

PODC Report to ECOP

October 19 & 20, 2000

Keith Niemann, Chair

Action Requested

PODC strongly encourages the ECOP/ESCOP effort to bring together a Partnership Meeting in February 2001 involving individuals from CSREES as well as land-grant institutions. We believe key Associate Directors and Administrators as well as program leaders and members of PODC and PLC should also be invited. Copies of a letter from PODC to Dr. Dan Godfrey encouraging this action will be distributed during my report.

Information Technology and its Implication on the Future Structure of Extension Work Group

This Work Group was formed by PODC at its October 2000 meeting in response to requests by Ted Alter, Director, Cooperative Extension Service, Pennsylvania State University and James Wade, Associate Dean and Associate Director, Maryland Cooperative Extension Service.

In its initial discussion the Work Group agreed that the overarching question is “How can new and evolving information technology increase the efficiency (educational and otherwise) of the Extension system?”

As such, a number of essential questions were posed: 1) What is Extension already doing in the area of information technology? 2) Are there increased efficiencies we (the Extension system) could realize by better communication and collaboration, with regard to information technology? 3) Are there training needs associated with increased use of information technology, both for Extension faculty as well as Extension clientele? 4) What implication does the increased use of information technology have on the structure of the Extension system?

Pursuant to the above, the Work Group will: 1) Devise a web based, information gathering form to ascertain what Extension is currently doing in the area of information technology. Curtis Clark will develop a form for other Work Group members to review. A form suitable for dissemination to the entire system will be shared with the entire PODC committee at the January meeting. The Work Group will also share with the entire PODC committee, at the January meeting, a means for disseminating that information system wide. 2) Joe McGilberry will gather information regarding virtual centers as well as interactive learning modules and will present that information to the group in January.

The Work Group is recommending the following at this time: 1) A discussion of training needs associated with increased use of information technology, both for Extension faculty as well as Extension clientele, should be included as an agenda item at the joint meeting to be held in May 2001. Specifically, a discussion between PODC and PLC is critical to assure accomplishment of the basic goal of this Work Group, which is to increase the efficiency of the Extension system through the use of information technology.

Training Work Group

A letter will soon be sent to all Directors and Administrators as well as Associate Directors and Administrators announcing the website locations of the following:

- * Guidelines for Professional Development in Extension (hard copy will also be included)
- * Value of Agriculture - Rural/Urban Interface project report
- * Leadership Development Opportunities for Extension's current and future leaders
- * New Director/Administrator Briefing Book
- * Electronic Data Base - site of PODC minutes and Publications

This Work Group also intends to link the PODC web site to other extension organizations and groups.

Organizational Culture Work Group

This Work Group was instrumental in providing two workshops for PODC at our last meeting. Kathy Castania led a half day workshop on Cultural Competency. Howard Ladewig outlined his work with Benchmarks and discussed ways PODC's efforts in this area can be complimentary to each other.

Subcommittee on Extension Diversity

The Change Agent States for Diversity project will be recruiting for a project manager to foster better collaboration among the eight project state institutions (Cornell, Penn State, North Carolina State, Georgia, Missouri, Colorado State, Arizona, and North Dakota State). This subcommittee is also conducting an assessment of the current conditions in those eight states in order to measure change after three years.

SED will submit a proposal to CSREES to support work toward a virtual center for diversity.

New members nominated (and approved by PODC) for four year terms on SED were: Paul Gutierrez (Western), Starlene Taylor (Northeast), Carmen DeRusha, (North Central), and Gae Broadwater (1890). Approval from the nominee's Directors/Administrators will now be solicited.

NELD

RFPs will soon go out soliciting states interested in hosting NELD for the next contract term.

General Items

As outgoing Chair of PODC, I would like to thank the members of this Committee for their dedication and participation in the work of the system. I would especially like to thank those members who will be leaving the Committee at the conclusion of their terms this fall. Those members are: James Smith (Auburn University), Starlene Taylor (Delaware State University), Bill Peterson (University of Arizona), Ray Bosmans (University of Maryland), and Milan Rewerts (ECOP Administrative Advisor, Colorado State University). Larry Arrington (University of Florida) is also completing his term, but has been reappointed for another four years by the Southern Region. Also, my thanks to ECOP for the opportunity to work with these wonderful Extension faculty members.