



Epsilon Sigma Phi

Dedicated to fostering standards of excellence in the Extension System and developing the Extension profession and professional

Spring 2014

**Epsilon Sigma Phi
Alpha Omicron Chapter
Committees 2014**

Executive Committee

Jon Laughner President

Beth Raney, Vice-President

Robin Kuleck, Secretary

Cathy Bowen, Treasurer

Ann Swinker, Past President

Annual Meeting -

Audit & Finance - Tom Walker

Chapter & Career Awards - Melinda Graver

Constitution & By-laws -

Global Relations -

Membership & Initiation - Martha Gregory

Nomination - Janice Stoudnour

Professional Development -

Scholarships & Loans - Staci Hritz

Sympathy & Memorial -

Recognition on Retirement -

National ESP Endowment (Ad Hoc) -

Historical (Ad Hoc) - Guy Temple

Life Member Involvement (Ad Hoc) -
Patricia Powley

Message from the President - Jon Laughner

ESP.....why? The mission of Epsilon Sigma Phi is to foster standards of excellence in the Extension System and to develop the Extension profession and professional. Who of us in the Extension profession wouldn't find this organization valuable?

As I write this, our ESP Chapter has several members attending the PILD Conference in Washington D.C. delving into legislative issues with peers from across the nation. They are meeting with government agency representatives, examining Extension's role in various situations, and strategies for addressing public issues. This is just one of the wonderful opportunities that exist through ESP.

As a reminder, some of the other benefits of ESP membership include:

- * Scholarships for individual professional development opportunities including Advanced Degrees.
- * Professional Development Mini-Grants for Chapters.
- * Chapter and national recognition programs for member individuals and teams.
- * National Conference provides an opportunity to give peer reviewed scholarly presentations.
- * Involvement in public issues and activities.

And you might want to mark your calendars for the upcoming Recognition & Career Awards & Scholarship, the Alpha Omicron Chapter Leadership Awards – Deadline – October, and the JCEP Scholarship & Forgivable Loan – Deadline – September.

Many of these benefits will be extremely valuable to us individually as well as we develop dossiers for advancement and network across many state extension professionals.

In this year we have 36 annual members and 89 life members. Thank you to all of you. You are all a very dedicated group of members taking on additional important responsibilities within the organization and making a difference. Small but mighty?

This just demonstrates that numbers don't tell the whole story. However, with a larger membership some of these important jobs can be spread around. Help spread the word!

Friend of Extension Award - Melinda Graver

Friend of Extension Award – PA Senator Elder Vogel – Senator Vogel grew up on a western Pennsylvania dairy farm and has been in the family dairy business. Elder served as the local Beaver-Lawrence County Farm Bureau president, New Sewickley Township Supervisor, and many years as a Beaver County Penn State Extension Board member. He actively participated at the local, state, and federal legislative levels communicating the importance and value of Extension's expertise. He utilized this experience first-hand on the farm.

Senator Vogel is now serving in the second term in the PA Senate. He quickly became Chairman of the PA Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee. In this position he has been strongly supportive of the Penn State Extension budget as provided by Commonwealth funding. These efforts supported the entire Penn State Extension organization.

He holds up Extension as a model of providing valuable educational programming in many venues across the state and promotes at the federal level. His personal first-hand knowledge is invaluable in creating a positive impression of the organization and he is a proud supporter.

Senator Elder Vogel is rooted in agriculture and Extension. His long experience as a dairy farmer, township supervisor, agricultural organizations, and Extension leadership positions have been beneficial at the local and state level. His local Extension participation has provided a credible basis for extending his positive influence throughout the state. He takes every opportunity to promote Extension to new audiences and reinforces our role in the community to existing stakeholders.

Extension Relations & Leadership Awards - ESP Recognizes Rookie and Distinguished Service Recipients at Annual Meeting - Mindy Graver, Chair

2013 was a great year for Chapter Awards! Thank you to the members who applied for awards. The state winners were sent on to National ESP to be our nominees for recognition selection for the 2013 National ESP meeting at Galaxy IV in Pittsburgh. Congratulations to the following award winners:

Distinguished Service Recognition Award – Jan Scholl –



Jan came to Penn State University as an Associate Professor in 1988 and was initiated into Epsilon Sigma Phi and has been an active member since that time. She received her Bachelors of Science from the University of Idaho in 1975 and her MS and Ph.D. from Iowa State University in 1982 and 1986. Jan started her career in 1975 as an Extension Educator in Havre, Montana and a 4H specialist at the University of Wyoming in Laramie.

During her 25 years in ESP, Jan has worked on the National Global Committee for 3 years, the National Historical Committee for 2 years and presented at five ESP Conferences. During the last 5 years, she has received national awards for curriculum, historical research, internet education applications, diversity, and meritorious service.

Jan's accomplishments include being published in 50+ state Extension bulletins, and she developed the National 4-H/EFNEP research databases which include over 10,000 in use. She created 17 media/TV programs; three national webinars and manages the Eat4-Health program which reaches 5,000+ participants. Jan completed 7 Experiment Station projects, 37 refereed papers, 9 books, and 92 presentations in 12 countries.

Jan will be taking a sabbatical in 2014 to speak at many state conferences in the U.S. about the Smith-Lever Act, why it was ratified and its consequences and blessings. She gave presentations at national webinars on the 100 years of FCS in Extension with artifacts from the time period.

