CENTRA TRAINING “Urban External Funding”  
November 7, 2007 ~ 9:45 a.m. ~ 12:00 noon  
Guest speakers from the University of Illinois Extension, Dr. James D. Oliver, Associate Chancellor & Assistant Dean, Urban and Metropolitan Affairs, and Cook County Director, Wiliene Buffett, will share their philosophy of external funding and successes they have had in the Chicago metro area. Programatically, Cook County is a national model and has focused on the needs of the area and staffed to meet those priorities. Partnerships, collaborations and flexibility are keys to their ability to secure program funds.

Almost 50% of the states population reside in Cook County, 109 languages are spoken, 69% of the state's minority population and 53% of the state's poverty are within the county borders. The region is expecting growth of an additional two million people over the next 20 years. Innovative funding has helped the educators to address complex societal issues and have a lasting impact on the county.

I know you will gain a lot from this presentation. Sign up for the Centra (http://eit.tamu.edu/centra.html) and join us for an informative discussion on "Urban External Funding" from two of the nation's leading resources.

Extension in the City Award Nominations  
The second annual Extension in the City Award will be presented at the January Agriculture Conference in College Station. The deadline for submission of nominations has been extended to NOVEMBER 20, 2007. This year we will be honoring a state elected official that has been supportive of Extension urban programming. The nominations are open from all the 20 initiative counties and it is an excellent time to recognize one of your state legislators for their support of your programs. The form and guidelines are attached.
Site Visit to the Valley

District Extension Administrator, Ruben Saldaña, hosted me for a site visit to Cameron and Hidalgo counties. The new facilities for the Cameron office are outstanding, with plans for a co-location with ENP in the works. The facilities reflect the appreciation from the county for the educational impact Extension is having in Cameron County. Each agent shared program highlights and it is always great to see approaches and topics that relate to the audience so well. In Hidalgo, I had a "traveling tour" that was an excellent time to hear from each of the agents about their programs, plus observe others in action. I went to classes being taught in Spanish to parents in a school setting, demonstration garden at community center for "Growing Growers" project, and programming at an active community center. With so much going on in each of these counties, I obviously could have had a much longer visit and probably still would not have covered all the program activities! A bonus to the trip was learning about the Arroyo Colorado project and its potential for programming with some of our outstanding urban environmental programs.

Galaxy III Request for Proposals

Galaxy III will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana from September 15 - 19, 2008 and will have participants from all the national Extension professional associations. Each participating professional association has been allotted six concurrent session slots. Each session will be selected by the respective association. Epsilon Sigma Phi is currently accepting proposals with a focus on LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, applying to either youth and/or adult programming. The information about eligibility and procedure can be found on the ESP Web site http://www.espnational.org under "Request for Proposals for Concurrent Sessions". Make plans to attend Galaxy III next year. It is a great opportunity to interact with colleagues from all disciplines and from all parts of the country.
Spotlight

Dallas County Farm Day
Dallas County Farm Day combines natural curiosity and affinity for animals with research based information about agricultural food and fiber production. While attending an entertaining and educational program, students, their teachers and adult chaperones are taught about agricultural products not only as food and clothing sources, but also as resources in technological and medical fields.

Participants were guided through a series of 6 learning stations: dairy and poultry production; forestry; natural fibers production; and cereal grains. In the sixth station, students got first hand presentations on farm animals and the usual manners in which many contribute to our lives, besides as a main course on the supper table! All presentations were cross referenced to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum objectives.

As a "hands-on" activity, students participated in a factual scavenger hunt. As they listened to the presentations, they answered questions over the content to reinforce what they were learning. Upon return to school, the scavenger hunt was graded to review the day's presentations. Each school held a drawing of those who answered 100% of the questions correctly. The winner at each school received a t-shirt .donated by the Southwest Dairy Museum.

Contact: Kim Malone, CEA 4-H & YD, Dallas County

Ag Producers provided technical assistance from Cooperative Extension Program, Prairie View A&M University
As a result of CEP's Small Farm Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program, almost 400 farm families have been assisted in Hidalgo County in preparing loan applications that were sent to USDA-Farm Service Agency for financing. The requested amount of all of these loan requests combined has totaled up to $49 million. If the SFOT-TAP had not been in the Rio Grande Valley, these producers would have paid a 1% fee to an independent loan packager, if one had been available. The most important thing about SFOTTAP is that all of the program participants were given a fair chance to obtain financing for their operations because of the obstacles that impeded them from applying were removed.