Deepening Our Roots: Advancing Community Engagement in Higher Education

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Session Objectives

As a result of this session I hope you will:

1. learn ways that Virginia Cooperative Extension is working to increase community engagement,
2. identify key areas to consider rethinking community engagement for Cooperative Extension and Higher Education organizations, and
3. develop networks and share experiences that strengthen the scholarship of engagement in community.
Who is Virginia Cooperative Extension?

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

1862 – founded in 1872

1890 – founded in 1882
We have the commonwealth covered

- 107 Local Extension Offices
- 11 Agricultural Research and Extension Centers
- Two Departmental Research Centers
- Six 4-H Educational Centers
- Virginia Tech, Blacksburg campus
- Virginia State University, Petersburg
Contact Us

Office Location
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8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.,
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The Pamunkey Indian Reservation is in King William County, Virginia. The reservation, which lies
Parts of Engaged Working Definition:

- Community involvement in all parts of program/problem resolution
- Shared learning/shared expertise
- Extension as a conduit between community and the university
- The product of strong relationships
- Includes multiple approaches

(Vines, 2018)
Engaged – Expert Models: What are they?

Facilitation
(community issues, strategic planning)

Transformative Education
(ag profitability, parenting, youth obesity)

Service
(communities, soil and pressure canner tests)

Content Transmission
(fact sheets, Web sites, newsletters, curriculum)

Public Value

Private Value

Adapted from Franz & Townson, 2008
Franz, 2017
The Hybrid Model of Extension Program Delivery

- **Engaged Model**
  - High Facilitation: (community issues, strategic planning)
  - Low Service: (committees, soil and pressure canner tests)

- **Expert Model**
  - Low Facilitation: (community issues, strategic planning)
  - High Service: (committees, soil and pressure canner tests)

- **Content**
  - High Transformative Education: (ag profitability, parenting, youth obesity)
  - Low Content Transmission: (fact sheets, Web sites, newsletters, curriculum)

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Basis for Change

• Collective impact theory (Kania & Kramer)
• Mutual respect
• Shared expertise
• Shared learning
• Strong relationships
  – Internal to the university
  – External to the university
Objective 1:

LEARN WAYS THAT VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IS WORKING TO INCREASE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Strong Relationships

Extension as a conduit between community and university – relationships
Increasing Community Engagement Internally

• Program teams
• University wide involvement
  – New VCE internships
  – Opioid Projects
• Explore new approaches to programming
Increasing Community Engagement Externally

- Program teams
  - External members
- Enhance situation analysis reports
  - Accuracy
  - Representation
Objective 2:
IDENTIFY KEY AREAS TO CONSIDER RETHINKING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AND HIGHER EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS
Strengthening Connections Across the Land Grant
Rethink Engagement

• Focus on real community issues
• Internal relationships
  – Extension ↔ Academics
  – Extension → Research
• Shared expertise/Shared learning
  – Challenges
  – Opportunities
Extending Reach

• Hiring
  – Workforce represents communities
  – Emphasize process skills
• Professional Development Systems
  – Appropriate to stage in profession
  – Emphasize process skills
  – Invite other faculty/partners to participate
Extending Reach

• Structure
  – Program Teams including external partners
• Evaluating
  – Employee performance
  – Our work
  – Organizational success
Objective 3:

DEVELOP NETWORKS & SHARE EXPERIENCES THAT STRENGTHEN THE SCHOLARSHIP OF ENGAGEMENT IN COMMUNITY
THANK YOU!

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