about programs taking place and plans for the future. Through this monthly newsletter, I want to offer the opportunity for more program sharing among the counties and identify opportunities for professional development and learning. Your input will be valuable to making this news update work. So, I’m counting on each of you to send information about program successes and events that will be of interest to others.

Extension in the City Award

During the January Ag Conference in College Station, the first “Extension in the City Award” was presented to Commissioner J.D. Johnson of Tarrant County. Mr. Johnson has been a champion for urban Extension programs and regularly participates in county events and provides significant support to the programs.

Next year’s award will be given to a state elected official, so be thinking about your nomination (due October 1, 2007) for this prestigious award. Only urban initiative counties can nominate, so its up to you to help recognize those you feel have been exceptionally supportive to Texas Cooperative Extension.

Centra Trainings Planned

Scheduled urban initiative county Centra trainings will have a focus that addresses the unique challenges in urban settings on the following dates and topics:

- June 12, 2007 10:00 a.m. Interpreting TCE to elected officials
- August 22, 2007 10:00 a.m. Managing Volunteers

More information as date gets closer, but wanted you to schedule in this professional development opportunity now.
NEW DVD URBAN SUCCESS STORIES

We are continuing to add to the DVD success stories and have just completed #3. One copy will be sent to the Program Coordinator for each of the counties so that you can review the new set. This is to be added to the first two copies I shared on my spring visits last year. As you identify programs that you feel would be of value to share via DVD for interpretation purposes, please let me know and I will try to schedule the videographer, Austin Moore, from Ag Communications to work with you. These DVD’s are used in many different ways and the complete set can be viewed on the TCE Urban website http://urbantaex.tamu.edu/

Extension in the City Success Stories

Seasonal Irrigation Program (SIP)
  Ag Fair
  Walk Across Texas
  Master Naturalist
Sports Athletic Field Education (SAFE)
  Harvest Trails
  Kid Fit
  Plane State Jail
  Master Gardener
  Pizza Ranch
  Junior Master Gardener
Expanded Nutrition Program (ENP)
  Space Camp
  Boggy Creek
  Plant of the Week
  Grow Green
  Drums in School
  My Things
  Ft. Bend JMG
  ENP Low-Fat Tamales
  Texas Experience
  Farm Day
  Parenting for Grandparents
BLT Holidays on a Shoestring
  Small Business, Big Dreams
  Urban Rancher
Abandoned Well Closure
  Avance
  Child Passenger Safety
  Earth Camp
  Grow Boxes
  Operation S.T.E.P.
Shaping America’s Youth
  Youth Entrepreneurship
Spotlight on successful program:

Each month I would like to spotlight successful programs from the urban initiative counties. This will be your section to send in ideas to share with your colleagues, so let me hear from you!

A successful Nueces County Master Gardener program called YEEHA! (Youth Environmental Education Health Awareness) was developed for elementary school grade levels. Within an hour, three class groups can be taught YEEHA! In 15 minute intervals “Nutrition Starts in the Garden”, “Salad in a Pot”, “Insects – Good Bugs and Bad Bugs” and “Water Runoff and Conservation” are taught. The final station is a picture opportunity with the teacher and students and 5 foot vegetable cutouts which include Ms. Callie Cauliflower, Bro Broccoli and Celebrity Tomato.

The stations focus on: growing vegetables and their nutritional value and proper planting and care of plants. Each student is given a packet of seed to grow their own “Salad in a Pot”; identifying insect types they might find in their garden and ways to control bad bugs; and the value of water utilization a water display module. Literature is available for teaching the YEEHA! curriculum by contacting Master Gardener Helen Orsak, Horticulture Secretary at the Nueces County office.

El Paso County is one of the few counties in the nation to successfully establish a working relationship with the City for program enhancement. The City of El Paso and Texas Cooperative Extension entered into an interlocal agreement to establish Extension within the framework of city government in the Department of Parks and Recreation. Under this agreement, Extension provides education, training, and technical support for two city departments: Parks & Recreation and the Library. Through the partnership, Extension now has many venues for its own program delivery at different parts of the city which amplifies our exposure in the city.

