

Speech to the Iowa State University Foundation

Good afternoon. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to tell you a bit about ISU Extension. In the process, I hope that I can demonstrate how a collaboration with the ISU Foundation can bring many of Extension's initiatives to bear and in turn, provide a dramatic impact on the quality of life of all Iowans.

For those of you who are only vaguely familiar with the latter-day Extension, I would like to assure you that it has evolved over the years from its popular public image as a friend of the farmer that provided scientific information to improve rural agriculturally based activities. To be sure, the county extension agent remains inextricably interwoven into the fabric of rural America as personified in Norman Rockwell's 1948 portrait of an extension agent kneeling next to a Guernsey heifer, instructing a 4-H youth.

But today, the ISU Extension agent also is developing partnerships with state commissions and organizations serving underrepresented groups. And, he or she is providing opportunities for youth to demonstrate their knowledge in science, engineering, and technology. Moreover, they are helping Iowa industry leverage globalization to improve their competitiveness and serve as a catalyst for campus economic development research activities.

In short, Extension has moved beyond cows and plows and is in sync with Iowa's greatest challenges. Extension's straightforward, practical mission is to build partnerships and provide research-based learning opportunities, which all lead to one objective: to improve the quality of life in Iowa.

There are many avenues or programs that Extension uses to reach that objective:

- 4-H Youth Development
- Families
- Community and Economic Development
- Business and Industry, which also goes by the name CIRAS (Center for Industrial Research and Service)
- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Continuing and Distance Education (soon to be known as ISU Online)

Each program centers around three values:

- Healthy People
- Healthy Environments
- Healthy Economies

Of course it's the people who work in Extension and who deliver the programs under these content areas that make Extension work. We have an ISU Extension office in every county in Iowa staffed by a county extension education director.

Over the decades, Extension has seen many program changes and also changes to its funding sources.

Last year's annual budget for Extension was almost \$92 million:

- 37 percent of extension's budget came from federal and state appropriations (\$34.5 million);
- the rest came from funding that ISU Extension self-generated, mostly from user fees and grants and contracts.

ISU Extension is hailed as a national model in imposing modest user fees for many of its services in order to continue its high level of service. We were the first to move aggressively into user fees and most other states are now following our lead.

Now, let's look at what the ISU Foundation and Extension can do together to augment Extension's and Iowa's top priorities of

- Healthy People
- Healthy Environments
- Healthy Economies

Urban Extension Development cuts across all of these priorities. Urban centers are the financial, commercial, and industrial centers of Iowa. They also are the hub for wealth and services for their surrounding areas. In addition, urban communities are population centers for their surrounding areas. With almost half of the school age youth living in urban centers and surrounding suburbs, these youth and their parents provide a new and underserved audience for ISU Extension. This is where Iowa's future population growth will occur. This is where the potential students for Iowa State University live. These urban centers also will be major employment centers for future Iowa State University graduates. The success or failure of these urban centers will have a critical impact on the surrounding area and the future of Iowa.

Support of Urban Extension Development will lead to improved quality of life for urban residents and enhanced services within urban communities. The programs will link Iowa State University to Iowa's urban centers and build partnerships to provide research-based learning opportunities for urban residents.

With at least 15 urban specialists serving the adults and youth in the state's urban centers, Iowa State University will be positioned as an active, critical partner for the future success in the urban communities of Iowa. The 15 urban specialists will serve adults and youth in the state's urban centers,

allowing us to create partnerships that result in programming opportunities such as

- metropolitan food systems planning and development;
- neighborhood leadership, planning, and development for youth and adults; and
- urban and community design education.

The Iowa Future Fund will help grow a healthy economic future in Iowa by exposing students to Iowa companies and reducing brain drain. As a result of the support we'll receive through the Iowa Future Fund, Extension's Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) will be able to match student design teams with Iowa companies to identify solutions to their most pressing development challenges. Students will gain experience as they work on industries' design challenges, and companies will take advantage of an additional avenue for exploring new ideas so that they can better compete in a global economy. The close interaction between students and company personnel will increase the likelihood that the students will stay in Iowa upon graduation.

This increased interaction between ISU students and the Iowa business community will enhance undergraduate education, support economic growth in the state, and create powerful incentives for our graduates to stay in Iowa as they see firsthand the opportunities that exist for them in these companies.

