

**North Carolina Association of Cooperative Extension Specialists**  
**2017 Spring Meeting**  
**May 5, 2017 9:00am – 12:00pm**  
**Room A-16, C.H. Moore Hall,**  
**North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University**  
**Greensboro, NC**

9:30 a.m. **Welcome and Announcements** (*Misty Terry*, NCACES President, NC A&T)  
Misty welcomed the members and discussed needs for members to serve on the Special Projects and Professional Improvements Committees. Matt Poore is leading a committee to investigate the need for positions to cover gaps in programming. Joanna Lelekacs is leading a committee to develop recommendations for a career promotion plan for Extension Associates.

9:45 a.m. **Extension Administrative Updates**  
**Dr. Barbara Board, Interim Associate Administrator, NC Cooperative Extension Program, NC A&T State University**

Dr. Board discussed NC A&T's strategic plan, shared a map of current coverage across the state. She discussed movements to meet the needs discovered within the strategic planning process. She discussed the implementation of curricula: Extreme Makeover: Soft Skills Edition (*Misty Blue Terry*); Community Voices: Leadership Development Program (*Michelle Eley*); and Speedway to Healthy. She discussed the importance of Small Farms Week (March 19-25).

Additional steps to address the strategic plan taken include:  
State Program Teams were launched to encourage strong relationships between county staff and campus, development of tools and resources aligned with goals, and educational product development. Meetings are being held with County Staff across the state about Mission Possible to check in on tools being developed. Strategic goals include bringing 1<sup>st</sup> generation kids to 4-H, partnering to expand FCS reach, and working with county teams to put together agriculturally focused conferences. Positions are being hired to include: Program Evaluation Specialist, Animal Science Specialist, and Extension Program Leader for Agriculture and Natural Resources.

***Sheri Schwab, Associate Director and Director of County Operations, NC Cooperative Extension Program, NC State University***

Ms. Schwab discussed the importance of connecting agents with specialists. She suggested that NCACES could help Administration think through/discuss ways to further enhance campus and county relationships. She also discussed the model currently under review for agent promotion. This model will likely be a continuing education model that moves from onboarding and understanding basics in year 1 to continuing education across years 2-5 and a dossier completed in year 5. Later years will include more advancement opportunities based on experience/longevity/training. She mentioned that subject matter might be an opportunity for agents to gain CEU's and extension specialists/associates to provide CEU's to gain opportunities for advancement. Online modules launched for agents in the past year could potentially work for specialist/extension associates onboarding in the future. Is this something NCACES could provide some input on for early career specialists?

Ms. Schwab also discussed the recent work of Simone Keith in Information Technology with videography training. Simone Keith was brought on to support the move within Extension to be more high tech, high touch. Simone is on board to help everyone improve their work and there is a potential opportunity to bring Simone in to help program teams make a couple of high quality videos.

Ms. Schwab celebrated the success of the Extension Engage Conference recently held in Durham. The conference convened around the topic of how to work with new audiences. Ms. Schwab discussed the importance of appropriately and consistently using the new branding to help people know about Extension and its connection to the University. Branding toolkits with banners and other marketing items are being sent to departments soon. Other topics included an upcoming meeting with county ops/directors in for meeting about how to get PCARDS to county admin; translating professional scheduling to county personnel; and the review of promotion and tenure to effectively and substantially recognize Extension work.

### **10:15 a.m. Awards Committee Report – Recognition Ceremony**

#### **Committee Co-Chairs:**

***Dr. Susan Jakes, Associate State Program Leader, Community & Rural Development***

***Dr. Michelle Eley, Community & Economic Development Specialist***

#### **Presentation of awards**

***Ms. Sherry Schwab & Dr. Barbara Board Presenting***

#### **Outstanding Subject Matter Program by an Individual Award**

- *Outstanding Specialist in Support of County-based Programs* - Dr. Wayne Buhler
- *Outstanding Subject Matter Program* - Crop Integrated Pest Management Program, Dr. Dominic Reisig
- *Outstanding Subject Matter Program by a Team* - CEFS NC Growing Together Project, Dr. Rebecca Dunning (lead), Emily Edmonds, Robyn Stout, Sarah Blacklin, Joanna Massey Lelekacs, Thomas A. Melton, Nancy Creamer, Steve Washburn, Benjamin Chapman, Barry Nash, Matt Poore, Chris Gunter, Michelle Schroeder-Moreno, Patricia Carolyn Dunn, Robert Handfield, Chyi-Lyi Liang, JJ Richardson, Laura Lauffer, Krystal Chojnacki, Dustin Adcock, John Ivey, Mary Jac Brennan, Erin Eure, Craig Mauney, Paige Burns, Taylor Williams, Susan Kelly, Peggie Garner, Lisa Childers, Kenny Bailey

