

Summary of Focus Groups for Five State Regions

During the second breakout session on day two, the strategic planning participants were dispersed into focus groups based on the five regions – Upper Peninsula, North, (the upper peninsula and north regions were combined) Central, Southwest, and Southeast. The focus groups were assigned the task of asking the following questions by the facilitator, Dr. Granville Sawyer. The responses to the questions for each focus group are below.

The questions each group answered include:

1. Develop at least two recommendations for use of grant writing workshop information and other resources to obtain additional funding for programs and for match with federal dollar.
2. Develop at least two recommendations concerning ways state supported grant research and grant writing assistance can be used to help accomplish objective in Item 1 above.
3. Develop recommendations for at least one new program based on work done on program focus areas and the research issue identification priorities Dr. Coon mentioned today – 1) food safety; 2) building strong families; 3) building strong communities; 4) jobs and the economy; and 5) health.

UP & North

Regional Group Responses

#1 Regional grant writer & regional FCS specialist

#2 Linker from campus FCS state staff – like 4H linker program

#3 Vital Aging Initiative (we are doing a logic model)

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UMBRELLA

5. Program focus areas of research issue id

1) Food Safety/health

Diabetes Health

Personal Action Toward Health (PATH-Stanford U)

Advanced Care Planning/Legally Securing Your Financial Future

Senior Tool Box

Senior Project FRESH

FNP

2) Building Strong Families

Family Caregiver Education/U of Wisconsin Extension

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Older Adult Life Span Development

Strength-based assessment for aging in place (Kathy Majewski's

Senior Medicaid Project)

2a) (see above -Legally securing your financial future}

-Family Resource Management

-Who Gets G'ma's Yellow Pie Plate

-Housing Universal Design

-ACP/LSYFF

(ABOVE) Intergenerational Programs

3&4) Building Strong Communities/jobs & the economy

Elder Friendly Communities Certification Program

Leadership Development/Civic Engagement for Seniors

MI Vital Aging Think Tank

Cool Cities

Cross Program Content

-Farm Transfer

-Small Business Transfer

Tasks for Breakout Groups: Central Region

6-22-06

1.
 - a. Boilerplate needs to be created for grant writing through portal/EIS/AOE's across disciplines. State leaders identify and network with important department members with extension dollars.
 - b. Needs to also be tracking systems that staff can use as a resource for writing grants, to reduce competition for grant dollars and to see what grant opportunities exist.
 - c. Additional funding could be sought through: foundations, in-kind donations, businesses, partnerships/coalitions, and relationship building with local coalitions
 - d. We need to be aware of grantor requirements.

2.
 - a. Hire a dedicated position to find grants, notify campus/counties of opportunities and then offer help with grant writing. State driven versus coalition/county grants when possible.
 - b. Need updated curriculum/bulletins from campus, in appropriate languages and we need specialist support from faculty with ongoing funding for these. This speaks to our branding/marketing plan. Structure to communicate with research staff.
 - c. Need to know how to get money that goes back to the unit to help update curriculums and improve our marketing image (indirect costs) that go back to the unit (from Dr. Coon)??
 - d. Top administration to work to get FCS back into federal/state funding streams to receive base/foundational funds. (Funding formular dollar)
 - e. Access to the research pieces/people on campus. Updated lists of specialists to provide a network of people/departments that have extension connections. State leader facilitate communication with research oriented faculty that may be potential partners.

3. How (who) will the FCS program priorities be decided and how do counties/field staff communicate their needs to campus and become a part of this process? Example: funding for diabetes prevention.
 - a. Fund existing program in counties where there is no presentation
 - b. MSUE Health Education Tool Kit that targets the business sector with MSUE Curriculum and educational resources:
 - EAP's and Company Wellness Teams
 - Don't Croak on 'Secondhand Smoke
 - Home Safe Kids
 - Resource Management
 - Parenting,
 - Workforce Development,
 - Nutrition and Physical Activity Resources
 - Could promote MSUE Health Education Tool Kits at Chamber's.
 - Could provide MSUE Health Education Tool Kit - Train the Trainer

c. Centralized needs assessment: by county, region, state. This information needs to be available.

6-22-06: Compiled by Kendra Moses

7-5-06: Revised by Jennifer Gibbs

Southeast Region Report

Question 1/2:

- Full-time regionally based FCS Fund Development Specialist (grant writer) for each region
 - Every grant has to have salary and fringe funding
 - Alternative funds for Nutrition Education and BFI
 - Utilize grad students/state level support to provide sample language, templates and background information for grant proposals such as FNP
 - Provide connect between campus and field staff so that are knowledgeable and have the opportunity to be involved in large state grant projects.
- Explore current allocations of MSUE Core dollars so that there is a more equalized distribution of funds. Every FCS EE having at least 20% hard dollars would allow EEs to explore other program opportunities including PREF. The current system does not allow those EE's funded totally on grant dollars to explore PREF programming.

