

# Inside Outreach

October 2005

*Organization doesn't really accomplish anything. Plans don't accomplish anything, either. Theories of management don't much matter. Endeavors succeed or fail because of the people involved. Only by attracting the best people will you accomplish great deeds.*

Colin Powell

Colleagues:

The start of the new academic year has been a busy one for Outreach and for me. Many of you know that I recently returned from an alumni tour to the lake region of northern Italy—just a beautiful country. But one of the best things about traveling with Penn State alums who graduated in the 50's was to hear myself referred to as “young man”! This doesn't happen very often any more.

Our next issue of *Inside Outreach* will provide updates on our major initiatives, including the work of the CE Task Force Committees. However, it's been a very exciting autumn for Outreach, and I'd like to take this opportunity to recap what's been happening.

Recently, all of Outreach had the opportunity to participate in a wonderful Day of Connection. With over 450 colleagues from Extension; Continuing & Distance Education at University Park and the campuses; Public Broadcasting; the Office of Economic & Workforce Development; Marketing and Communications; Finance, Facilities, and Information Systems; Planning & Administration; and Client Development—Outreach took a full day to learn more about our organization and how we connect with each other and our constituents. In spite of the ugly episode when the Executive Team demonstrated their “Gittin' Jiggy” talents, I hope the program advanced your understanding of the status, progress, and impact of our collective work, and also furthered your connection to our mission and your Outreach colleagues. For those who would like to review the Outreach strategic goals and priorities discussed, the presentations by Daney Jackson, Ted Krichels, Gary Miller and me will be available at the Day of Connection web site at <http://www.outreach.psu.edu/Connections/> I also encourage you to respond to the Day of Connections evaluation survey available at <http://omr.outreach.psu.edu/omrp/surveys/connection.htm>. I am most interested in knowing how you are doing your work differently as a result of learning more about the goals and priorities in Outreach. What have you changed to achieve our goals?

This fall also marked the launch of our new Outreach home. Now open for business, our new Outreach Building offers great opportunities to collaborate and connect...with our students...with our communities...with each other. President Spanier and the Board of Trustees dedicated the Outreach Building at a stellar event on September 8, attended by over 300 guests. The celebration included two very special friends with close ties to Outreach, Frank Mayadas of the Sloan Foundation and Ray Suarez, host of PBS' *The News Hour*. After the ribbon cutting, Ray and Frank also participated in a special taping of *Pennsylvania Inside Out*, and Public Broadcasting hosted an evening conversation with Ray that was very well attended. I'd like to thank the Building Planning Committee and the Building Dedication Committee for contributing much time and effort to the preparation and dedication of the Outreach Building—your hard work and commitment made the launch of our new home a true success. While the building houses a small number of the Outreach team, it is truly a symbolic and real home for all Outreach colleagues. Please stop by and visit our new home.

At the invitation of the Education Policy Committee of the Penn State Board of Trustees, Gary Miller and Ted Krichels joined me at the September 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to talk specifically about access and technology. Through a wonderful mélange of slides and video collaboratively produced by Distance Education and Penn State Public Broadcasting, we provided the Board with a picture of a few major Outreach initiatives in a presentation titled, *Access and Engagement Through Technology: An Update on the Word Campus, Public Broadcasting and Penn State Online*. The response from the Board was very positive, and we also used that presentation as a foundation for a day-long meeting with the Outreach Advisory Board. These semi-annual meetings of the Advisory Board give Outreach leadership an opportunity to benefit from the innovative thinking of our creative Board.

While special events have garnered much of the spotlight this month, we continue to make progress with major initiatives. The three strategic thematic initiative teams have been busy developing funding guidelines for their areas. With academic leadership provided by Penn State faculty from the Colleges of Agricultural Sciences, Education, Health and Human Development, and Medicine (see below for list of team leaders), the teams have been charged with enhancing collaborations, partnerships, and innovations among Penn State academic and Outreach units to address statewide challenges in the areas of health, pre-K to 12 education, and economic and workforce development.

To provide financial resources for high potential thematic initiatives, Outreach has created the Thematic Initiative Fund. Administered by the Thematic Teams, the Fund is designed to support innovation that contributes to the sustained engagement of Penn State Outreach and academic units in the identified thematic areas. I encourage you and your colleagues across the University to visit the Thematic Initiative web site at <http://www.outreach.psu.edu/themes/> for

more information and guidelines for applying for funding from the Outreach Thematic Initiative Fund.

One of the fundamental tenets of the Outreach philosophy is that we are an organization that provides and rewards excellent service. This month, Penn State Public Broadcasting (PSPB) won two regional Emmy awards at the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences presentation in Philadelphia this weekend. *The Grange Fair: An American Tradition* won first place in the documentary category and *Geology in the National Parks* won first place in the program feature/informational category. Such recognition by professional association confirms our pride in our work and advances our belief that Outreach can transform lives. Congratulations to PSPB!

Many of our special events this fall have focused on our new Outreach facility. But it's important to recognize that the excitement is really not about the building...or the technology. It's about the potential to deliver on our Outreach hedgehog concept as collaborator and catalyst...to have cutting-edge tools, and state-of-the-art facilities that offer new opportunities to *connect* with colleagues and serve the needs of our students, viewers, listeners, clients, and communities in innovative and creative ways.

Thank you for your commitment and great work to connect the resources of Penn State with the needs of our students, members, partners, viewers/listeners, and customers. As we continue to celebrate and connect throughout the year, I look forward to joining you as a part of this new chapter in Outreach's long and stellar history!

Craig

## **Thematic Initiative Team Leaders**

### **Health**

Faculty: Luanne Thorndyke, Fred Vondracek

Outreach: Stephanie Tyworth, Gary Miller

### **Pre- K-12 Education**

Faculty: Kyle Peck

Outreach: Babs Bengston, Ted Krichels

### **Workforce and Economic Development**

Faculty: Martin Shields

Outreach: Jack Gido, Craig Weidemann