September Executive Leadership Conference Recap

The most recent CCE Executive Leadership Conference (ELC), held September 26 – 27 in Stocking Hall on campus, highlighted the annual summer Internship Reception and poster session; an event that exemplifies campus-county connections and student engagement in extension work. Twenty-seven students shared an overview of their work with associations throughout the state to an enthusiastic audience that included faculty, Interim College of Human Ecology Dean Rachel Dunifon, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences representatives, members of the university administration, CCE executive directors and CCE administration staff.

Executive directors and campus faculty/partners engaged in “Trending Topics” relevant to extension work in New York, ranging from climate change to ticks and vector-borne diseases. Through an extended and well-received session with the Cornell Intergroup Dialogue Project https://www.idp.cornell.edu/, attendees built a foundational understanding and increased skills around diversity, equity, and inclusion through the LARA process (Listen, Affirm, Respond, Add.)

Other notable presentations introduced the system to College of Engineering Professor Max Zhang, who is partnering with over 30 associations around energy work; Assistant Director Kristin O’Neill from the NYS Committee on Open Government reviewing Open Meetings Law and FOIL and Andrew Marietta of NYCON (New York Council of Nonprofits) discussing fund development.

Materials for this and other Executive Leadership Conferences can be found at elc.cce.cornell.edu.

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity, affirmative action educator and employer.
**County Law 224 - Funding Update**

CCE executive directors will convene in Albany on Tuesday, January 22, 2019 to advocate for a $4 million increase to County Law 224 budget item. This will be the third year in a row that association executive directors from across NY State will travel to Albany to engage elected officials regarding this request. This is part of the overall strategy to increase New York State investment in the extension system. Executive directors and staff worked to get state elected officials to local events during the summer to showcase the impact of our programs. Directors worked with local Farm Bureau partners to gain resolutions in support of our request which will go on to the state Farm Bureau annual meeting for support. Currently, volunteers are sending the Governor letters on our behalf to request the increase. Thanks to all of you for the effort to advocate for continued state support of our system and our proposed increase.

**Digital Accessibility Initiative**

The university is leading an effort to improve accessibility across web platforms and other electronic documents. Following their lead, CCE administration is in the process of evaluating and updating our electronic resources for WCAG 2.0 compliance, and sharing resources and training with CCE associations as they become available.

So far, the CCE Accessibility Team has created and shared with CCE staff printed *Accessibility Quick Cards* and has forwarded tips and training opportunities to CCE communications and IT staff as they become available. An overall CCE Administration Accessibility Plan, currently in draft form, covers steps for getting our digital resources in compliance, and will be shared with EDs when it is complete. We have scheduled five webinars from November 2018 through April 2019 that cover different aspects of accessibility and are open to all CCE staff.

For more information on the Cornell Accessibility Initiative:  
[http://accessibility.cornell.edu/information-technology/web-accessibility/](http://accessibility.cornell.edu/information-technology/web-accessibility/)

Questions? Reach the CCE Accessibility Team at: [cce-accessibility@cornell.edu](mailto:cce-accessibility@cornell.edu).

**Phishing Initiative**

CCE and Cornell University are working together to find new and innovative ways to improve our security, protect our sensitive information, and stay one step ahead of the bad guys. When sensitive information is exposed, it can lead to identity theft, financial loss and harm to you and our organization. One of the most common methods that attackers use to target organizations like CCE is through phishing emails.

To improve security, CCE-IT, in collaboration with the CIT Security Office, has been periodically sending mock “phishing” emails to employees since December 2017. The goal of this program is to continually
improve everyone’s ability to identify and properly handle phishing emails. In addition, we developed a Phishing 101 online course in conjunction with the CIT Security Office to help get staff up to speed on what to watch out for.

We reported to executive directors in May 2018 with summaries of how staff in their associations fared in the first four mock phishing campaigns. Since May, we have continued monthly campaigns as well as continued to advertise the online course to all staff. We are finishing up this year’s campaigns in early November 2018. After that, we will be reporting back to EDs with comparisons to the numbers from May in their association, region, and overall at CCE. Early analysis indicates that overall, most staff are able to identify and avoid phishing emails with greater accuracy. We still have some education to do with staff that continue to click on phishing emails, and we will be following up with EDs about this as well.

IT Security questions? Email us at: cce-security@cornell.edu

Annual Executive Director Performance Review

One of the ten basic responsibilities of a Cornell Cooperative Extension association board is to conduct an annual performance review of the Executive Director (or senior staff member of the association.) This responsibility is included in the annual agreement with Cornell University (the AR), and is also an accreditation standard for all associations. This review is conducted in years when there is not an in-depth review and conferral of title for the executive director, and is led locally. Although the board president is the executive director’s supervisor with oversight of the SES (State Extension Specialist), the entire board should be included in the annual review. Your SES is available to help you design the right process for your association. Standard forms for performance reviews are available through your association or from your SES. For more information on the annual review and the in-depth review, please visit the Board Toolbox.

Blackbaud Extension Accounting Resources (BEAR) Project

The BEAR project team has determined that the FE NXT software does not offer enough advantages to roll out to the CCE system. We are terminating the project and will be working on exiting the contract. In the meantime, we will continue to use ACCPAC as we re-evaluate the needs of the system. Extension administration is currently working to recruit a systems administrator to provide support with both ACCPAC as well as any other software the system moves to in the future.

Strategic Plan Update

Thank you for your patience while the remaining innovation proposals are being reviewed. If you have questions, please contact Eskedar Getahun.

We want to hear about how you’re putting the 2018-2022 CCE strategic priorities into action! Whether you’ve received an innovation award, are on a strategic planning committee, or are incorporating the strategic priorities into your regular work, please consider sharing your progress and efforts for inclusion in a future issue of the Extension Insider newsletter. To submit, send a summary of 75 words or less describing your efforts and outcomes as they relate to the strategic priorities to cce-communications@cornell.edu and include any relevant links and photos. We look forward to hearing about how you are working to enhance organizational communication, strengthen campus county connections, diversifying funding, and create a culture of innovation throughout CCE!