

K-State's Engagement E-News

*Connecting K-State to Kansas
and Communities Worldwide*

Workshop trains participants to be civic leaders

by Stephanie Faulk

Every community faces important public issues. How those issues are discussed — whether through forum, city council or other means — has a tremendous impact. Public dialogue today is often filled with slanderous, mud-slinging comments; dialogue that, if anything, creates a greater divide. Individuals with the skills to coordinate and direct civil dialogue are imperative assets to communities and civic organizations.

“For our communities to move forward in a positive and productive way, it is essential to hear citizens’ voices and understand how they feel about these important issues,” ICDD Director David Procter said.

“The issues plaguing communities are often socially constructed, and there is rarely a solution that is acceptable for everyone,” Procter explained.

Because these issues are sensitive and personal to all participants, ICDD suggests core principles of mutual understanding and respect, shared responsibility and voice for all. Public discussions should discourage personal attacks and ideological sloganeering.

Participants in the 2008 facilitation workshop learned how to host a public forum, looked at case studies of successful facilitated events, and listened to seasoned facilitators discuss strategies that really work. These sessions, combined with participating in a



Participants engage in round table discussion.

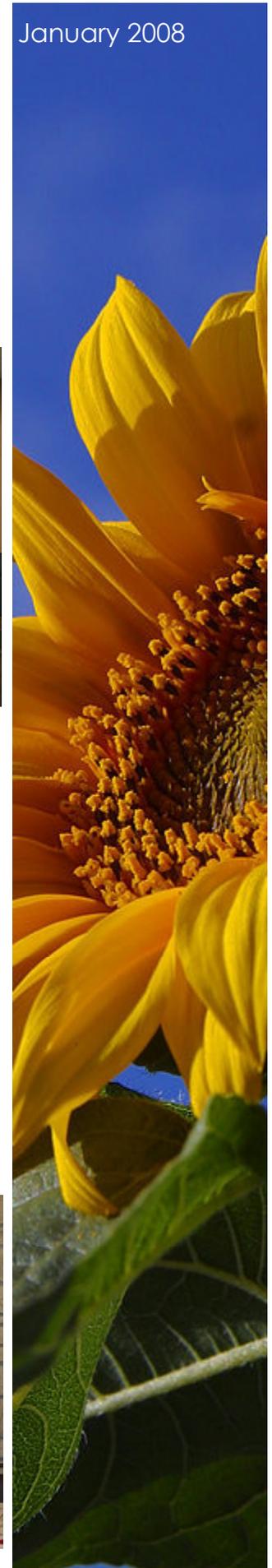
forum of their own, enabled participants to learn about and practice successful facilitation.

“Facilitation skills can be used in everyday life and in all fields,” ICDD graduate research assistant Katy Rubiano said. “I know I’ll have the ability to apply what I learned here in the real world.”

ICDD has hosted facilitation workshops since 2006 featuring participants from all across Kansas as well as five other states including North Dakota, Nebraska, Texas, Wyoming and California.



Former Governor Carlin speaks to workshop attendees.



CECD collaborates to present community and economic development resource fair

by Dan Kahl

The Center for Engagement and Community Development co-hosted the Community and Economic Development Resource Fair at K-State Salina last November. The resource fair was intended to alert participants to new resources available to community and economic development practitioners.

The two-day fair focused on community assessment materials and K-State resources on day one, and showcased Federal, State, and Organizational service providers on day two.

Through the use of video-conferencing, participants were guided through web-based resources by University of Illinois Extension Leadership

Development Specialist Dr. Anne Silvis. This was followed with an exploration of resources at K-State accessible through the CECD. K-State Research and Extension attendees complimented the value of having new access to resources through the CECD website.

The event also provided information and presentations from USDA Rural Development, the Kansas Department of Commerce, Network Kansas, the Small Business Development Center, and the work being done by Kansas Communities, LLC. The event was co-hosted by the KSRE Community and Economic Development Professional Development Team.



Being aware of these resources allows all of our extension community and economic development professionals to better serve their communities.

-- Dan Kahl, CECD Extension Liaison



Kansas community development — CECD can help

by Dan Kahl

Communities in Kansas are bombarded by issues that challenge their sustainability. Extreme weather events, global market economic forces, fuel prices, technological change and societal trends are all examples of events driven outside of the realm of control for rural Kansas Communities.

While control is an ideal that communities often strive for; it is actually change, and the ability to respond to it, that determines a community's success. The world is in a constant state of change. What Kansas communities can be in control of, however, is how they organize, plan, collaborate, and implement

both their responses to external community shaping events, and their management of resources and investment in the future.

To do this, communities need to become involved in organization, processes, and networks that provide a community the resilience and strength to guide their futures. K-State can help. Working through a network of trained facilitators we can help your community organize and plan for the future.

