

# ANNUAL CONFERENCE TALK 2005

## Bridging Science and Society: Recapturing Land Grant

James Christenson, Deborah Young and Lisa Lauxman

### Jim Christenson

Good Morning.

This morning we celebrate the success of our faculty with awards. And we wrap up these Annual meetings with gusto. I would like to thank Ursula Schuch and Mike Hauser for their excellent leadership along with the rest of the program committee as noted in the program. I would also like to thank Sandra Saad for her help in getting the hotel and putting the event together. And I would like to thank our staff, Patti Baciewicz, Glenda Thompson, Steven Crofts, Sheila Merrigan, Kelly Block, Robert Armstrong, Andy Medina and Debby Janes for helping out and do all the necessary things that are needed to have a successful meeting. We had the meeting at La Paloma because it is a first class facility, the cost is less than going near campus later in the year, and because we feel you deserve the best.

The topic: Recapturing the Land Grant. For those new to the University, Land Grant is historic legislation which was signed by Abraham Lincoln in 1862 and which set aside land in each state to establish a university that would provide higher education for working women and men. It created a system of formal and non formal education to serve the needs of the people and address the issues of the day. Cooperative Extension was added as a new dimension to Land Grant in 1914 when funding was established at the Federal level, matched by State and County governments, to create a co-operative system for applied research and outreach, placing faculty throughout 3,000 plus counties, township and parishes to bring the university to the people and the people to universities. This legislation, along with the G.I. Bill, is considered two major events in higher education.

Cooperative Extension has been acknowledged as a worldwide model, esteemed, copied, and valued. Until the last 30 years, no state could imagine a time that Land Grant would not be making a contribution to the state and that Extension would not be a key player. When our country was more rural, Extension programs were better known, valued and respected. Times change. Population demographics change. 1914 or 1950 are long time ago. We are not new anymore. Many other players have taken the field. However, we remain unique because we have a county-community based network of faculty, with research-based ties, who contribute to the economic, social and cultural local situation. We make science and education work for people. Changing times do demand organizations to evolve, to chart new paths. We need to constantly reassess, redirect, and market our competitive advantage. We need to find those niches where we can make a difference, be perceived as making a difference, be valued and respected in both our University and county-based context. The mission and the mandate live on, but the content has changed.

In many ways we are like a large ship, moving in rough seas. We have competitors but none has the array of small ships that make up the fleet. Being a fairly large system (ship) it is difficult and dangerous to change direction quickly and haphazardly. So we make changes on the margins, a new hire here, an elimination of a position through retirement there, new funding sources, budget cuts, reallocations, new partnerships. It is like a series of small tug boats pushing on the big ship to keep it on course, to keep it goal directed, and to keep it relevant to its home markets.

Today we would like to briefly discuss some changes on the margin for Cooperative Extension, changes in the winds of funding and issues that should be discussed and explored. We have a CED meeting coming up later this Fall when we will further discuss some of these ideas. We do need your thoughts and input. We want to start a dialogue. In this brief time this morning, we will focus on our resource portfolio, strategic positioning for programmatic success, and staffing opportunities. I will focus on our resource portfolio, Deb will focus on strategic positioning and Lisa will focus on staffing. We work as a team so we wanted to report as a team.

Last year in my presentation to Annual Conference I discussed STEPS TO THE FUTURE (see PowerPoint presentation at: [http://cals.arizona.edu/extension/steps\\_to\\_the\\_future.ppt](http://cals.arizona.edu/extension/steps_to_the_future.ppt)). That presentation along with the tables and trend are on line, just like this presentation will be on line. In that 2004 presentation, I discuss the tradition 3-legged stool that was and still is the core resource foundation for Cooperative Extension: a combination of Federal, state, and county funds. If these were our only sources of funding we would either be half the size that we are today or not in existence. Fortunately YOU have made up for many of the Federal and state cuts with new resources from grants, contracts, gifts, endowments, cost recovery and partnerships. And I complement and applaud you for your efforts and achievements.