Question 3:

The group felt that rather than develop a new program, the State FCS Program should instead be focused on **combining, expanding, and updating all of the current, great FCS programs that are currently available in order to be able to reach ALL citizens of Michigan**. Funds would need to be sought to reach other audiences than those we currently serve.

Southwest Breakout Group

To continue the process

- I. Finalize vision, mission, guiding principles and standard operating procedures. Revisit written material from Think tank March 2005
- II. Create a “pro-active” plan
 - a.) Follow the needs
 - b.) Be collaborative in program development
 - c.) Enhance all communication systems
 - d.) Identify a “flagship” statewide program

Notes

Question 1

1. What additional funding sources could we identify to leverage additional dollars? Go to the business community and health insurance companies and offer services for wellness programs, example: BSF – if you can invest this much we can invest this much – to leverage dollars
2. Create a data base of our past participants to help create an endowment
3. There are constraints on our county staff to write grants because they are on soft dollars. Staff reductions and increased work loads means there is little time to dedicate to writing grants.
4. A lot of local grants are supplemental not on a state wide level.
5. A lot of counties already do grant writing, they need to do this at a county level.
6. We need an overall plan to direct funding efforts. We have to have cty, reg, and state-based coordination when we go to a funding source so as not to duplicate or approach the same funders.
7. We need a person to coordinate grant resources and a data base
8. We are stuck in our silos, we should do cross-programming to fund projects/programs with different components. It is better if we can find wrap-around programming. A drawback is that there is a disincentive for people to do multiple programming because you can loose the security - the % of your work covered by soft dollars may not be available when you want to come back to it.
9. Issue of sustainability -- research grants are for 2-3 years. We need to build trust etc. Hard to do this on short term funding.
10. Further discussion needs to happen around whose job it is to write grants.
11. We need a strategic decision process with more county involvement. We would then have a more realistic plan when grants are written and when they are implemented.
12. We need to think about the diversity of our grant writing teams for cross-fertilization and better, more realistic results.
13. Write a project that you want and then find a funder.
14. Create a system that: coordinate efforts and create boiler plates pieces in date base including funded grants, outcome/ impact info, needs info.

Question 2

1. Strategic planning needs to clarify vision, mission before working at level of funding grant. We need a think tank like the March 2005 to be proactive about mission vision of FCS. See what came out of the MEAS week- web site has notes has vision/ mission guiding principles website.
2. Don't necessarily need a grant write but we need some of these resources in a systematic fashion through a centralized data base that is easily accessible. We need tools to assist us all in what we are already doing, a person to look for funding opportunities and manager grant writing resources, where existing funding is coming from.
3. Grant writing is needed but not a lot of time to do it, Counties don't have time to do grant writing.
4. Replicability of grants across counties – proposals should be moveable, portable.
5. Campus staff – “how do we know who to involve and what is the best way to involve counties”? county response “E-mail invitation with a reply-by date. If someone else is started easier to get on board.”
6. As a PA it's frustrating to work on grants that disappear – we need a data base of resources, boilerplate materials and person to help find funding.
7. Grant writing is a good topic for Fall conf. training. Fall conf. planning committee could find someone.
8. Can see future need to write grants as funding becomes tighter.
9. Job insecurity on short-term dollars, limits peoples ability to be flexible and creative in search for additional dollars
10. We need to work more collaboratively esp. when it comes to match dollars.
11. Departments want to work with us, but they need more of our time. We need to be able to give our time to work with them. SW does have some flexibility with time. Could be a model for other regions, staff need help to be creative to buy out our time in ways that are fulfilling, interesting to me. Prof. dir. Opportunity.
12. There are several urban legends out there- most prominent is that of campus/ county disconnect. While this may have some truth to it, we need to you a strength based approach to address and stop these types of dysfunctional relationships. We around table are making a commitment to end the urban myth about campus/city divide. Focus on our strengths, successful partnerships, not our deficits - a strength based approach.
13. Great ideas are coming out of our round table - how do we make them happen?

Question 3

14. FCS has no single thing that we can hang our hat on - is there a need of all people across the state that we can identify? We need to identify a “Flag ship” program either state or regional, then find funding for it