

# espconnection

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The Newsletter of Epsilon Sigma Phi

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**Mark your calendar:**  
**2018 National ESP Conference**  
**October 1-4, 2018, Manhattan, KS**



## Welcome to a new year of ESP!

*Beth Claypoole, National President*

Although your Board of Directors have been hard at work since after the National meeting in Wilmington, it is now time to regroup and look to the future!

As part of the national strategic plan, I presented key points at the Council meeting and wanted to reiterate them here, as they are so important. The success of our organization depends upon your participation and input throughout the year. Each of the committee chairs are incorporating these themes into each of the plans:

- Provide opportunities for personal coaching for state leadership and state membership, resulting in plans to increase the number of members and members who actively participate.
- Provide many ways for members to learn about benefits and truly act on receiving those benefits - stipends, scholarships, grants, and recognition.
- Provide individual encouragement and training regarding participation on committees at the state and national levels.

There are many opportunities for everyone to partake in leadership training and training at the national level – JCEP Leadership Development Conference and PILD: Public Issues Leadership Development, are just two examples. There is still time to register for PILD. If you can't attend this year, start planning for next. To help you get started in leadership, last year we started a mentoring program at the National ESP meeting, which I hope those who participated have continued to communicate. In addition, we are looking for new leaders for Regional Vice Presidents from the North Central and Southern regions AND a 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President from the North Central – apply NOW!

The benefits of ESP are large, both from a personal development standpoint and the opportunity for money returned to members! I have asked the RDM (Resource Development and Management) Committee to look for ways to return more money to the members, in forms of additional scholarships/stipends/grants. As our endowment grows, there is more opportunity for more interest to be used. Believe it or not, each year money is left on the table as members are not applying for or using the money that is currently available – how can we get you to use it, please tell us!!!

Finally, participate, participate! All committee meetings are open to all members. We will be putting the dates on the calendar and you can easily contact the committee chair to get the agenda and Zoom link – there is not a cost to participate! In addition, we are looking for new “official” members of each committee with applications due April 1.

All of these items are further described within this newsletter. Please reach out to any of the Board members for ideas in which you can help us be a great organization for the benefit of our members. Thanks to all for your participation!



## Past President's Message

*Kathy Tweeten, National ESP Past President  
and Global Relations Chair*

As the chair of the Global Committee, I want to thank Kevin Gamble of the committee for finalizing the plan and setting up the funding site for our new Global International Grant. (See Kevin's Global article below.) All donations are very much appreciated. It doesn't matter how much! Our goal is to advance Global work, build international partnerships and to provide opportunities for our ESP members.

If you missed the JCEP Leadership Conference's Virtual Town Hall meeting, I would encourage you to go to the JCEP website at [jcep.org](http://jcep.org) to view the video. The meeting focused on innovation and change at the same time to staying true to why Cooperative Extension exists. Chuck Hibberd, chair of ECOP moderated the panel.

As president of JCEP, I have the opportunity to work with the leadership of seven Extension professional associations. They are a hard-working group that's devoted to "linking Extension from the ground up." We recently met at the JCEP Leadership Conference and decided to look at whether a national leadership conference was meeting the needs of our members or if we should look at going back to two or four conferences with maybe a national conference every third year. Let your chapter president know your preference so they can share with your regional ESP VP. There will be a national leadership conference again next year in San Antonio, TX so any change won't happen until 2020.

## Important Dates Ahead Mark Your Calendar!

- **April 1, Nomination Deadline for National Leadership**
- **April 8-11, PILD Conference, Arlington, VA**
  - **March 9, Last day for PILD Early Bird Registration**
- **2018 National ESP Conference, October 1-4, Manhattan, KS**
  - **June 1, Early Bird Registration Opens**

## New ESP Partnership with USAID Feed the Future Innovation Lab

*Kevin Gamble, Global Relations Committee*

Epsilon Sigma Phi members, we need your help! ESP has partnered with the [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Sustainable Intensification](#) (SIIL) at Kansas State University to create a new grant to provide professional development opportunities for Extension professionals professional from Cambodia. The goal is to create an opportunity for the successful applicant to develop new capacity building skills to reduce hunger and poverty. We need to raise \$2500 from ESP members, and friends of Extension, to make this initiative a reality. The ESP board has agreed to match the \$2500 raised to make the total grant available \$5000.

