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Making the At Work for Nebraska Report work for IANR: Next Steps

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Making the At Work for Nebraska Report work for IANR: Next
Steps
Liaison Committee Spring Forum
Noon to 1:30 p.m.
Friday, April 13, 2007
116 Chase Hall

Folks, I am so pleased to have this opportunity to talk with you about the "At Work for Nebraska" report we recently received from Battelle of Columbus, Ohio.

When we contracted with Battelle for the report, we sought a strategic-planning and accountability tool to help us build a successful, sustainable future for Nebraska. We asked Battelle, a highly-respected nonprofit research and development organization specializing in global science-and-technology, to do two things. One, we wanted them to take a close look at IANR accomplishments; two, we asked for a critical look at the areas in which we work. We were seeking information helpful in determining any adjustments in direction we might need to make as part of our strategic planning. The report provided us insights for the future, and more.

How we might build on this report to strengthen and further the work of the Institute is important to all of us, and I welcome your ideas and comments on that.

I also welcome your ideas and comments on ways we can best communicate the "At Work" findings to our audiences. Today I'm going to talk about what we've done in that regard so far, other things we plan to do, and how important it is that each of you be a part of these communications efforts.

When we received the "At Work" report citing the excellent return IANR provides Nebraska on tax dollars invested in us, it was exciting, and we wanted to announce the report findings to the public as soon as possible. We chose to have our CIT communicators get the information out quickly, then we asked them to continue to build a communications plan and develop additional tools for all of us to use in telling this story of the value IANR adds for Nebraska. These next steps already have begun.

Our communicators have provided tools for use now, and more will be coming. You'll find the current tools at the "At Work" Web site *address*: atworkfornebraska.unl.edu. It's also linked from the IANR home page.

If you'd like copies of the handouts on the Web to distribute at meetings or when you have visitors to your office, contact ^{JUDY NELSON is} CIT to request them. We don't have large amounts of inventory on hand, but will be happy to have copies printed for you. Please give CIT seven working days or more to get what you need printed and mailed in time for your meeting.

Also, you can print individual copies from the Web at any time, of course, choosing the handouts best suited for your need. Please be generous in sharing these with your constituents.

You'll also find three sets of PowerPoint slides on the Web – one for agriculture; one for natural resources; and one for youth, families, and communities. These were developed in response to a liaison committee request that we provide a brief set of slides each of you can include in PowerPoint presentations when giving

workshops or other programs to briefly highlight report findings on the Institute's "value" for Nebraska as part of your program.

We used "all three sets" of slides recently in a presentation put together for Agriculture Builders of Nebraska, plus a few extra slides we added. I'm going to run through that presentation shortly, but before I do I want to highlight some other things already done to communicate the At Work report to various audiences.

We have "two" talking points cards people can use to deliver "consistent messages" when talking about the Institute. One contains quotes from the At Work report, and the other highlights Institute impacts in Nebraska. You can request those from CIT, as well.

We delivered "executive summaries" of the report and handouts to a number of decision makers, ranging from the governor and the Nebraska Legislature to key supporters across Nebraska. We've delivered key "At Work" messages to the legislature three times this session, highlighting the "strategic investment" we are for Nebraska.

The "At Work" study has been the basis of several radio tapes, and "of course" I mention it to every audience I can. It's important that we do that – all of us – deans, department heads and chairs, directors, faculty, and staff. How good a job we do at building on the "At Work" report depends on every one of us.

Now. Let's take a look at the PowerPoint done for ABN that incorporates the slides available on the Web for your use. As I said, we added a few extra ^{slides} for the presentation to ABN. I've left them in today because they provide a great opportunity to talk about key points in the report. I will not read each of these slides to you because you're totally capable of doing that yourself!

(Slide #1) It's important we make clear this is an independent, impartial study. It's also important you know no state tax funds were used in financing it.

(Slide #2) Let me read you the direct quote on this return from the "At Work" report:

"In FY2005, IANR received an annual appropriation of \$71.6 million from the State of Nebraska ... the estimated annual impacts of IANR programs far exceed \$750 million in direct

economic output and savings benefits for Nebraska, a leverage ratio conservatively estimated to be greater than ten to one. This number does not include the impact of IANR's direct and indirect expenditures (salaries, benefits, capital improvements, etc.) ... which represents an additional leverage ratio of approximately five to one. **Taken together, the impact of IANR's programs and expenditures represents a leverage of state funding that exceeds fifteen to one."**

Don't we all wish we could invest our money and get a similar return!

