March Executive Leadership Conference Recap
The March Executive Leadership Conference took place in Albany from March 4th to 6th. Our Association Executive Directors grouped up into teams on March 5th and went to The Empire Plaza to meet with Senators and Assembly members, their staff and aides to advocate for a $4 million dollar increase of County Law 224 funding for a total of $8 million. We collectively made 112 visits and it was a successful day for CCE to have a presence in Albany with our elected officials. Monday evening we attended NYS Farm Bureau’s Taste NY event networking with our Farm Bureau partners and elected officials. Staff members from 6 associations, Harvest NY, and the Eastern NY Hort. Team staffed displays in the main Legislative Office Building hallway entrance to showcase CCE’s programs. On Tuesday, speakers included CCE Director Dr. Chris Watkins with Extension updates, Dazzle Ekblad from the Office of Climate Change at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation along with Carolyn Klocker from CCE Dutchess County presenting on New York Climate Smart Communities. The Keynote Speaker of the day was Dr. Michelle S. Rodgers, Associate Dean and Director of Cooperative Extension and Outreach at University of Delaware (UD) who presented on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Partnership for Healthy Communities.
June ELC: Save the Date
Please mark your calendars for the Upcoming June Executive Leadership Conference. It will be held June 13th-14th. Extension Administration welcomes Board Presidents of the Association’s or their designee to participate in this ELC. More details to follow in the coming weeks.

BEAR Update
What does BEAR stand for?
Blackbaud Extension Accounting Resources

Core team:
Donna James, Roxanne Churchill, Betsy Klug, Jen Holleran, Heather Blinn, Heather Russell, Jie Ma, Betty Stoquert, Sheryl Thomas

What’s currently happening:
• The Core BEAR team, Finance leads and our Blackbaud partners are in the middle of data mapping and validation. Many issues have been identified and worked through. The goal is to get the process solidified with the first 12 companies before moving onto more Association data. This part of the project will be ongoing through May and we are taking a bit of a breather so we can all maintain our sanity while we also get through year end closings.
• The mid project survey data has been analyzed and here is a summary of the findings:
  o Overall we saw a slight decrease in user participation from the last survey (44% response rate). Ideally we would have liked to have seen an increase in participation at this stage of the game. The survey went to all ACCPAC users.
  o Overall improvement in scoring in almost all categories. Staff expressed awareness, understanding of project goals and objectives and impact to them personally.
  o Awareness of strain on resources and some signs of consensus shifting.
• The training plan is coming along nicely. All of the Finance leads as well as a few other Association Finance managers have been brought into the fold as we begin testing. They will be experts in the software and able to bring all finance staff up to speed. We plan to use a team approach to the training. Blackbaud also has extensive online training available for our use.
• The project is on schedule and on budget, with a go live target of early November.
• To see communications, meeting agendas and project timeline please [click here].

Please send any questions you have regarding the BEAR project to cce-bear@cornell.edu
Strategic Plan

Since the last strategic plan update, the comment data from the system-wide survey was coded and organized by theme in a summary document which was sent to all of the Executive Directors at the end of November, to be shared with the Board and staff. In addition, the Executive Directors received the aggregate system survey data as well as the individual county reports for those counties with a sample size that met the threshold for anonymity. Eskedar Getahun, State Extension Specialist, led two drop-in Zoom webinars to discuss the results and answer any questions that the Executive Directors had.

Based on the themes that emerged from the various data-gathering initiatives in 2017 (see attached infographic for an outline of these activities), the strategic plan committee created a draft priorities document, which was shared and presented at the December ELC. The focus of this ELC was to engage EDs in active group discussion, using a visualization method to dig into various complex elements of the four strategic plan priorities, which are to: (1) Enhance organizational communication across CCE in order work more effectively together (2) Strengthen campus-county connections (3) Strengthen Associations’ abilities to diversify funding and (4) Create a culture of innovation across CCE. The ELC Co-Chairs received positive feedback regarding this approach, as it allowed for rich conversation and a deeper dive into the priority areas.