This is a new initiative of the Global Relations committee designed to increase ESP member involvement with the international Extension community. This program will offer many

opportunities for ESP members to be engaged with the project as it moves forward. This is a pilot program, and if successful, will be expanded to include additional Feed The Future countries in subsequent years.

The Global Relations committee wants to demonstrate the power of crowdfunding to support innovative programming. We hope that your small donations will help to launch this new initiative. Please contribute today: [ESP Global Initiative](#)





## It Could be Your Time to Shine on the Executive Board

*Mark Blevins, ESP President-Elect  
and Marketing Committee Chair*

Every year, about this time, we conduct a candidate search for two Regional Vice Presidents and a 2nd Vice President to serve our members on the Executive Board. I'll explain the two roles so you know what to expect of your colleagues and share how to apply so you (can encourage someone else to) get involved.

The Regional Vice Presidents each represent one of our four regions around the nation. This is a two year responsibility and the roles are staggered so that two new VPs are elected each year. The 2018 selections will come from the South and North Central parts of the country. Odd years select VPs from the West and Northeast.

Regional VPs lead and share information with and between the Chapter leaders within their region. It isn't always easy to coordinate the efforts of a quarter of the country's Chapter Presidents, but these individuals make it look easy. These folks also have the honor of chairing a committee at the national level. If you excel at communicating with groups of busy people and can pull reports out of reluctant chapter officers, this job is for you. And if you're looking for information to share with your chapter about upcoming scholarships, deadlines, and neat things other states are up to, look no further than your Regional VP.

The Second Vice President is selected from the North Central Region this year. This role chairs a the Chapter Relations committee and one more while preparing for the leadership rotation of the Presidency. President-Elect is the next step during the following year in which another committee chair is matched with one's strengths and interests while representation is ramped up through the Joint Council of Extension Professionals board and additional responsibilities on our Executive Board.

The climax of this four year cycle is the President role when no committee work is required, but the annual conference is chaired and monthly meetings are presided over during this phase. Finally, as Past President, the role of wise sage is engaged, and relaxing has to wait at least another year. Once again a committee is chaired and all of the things you thought you could change, but couldn't become projects to actually enact.

This four year responsibility isn't for the faint of heart, but provides a rich opportunity for those who seek it out and put in the effort to lead the leaders among us in ESP.

The application process is fairly straightforward. Annual or Life members in good standing and who have been involved in national committees or the Executive Board can apply online at [espnational.org](http://espnational.org). Click on the Forms drop-down button and choose "Application for New Committee Member".

In addition to sharing one's vision for the organization and relevant background, applicants will need to send a letter of support from the Director of Extension in their state, another letter of support from their chapter president, and a short video addressing your priorities for the organization and a little about themselves. There are many eligible and skilled leaders among us and we look forward to the challenge of selecting excellent individuals for these positions.

Both of these roles, and all of your Executive Board members meet monthly via Zoom (a web-conference application) and twice in-person to conduct the business of the organization throughout the year. There are various expectations, arrangements, and reimbursements for travel to additional Extension functions in order to represent or operate for ESP.

The 2nd VP will have additional responsibilities with the Joint Council of Extension Professionals during part of the Presidential rotation. Those interested should discuss these responsibilities with our own Kathy Tweeten of North Dakota's Upsilon Chapter, who is our National Past President and the Current President of JCEP. She knows all of the ins and outs of that facet of service.

Don't miss the many benefits of being a Vice President and joining the Executive Board. Being part of making strategic decisions that affect the future of ESP and the professional development of thousands of colleagues is no small task, but there are excellent people alongside you who are working hard to support their portions of the organization's structure and fulfill their responsibilities. This group judiciously supports travel opportunities for important activities to represent our organization and conduct necessary business. You can trust that your Executive Board takes each expense seriously from the annual conference to awards and scholarships.

Please consider being a part of this group and serving your colleagues at a higher level of our organization.



