

Feature Story

NE District well represented by award winners at professional conference

The National Association of County Agricultural Agents (NACAA) recently held their annual professional conference in Sioux Falls, SD. Of the six Florida agents awarded prestigious awards for professional service, three are from our own district. These awards were presented on July 15th, 2015.

Achievement Award

The Achievement Award (AA) recognizes agents with less than 10 years of service in Extension who have exhibited excellence in their professional field. Nominees must be association members and attend the Annual Meeting to receive the award. Based on the number of active national association members, Florida was allotted three award winners this year. From the statewide applicants, the committee submitted three award winners, one of whom is our own Jim DeValerio, Bradford County.



Jim DeValerio

A Gator since 1977, Jim has developed biological weed control agents, mentored students and has taught in Brazil. Extension efforts include

horticultural (Master Gardener), agricultural and mosquito IPM programs.

Distinguished Service Award

The purpose of the Distinguished Service Award (DSA) is to recognize agents with at least 10 years of service who have conducted outstanding programs and are highly respected by their peers. Florida was entitled to three DSAs this year, and two are from the NE District: Elena Toro and Larry Figart.

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August – October 2015

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NE District well represented by award winners at professional conference...continued from previous page



Elena Toro

Elena Toro serves as the Agriculture/Natural Resources Agent for UF/IFAS Extension in Suwannee County. Her work has fo-

cused on livestock, forages, small farms, regulatory issues, food safety and row crops.



Larry Figart

Larry has excelled at delivering a quality Urban Forestry extension program. He is the resource for urban forestry and arboricultural information in

Northeast Florida. His programs reach homeowners, landscape companies, and municipal workers.

**Congratulations
to our
AA and DSA
winners!**

From the District Director



Eric Simonne

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Quotes and Reflections from 2015 Middle Managers Conference, in Charleston, SC.

Every other year, the middle managers (also known as District Extension Directors in the Florida system) of the Southern Region meet to discuss current challenges, listen to solutions implemented in different states, look into the future and network with their peers. Read the statements and quotes below, and reflect on how they apply to Florida Extension and the NE Extension District. Enjoy!

- "Today's Extension needs a balance between high tech and high touch." Well said!
- "Extension is profoundly committed to the localness of its programs." Yes, in Florida and elsewhere!

- "Job embeddedness (yes, a new word meaning likelihood of staying in the job) for county agents is the overall aggregation of LINKS (relationships built with local groups, stakeholders and businesses), FIT (how the agent is well suited for and comfortable with the job, the Extension Service and the community), and SACRIFICE (potential losses of material, social and psychological benefits if the job were abandoned)." What are your LINKS, FIT, and SACRIFICE? Are you embedded?
- "We observe today that the classical symmetrical, normal distribution of adoption of change overtime (the "bell shape curve") is replaced with an asymmetrical, spike looking "shark fin curve" of spiking early in the adoption trends of new technologies." Humm.....
- "Few people understand the need for middle managers; no one likes to have a boss." No comment.
- "Extension's mission today is to improve the economy of the states through the improvement of the wellbeing of individuals." Economic

impact: that's what our partners and funders are looking for... What is the value of your program?

- "About the mentor-mentee relationship: the older I get, the less I listen to people and the more I watch what they do." Yes, that's leading by example!
- "Advice to new agents: in times of rapid change in Extension, be careful who you follow and choose your professional models wisely." Makes sense....
- "Generational representation in the workforce: US demographers project that by 2020 (by the way, that's only 4+ years away!) 50% of the workforce will be Millennials and younger." This is our biggest challenge in Florida Extension: incorporate and allow to grow those so talented, yet so different young professionals. How are you getting ready for it?
- "Local groups want to partner with Extension because we have the 800-lbs gorilla behind us: the University." That's a little more than two offensive linesmen.....Keep pushing

How Does the **University of Florida** Work?

A County Program Review Primer

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By **Amy Harder**
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Improving Extension programming has long been a goal for county and state level stakeholders. Rapid changes within counties, which include economic difficulties and changing stakeholder demographics (Harder, Moore, Mazurkewicz, & Bengé, 2013) are cause for continual assessment of programming practices within Extension. County Extension Program Reviews are a unique way to gain insight into the program delivery and educational services of a local Extension office. These formative evaluations are used “to assess program quality, facilitate program improvement, foster cooperation among Extension’s various units, and assist in achieving the best use of institutional resources” (Jacob, Israel, & Summerhill, 1998, para. 1).