The community of El Paso has a direct benefit from this partnership also. Parks & Recreation has improved the quality of service delivery by focusing more on customer service. Through Extension’s trainings and workshops, the Parks & Recreation personnel have new skills that help them in their program development and management of facilities. Contact: Dr. Ray Bader, CED El Paso.
National Urban Conference
Theme: The Future Urban Extension Agenda: Reaching New and Diverse Audiences
May 7-10, 2007
Kansas City, Missouri

An excellent opportunity to interact with other urban agents/administrators from across the nation. Join your extension colleagues in Kansas City to discover and explore successful, innovative Extension programs being offered in urban centers across the country. This professional conference will offer an array of workshops, speakers and exhibits that will stimulate and inspire a renewed, shared vision for Extension urban programming and outreach. The conference is for extension educators, faculty and staff who work in urban, suburban and highly populated areas; who provide administrative and program leadership on the local, state or national level or have responsibilities for urban programming. The conference will feature outstanding speakers who are respected national leaders for extension and higher education. The format will consist of a pre-conference May 7-8 for administrative and program leaders and a main conference May 8-10 for extension educators, faculty, staff and extension leadership at all levels of the extension system.

The conference is being planned by the 12 North Central states and hosted by University of Missouri Extension. Co-chairs for the conference are Jim Lindquist, Kansas State Research and Extension and Al Black, University of Missouri Extension. If you have suggestions or questions about the conference, please contact us.

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Al Black, 816-252-7717, blacka@missouri.edu

Urban Conference Highlights
Pre-conference Highlights May 7-8

Key Note Speaker-Chester Fehlis, Director Emeritus Texas Cooperative Extension. He presented the Seaman A. Knapp lecture at the NASULGC Annual Meeting October 2006.

Monday afternoon presentations and workshops on partnering featuring national leaders: Maurice W. Dorsey, National Program Leader for Public Policy at the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA; Nancy Zimpher, President of the University of Cincinnati and Chair of NASULGC Board of Directors; Carl O’Conner, Executive Director, North Central Region Extension Directors; Jim Zuiches, Vice Chancellor for Extension, Engagement, and Economic Development, North Carolina State University; Kay Gasen, Director Community Partnership Project, University of Missouri Extension/University of Missouri-St. Louis and Carl Calkins, Director University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development.

Monday evening reception and dinner at the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library

Tuesday morning presentations about best practices, successful models and systems for staffing, funding and programming from regional and county extension directors. Featuring Jim Oliver, Associate Chancellor/Assistant Dean and Regional Director, University of Illinois Extension; Jack Kerrigan, County Director The Ohio State University Extension; Deno De Ciantis, County Director Pennsylvania State University Extension; Willene Buffett, County Director University of Illinois Extension; and Jennifer Skuza, Director Urban Center, 4-H Youth Development University of Minnesota Extension Service.

Cap Note Speaker-Jack Payne, Vice President for Extension and Outreach, Iowa State University and Chair Elect of the 2007 Policy Board of Directors of the Board on Agriculture Assembly.

Main Conference May 8-10

Key Note Speaker-Peter Magrath, Senior Presidential Advisor to the College Board and President Emeritus of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

93 workshops and 4 workshops on the move presented by extension colleagues

Poster Session featuring 27 extension program presentations

Evening reception and dinner at the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum and Jazz Museum

Main Speaker, John Bryant, Executive Director of Operation Hope

Fees/Registration: The main conference fee is $350 before March 30, 2007 (early bird) and $450 between March 31 and April 27, 2007. The pre-conference fee is $125. Registration deadline and refund deadline is April 27, 2007.

Hotel: The hotel is the Hyatt Regency Crown Center, Kansas City, MO located in downtown Kansas City in the Crown Center area near shopping, restaurants and entertainment. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel at 816-421-1234 or 1-800-233-1234 or at the conference website. The hotel has created a link to our website specifically for our group reservations. Please reserve your hotel rooms in our block so that you will receive the special 2007 Urban Extension Conference rate of $110. Please make your hotel reservations by April 6, 2007 to ensure availability in the block and to receive the special conference rate.