

*North Carolina Association of*  
**Cooperative Extension Specialists**

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November 17, 2016

Federation Forum  
N.C. Cooperative Extension State Conference

To: Amy-Lynn Albertson, Federation President

RE: NC Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists (NCACES) Association Report

In 2016, NCACES continued to build on its theme of recognizing **Excellence**, encouraging **Scholarship**, and providing **Leadership** opportunities for Extension professionals with a special focus on improving communications among all specialists, agents and administrators. We provided three professional development opportunities during the year beginning with an open forum with Dr. Richard Bonanno, the new Associate Dean, CALS & Director, NC Cooperative Extension Service, NC State University. This was followed by a program focus on integrated programming, specifically around local food systems development. We then closed the year with a panel focused on leadership in Extension programming through strong county / campus partnerships. Attendees during these events represented a diversity of departments including representation from both NC State University and NC A&T State University.

At a retreat with our Board of Directors during the summer, we framed a program plan outline for the organization for the next three years. We hope to engage non-campus members through one virtual meeting per year, while maintaining two face to face meetings, one at each university. In 2017, NCACES plans to begin our year with a focus on success in Extension programming through professional development on preparing and delivering ignite presentations.

The **first priority** identified in the 2015 NCACES strategic plan was development of tangible benefits for its members and a mentoring role for the organization. As a special project this year, and at the request of Dr. Bonanno, NCACES surveyed our membership and other specialists for input on NC State University Department Extension Leader (DEL) positions. Based on input from survey results, Dr. Bonanno has re-instated a DEL in every department CALS department.

The Association's annual awards provided a mechanism to recognize Specialists who meet the needs of North Carolinians through developing and delivering excellent programs and those who provide exceptional support to Extension agents. This year's award winners were:

Outstanding Specialist Awards

- Award Winners: Misty Terry and Joanna Lelekacs – For excellence in service and partnership with agents

Outstanding Subject Matter Program (developed by an individual)

- Award Winner: April Shaeffer – NC Leadership and Cattle Handling for Women Producers: Advanced BQA Training and Truck/Trailer Safety program

Outstanding Subject Matter Program (developed by a specialist team)

- Award Winners: Liz Driscoll and Tes Thraves – The FoodCorps North Carolina program

In 2016, NCACES completed a thorough review and update of Association bylaws. As a result of that review, we amended our annual meeting date and officer and board elections to November to better align with Federation timelines. Our professional improvement committee is in the process of developing guidelines for Extension Specialists on appointment-based expectations in preparation of their Statement of Mutual Expectations.

As Cooperative Extension grows and evolves, so do our professional associations. As a result of developing a clearer understanding of the needs of our members through strategic planning last year and updates to bylaws this year, the NCACES Special Projects Committee is spearheading a Communications and Membership Campaign. Through this effort, we had 8 new potential members attend our Annual Meeting in November, and we have registered a number of new members from our first round of the campaign. We are pleased to report the past year has been an exciting and productive one for NCACES members, and we are looking forward to yet another year in recognizing **Excellence**, encouraging **Scholarship**, and providing **Leadership** opportunities for Extension professionals.

The NCACES 2017 Board of Directors are:

President – Misty Terry  
President-elect – Sarah Blacklin  
Past President – Joanna Massey Lelekacs  
Treasurer – Mark Megalos  
Secretary – Autumn Guin  
Parliamentarian – Gary Moore  
Elected Board: Sanjun Gu, Joshua O. Idassi, Susan Jakes, Diana Urieta, Gary Bullen, Matt Poore

Membership in NCACES has increased by nearly 20% since 2015 and is expanding. The association voted in 2015 to offer life memberships to active Extension professionals and thus far we have nine lifetime member. Only current members in good standing are eligible to serve as association officers or committee chairs.

Respectfully submitted by:

Joanna Massey Lelekacs  
NCACES Past-President, 2017