Lets take another look at the new 5-legged stool (our resource portfolio) from a different angle. You can call it the 5-spoked wheel of a ship steering into uncharted waters.

Over the past few years the College has repositioned all of its state monies on faculty. Whether on or off campus, faculty are the heart of Land Grant. We have pulled state dollars off travel, particularly out of state travel, some operations, maintenance, start-up funding and concentrated it on faculty so that we could have tenure and continuing track positions. This helped compensate for some of the State cuts. We have had over 20% cuts of state and federal funding over the past few years, but we are not down 20 percent of faculty because of internal reallocation. And we have not given up on increased state or federal support. With the support of the President and Provost, we will go forward to the legislature with a \$1.5 million U of A decision package for off campus programs. We will definitely need your help in doing this. But as you can see in the view of the 5-legged stool or wheel, faculty are and will continue to be at the heart of our resource portfolio.

To maintain and enhance faculty numbers and impact, more and more staff and technical support will come from grants, contracts, and cost recovery. We also need to partner with other entities to leverage our impact (hospitals, cities, NRCS, Forestry, Commodity groups, NGO's). Many organizations are the "fittest" because they cooperate with other groups, rather than competing with them. The challenges from a resource portfolio perspective are: 1) to fully implement cost recovery in all programs. It should become at least 10 percent of our overall budgets, 2) to build

new partnerships with cities, Tribes, ARS, etc. Cities like Sierra Vista, tribes like CRIT, special funding from the Forest Service are helping us to build a new and expanded portfolio. Each county and department needs to look at their portfolio and see where they can build. In addition, we are making strides in endowments. They currently make up 5 percent of our overall budget, but they need to go to 10 percent over the next few years.

Resource portfolio review, assessment and direction is important for all of us. Strategic positioning to address and deliver our portfolio, to add direction to our large ship at sea, is essential for respect, value and sustainability. Deb Young will now discuss strategic positioning.

## **Deborah Young**

As Jim mentioned, we envision Arizona Cooperative Extension as a large ship. The ship is set on a course, in a direction that was set in 1914. We need to constantly adapt -- to changes in the winds, currents, environmental, social and economic forces that influence our organization. Zeyphrus is the Greek god of the wind. Imagine that there is a zephyr, a warm and pleasant breeze, guiding us.

In order to continue our course, it is essential that our Extension programs be responsive to the needs and assets of our constituents. We gather information from many sources to gain knowledge and awareness of what the residents of Arizona need and want from Extension. Consider our navigational devices. How do we strategically position ourselves for the future?

One source of navigational information is the various instruments such as Kids Count 2005 and How Arizona Compares (from the Morrison Institute for Public Policy). These sources can guide us on the currents and winds today and in the future.

We need to look to the economy of Arizona to assess how we can best take the university to the people. The greatest number of jobs is in services, retail trade and government. The majority of jobs are low paying; the state's average was of \$33,000 (2002) lagged the national average by 7%. So how can the university make a difference? By helping create and enhance high skill jobs. Our economic future lies not in growth related employment, but in the high skill jobs and incomes that come from innovation and invention. This includes examining new ways of conserving and managing our natural resources in order to manage our natural resource-based industry.

We need to look at educating our residents in new ways. Education is synonymous with economic development, both in preparing the resident work force and in attracting the retaining the talented, creative people vital to a competitive knowledge economy.

We need to the look at the state of our families. We shape our future by how successfully we raise healthy, capable children and help others do the same. Our under-5 population is growing rapidly compared to many other states. One approach is to expand opportunities for affordable, quality childcare to provide greater work and education options for parents and a good start for children.

We need to focus at once on disease prevention and wellness, while partnering with specialists in the Arizona Health Sciences Center for the expertise in chronic disease management.

We are looking for new sources of navigational information as well. We must emphasize a strong "customer focus" to determine program priorities. How can we partner with agents, specialists, elected officials, and constituents to gather more information and make Extension more relevant today and in the future? Do we need to implement a review process for Extension programs? Should we complete a cost analysis for programs to aid in our navigation?