(Slide #3) The report said, and I quote: "In the 21st century, challenges such as globalization, competitive market pressures, technological advances, and the preeminent importance of innovation and talent are restructuring the economy. Against such a background of rapid and dramatic change, can a system such as agricultural research and extension, established in the late 1800s, be relevant? The surprising answer – that agricultural research and extension institutions may well be *more* necessary and relevant than ever

before – is a testimony to the foresight of those who ensured the creation of IANR...”

(Slide #4) The slides available for your use provide examples of how we are at work for Nebraska, and show benefit to the state,

(Slide #5) such as the agricultural slides that include our wheat research,

(Slide #6) the beef muscle profiling our researchers did with colleagues at the University of Florida, and our new professional program in veterinary medicine offered by Iowa State and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

(Slide #7) You’ll find this slide about our Republican River Basin work in both the agriculture and natural resources slides,

(Slide #8) and we note the alternative crop research in the Panhandle that contributes to the economy there for agriculture.

(Slide #9) How we help people deal with drought,

(Slide #10), new products from cornhusks, chicken feathers, and rice straw,

(Slide #11) and some of our water work for Nebraska are part of our natural resources slides.

(Slide #12) When it comes to families, youth, and communities, our examples include the great work done helping Medicare recipients enroll in a prescription drug benefit program,

(Slide #13) the BIT Mobile and our eCommerce work,

(Slide #14) Parents Forever and Kids Talk About Divorce, helping children cope with their parents' divorce,

(Slide #15) and nutrition research that found a majority of Lincoln pre-schoolers don't get enough vitamin E.

(Slide #16) There are a few slides included in all sets, to broaden people's understanding of what we do. This one, about the number of youth 4-H touches each year, is one, as is

(Slide #17) this slide about CASNR and the number of CASNR grads who take their first job out of college in Nebraska.

(Slide #18) When we prepared the ABN presentation we added this slide, which is very much about our future:

"Much of what is required for 21st century success (innovation, technology transfer, human capital enhancement, productivity improvement, networking, and quality of environment and place) is directly addressed through the mission and operations of IANR."

The Institute is a well-positioned economic engine for Nebraska.

(Slide #19) As we move through the next year, I thank ^{EACH OF} you _^ for your support and your efforts in helping us tell this story. It is important to us in the Institute, and to our state, that we do so. I also thank each of you faculty and staff members for all the tremendous accomplishments that made this highly positive "At Work for Nebraska" report possible.

The folks in CIT have given us some good tools to use and they're developing more, including a DVD we expect to have available around the end of May. The video will highlight IANR folks at work for Nebraska, and provide you a springboard to talk about your-own-specific programs or topics. It can serve as a program for citizen groups, providing examples of the diverse

ways IANR[“] contributes[”] to Nebraska. It also can be a prelude[“] before[”] you start a workshop. Put it in the DVD player to focus your audience before you speak and prepare them for your program while providing them [“]glimpses[”] of the breadth ~~and~~depth of Institute work on Nebraska’s behalf. Please share it with decision makers, and talk about your work with them.

We’ll be adding video pieces to the At Work Web site throughout the year, as well. We also plan a brief, quarterly newsletter to our supporters to keep them up-to-date on Institute work for Nebraska.

Other communications planning currently is under way, and we’ll let you know as [“]new tools[”] become available for your use. Your ideas on communicating “At Work” messages to our various audiences as we move ahead are most welcome. You can e-mail me or the IANR Deans your ideas anytime, and I know Judy Nelson, one of our CIT team working to help us deliver our “At Work” messages, welcomes your ideas. You can e-mail her at jnelson5@unl.edu.

We have a real opportunity to build on this study, to put what it tells us to good use in our strategic planning and to help all of us deliver key-messages to targeted audiences as we work to sustain and strengthen both Nebraska's economy and the social fabric of our state. Ours is a story worth telling. Please join me in doing so.

Thank you.

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