On her own time Jan has been trying to restore a special collection in the Paterno Library on PA 4H from 1910 – 1950's with over 600 negatives not including photographs and historical documents. Dedicating 38 years to Extension, Jan's curriculum, research, and historical expertise is shared world-wide.

Rookie of the Year Award - Alicia Spangler



Alicia Spangler is a Field and Forage Crops Educator of Armstrong County. Alicia received her B.S. in Agro ecology (Agronomy), Minors in Agronomy and Plant Pathology in May 2010) from Penn State University and her Masters in Crop and Soil Sciences from Michigan University in August 2012.

Alicia was employed as the Field and Forage Crops Educator supporting Armstrong, Indiana, and Westmoreland Counties (District 6) and the Penn State Field and Forage Crops Team in July 2012. Early in her Extension career, she became an active member of the Pennsylvania Association of County Agricultural Agents (PACAA). This spring, she received 3rd Place in the state for a Program Promotional Piece that she developed to advertise an event. This fall, she organized and then guided 53 educators from around the country on the "Crops and Cows Tour" during the Galaxy IV Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The tour visited two highly successful crop farms, showcasing Western Pennsylvania's important contribution to production agriculture.

As a Field and Forage Crops Educator, Alicia educates a diversity of adults and youth about corn, soybeans, small grains, cover crops, hay and pastures. Within the 16 months she has worked for Penn State Extension, she has organized and offered many programs to fit the agricultural community's needs. To date, my most accomplished events include "Pesticide Safety and Agronomy Update Meetings," "Western PA Crops Day," and "Soybean Field Workshops."

The purpose of "Pesticide Safety and Agronomy Update Meetings" was to educate Certified Pesticide Applicators how to safely handle and apply pesticides and how to control agronomic pests. Last winter, she educated 567 applicators in six Pennsylvania counties.

In addition to discussing pesticide safety last winter, Alicia also organized "Western PA Crops Day." This day-long meeting featured a variety of agronomic topics by Penn State Specialists. In total, she received \$1,790 of support from agribusinesses, and was able to offer "Western PA Crops Day" for a reduced fee to all attending growers, dairy and livestock producers.

This summer Alicia educated soybean growers on how to achieve successful soybean stands and yields at "Soybean Field Workshops." The workshops were part of a state-wide series sponsored by the PA Soybean Board and directed by the Penn State Field and Forage Crops Team.

This growing season, Alicia established an on-farm starter fertilizer and micronutrient trial to determine how the products influence corn grain yield. The trial analyzes a few of the many fertilizer products available on the market and provides insight as to which ones are most cost effective. She plans to repeat the trial two additional growing seasons and then share the results with growers.

Alicia composes a monthly two-page newsletter that addresses current agronomic issues. This letter reaches 1,087 growers, dairy and livestock producers, and agribusinesses.

Continuing Professional Development – Scholarship & Loan Recipients - Stacie Hritz, Chair

Congratulations to Dwayne Hay, 4-H/Youth Development Educator in Bedford County. He was the recipient of both the 2013 Alpha Omicron Forgivable Loan and the 2013 JCEP Scholarship. Dwayne is putting these scholarships toward his Master's Degree in Agriculture Education, which he is pursuing online through Oklahoma State University.

If you would like to apply for the Alpha Omicron Forgivable Loan and/or JCEP scholarship for 2014, be sure to watch for more details in either May or June. Scholarship applications will be due in September.



Public Issues Leadership Development (PILD) - Robin Kuleck



\\L-R Susan Alexander, Ann Dunkerton, GT Thompson, Robin Kuleck, Jan Scholl.

The annual PILD conference is one of the events sponsored by JCEP – the Joint Council of Extension Professionals. JCEP's mission is to “promote communication, cooperation, and professionalism among all Extension Educators. In light of Extension's Centennial, the theme of this year's conference was “Celebrating the Past, Leading the Future and was held April 6-9 in Alexandria, Virginia. PILD attendees include Extension volunteers, educators and administrators who participate in professional development activities including advocacy. My travelling companions were Ann Dunkerton – 4-H McKean County, Susan Alexander 4-H Jefferson County and Jan Scholl, University Park.

National Program Leaders from USDA NIFA (United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture) conducted panel discussions on current and emerging national issues. Model Extension programs that are addressing these issues were included as part of the

program. Some workshops offered included: The Role of Extension in Controversial Issues, Effective Strategies in Addressing Public Issues, View the Power of Data, Helping Our Clientele Stay Healthy Through Extension Programming, Extension's Public Value: Then, Now and in the Future, and Extension's Leadership Role in Providing Health Insurance, ACA and Marketplace Education and Outreach to Consumers.

A highlight for me was the concluding general session where Steve Stark dressed in period mourning coat, from Fargo North Dakota provided an illustrated narrative on the history of Extension and the various personalities and legislation that impacted the creation and development of Extension as we know it today. The culmination of the conference was Capitol Hill visits where teams met with various Congressmen and Senators to tell the Extension story and the impact we have on them personally as well as on their communities. Our team was fortunate enough to meet with Congressman Glenn “GT” Thompson and his Senior Advisor John Busovsky. Each of us shared details about the various programs we conduct including the StrongWomen program and 4-H programs such as the Robotics club. Both GT and John were interested in learning about these programs that don't immediately come to mind when you're discussing agriculture. Creativity, teamwork, collaboration and mechanical skills are just a few benefits of youth participating in Robotics which falls within the realm of STEM. A former nursing home administrator, GT knows the value of physical activity and strength training in helping our aging population remain independent in their own homes and accompanying reduction in health care costs.