## ESP National Committee Applications—Apply Now!

*Mike Knutz, ESP National 2nd Vice President and Resource Development and Management Committee Chair*

Serving on a National Committee can provide you with insight on the workings of the National ESP Organization, foster collegiality among Extension Professionals across the country, and supplement your travel funds to National Conference (\$200). This is also a great way to gain national level service within your profession. This national level of service can also strengthen your awards or professional development scholarship applications. for ESP Awards.

There are seven national committees that are comprised of at least two members from each of the four ESP Regions. There are at least nine members including the Chair who is also an officer on the National Board. Committees are open to annual and life members and meet up to once a month via Zoom Conference Calls and at the National Conference.

**Online Applications** are being accepting now through April 1<sup>st</sup>. Applicants must be recommended by their chapter with a **Letter of Support** submitted by the chapter president.

local communities.

A brief description of each committee is listed below:

**Global Relations** – supports international work of Extension and ESP Members and strives to build the capacity of Extension

Professionals to promote a global understanding within their local communities.

**Marketing** – Advises the National ESP Board on strategies for marketing ESP to potential members and assists with promotional efforts.

**Membership Recruitment and Retention-** works with chapters to recruit and retain members.

**Scholarship, Grants and Recognition-** reviews scholarship, grants, and National Friend of Extension Applications. In addition, the committee communicates the benefits received by each of the chapters.

**Professional Development-** Plans the National ESP Conference, selects concurrent session presenters, and facilitates virtual workshops and trainings.

**Public Issues-** supports the JCEP Public Issues Leadership Conference and provides workshops on public issues affecting the Extension System.

**Resource Development & Management-** Works on the National budget proposal, implements plans for increasing financial resources of the Organization.

## See how the Development Fund has benefited you State/Chapter

*David S. Ross, Resource Development and Management Committee*

On the ESP website homepage there is a link for the Development Fund that takes you to “**Contributions and Payout by State – 2017**”. This link is:

<http://espnational.org/images/Endowment/9-1-2017-Payout-Summary.pdf>. How does your state/chapter compare?

It is interesting to see and compare the contributions made by state members and to see the reimbursements received back by members of each state. Some of these reimbursements come from the Development Fund and others come from conference or operating funds (see footnote on the table). Columns in the table on the right side show the recent contributions and total contributions made by members of each state. The last columns on the right show the return on investment/contributions received

by the state and the percentage of state members who have contributed.

Page two has some interesting details/comparisons on state/chapter contributions in terms of rankings of total reimbursed, contributions per member, how state compare in ranking, dollars reimbursed per member, amounts of contributions in 2016-2017.

The statistics are interesting. Note that more than a half million dollars have been given back! The 2018 Development Fund Campaign is underway. Please give to support your profession.

Consider applying for professional development funds to assist with costs associated with trainings or National ESP Conference.

Online applications can be submitted now through May 1<sup>st</sup> for the [Redinger Administrator/Leader Scholarship and Angus Professional Development Scholarship](#). Click on **FORMS** and choose **Scholarship Application Forms**.



## Professional Development Committee National Webinars

*Mark J. Platten, Western Region Vice President  
and Chair Professional Development Committee*

The professional development committee is excited to present two national webinars this spring.

We will host the first webinar on April 20 from 12 noon - 1:00 pm Mountain Time. A panel of experts will introduce health, wellness and time-management concepts relevant to retirement-aged individuals. The stages of the family life cycle suggest that an important conversion occurs as adults transition from the workforce to retirement. As retiring individuals leave behind a lifetime of work, they engage in a renegotiation of family roles and may begin to face potential physical health issues. The ability to mitigate these potential effects of retirement are possible, and include maintaining a social support system, engagement in exercise, and committing oneself to part-time work or volunteerism

This webinar will introduce concepts that the workforce needs to consider when facing a transition to retirement. Specifically, participants will:

- understand the trends between retirement and poorer health outcomes
- understand the need to stay socially, cognitively, and physically active in order promote optimal aging
- brainstorm ways in which to remain active in one's family, community, or professional association
- understand the need to establish adequate time management during retirement
- make a plan for balancing work or volunteer commitments with free time and time for oneself

The second webinar will take place the week of May 8 and will focus on Learning digital marketing strategies to promote your programming!

