Leadership Opportunity for Executive Directors

Extension Administration is continuing CCE’s investment in leadership development. Funding has been reserved to ensure Executive Directors are able to attend Harold D. Craft Leadership Program (HDCLP) and for Building Teams and Leading Change (BTLC) in 2015. In each case, Extension Administration (EA) will cover part of the cost of the program ($1000 of the $1500 total tuition) for HDCLP; $750 of the $1000 total tuition for BTLC), participants will need to cover the remaining cost of the tuition, travel, lodging, and food outside of the program. Our fall participants have provided feedback indicating positive personal and organizational impact as a consequence of attending the program.

Harold D. Craft Leadership Program (HDCLP)- 5 days, February 9-13, 2015; Tuition Cost to Association - $500 ($1500 full tuition less $1000 Extension Administration support).

The five day HKCLP program is focused on individual effectiveness, power of communication, personal mastery, and leadership. The program helps participants to:

- Discover their own and others’ leadership styles and the implications of style to leadership.
- Understand and experience the power of constructive feedback and measurement as a leadership tool.
- Interactively discover the value of empowerment, collaboration, and partnership in an organizational setting and how leaders can build a culture of trust through dialogue and partnership within an organizational system.
- Experience the potential leaders and teams have in creating positive work environments.
- Develop a model of personal mastery and explore the alignment of personal and organizational values, authenticity, and vision.
- Understand individual change, design a change plan, and understand how well-designed change can positively affect one’s leadership success.
Building Teams and Leading Change (BTLC)- 4 days, March 3-6, 2015; Tuition Cost to Association-$250 ($1,000 full tuition less $750 Extension Administration support).

The four day Building Teams and Leading Change Program is part II of the leadership program and is focused on individuals who direct, manage, or lead others. HDCLP is a prerequisite. The program helps participants to:

- Have, and be able to use, tools to harness and leverage the diversity and dynamics of groups and teams.
- Gain awareness of, and comfort with, personal impact and style in leading and facilitating groups.
- Be able to effectively manage meeting agendas and objectives.
- Be able to build a team from the ground up, and diagnose and intervene on team dynamics.
- Continue creating an individual development plan that will be put into action upon return to work.
- Understand, and be able to manage, the dynamics that are present in any change - personal/individual or organizational.
- Plan a change leadership strategy for a real change.
- Gain tools and resources to deal with personal/individual change and organizational change.

SNAP Ed Proposals Awarded

All seven CCE regional proposals plus the New York City proposal received positive notification from NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) on October 8. The seven CCE regional proposals appear to be basically funded at the level they were proposed at, on average of roughly $1 million per year, per region, renewable for 5 years (a total of roughly $7 million per year). The award letters indicate positive award status, dollar amounts, and the need to negotiate a state contract ultimately approved by the State Comptroller’s office. Specific timelines and details of agreements are yet to be communicated.

There likely will be staff who lose their jobs because of mandatory educational requirements, programs will change, and project management will be regional all in accordance with the requirements of the funder. This will continue to be a major change for this nutrition program and the system. However, it is good news that CCE across the state earned the successful awards in this openly competitive funding program and is likely the best possible outcome given the funding situation.

Cornell University and CCE add Economic Value to New York State

A recent study released just this week indicates CCE’s ability to add value to communities across New York State. “CCE programs, critical to fulfilling Cornell’s land-grant mission, benefited 1.4 million state residents. CCE volunteers logged 1.1 million hours in FY 2013; the impact of total CCE, student, staff and faculty volunteer activity exceeded $27 million.” For more information see: http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2014/10/cornells-economic-impact-has-stabilizing-effect-state-county

Engaged Cornell Announced

At the October Executive Leadership Conference, Vice Provost Judy Appleton announced the start of a ground breaking $150 million, 10 year initiative to establish community engagement and real-world learning experiences as a foundation for Cornell undergraduates. With a presence in all the counties and New York City and a rich history of working with faculty and internships for undergraduates, CCE is poised to help support the effort. For more information about the initiative, please read the story here: http://now.cornell.edu/engaged/
Board Financial Oversight Cheat Sheet

One of the top priorities of an Association Board is to provide fiscal oversight of the Association’s finances. Many Board members are new to CCE and to serving in a financial oversight role. We spoke with Donna James, Finance Lead for the Western NY SBN, about some of the key questions Board members should ask or consider to learn about the finances and provide the fiscal oversight needed to keep the Association on track.

General Questions:

• Are the financial statements being reviewed current? They should be within 30-45 days depending on month-end date vs board meeting date.
• Does the financial statement package include a cover page of written notes explaining the financials? Notes should be included to explain deviations and other important aspects of the report by the finance manager.

Statement of Operations:

• Are revenues and expenditures in line with budgeted amounts?
• Does the budget balance?

Balance Sheet:

• What is the current ratio? Current ratio is the value of current assets to current liabilities. 2:1 is acceptable. What is the trend over time?
• Does the statement balance? Assets – Liabilities = Fund Balances
• Is an aging report shared or details of receivables and payables shared?
• Is the board aware of how old receivables are? i.e… over 90 days, etc…
• Is the board aware of how bills are being paid? Is the association current with payables?
• Is the Cornell Payable account current?
• Is the board aware of what “normal” balances are for these accounts?

