



Inside Outreach

November 2005

So often we dwell on the things that seem impossible rather than on the things that are possible. So often we are depressed by what remains to be done and forget to be thankful for all that has been done.

Marian Wright Edelman

Dear Colleagues,

As we all begin our travels to spend Thanksgiving with friends and family, I would like to thank each of you for your hard work and dedication to the Promise of Outreach. I am very fortunate to work with such an outstanding group of colleagues. We are making much progress on the road from Good to Great, thanks to your creativity and commitment to transforming lives.

This will be a brief Inside Outreach, with one main goal of saying thank you and to enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday. In January, we will return to a monthly Inside Outreach to help you stay abreast of all the successes, changes, and challenges within our organization.

Last month, we all met to explore Outreach strategic priorities and connect with colleagues across Outreach during the Outreach Day of Connection. Over 400 Outreach colleagues came together to connect and learn about each other and the organization. I wish that all Outreach employees could have joined the event. The day was inspiring for me, and I thank those of you who attended and shared your successes and challenges with others. I do think the day played a very important role in making us aware of potential collaborations. Many of you took the time to give us your thoughts on the Day of Connection through the online evaluation, and your comments will be carefully reviewed and considered. The feedback was positive, as noted by one attendee, "I am PROUD to be a part of Outreach and PROUD of the work we do. I believe we are making a difference in our community and in our world." I look forward to future conferences and meetings around the state to further our goal of increasing opportunities for collaboration and connection that impact our various constituents.

For me, the Day of Connection reinforced my confidence in the good work we are doing and the positive impact Outreach has on individuals and communities across Pennsylvania. Each day we are connecting with our Outreach colleagues and optimizing the incredible resources of Penn State to make contributions to our communities and partners. Gaston Caperton, president of The College Board and former governor of West Virginia, is fond of telling a story from his father about the small community where he grew up in the hills of West Virginia. His father said that the small town had a large community woodpile to serve everyone. There were two rules regarding the firewood: first, that whenever you took wood from the pile, you were expected to replace it with more wood than you took. And second, never play with fire near the woodpile. Both points are good advice and solid words to live by.

This Thanksgiving, I am proud to say we in Outreach are rising to the challenge of making life better, and I know that we are replenishing more than our share of wood on the community woodpile.

I am grateful to have such committed and dedicated colleagues. I hope that each of you has a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Craig