What tactics are best for marketing your Extension events? In this session I'll cover social media, e-newsletter, and website marketing best practices to increase attendance and improve your ability to target your audience for your county programming and events. A bonus for attendees will be learning how to include paid marketing efforts for social media in your marketing strategy.

Content strategy, branding, and creating effective "Call to Action" buttons for digital media will be introduced as well as the "dos and don'ts" associated with accessibility for images when creating graphics for digital media. Our team's experience working with the new Facebook algorithm while encouraging fan growth and event attendance will be included in this webinar.

Stay tuned for registration information over the next few weeks as we set these webinars up through eXtension. These are open to anyone in Extension to promote what ESP membership offers, so please invite other colleagues not in ESP.

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## ESP Webinar Archives

While participation in online seminars is most impactful when viewed live, past webinars have been recorded and archived on the National ESP website. This allows our members access to seminars you may have missed or want to view again. Some past seminars archived on the National ESP website include topics ranging from water education to program design strategies.

Archived ESP Professional Development Webinars: <https://espnational.org/en/view-webinars>



## 2018 Public Issues Leadership Development Conference (PILD) April 8-11, 2018 Plus New Post-Conference Offering April 11-12, 2018

Jennifer Grogan, ESP Southern Region VP and Public Issues Committee Chair

As chair of the National ESP Public Issues Committee, I have the privilege of representing ESP on the PILD Conference Planning Committee. PILD is the acronym for The Public Issues & Leadership Development Conference, scheduled for Sunday, April 8, 2018 - Wednesday, April 11, 2018, in Arlington, VA. The theme of the conference is "Cultivating a Climate of Civil Dialogue" and is sponsored by JCEP – The Joint Council of Extension Professionals. This opportunity provides a great growth and learning experience! PILD's Mission – is to provide leadership and advocacy skills to effect public issues.

This is an outstanding event for Extension professional development focusing on areas of public issues. The conference is also a great opportunity to interact with colleagues and key lay-leaders from across the nation. During the four-day meeting, Extension professionals and volunteers will collaborate as they learn about Extension programming and funding. The visit to Capitol Hill and sharing of your Land Grant University's & Extension's impacts with federal legislators is a highlight of the conference.

Key highlights and important information include:

ESP Association Meeting; Monday, April 9, followed by ESP Night Out. Our featured speaker during the ESP Meeting will be Janet Welborn, Associate Director of the Southern Rural Development Center located at Mississippi State University. She will be speaking on civil dialogue skills that come in handy when communicating with elected officials and sharing resources available to make our jobs easier. Janet is an awesome speaker!

Networking with Extension Professionals from across the nation

Presentations & explanations on many topics of interest.

National Program Leader Panel Sessions

A Washington Twilight Tour

Registration Fee - Early Bird \$400 Until March 9<sup>th</sup>

Post-conference Workshop; \$50 fee

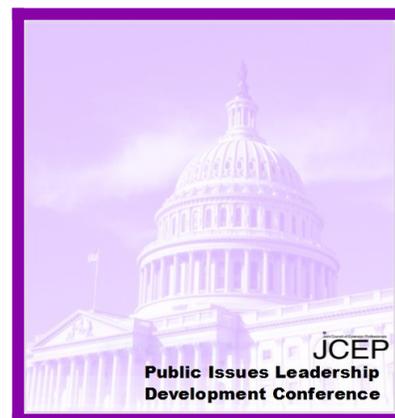
For more information and to register for the PILD conference and / or post-conference workshop.

For the first time, a post-conference workshop, **Civil Dialogue in the Public Arena**, in partnership with ECOP's Rapid Response Team on Civil Dialogue on Race Relations, will be held. This workshop begins Wednesday, April 11 at 2:30pm and ends Thursday, April 12 at 11:15am. The \$50 fee can be added to your PILD registration cost or you can just participate in the post-conference workshop.