There are three key next steps for the planning process in 2018: (1) Cornell IT is providing technical and design support to display the values statement and key strategic priorities on the CCE public website. The CCE Communications department will also work on an introductory video for the site. (2) CCE Administration and the strategic plan committee will put together template and resource documents which EDs can use to move forward their own county strategic plans, to mirror the priorities that have come to the surface in the system plan. (3) Director of Extension, Chris Watkins, is providing a $150,000 budget to support innovative ideas in counties that address the four strategic priority areas. Counties will be invited to respond to an Innovation RFP, which is currently being drafted by the strategic plan committee, and awards will be made based on the scope of the submissions. Counties are encouraged to collaborate with each other and with Extension Administration, where appropriate. For more information on a similar initiative at another organization, refer to this website: https://www.hhs.gov/idealab/ignite-accelerator/. In addition, the following book provides helpful context and examples of innovation in the social sector: https://cup.columbia.edu/book/design-thinking-for-the-greater-good/9780231179522. Any questions related to the strategic plan can be sent to Eskedar Getahun at eg524@cornell.edu.
Reminder: Year end and AADIP

Year-end Programmatic and Financial Reporting as well as Affirmative Action, Diversity and Inclusion Plan’s (AADIP) are due from the Associations to Extension Administration by March 31st 2018. For programmatic reporting questions, please contact Celeste Carmichael at cjc17@cornell.edu. For questions regarding financial reporting, please contact Betty Stoquert at efs24@cornell.edu. For questions regarding AADIP, please contact Sarah Dayton at sf23@cornell.edu.

Office of Engaged Cornell

Since the establishment of a strategic partnership between CCE and the Office of Engagement Initiatives in 2015, CCE and OEI have developed a number of campus-wide strategies to:

- Support reciprocity between NY communities and the university
- Strengthen and support existing relationships between university faculty/students and communities throughout NY
- Create new opportunities for community-university partnerships involving all disciplines and colleges
- Expand opportunities for students to engage with NY communities

Between 2016-2017, 12 county-level extension offices have been included across five different Engaged Cornell funding mechanisms. While the vast majority of these 16 grants are in partnership with faculty...
and students from CALS and Human Ecology, novel involvement from Colleges of AAP, Arts & Sciences, and Veterinary Medicine, and the School of Law, represent a broadening of extension relationships.

**EC-funded Grants with CCE Partners (2016-2017)**

- **Broome County**:  
  - Identifying Strategies to Address Food Insecurity and Promote Improved Health Outcomes  
  - Rust 2 Green: Living with Water Initiative  
- **Columbia-Greene County**, Engaging Landscape Architects & Engineers in Interdisciplinary, Community-based Climate-adaptive Design  
- **Delaware, Jefferson, Livingston, and Tompkins Counties**, Linking Flood Risk and Climate Change: A Map of Riverine Flood Risk in Central New York State  
- **Erie, Chemung, Broome and Tioga Counties**, Seed to Supper  
- **Madison County**, Preventing Losses from Diseases Threatening NY Hop Industry  
- **Tioga County**, Our Farms; Our Stories  
- **Tompkins County**:  
  - Community Engaged History  
  - Community Food Systems Minor  
  - Environmental and Sustainability Communication  
  - Food Systems for Global Health  
  - Global Public Health Science Minor  
  - Law and Policy of Food Systems  
  - Families at Risk from the Opioid Epidemic  
- **Sullivan County**, Supporting Sullivan Seniors Planning Project  
- **Wayne County**, Shared Vision Planning for Community-Based Water Resources Management

In addition to funded activities, OEI is currently working with CCE to support partnership discussions on waste management policy and implementation in Ontario County, the redesign of demonstration gardens in Rockland County, and a Climate-focused topical lunch on campus this May bringing together county leaders from Erie County with Cornell faculty interested in community-engaged learning and research opportunities.

As the demand increases for more off-campus community-engaged learning student programs, OEI is collecting information on housing relationships that Associations have with local colleges, universities, or other private entities. This data will be used to inform decisions about how students are placed for off-campus programs across NY State.

The NYS Partnership Liaison is a role designed to better connect communities across NY State with Cornell teachers and researchers. Dhyana Gonzalez, hired in early 2018, will continue to advance the goal of growing partnership with CCE associations across the university.
Taste of New York

In 2018 CCE will be involved in five new Taste NY locations across the state. CCE’s current involvement with Taste NY in NYC, Long Island, Onondaga, Broome, and Dutchess Counties has allowed those associations to have a new platform to support our agricultural communities and promote NYS agriculture and agri-tourism. We look forward to increased opportunities to connect in new ways with farmers and consumers through this innovative approach.

From Dr. Chris Watkins, Director of CCE, “Cornell Cooperative Extension and Taste NY share a mission to support New York State agriculture and ensure consumer access to world-class, locally grown and produced food, beverage, and specialty products. This partnership has provided a broad range of comprehensive educational opportunities for CCE to work closely with producers from effective production on the farm to successful planning for the market shelf. Through a close working relationship with producers and Taste NY, CCE can connect with agricultural producers to extend Cornell University research from farm to market.”

For associations interested in a Taste NY opportunity, please contact your State Extension Specialist or Associate Director Sarah Dayton sfd3@cornell.edu (607) 255 2135.