#### **10:45 a.m. Awardee Ignite Presentations**

##### *Video Presentations:*

Dr. Dominic Reisig - Associate Professor & Extension Specialist- Entomology

Dr. Wayne Buhler, Interim Department Head & Extension Specialist, Horticultural Science

##### *In-Person Presentation:*

*NC Growing Together Team* – CEFS NC Growing Together Project, Dr. Rebecca Dunning

#### **11:10 a.m. Professional Improvement Committee Presentation and Input Session**

*Joanna M. Lelekacs & S. Gary Bullen*

- Working at NC State to develop non-tenure extension associate promotion/career path model
- Goals today – getting input and expanding committee
- Committee is also looking at what defines scholarship for Extension professionals
- Core group potentially impacted (to be confirmed with input from Extension Administration) – 5 non-faculty specialists, 71 extension associate, 34 extension assistants, other folks who have different titles but have some funding through Extension and fit under EHRA non-tenure staff

*S. Gary Bullen*

Mr. Bullen provided an overview of what other universities are doing as follows:

- Clemson – no career path, no promotion, evaluated within departments
- University of TN – most developed (see handout)
  - BS to MS required
  - Extension Assistant 1 to 11
  - Extension Specialist Rank works independently
- Louisiana State University
- Auburn – Well developed, 3 ranks Associate to Specialist
- Georgia – Extension Associate to Specialist – PhD required
- Virginia Tech – no Extension Associates – had Associate Professors of Practical Practice who were non-tenure with MS (PhD preferred)
- University of Kentucky – similar to TN – EA works with professor but then becomes more independent

*Joanna Lelekacs*

Defined the goals of Extension leadership in asking for help from NCACES to recommend a non-tenure Extension Associate/University Staff career pathway. Extension Associates are leaving and want to find a way to keep good people. She then facilitated a conversation to gain input from the members present. Notes from that process follow.

*Benefits of Advancement – Career Ladder*

To Members

- self-efficacy and self-worth
- Path for Professional Development (can see way forward)
- gives focus
- develop additional programming
- Continuing Education benefits – (more validity across nation)
- better quality of life

To University –

- Retention
- Programmatic Continuity
- Maintenance of Skill Levels
- Reduced down time of program)
- Focused Positions to Extension
- Maintain Critical Relationships/Networks/Connections
- Make Positions more competitive
- Saves \$\$

*Challenges to Consider*

- *How do we measure our work/academic impact? Extension Scholarship*
- *Variation on position duties*
- *Support from administration*
- *Funding (grants/hard from Extension University)*
- *Perception of Extension Programs – grants are capped differently for research vs. extension*
- *Requires adequate funding through soft money – recognition of value of extension work*
- *Conflict between traditional titles and roles and new roles (folks want to talk to the Specialist)*

*Input on Naming/Title Convention*

- *Important to have title reflect level of knowledge/ability*
- *Extension may need to revisit what it means to be a specialist*
- *Term – “Educator” may be more transparent to general public*
- *? Opportunity to streamline what tiers are called in a way that is parallel with academic or research levels (e.g. instructor) Research addressed with Research Associate, Research Assistant Professor, etc. --- these are non-tenure track – commonality across the system*

**11:40am Special Projects Committee Update**

*Dr. Matt Poore*

Dr. Poore is chairing a committee to study Extension programs across the state to look for programming gaps. He expressed interest in gaining insight from members at NC A&T to figure out commonalities between and within universities. There will be a meeting over the summer to have output for administrators. The faculty staffing model is now to take priorities for staffing out of departments into systems which leaves faculty feeling out of the loop in terms of having a voice as to how position decisions are made. Dr. Poore needs additional people in NCACES to work on the committee. One way the committee will study program gaps is through departments and historical programs. Another way is through surveys which are to be sent out soon and a follow up survey in the summer. Discussion focused around how Program Teams fit. NC State is in the process of creating program teams (3 in place?) and NCA&T has program teams in place.

**12:00 p.m. Adjourn**

**Executive Committee**

Misty Terry – President	336-285-4694	mablue@ncat.edu
Sarah Blacklin – President-Elect	919-928-4771	seblackl@ncsu.edu
Joanna Lelekacs – Past President	919-515-1195	jmleleka@ncsu.edu
Autumn Guin - Secretary	336-285-4694	autumn_guin@ncsu.edu
Mark Megalos – Treasurer	919-513-1202	mark_megalos@ncsu.edu

**Elected Board**

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**Program Planning Committee**

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**Attendees**

Joe Neal  
Michelle Eley  
Jackie Miller  
John Ivey  
Joanna Lelekacs  
Becky Bowen  
Susan Jakes  
Sekai Turner  
Barbara Board  
Sheri Schwab  
S. Gary Bullen  
Matt Poore  
Rebecca Dunning  
John O'Sullivan  
Sanjun Gin  
Autumn Guin  
Misty Blue-Terry