During the post-conference workshop, participants will have the opportunity to explore the important practices of civil dialogue that can help shape conversations on difficult issues into productive exchanges. This hands-on workshop will introduce participants to the basics of civil dialogue convening, facilitation, and moving to action. Participants will have the opportunity to experience and practice some of the processes and skills needed to help lead effective dialogues. Specifically, participants will:

- Examine how civil dialogue efforts fit within the Cooperative Extension Service mission and the important work of community capacity building
- Explore methods for naming and framing issues of local importance
- Discover processes to help foster engagement from a diverse group
- Participate in a miniature dialogue process
- Practice facilitation skills guided by an experienced coach

The PILD Conference is the best professional development conference I have ever participated in and I've been a delegate for 4 years! This year, I'm also looking forward to participating in the post-conference workshop. Hope to see you there!!!



[For More Information and to Register](#)



## Membership Recruitment and Retention Notes

*Doug Jardine, North Central Vice President and Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee Chair*

The books on the ESP membership year closed on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Chapter membership as of that date will be used to determine the number of your chapter's delegates at the annual business meeting to be held in Manhattan in October. Members must also have renewed by that date to be eligible for national awards and scholarships for the current year.

What if a member failed to renew by that date? Chapter presidents and membership retention chairs are encouraged to contact those delinquent members as soon as possible. With the new online dues payment process, it may have been a simple oversight or lost email reminder. Of course, the best way to contact a delinquent member is in person or by phone call, but an email reminder may also be successful. Be persistent! A member who fails to renew for the current year is more likely to not renew again next year and then they may be lost to the chapter for good. While we need to work hard to recruit new members, we need to work equally hard to retain the ones we already have. By the way, be sure to invite retiring colleagues to become life members and then create activities within the chapter to keep them actively involved. They have a lifetime of experience that can be useful to younger colleagues.

The Chapter of Merit and Achievement in Chapter Membership recognition program applications are due May 1, 2018. The Chapter of Merit recognition program was developed by the ESP National Board to provide recognition for those chapters who have put forth an exemplary effort to forward the cause of the Extension system and to provide professional development opportunities for their members. Awards are made in the Platinum, Gold and Bronze Standard categories and will be presented at the regional meetings to be held in Manhattan.

The Achievement in Chapter Membership recognition program is a responsibility of the Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee. The objectives are to 1) recognize chapters' growth in membership, including new annual and life members; 2) recognize retention of current annual members; and 3) encourage systematic efforts to inform all potential members about membership opportunities.

Both applications will be available from March 1 to May 1 at [espnational.org](http://espnational.org) and can be found under the **FORMS** and then **CHAPTER RECOGNITION** tabs. Any questions can be directed to me as chair of the Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee or Executive Director Greg Price.

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## Key Level Donation Recognition System

*David S. Ross, Member, Resource Development and Management Committee*

ESP has a recognition system for all donors to the Development Fund, the tax deductible endowment fund of ESP. When you donate, your donation is credited to you in the records and your donations gradually accumulate in your name. The same works for state chapters. As one reaches each Key Level you or your chapter is recognized.

### Key levels are:

ESP Key: \$250 - \$499

ESP Bronze Key: \$500 - \$999

ESP Silver Key: \$1,000 - \$4,999

ESP Gold key: \$5,000 - \$14,999

ESP Platinum Key: \$15,000 - \$24,999

ESP Diamond Key: \$25,000 – and beyond

On the [espnational.org](http://espnational.org) under the **Development Fund** tab, one can find this list under "**Donate to the Fund**". If you have been a donor you can find your name in the "List of All Who Have Contributed to the Development Fund" and if you have donated at a Key Level, look at the "List of Contributors by Level of Contributors". All Key Level donors are listed in addition to those for the given year. Check these out. Donors will be recognized in a newsletter annually.

We hope you are listed and we hope you will continue to support ESP by contributing during the 2018 Development Fund Campaign (September 1, 2017 – August 31, 2018). We are getting close to our target of \$500,000 in donations and there are many funding opportunities for members and chapters. Please give now!

## Joint Council of Extension Professionals

by Denise Everson

The 2018 Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) Conference was an opportunity to reflect on the critical role Extension faculty play in ensuring the continued support of food and agricultural production and safety in the United States, while exchanging ideas on how we can ensure the balance of the traditional programming for which we are celebrated and the innovative programming necessary for continuing to meet the needs of our communities.