In their study, Brown and Kiernan (2001) found that using formative evaluation on a program resulted in a strengthening of the implementation and impact of an educational program. Their study showed that formative

evaluations help to identify needed changes in order to improve programs. Program reviews bring together various players within Extension to help identify those needed changes as well as strengths that counties can then use to improve their programs.

How do the Reviews work?

Five counties are chosen for the yearly county reviews. District directors “nominate counties for review on an annual basis” (Jacob, Israel, & Summerhill, 1998, para. 7). A team of four individuals conducts program reviews. The team consists of one county agent, one District Extension Director, one program leader, and one state Extension specialist. These review teams change from county to county. The review teams travel to the specific counties to hold interviews with “three major groups within the county: (a) agents, program assistants, staff, and volunteers; (b) clientele and advisory members; and (c) collaborators (including local government and agencies)” (Jacob, Israel, & Summerhill, 1998, para. 5).

The review teams ask questions surrounding the strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats of programming within the county. These qualitative data are collected through interviews and

serve as the foundation for the review team’s report. The responses from the various interviews are then compiled and the review team presents their findings to the key members of the county office. Counties then draft, submit, and implement plans to improve programming based on the review team report.

Summary

The process of the program review allows for coordination among various stakeholders for the unified purpose of improving Extension programming. County reviews help to evaluate how a particular county’s programming is doing and are a valuable tool for both program development and accountability processes. More information on the County Program Reviews can be found at: pdec.ifas.ufl.edu

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What’s **Working?**

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What are Extension partnerships? They are collaborative efforts between the Extension Service and other organizations to provide mutually significant

opportunities and services for citizens. Partnering with other organizations can often result in more successes than can be realized by working alone.

On the PDEC site, you can access the complete module on Partnerships, Relationships and Collaboration. Learn

more about the key components of establishing and maintaining successful partnerships. Get out there and partner-up for a higher ‘outcome per input ratio’. http://pdec.ifas.ufl.edu/new_faculty_modules/collaboration/index.shtml

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“Modular Writing” Assignments

Following the NE District Meeting in April, Dr. Simonne challenged agents to write articles using an alternative way of writing. As Dr. Simonne stated in this challenge: “In our traditional publications, we have an introduction, typically three main sections and a conclusion/summary. To get the message, the reader needs to read the whole article, digest what he/she read, and retain what he/she can. The alternative method is to write publications based on lists of items of similar importance. Each item is numbered in the list, has a title, a picture (or even a short video as shown on the first link below) and is easy to read. This form of bare-bones articles that focus on the essence of the message is seldom used in Extension”.

From that challenge, the following are examples of “Modular Writing” that have been written and submitted by some of our colleagues. Kudos.



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10 Life skills your Child will learn by attending 4-H Camp Cherry Lake

As a parent, have you ever asked the question, “Why should I send my child to 4-H Camp Cherry Lake?” Many parents reply to this question with justifications as to why their child may not be ready to go to residential camp alone; for example, will he/she be safe, my child is irresponsible, what if she gets tired or homesick, or he may not like the living environment. These are just a few reasons parents are hesitant to send their child to camp. At 4-H Camp Cherry Lake, your child will have a safe and memorable camp experience. All activities and educational programs are under the direct supervision of University of Florida 4-H Staff. All summer staff is American Red Cross Certified in First Aid and CPR, and lifeguard certified. Campers are supervised by teen counselors and co-counselors who are selected by the 4-H agent and have at least six hours of camp leadership training. As a

4-H Agent, I always get asked the question, “Why 4-H Camp Cherry Lake?” My response to the parent is your child will come home with at least 10 life skills they will learn through the camping experience.

1. **Independence.** Campers learn to do things on their own, such as keeping up with their belongings and cleaning up after themselves for the week. For many, this is a first.
2. **Sense of Belonging.** Campers belong to groups such as camp clusters, cabin groups and learning groups and make new friends as they share meals, activities and cabins.
3. **Time Management.** Camp life requires youth to stay on schedule for the week.
4. **Learning by Observing Positive Role Models.** Camp staff, counselors and co-counselors exhibit leadership qualities that campers will emulate the week of camp. For example, they see how to respond to someone who is not doing what you necessarily like by talking the child through the problem.



