June 2015 Executive Leadership Conference “Special Edition”

A “Special Edition” of the CCE Executive Leadership Conference is scheduled to take place on June 10 and 11, 2015 at the Cornell University campus. Once again, Board Presidents (or their designees) are invited and encouraged to attend so the leaders in the CCE System have an opportunity to interact, learn from each other and make meaningful connections. The meeting will be designed to strengthen association and campus faculty/administration connections; continue dialogue on CCE’s strategic plan implementation; and provide opportunities for board volunteer interaction and relationship building. We truly hope every Association will bring their current Board President or potential future leader to the meeting.

4-H Moving Forward

The State 4-H Office is working closely and collaboratively with CCE Associations and 4-H Educators to create a shared vision for the program moving forward. The process began in the spring of 2014 with an extensive 4-H survey that was sent to every CCE Association. The survey led to the identification of core statewide priorities and a process to address them. The 4-H working group (SWG) made up of three Association Executive Directors, nine county based 4-H Educators (selected by their peers) and the leadership team from the NYS 4-H office was formed and empowered to move the 4-H program forward with clear priorities, shared vision, and renewed commitment to statewide goals. The group started out by focusing on the clarification and updating of the NYS 4-H Mission, Vision and Values. The mission statement will be our guidepost. It is intended to succinctly describe the core purpose of 4-H programming in a straightforward way that will make sense to the public. The mission will be a core component of future marketing efforts, program planning, and professional development. Here is the newly revised NYS 4-H Mission Statement:

4-H connects youth to hands-on learning opportunities that help them grow into competent, caring, contributing members of society.
The 4-H SWG will be meeting again in March and sharing its work throughout the spring with 4-H educators. The SWG will also be finding ways to incorporate the views and opinions of active 4-H youth in the planning process. The SWG is looking forward to an opportunity to engage with Board Presidents and Executive Directors at the June, 2015 Executive Leadership Conference.

**4-H Public Presentation Evaluation Process**

A topic that emerged from the 2014 4-H Association survey is just how strongly 4-H Educators feel about the value of the 4-H public presentation program. However, there is very little empirical evidence that documents how the program may be benefiting 4-H participants statewide. With this in mind 4-H Healthy Living State Specialist Nigel Gannon is working with a group of 4-H educators and two entities on the Cornell campus to provide a more in-depth evaluation of the public presentation program. The research questions include the following:

- Do participants attain useful skills in the areas of communication and social and emotional competence (e.g., confidence)?
- Do improvements in these skills and competencies increase with multiple years of participation in the program?
- Do participants improve and/or develop critical thinking skills as a result of the program?

The results of this project will help us make refinements that will lead to a more uniform program statewide based on best practices. In addition, we will be able to better communicate the impacts to stakeholders, funding sources, and families considering 4-H for their children.

**Kopko Appointed Assistant Director**

Kim Kopko has been appointed as the Assistant Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension and Associate Director of Extension and Outreach in the College of Human Ecology.

Kimberly Kopko received her Ph.D. in Child Development from the Department of Human Development at Cornell University in May 2005 and joined the Department of Policy Analysis & Management in 2007 after spending a year as an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Ithaca College. Her extension and research interests examine parenting and adolescent development. Specific extension and research interests include: teens being raised by custodial grandparents, the use of evidence-based programs to reduce teen risk-taking behaviors and strengthen families and parenting behaviors and adolescent development. Her current Extension Activities include promoting the work of the Parenting in Context Project, an initiative that integrates extension and research activities in the area of parenting education, aligning parenting education efforts with the work of translational and youth development researchers in the Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research (BCTR) and in 4-H Youth Development in an effort to expand the reach and impact of parenting education across New York State, and incorporating research and extension activities in the area of relative care, specifically, grandparents raising their teenaged grandchildren.

In addition, she is the Department Extension Leader (DEL) for the Department of Policy Analysis and Management, and co-chair of the Parent Education Program Work Team (PWT).
Safety is a Priority

In May of 2014, the New York State Compensation Insurance Rating Board (NYCIRB) notified Extension Administration that the CCE association system had exceeded the established Workers Compensation experience modification rate. As a result, CCE was required to undergo a Workforce Safety and Loss Program Prevention Consultation and Evaluation as per Industrial Code Rule 59 (ICR 59). A consultant was hired in August to independently review the CCE association system workplace safety, which included on-site visits to five associations. The consultant’s report resulted in 9 system-wide non-physical hazard recommendations, 5 system-wide physical hazard recommendations and 19 site-specific physical hazard recommendations. Since then, the system has been working to satisfy these recommendations in preparation for an audit by the New York State Insurance Fund (NYSIF). Due to much collective effort, the CCE association system recently passed the ICR-59 audit.

The ICR-59 process was an opportunity to increase safety awareness and make the CCE environment safer for staff, program participants, volunteers and the general community. The goal is a safer work environment, resulting in lower claims activity and lower premiums. Please continue to advance safety in your respective associations.