It is anticipated that student design teams might complete 20 company projects per year. Company-reported annual impacts of \$2 million might be expected.

ISU OnLine™ brings economic development to Iowa by providing the urgently needed upgrading of skills, credentials, and knowledge throughout the workforce. The ISU OnLine Course Creation Fund will accelerate growth and access to highly sought-after online classes that meet the needs of place- and time-based students, businesses, professional organizations, and public sector agencies. It will extend the excellence of ISU by offering ISU's truly best academic courses and curricula—those in which we have a unique expertise or special level of expertise. ISU OnLine will serve Iowans who are time and place-bound students that our campus cannot serve for many reasons, including lack of capacity, and students whose educational needs or interests cannot be well met by other educational providers.

Targeted and relevant course creation and online access are the keys to providing the necessary lifelong learning opportunities necessary to prepare Iowans for a future that promises labor shortages and global competition. The ISU OnLine Course Creation Fund will enable the ISU academic units to hire additional faculty to create and teach high-demand online courses and thus have the added affect of increasing on and off-campus capacity.

An additional 50 new courses over a period of five years will

- increase availability and access to high-demand courses, thus providing Iowa employers with a contemporaneous, well-equipped workforce;
- create new points of entry for students to Iowa State University;
- provide an opportunity to respond more rapidly to fluctuations in course demand; and
- provide relief to students previously unable to enroll in courses because of scheduling conflicts or enrollment limits.

Expanding the Horizons program will build healthier economies by helping communities build a comprehensive leadership base to better address poverty, economic decline, and the exodus of young adults.

Horizons brings together all segments of a community to affect structural and systematic solutions. Iowa State University Extension collaborated with 10 educational organizations and the Northwest Area Foundation to design Horizons. The program was piloted in 44 communities and has expanded to 200 communities in Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, and Washington. Iowa State University Extension is the delivery organization for the Horizons program in Iowa.

For families and communities to thrive, everyone must have an opportunity to prosper. By expanding the Horizons program, Iowa State University Extension can help communities build a comprehensive leadership base to address poverty, economic decline, and the exodus of young adults.

Support for Horizons would glean

- 275 community volunteers trained as facilitators in Study Circles or LeadershipPlenty®,
- 1,200 citizens with an increased understanding of poverty through Study Circles ,
- 625 citizens with increased leadership skills through LeadershipPlenty® training, and
- 25 communities taking action to reduce poverty.

Creating and maintaining Healthy Environments is a major factor in **Mobilizing the Iowa Bioeconomy**. One of our state's fastest growing industries is the bioeconomy. As Iowans explore developing the state's biorenewable resources, they must consider the agronomic, economic, social, and environmental impacts of this rapidly growing initiative. Iowa State University Extension can help them make informed decisions and be engaged in shaping a desirable future.

As Iowans embrace the bioeconomy, ISU Extension will synthesize the results of ISU's multiple research agendas and integrate this information into timely educational and training activities and resource materials for Iowa producers and their service providers. Support for the Mobilizing the Bioeconomy Fund initiative will allow us to accomplish this important work

for Iowa so that we maintain our international leadership in the bioeconomy.

Support for this initiative will result in 80 percent of Iowa producers and their service providers involved in Iowa's emerging bioeconomy using knowledge gained from participation in ISU Extension educational activities when they make decisions about the bioeconomy that affect Iowa's future. With ISU Extension education, they can make better decisions for increased profitability; enhanced air, soil, and water quality; and new economic development opportunities.

I deeply respect and appreciate the more than 50,000 donors who contributed to the Foundation last year, and I don't take their impact on the university's programs lightly. More than 34,000 of these donors live in Iowa, and Extension's strategic plans will directly benefit these donors, the University at large, and the State of Iowa as a whole. We intend to reach out through Extension's programs and touch the lives of all Iowans, to ensure that they too can benefit from the important strategic initiatives we're setting in motion through the help of the Foundation. By increasing Extension's presence across Iowa, we will increase the presents Iowans choose to donate. Extension's partnerships are strong and reciprocal, and what you do to assist these initiatives will in turn give support to the ISU Foundation's fundraising efforts throughout the state. Thank you for your time.