Camp Cherry Lake

5. **Socialization Skills** are gained by youth constantly communicating with each other over meals, through camp songs, and during activities.
6. **A Week of Physical Activity away from Electronics.** Kids spend a week in active play and enjoy doing it. They participate in canoeing, kayaking, swimming, recreational games, archery, camp fires, fishing or health lifestyle.
7. **Conflict Resolution Skills** are taught experientially. When a conflict arises, the camp counselor is taught to be a mutual party who never takes sides in a conflict. They teach the youth how to vent their differences and come to a common consensus between the campers.
8. **Self-Confidence** is gained through learning to do things independently. For most campers, this is their first time away from their parents for a long period of time. If they are always under their parents, they continue to look for security from the parent. By the camper acting independently for a week, they gain the “I can do this attitude”: whether it is keeping up with a schedule to keeping up with their belongings, they learn to be resilient youth.

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10 Life skills your Child will learn by attending 4-H Camp Cherry Lake...continued from previous page

9. Self-Discipline is taught by getting up early, staying up late, following the camp schedule, and following camp rules.

10. Cooperative Living. Campers are required to keep their cabins and camp cleaned by being assigned daily chores. Through daily camp chores youth are taught work force readiness skills. These skills include

team work, shift work, and work performance incentives. Cabins are awarded cleanest cabin award for the cleanest female and male cabin. Youth are highly competitive to win the cleanest cabin award because they eat first at supper time. Camp chores are a team effort. Youth quickly catch on to who is willing to work hard to get chores done.

Summer camp can grow your child in so many ways. Are you convinced? Will your child or grandchild attend 4-H Camp Cherry Lake this year? I hope so, and they will be a well-rounded individual for doing so!



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List of Measurable Verbs Used to Write Effective Learning Objectives

One of the challenging tasks that agents face throughout their career is developing learning objectives. Learning objectives are statements of what learners will know and be able to do when they have completed instruction. These objectives must be related to outcomes, be specific, measurable, and learner centered.

Agents develop program objectives during the program planning stage, which then guide the design and delivery of educational materials including the intended methods of evaluation. In Extension, objectives are specific ways in which a program will change the targeted participants by building their knowledge and skills through education or by modifying their behavior.

In 2001, Anderson and Krathwohl revised Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of measurable verbs to help describe and classify observable knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and abilities. The theory is based upon the idea that there are



Methods of delivery are guided by learning objectives at the 2014 Small Farm Conference.

Image Credit: UF/IFAS

levels of observable actions that indicate something is happening in the brain (cognitive activity).

By creating learning objectives using measurable verbs, agents can indicate explicitly what the learner must do in order to demonstrate learning. The following is a list of Bloom's cognitive domain levels (lowest to highest cognitive skills), with corresponding measurable verbs that should be used to create measurable objectives.

1. Remember. Retrieve relevant knowledge from long-term memory.

Measurable Verbs: Arrange, Define, Locate, Recall, Recite, Describe, Repeat, Identify, Select, Quote, Label, Copy, List, Name, State

Example: Upon conclusion of presentation, participants will be able to define, describe, and demonstrate the operation of an egg incubator.

2. Understand. Construct meaning from instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communication.

Measurable Verbs: Classify, Describe, Identify, Articulate, Indicate, Organize, Interpret, Illustrate, Reorganize, Translate, Paraphrase, Summarize, Transform, Discuss, Explain, Defend, Compare, Report, Restate, Review, Rewrite
Example: Upon conclusion of presentation, participants will be able to define, describe, and demonstrate the operation of an egg incubator

continued on next page

3. Apply. Carry out or use procedure in a given situation.

Measurable Verbs: Calculate, Construct, Classify, Estimate, Illustrate, Interpret, Appraise, Contrast, Criticize, Diagnose, Identify, Demonstrate

Example: Upon conclusion of presentation, participants will be able to define, describe, and demonstrate the operation of an egg incubator

4. Analyze. Break material into its constituent parts and determine how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.

Measurable Verbs: Combine, Figure, Find, Sketch, Solve, Predict, Change, Survey, Compare, Diagram, Examine, Test, Modify

Example: Upon conclusion of the "Farmscaping" presentation, participants will diagram a plan to increase biodiversity on their farm.