Call the CECD office at (785) 532-6868 to learn more about the resources available through K-State.

Upcoming Event: ICDD Spring Lecture

with David Mathews

president of the Kettering Foundation

Thursday, March 27 at the
K-State Alumni Center

Procter speaks to great plains vegetable growers conference

by David Procter

On Jan. 12 David Procter, the director of the Center for Engagement and Community Development (CECD), presented “The Rural Grocery Store Initiative” at the 2008 Great Plains Vegetable Growers Conference in St. Joseph, Missouri. This regional conference attracted nearly 400 local food and flower growers, food distributors, sustainable farmers, and university extension staff from Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Iowa and Oklahoma.

Dr. Procter outlined the rural grocery store initiative organized by CECD, the USDA Rural Development Office, the Kansas Sampler Foundation, the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development and K-State’s Department of Agricultural Economics.

Procter spoke about the importance of

sustaining rural grocery stores in an era of big box stores and convenient, low-cost shopping patterns. Procter emphasized how these grocery stores remain vitally important for economic development, community development and public health. He pointed out that rural areas are becoming “food deserts” – geographic areas of the state where nutritious and fresh foods are unavailable – and that the young, poor, and elderly are impacted most negatively by a lack of local grocery options.

Procter pointed out that local growers could be an important part of a community sustainability effort. Procter and conference attendees talked together about how local growers might work in partnership with rural groceries to make local foods and products available while at the same time helping sustain local grocery stores.

K-State class works with CECD, Kansas community on water project

by Stephanie Faulk

A K-State PR Campaigns class is working with the Delaware River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) to communicate with Kansans about watersheds and water sustainability. This relationship is symbiotic for the students and the communities they serve.

“I felt it was beneficial to have a client that we could correspond with on a daily basis,” former PR Campaigns student Jessica Silfverberg said. “Developing a partnership with them enabled us to use what we’ve learned over the last four years in actual practice.”

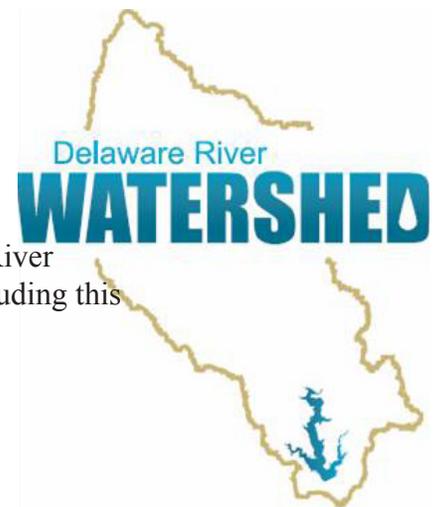
Marlene Bosworth, the coordinator of the Delaware River WRAPS, was equally grateful to receive the students’ help. Bosworth’s background in science helped her understand the issue facing her organization and community; but at times she needed help translating the issues into a communication plan that the general population could understand. Bosworth learned how to effectively communicate with her audiences and the PR students learned about an environmental issue facing Kansans today.

“The students who worked with us last semester learned a lot about water issues that may very well translate into personal interest in water or environmental issues later on in their personal lives and perhaps even their careers,” Bosworth said.

The students not only gained interest in environmental issues, but also a place to test their creativity. Assistant Professor Nancy Muturi, the instructor of PR Campaigns, explained that a non-profit environment offers communications professionals much more personal freedom than a corporate business could offer.

“Communications students are very creative,

The fall 2007 PR Campaigns class created a slew of new materials for the Delaware River Watershed including this logo.



and I guess that is why they chose the major in the first place,” Muturi said. “Our community partners who have very limited resources and who lack the expertise in communication areas are always looking forward to student contributions.”

These contributions are especially valuable because Bosworth and her staff will use them on a daily basis.

“In some ways community service learning is better than an internship because the students get put right onto a real project that will result in a product that we will actually use extensively in our work,” Bosworth said.

WRAPS works to improve water quality by determining water quality problems, prioritizing issues, creating a cost effective plan, and implementing the plan. WRAPS seeks to involve local individuals in the decision-making process to empower citizens to be elements of change in their communities.

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CECD Mission & Vision

Mission

To promote engagement across the breadth of Kansas State University - in teaching, research, and outreach - and to connect the vast resources of KSU to the significant issues of public need facing Kansas and communities worldwide.

Engagement occurs when collaborative partners — both on and off-campus stakeholders — work together to address a public need in a way that is both reciprocal and mutually beneficial. Through engagement, K-State endeavors to fulfill its historic land grant mission.

— David E. Procter, CECD director

Promoting Civic Engagement

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