Finally – ask questions – if the board does not understand what is being reported or why, ask. Schedule a meeting with the executive director and finance staff to help better understand the statements

Annual Meeting/Nomination Process

Fall is the season when most associations hold their annual meeting, and association Nominating Committees should be hard at work identifying potential Board candidates. The Nominating Committee is a committee of the association - not of the Board of the Directors – and should contain a majority of members who are not current Board members.

Besides identifying potential candidates, the Nominating Committee is in charge of the annual election, which should be held according to one of the optional formats as identified in the association constitution. If questions arise as to process or procedure during the election, the Nominating Committee should resolve them.

Although elections are normally held in the fall, the Nominating Committee should really be active throughout the year in assessing the demographics of the county, the needs of the association and identifying potential candidates.
Funding Update

Fall in CCE is traditionally known as county funding season marked by discussions among Executive Directors, boards, and county government partners. It is early to accurately project actual appropriations for 2015. There are emerging conversations across the state ranging from projecting increases and level funding to some decreases realizing these are only projections and could change. We will start collecting data on projections beginning in mid-October. The State Extension Specialist team and others in CCE Admin stand ready to assist associations in their county funding discussions. October 1 marked the beginning of the federal fiscal year which looks better than the previous year with pre-sequestration funding projected to be restored. At the state funding level, we are in the middle of the current state fiscal year. It is premature to project the next year state funding level.

Association Accreditation

The Association Accreditation process was initiated about seven years ago as a means to mutually assist associations and Cornell (as agent for the state) in meeting various regulatory and policy requirements.

After reviewing benefits/successes and challenges/deficits from the pilot phase of accreditation, and considering technological and administrative advancements in the ensuing years, the Accreditation Review Team has agreed on the following refinements to the CCE accreditation process:

• Several indicators which the pilot phase has shown to be consistently in compliance, or which have been supplanted by other policies or procedures, have been revised or eliminated.
• Other indicators which lend themselves to be included as part of the year-end reporting process to the Business Systems Launch pad will be verified by CCE Administration.
• The majority of indicators will be self-evaluated by the associations.
• An association will undergo an accreditation review as part of the executive director’s conferral of title in-depth review process, rather than on a 5-year cycle. The purpose of this change is to link accountability for compliance more closely with the executive director position, and to more directly involve Boards and Board Presidents with the process.
• There will no longer be on-site accreditation visits except in special circumstances.

The State Extension Specialists have “cross-walked” the schedule of individual ED conferral of title reviews and the former schedule of accreditation reviews and made adjustments where necessary. For example if an association was accredited in 2014 and the ED position is due for renewal in 2015, we would wait until 2019 for the next accreditation review. We can also adjust the accreditation schedule in individual situations if warranted, such as ED turnover. The State Extension Specialists will communicate with each ED individually regarding the date of your association’s next scheduled accreditation.

The accreditation process will use an online form on the Business Systems Launch pad that will be completed by the association and CCE Administration. This completed form will serve as input during the executive director’s Renewal of Title review conducted by the Board President and the State Extension Specialist.

Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment Insurance (UI) is a required manageable cost of doing business in New York State. The CCE Associations are covered on a statewide self-funded pool to help minimize the risk of any one Association encountering significant or unmanageable costs related to UI. All CCE Associations pay a contribution into the UI pool every year. The pool pays the cost of the UI claims from former Association employees. The annual pool contribution is an estimate of the Association’s possible impact on the pool, based on historical claims. Associations may proactively minimize that figure over time by working with the third party administrator, HR One, to minimize exposure prior to or during an employee’s UI period. As the cost of pool contribution cannot be effectively compared to claims paid or claims pending, the Associations are encouraged...
to work with their Shared Business Network Finance and Human Resource Leads to develop the appropriate budgeting method based on the possible risk of staff turn-over.

**Workers Compensation**

Workers Compensation (WC) coverage is a required manageable cost of doing business in New York State. The CCE Associations are covered on a statewide safety group insurance plan to help minimize the cost of insurance coverage. For the type of work CCE Associations perform, the New York State Compensation Insurance Rating Board (NYCIRB) has set an experience modification rate threshold of 1.2 or lower. The statewide safety group insurance plan exceeded that threshold this year. Due to this, NYCIRB issued a requirement for the plan to undergo a Workforce Safety and Loss Program Prevention Consultation and Evaluation as per Industrial Code Rule 59 (ICR 59). A consultant, Lawley Insurance from Buffalo, NY, was sent to 5 Associations to conduct on-site inspections and issue a report detailing required improvements. The final report included fourteen statewide improvements and nineteen specific site visited Association improvements. All requirements (statewide or site specific) must be completed before the NYCIRB audit which will be scheduled near the end of 2014. Failure of any single requirement to be satisfactorily completed will result in penalty of 5% cost increase every year until satisfied. The cost will be applied to all Associations. Also, each Association has historically paid a portion of the insurance premium relative to the number of staff employed. One of the requirements of the audit includes enacting a change to the premium calculation to account for individual Associations number and severity of claims, in addition to number of employees. This may change some Associations’ premium payment significantly when compared to prior years.

**Upcoming Executive Leadership Conference for 2015**

- February 25-26, 2015 - Location: TBD
- June 10-11, 2015 (with Board Presidents) - Location: TBD