5. Evaluate. Make judgments based on criteria and standards.

Measurable Verbs: Appraise, Argue, Assess, Defend, Estimate, Judge, Predict, Qualify, Rate, Support, Critique, Recommend

Example: At the conclusion of the "How to perform an illustrated talk" presentation, 75% participating youth will be able to appraise the quality of an illustrated talk.

6. Create. Put elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganize elements into a new pattern or structure.

Measurable Verbs: Arrange, Assemble, Compose, Create, Design, Devise, Formulate, Invent, Manage, Modify, Organize, Plan, Prepare, Produce, Propose, Set up, Verify, Construct, Develop
Example: At the conclusion of the "How to perform an illustrated talk" presentation, participating youth will compose an illustrated talk.

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Four Uses Everyone Has For a Household Inventory

Making a household inventory is a project that is best and most easily started at the beginning of one's life when accumulation of possessions begins..... usually about the same time as careers begin. Making a list of items, their date of acquisition and the initial cost (or value if they were a gift) is valuable information for the following four uses:

1. A household inventory will assist in determining the amount of insurance needed (for contents). It will also provide information on collections or specific items (like jewelry, guns, art pieces, etc.) that would require additional insurance riders or policies since such items have

limited coverage under most insurance policies. Insurance companies may have their own inventory forms so check with them.

- 2.** A household inventory, if up-dated at least every six months, will serve in reviewing the adequacy of current insurance coverage. As one increases the value of possessions, the amount of coverage must usually increase to insure against lost, theft or accidental damage. (Remember that flood insurance coverage requires a separate policy.)
- 3.** A household inventory will provide information about certain collections, art pieces, jewelry, etc. when one is making a net worth statement. Sometimes these items may not be considered in that document since they may not be easily converted to liquid assets.

4. A household inventory will serve in estate planning. It will help determine your personal belongings. Then you must decide to whom you wish to distribute them. These personal items are often the source of family disputes if their distribution is not well thought out and spelled out before death.

So... the earlier one begins a household inventory and continues to document acquisitions, the easier each of the four options can be accomplished.

Roaming Interview Section

By **Larry Figart**

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This edition's roaming interview is contributed by **Stephanie Toelle**. She is an FCS Agent in Duval County. The agents for

this section are randomly selected, so be ready.

Where are you from/where did you grow up?

I am from Hays, Kansas and grew up there.

How and when did you decide you wanted to be an Extension Agent?

I decided to apply for the Duval County Extension job when I was urged by my husband Andy, who was a 4-H agent in Idaho. I was working as a case manager for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of SE Idaho and wanted a "real job" with benefits and a better wage. I had developed a mentoring program for pregnant teens, and Andy said that it was very similar to the work in Extension.

What are your hobbies?

I play the oboe and have recently performed with the First Coast Wind Ensemble and a couple of chamber groups. I also like tennis, love my dog (Skittles, a mini Australian shepherd), yoga, nature walks, kayaking, and travel. I think it's fun to go to all kinds of museums and exploring. I enjoy trying new recipes, foods, and restaurants.

State something about yourself that most people don't know about you?

Maybe that I'm adopted and found my birth family when I was 20 years old (pre-Internet). I am still in contact with them.

If you won the lottery tomorrow, what would you do/how would you spend your time?

Honestly, I would like to design an awesome family dream home, travel, do all my hobbies and more, and I would like to serve others more directly, perhaps young parents. Maybe Andy would keep working so we'd have benefits!

Where did you go on your last vacation?

My son, Drew, and I just went out to Kansas to see my family, but we ventured up to North Dakota for me to visit my final state before I reached 50 years old (which is very soon)—and I beat my

brother. We visited friends in Omaha, went through Minnesota, Wisconsin, stopped in Dayton, Ohio to see the National Air Force Museum for two days! (Drew is Air Force ROTC), and on home.

What was the last book you read?

Reading (slowly) *Crucial Conversations*. Before that, *The Kitchen House*.

What is the weirdest question you had to answer as an extension agent?

Not a question, but the statement by an inmate; "my parents beat me and I turned out okay". Classic.

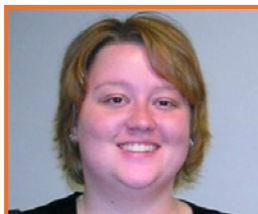
Do you play a musical instrument?

