Dear Friends,

I'm always amazed at the difference just a little bit of positive energy can make in any given day or on any given project. I had the pleasure of being surrounded by just such energy twice already this week and I'm sure I'll see some of that same level of energy as I meet with two of our new educators today. Individuals and attitudes can really play a big part in how we feel about our work environments and how our clientele feel about us. Last week I mentioned the concept of our personal brands. What type of energy are you bringing to work? To your projects? To your interactions with colleagues and clientele? Are you the one that brightens the room and encourages others to replicate your behaviors? Do people seek you out and want to be around you or on the teams that you're on? Remember, just a little bit of positive energy can go a long way in making our environments an enjoyable and desirable place to visit, work, and live. Thank you for all of the joy you bring my way and to our clientele.

Best wishes,

Jackie

**Conspectus - The Extension Director's Blog** . . . (Source: Roger Rennekamp)

It is my pleasure to introduce you to Conspectus, a new director's blog developed to **inspire innovation** within OSU Extension. It is my goal to keep the spirit of the **Vice President's Conversation on the Future of Extension** alive by challenging us to **Discover, Dig Deeper, and Discuss**. Look for additional postings in the coming months and share your thoughts about our future.

The blog is located at: [http://u.osu.edu/conspectus/](http://u.osu.edu/conspectus/)

**Curriculum Development Boot Camp 2016: LAST CALL TO SIGN UP!** . . .

The Curriculum Development Boot Camp will be offered state-wide again in 2016. The boot camp has six–5 hour sessions (9am-3pm). Every session includes training and technical support for participants as they complete a personal work session. The goal is to prepare professionals to be successful in turning their everyday work into curriculum. The cost will be $120 per participant to cover the cost of materials and food. The boot camps will be held at the Ohio 4-H Center. If you are interested in participating, please send an email to Vicki Myers at: myers.26@osu.edu. **Deadline to sign up for this boot camp is Friday, February 26!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Development Boot Camp</th>
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<td>March 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>April 19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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*Dates subject to change with advanced notice*
Updates on Policy 1.50 Including Volunteer Rescreening . . . (Source: Jeff Dick)
with Kirk Bloir was presented during the 4-H Hot Topic Carmen Connect last week. A recording of the presentation can be found at http://carmenconnect.osu.edu/p9evgn4njfj/. There were many important things shared and many great questions asked and answered.

NAE4-HA Awards Deadline . . . (Source: Christy Millhouse)
All award entries MUST be completed online utilizing the online NAE4-HA awards system by March 1. Enter the system via the link at https://form.jotform.com/nae4ha/state-selection. Members will select their state and then proceed to their desired award applications. You will be walked step by step through the application process. Complete the necessary requirements and submit. Please reference the score sheet of the award category you are applying in for specific award criteria and submission requirements.

For help or questions about anything awards related, please ask and if I do not have the answer. I will find out for you. My email is millhouse.10@osu.edu

Service Award Winners – I will submit your information for you. Please send this to me by February 26. I will need the following information:

- Award Nominee (exactly as you wish to have it on the award)
- Service Award (just to make sure I have it correct)
- Title
- Award Nominee Mailing Address
- City
- State
- Zip
- Telephone (Office)
- Email
- NAE4-HA Region
- 50 word bio that will be printed in the awards program
- A digital photo of the nominee (head and shoulders)

New OSU CARES Website Launched . . . (Source: Karen Burns and Terri Fisher)
We are pleased to announce the launch of the newly redesigned OSU CARES website! The address remains the same at http://osucares.osu.edu. Our goal with the redesign of our site is to bring it up to the new branding standards and to make it more easily navigable and accessible. A new feature that will be especially useful is our Partnerships page, where both OSU Extension personnel and OSU colleagues can go as a starting place when looking to build partnerships across campus to expand engagement with communities around Ohio.

We encourage you to visit our new site today, and hope you find that it has a fresh look, is easy to use and is informative. If you experience any problems using the new website or if you have any questions or feedback, please contact us at osucares@osu.edu.

Updated Guidelines for Review Process for OSU Extension Educational Materials . . . (Source: Ken Martin)
The OSUE guidelines for Review Process for OSU Extension Educational Materials have been updated and are posted at the following link: http://extension.osu.edu/policy-and-procedures-handbook/i-administration-policies/review-process-osu-extension-educational

Updates from OHR . . .