Our featured speaker, David Mitchell, guided us through the process of identifying our diverse personality styles, looking at ways we can adjust our relationships and communication styles to better cultivate civic dialogue. Mitchell reminded us the foundation of civil dialogue is conflict resolution: listen to understand, confirm understanding, validate perspective, share your perspective and identify common goals on which to build. It takes two to tango, and two to have a civil dialogue! Listening with the intent to understand allows us to broaden our own perspectives, becoming more effective educators and community leaders.

In an effort to include members from around the nation, the JCEP Conference once again hosted a virtual town hall meeting, allowing us to hear from Extension leadership ways we can help guide the future of Cooperative Extension. We are uniquely positioned to bring communities together to create solutions and influence systems. It is imperative that we look for innovative ways to identify emerging issues and engage communities!

Poster and concurrent sessions provided opportunities for us to learn from one another, emphasizing the themes of engaging in civil dialogue and balancing tradition with innovation. Additional themes focused on attracting and retaining a nimble innovative workforce and volunteers, as well as effectively communicating impact.

ESP members met each afternoon to connect and discuss upcoming opportunities including the various professional development opportunities ranging from webinars and concurrent sessions to grants each state can apply to receive. Regional vice presidents reported highlights of our regions and we discussed the upcoming national conference in Kansas. Thursday afternoon's session was with Chef David Bearl who has trained chefs at the White House, Camp David, and other prestigious locations. He shared leadership lessons from the culinary arts, which we used during dinner to evaluate the restaurant and what we knew about the leadership.

**ESP** Extension Sigma Phi  
Your Key to Professional Excellence

### An Extension Professional

- Is trained, experienced and knowledgeable
- Is culturally competent and demonstrates the ability to work with diverse audiences in a variety of settings
- Exhibits excellent oral and written communication skills
- Manages, networks and collaborates to build alliances and partnerships
- Adheres to the high standards of personal and professional ethics
- Demonstrates ability to work independently and is self-directed
- Is an effective team member
- Uses informational and educational technology to accomplish goals
- Teaches in formal settings as appropriate
- Is a lifelong learner
- Embraces and adapts to change
- Upholds the Land Grant mission and that of his/her University
- Is a scholar and demonstrates scholarship throughout his/her work
- Is national engaged with educational presentations, research and professional development
- Is a change agent, one who creates learning experiences that motivate and empower other to improve their life, family, business, community and world
- Is a recognized source of practical research-based educational information
- Maintains a positive attitude
- Treats clients, colleagues and stakeholders with respect

**ESP** Adopted by ESP in 2008

## Welcome Greg and Becky Price

*Mike Knutz, ESP National 2nd Vice President*

Your National Board of Directors are pleased to introduce Greg Price, the new ESP Executive Director and Becky Price, the National Office Manager (and Greg's wife). The National ESP Office is now located in Newnan, Georgia.

After a full university career Greg and Becky have longed planned for a second career in retirement around board management and/or meeting planning. The board recognized this skilled and talented duo as a good fit in serving the National ESP Organization.

Greg retired from the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service after 32 years of service. Greg has been active in five of the seven JCEP organizations: NAE4-HA, NACAA, NEAFCS, ESP, and ANREP. He has attended 29 national meetings of these organizations throughout his career. He has been a member of ESP since his induction in 1990 and is now a life member. Greg understands the history and culture of all the JCEP organizations. He has a passion for professional development organizations and helping them be successful. He understands the important role these organizations play in the scholarship of Extension.

Becky retired after 21 years providing support to upper level administration within the university system. She served in administrative assistant roles to the university controller, director of development, and associate dean for academic affairs and research. The last eight years of her university career Becky served as the Assistant to the Dean for the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Georgia.

Greg and Becky have 2 grown children. David age 35 and Amanda age 33. They have 4 grandsons whose ages are 5, 3, 3, and 2 years old. They have one dog, Davinci, a King Charles Cavalier who is 12 years old and one cat who is not very friendly. Greg and Becky enjoy packing their travel trailer and going on adventures in their free time.



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