Oboe, plus piano, then cymbals, clarinet, and a saxophone for high school or college marching bands.

What is the most exciting place you have ever visited?

I thought living in Idaho was pretty exciting. We were in easy distance from Yellowstone, the Tetons, Craters of the Moon, and I really enjoyed cross country skiing. It was a three year vacation. Yosemite is incredible, and really enjoyed an Alaskan cruise with family. Excited about Germany next summer for our 25th anniversary!!

Information Technologies



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Are you In or out?



LinkedIn is a social networking site for businesses and professionals. Check out the following pros and cons to determine if LinkedIn could boost your professional career:

Pros:

- Allows users to connect with a variety of professionals and businesses both within their field and out
- Simple, safe, user friendly platform

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What's Working?...continued from page 3

Columbia County Extension recently partnered the Master Gardener Volunteer Program with Habitat for Humanity and with Advocates for Citizens with Disabilities (CARC). Birdhouses were constructed, painted, decorated and sold as a joint venture to raise money for landscaping Habitat homes. Although the main objective was to use native plant landscapes as teaching opportunities, there were other notable outcomes achieved along the way.

What outcomes were achieved that could be measurable?

- More bluebird nesting sites are now available
- Heightened awareness of Habitat projects may bring offerings of time, talent, and funds.

- Lives were enriched: new skills were learned by participants from CARC, and reinforced.
- Every person involved in the project experienced personal worth by helping others.
- Money was raised to install landscapes that feature native plants.
- Master Gardeners received hands-on training on research-based planting practices.
- New homeowner and volunteers working on site were instructed on Best Management Practices (BMPs) to keep plants healthy without causing harm to the environmental.



Master Gardeners helped CARC participants experience all phases of the construction process.

Teaching Tips

Extraverts versus Introverts

By **Alexa Lamm**
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First in a series of Four: Teaching to Different Personality Types

Whether you're sitting in a conference room or out in the field, an extension program participant's interests and ways of learning directly affect how he or she takes in information. This calls on us as educators to consider different teaching approaches, based on the needs of who is sitting in the room. Participants whose preferences are different from ours may find it difficult to adjust to the learning atmosphere and the teaching methods of the educator. Therefore, we need to vary our teaching styles and approaches so we can motivate and teach a wider range of learners. Doing so means developing diverse approaches that better meet the needs of all learners.

One approach to this is considering personality type, as determined by the Myers Brigg Type Indicator or MBTI. Several of you recently took the MBTI at the NE District meeting and I'm sure others have taken it before and already know their type. While we can't always take the time to find out what personality type our learners have, we can assume that we have a variety of types in the room every time we present information. Therefore, ensuring our approaches are applicable to all types can assist in knowledge and skill transfer and hopefully inspire our participants to take and implement what we are teaching.

The easiest to implement, and most widely understood is the idea of extraversion versus introversion which describes where we focus our attention and get energy. Individuals who are extraverted like to process information externally and get energy from others. Extraverts will benefit from engaging in discussions, presenting information to a group, answering questions out loud and on the fly and

brainstorming ideas as a group to get instant feedback from others. Incorporating these techniques in your program will appeal to the extraverts in the room.

On the other hand, introverts like to process information internally and derive energy from personal time. This can be encouraged through pre-session reading assignments, providing time to read and process before being asked to discuss pertinent information, journaling, providing time in between session activities, and using progressive programs that allow the introverts to take their time before making decisions on how they will implement new information.

As educators, we all tend to rely heavily on our own preferences and style when developing programs. By keeping in mind that you have both extraverted and introverted learners, and making programmatic choices based upon that knowledge, you can make even more impact with your extension programs.

Are you In or out?...continued from page 7

- Allows users to list skills and qualifications, search for career opportunities
- Allows other users to suggest and endorse individuals and businesses on their skills and qualifications
- Networking, networking, networking
- Features educational articles and resources such as upcoming webinars, seminars, and workshops
- Puts a face with a name
- Platform for publishing articles and research

- User has control over people they allow to see their profile and join their network
- Can be linked with user's website, blog, and other social media outlets (user selected)

Cons:

- Like all social media sites, once it's published, it's out there forever and can be shared

- Can quickly become more "social" than professional if users are not selective of who is allowed to join their network
- One more social media site to maintain, potential time vampire if social media is a weakness

So...are you In or out?

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