

2007

## SCREC District VIP Event

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Owens, John, "SCREC District VIP Event" (2007). *John Owens: Speeches & Appearances*. 168.  
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THANK YOU! County Commission  
County Extension  
Board member

**SCREC District VIP Event**  
**(for county supervisors/commissioners,**  
**extension board members, extension unit leaders)**

**Noon, Monday, March 12, 2007**

**John C. Owens, NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR**

Folks, it's a great treat to have this opportunity to share with you how we in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources are at work for Nebraska. I want to talk with you a little bit today about that work, our land-grant university history, and where our vision for Nebraska's future is taking us.

We are at work for Nebraska in the Institute. In fact, *At Work for Nebraska* is the name of an independent study done for us by Battelle of Columbus, Ohio – a study we recently received.

Battelle is an independent nonprofit research and development organization specializing in global science and technology. We asked Battelle to closely examine what IANR has accomplished and to take a critical look at the areas in which we're working so we can use this information in our strategic planning.

Battelle reported – and I quote – “*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 ... a leverage ratio conservatively estimated to be*  
“greater than ten to one.” Add the economic ripple effects of IANR doing  
business in the state, and – again I quote – “... *the impact of IANR’s programs and*  
*expenditures represents a leverage of state funding that exceeds fifteen to one.*”

“Fifteen to one.” That’s money in Nebraskans’ pockets – rural and urban  
pockets – through new products, through value added to current products, and  
through savings and efficiencies realized because of new discoveries and  
education.

We’re proud of that return. I think any one of us would hurry down to any  
financial institution that provided us a 1,500 percent return on every dollar we  
might invest! In providing that return on Nebraskans’ tax dollars, in meeting  
Nebraskans’ needs through research, teaching, and extension-education, we are  
fulfilling our land-grant university mission for Nebraska. We have a long heritage  
of that.

(JOHN, YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO TALK FOR THREE-FIVE  
MINUTES ABOUT LAND-GRANT HISTORY. AM PUTTING THAT HERE  
WITH A LEAD-OUT OF HATCH AND SMITH-LEVER; AM THINKING YOU  
WILL TALK ABOUT THEM AS PART OF THE HISTORY...)

Those who went before us were indeed far-sighted and were true visionaries. They founded the land-grant universities to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, then followed with the Hatch Act providing funding for needed research, and the Smith-Lever Act, creating extension-education programs to “teach” the results of land-grant university research across each state so people could immediately put that new knowledge to work in their lives. I consider extension education the greatest out-of-the-formal-classroom learning experience ever yet devised.

Research, teaching, and extension education closely entwine for us. All <sup>Three</sup> are key to my vision, which is: Agriculture will remain Nebraska’s leading industry in this powerhouse agricultural state, where one in three jobs – jobs both urban and rural – depend in some way upon agriculture.

Smart people know you build on your strengths, and agriculture is a great Nebraska strength. Biosciences – renewable resources from fiber, fuel, and food – along with value-added products for Nebraska’s tremendous agricultural commodities, are naturals for growing our state’s economy. The Institute will provide the research and education needed to make that happen.

My vision is that recognition and stewardship of Nebraska's abundant, highly precious natural resources will grow. I envision a state of thoughtful citizens passionate about sustaining and preserving these resources because they understand it is Nebraska's natural resources that are the base of our state's wealth. That, too, takes research and education, and that is the Institute's role.

My vision also is this – individuals, families, and communities of all sizes will thrive in this state. Not merely survive. Thrive.

Of course a part of my vision is providing a valuable education for students through our College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, an education leading to lucrative, fulfilling careers. We constantly will assess how we can expand and grow that which we do well to add value to our traditional educational programs and meet new needs.

For instance: Our new Professional Golf Management program grows out of the Institute's strong turf science work. When such new programs bring more students to us, that helps us keep our traditional programs strong.

We're extremely excited about the Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine offered by Iowa State University and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Starting this fall, we'll welcome our first class of 25 Nebraska veterinary medicine education students to campus. The first time in history that veterinary medicine will have been taught in "our state". With Nebraska's large livestock industry, well-trained and educated veterinarians "are vital" to our state and the industry's well-being.

We have a new "joint program" with the College of Education and Human Sciences in "hospitality", restaurant, and tourism management. It grew out of interest expressed by representatives of the tourism and hospitality industries who came to us "looking for help" in finding qualified graduates. This major offers "eight" options: Ecotourism and "parks-and-recreation" are through CASNR.

Last spring we started an insect science major, which evolved from student interest.

Among our "new options" are agricultural finance and banking, equine sciences, microbiology, and applied climate science. Just last Friday, the NU Regents approved a new Bachelor of Science degree in Food Technology for Companion Animals and a new Bachelor of Science degree in Forensic Sciences.

agricultural

We've long talked about "producers" diversifying and adding value to their product. That's <sup>exactly</sup> what we're doing with these new majors and options that "complement our already strong traditional programs." In that way, we remain responsive to today's – and tomorrow's – needs.

Our blueprint to reaching our vision is the Institute's strategic plan, which is based on issues Nebraskans identify in the ongoing listening sessions IANR holds throughout the state.

Your Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources is at work for Nebraska. In research, in classroom teaching, and in extension education. You can bet – no, you really can take it to the bank – the Institute's assurance that we're going to go right on providing Nebraskans a great return on their investment with us. Currently that return is "15 to one." Conservatively.

Thank you for this opportunity to be with you today. Thank you.

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THANK YOU!