BENEFITS
Flexible Spending Account Blackout Period March 14-22, 2016
Ohio State’s Flexible Spending Account (FSA) vendor, TASC, will transition to a new system platform during March 2016. The transition will include a short blackout period affecting claims processing for faculty and staff with Health Care and Dependent Care FSA accounts.

During the blackout period, March 14-22, 2016, faculty and staff cannot submit claims for reimbursement, use their Health Care Flex Cards or use their FSA accounts online.
Should participants incur eligible expenses during the blackout period, faculty and staff should pay for the expenses and submit a claim after March 22 to be reimbursed after the transition period.

As of March 23, 2016, all current FSA participant information will be transferred to TASC’s new system. OHR will send a direct email and a postcard to all Health Care FSA and Dependent Care FSA participants in early March regarding this transition.

**OPERS Retirement Planning Seminars**
The Office of Human Resources is hosting retirement education seminars during the month of March for members of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS).

**Education Today for Retirement Tomorrow** is for OPERS members who are eligible to retire after January 7, 2018 (Groups B and C). This seminar provides tips on preparing for retirement and reviews key decisions dates leading up to retirement. Seminars are held:

- Thursday, March 3, 2016, 10-11 a.m. - Ross Heart Hospital Auditorium (H1213)
- Thursday, March 17, 2016, 10-11 a.m. - Scott Laboratory E100

**Ready to Retire Pension and Health Care** is for OPERS members who are eligible to retire on or before January 7, 2018 (Group A). During this seminar, OPERS members will learn about important pension and health care changes that will impact their retirement. Participants will learn how to apply for retirement, calculate their monthly OPERS payment and determine if they are eligible for health care. We will also cover upcoming changes to the OPERS Health Care Plan and the impact to their retirement decisions. Seminars are held:

- Thursday, March 3, 2016, 1-3 p.m. - Ross Heart Hospital Auditorium (H1213)
- Thursday, March 17, 2016, 1-3 p.m. - Scott Laboratory E100

To register or for more information, visit [go.osu.edu/BuckeyeLearn](http://go.osu.edu/BuckeyeLearn).

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Professional Development Opportunity for Managers – Feedback Skills**
Feedback conversations can be intimidating, but this two hour in-person workshop can help managers learn to deliver feedback with greater confidence and success. You will leave the workshop with a set of feedback skills you can directly apply. Register in [BuckeyeLearn](http://buckeyelearn.osu.edu) for the Feedback Skills workshop on Friday (2/26) from 9-11 a.m. at the Office of Human Resources, 1590 N. High St.

**Professional Development Opportunity - Working Through Difficult Conversations**
This 2-hour in-person workshop provides tools and practice to help increase skills and comfort in engaging in difficult conversations. Learn how to prepare in advance, start the conversation effectively, and maintain a productive environment. It also covers how to handle conversations that become difficult in the moment and how to anticipate and respond to other's reactions. Register in [BuckeyeLearn](http://buckeyelearn.osu.edu) for this workshop on Friday (3/4) from 9-11 a.m. at the Office of Human Resources, 1590 N. High St.

**Upcoming Training Opportunities from the Leadership Center . . . ([http://leadershipcenter.osu.edu](http://leadershipcenter.osu.edu))**

**March 3: Communication and Conflict Management**
Conflict is part of our daily lives. How do we manage conflict’s impact on the quality of our work? Effectively dealing with and using conflict as a positive tool is a major component of success in current and future leadership roles. Join Jeff King of the Leadership Center for this workshop. The cost is $75. Details [here](http://leadershipcenter.osu.edu). Register [here](http://leadershipcenter.osu.edu).

**March 9: What Is the Color of Your Personality Spectrum?**
This is a fun and exciting way to better understand yourself and others. In addition to gaining an understanding of your strengths, needs and motivators, you will also learn to value the differences among the people around you. Join Beth Flynn of the Leadership Center for this workshop. The cost is $75. Details [here](http://leadershipcenter.osu.edu). Register [here](http://leadershipcenter.osu.edu).
March 17: How to Get Along with (Almost) Everyone
How can you get along with almost anyone? By knowing and understanding your personality style. Why?
Because it helps you understand the root cause of your behavior and why you act the way you do. Not to
mention, figuring out what makes people tick and how best to deal with them is downright fascinating —
and even a strategic way to a happy workplace. Join Beth Flynn for this workshop. The cost is $75.
Details here. Register here.