Once we have gathered navigational information, I'd like to reassess that our ship is strong and seaworthy. Are we able to meet conditions of our changing society, funding and demographics? The structure of Extension must be sound in order to meet these goals.

1. Resources are flexible. As Jim noted, our state and federal resources are not flexible, they are fixed. The number of faculty positions we have is static, while the number of people requesting our services is increasing. One way we can have flexible resources is for you, the faculty, to continue to get grants and contracts. Another option is for the state legislature to support our decision package. We may choose to eliminate programs based on a cost analysis, or to increase revenue generation for those with the ability to pay. All of these are decisions we will have to make in order to ensure that resources are flexible.
2. Teaching, research and extension are blended. Outreach education is one of the three pillars of the land grant university. We must partner with other Colleges to obtain the expertise needed. We need to continue to encourage all faculty of this mission. I am asking all of you to instill this mission in our university, especially as we face a new university president in the coming year.
3. Evaluation is woven into all stages of program implementation. If we are going to continue to get outside funding, and/or increased funding from the state legislature, we have to market our accomplishments. For a limited number of programs statewide, we need to clearly demonstrate the outcomes and impacts. Think of evaluation as the keel - the backbone of our vessel. We will use evaluation to market our products. Evaluation will help us analyze Extension's "niche" for each program area.

Extension is a sound ship, with good navigational devices. But it can't sail by itself. We count on outstanding employees and volunteers. Lisa will examine this part of our organization.

## **Lisa Lauxman**

### **I. Introduction**

70% of our surface is water with all but 3 % of it being salt water. Life began in the ocean at least 3.5 billion years ago. Navigating the seas requires skilled people on board. In Jim Collin's book Good to Great, getting the right people on board is a fundamental truth. Good to great leaders understand 3 simple truths.

- A. First, begin with the who rather than the what to more easily adapt to a changing world.
- B. If you have the right people on board, motivating and managing are usually taken care of.
- C. Great vision without great people is irrelevant.

## II. Staffing

We in AZ CES have great people. Staffing is recognized as being critical to our success. Challenges can be met with the right people on board. In seaworthy vessels it's important to have roles to cover the needs of the ship such as captain, mates, an engineer and a steward. All shipboard staff are chosen for experience, teaching skills and commitment to education. In much the same way, so are county extension faculty who are the heart of the land-grant system.

In addition, thousands of volunteers answer phones, provide program resources and serve as major contacts and links with constituents. We need to build strong systems of support, incentives and learning opportunities.

In navigating the sea of change, some essential concepts for staffing include:

**Piloting** - the principle of navigating to determine location and direction. Staff know "the land." As Jim has noted, nearly all of our state funding is going to continuing and tenure-level positions. Today about 25%. Opportunities for new leadership roles are being explored to further know the "land" and to navigate Extension through the future. This may lead to faculty taking lead roles in new programmatic or funding opportunity areas.

**Celestial Navigating** - when we take the sights either with a sextant, using the sun, moon, stars and planets to fix our position we must continue to truly have a navigator's view of the universe - in this case, reflect the changing demographics of our state. Are we a model for working with different cultural groups? Do we model diversity with staffing? We need to foster and create a high quality work environment.

**Vessel Operations** - illustrates "how" we power the ship's operations. To operate vessels we need to know hydrodynamics, Archimedes Principle, Newton's Laws, Bernoulli Effect and Boyle's law about diesel engine combustion as well as mechanical and vessel design. To power Extension staffing will require exploring and expanding learning opportunities and keeping current with the tools of technology. E-Extension, the U of A library system, interactive audio/video computer-based conferencing systems continue to allow for technology to enhance learning experiences and facilitate interaction and communication.

Meteorology focuses on ability to connect systems between local, regional and global weather and life at sea. It helps to understand and connect pressure systems. Our support needs to include systems that provide support, training, and rewards and incentives. Locally funded gifts and endowments may be set up to recognize and support faculty, staff, and volunteers.

Navigating the issues, being strategically positioned, and having the right folks on board will ensure AZ CES ability to successfully sail through the "sea of change."