

Inside Outreach
March, 2006

It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory.

W. Edwards Deming

Colleagues:

W. Edwards Deming, regarded by many as the leading quality guru of his time, was a professor of statistics at New York University. In 1950 he was invited to Japan to help Japanese industrial leaders shift the world's perception of Japan as a producer of shoddy, cheap imitations to one of producing quality, innovative products. To achieve this objective, Deming urged Japanese leaders to focus on constant improvements, improved efficiency, and doing it right the first time. I met with Dr. Deming years ago, and found him to be a brilliant thinker who did not suffer fools gladly. His above quote reflects his frank assessment of the need for change and its relationship with survival. According to his view, the survival of any organization is not mandatory and not assured if an organization does not change. That being said, we continue to change, and will continue to change to ensure our survival and advancement. The following Inside Outreach provides you with a quick update on some of the major changes and actions within our organization.

As Outreach travels the road from Good to Great, I believe it's important to take stock of our progress and celebrate our accomplishments. At our Day of Connection in October, we presented the 2005-2006 Outreach strategic goals. Now that we are more than half way through the year, I'd like to share with you the progress we've made in achieving those goals, and highlight a few areas that are worthy of celebration.

Several major initiatives related to our goals of **Connection** and **Excellent Service** are reaching major milestones. The Committee to Attract and Retain the Adult Learner, appointed by the Provost in response to the CE Task Force recommendations, will hear the findings and recommendations of the SWOT team in February. The SWOT team leaders (Talat Azhar, Laura Bernhard, Bill Curley, Betsy Esposito, and Charlene Harrison) visited every Penn State campus in the past few months to gain a better understanding of the unique environment for adult learners at each location. The team will recommend strategic policies, programs and services that will enhance Penn State's efforts to attract and retain the adult learner in the future. I am confident that this comprehensive effort will lead to a more adult-focused Penn State.

The CE Task Force Committees on CE Service Regions, Major Employers, and Urban Areas will also be wrapping up their work shortly. Final reports are being submitted and recommendations are being reviewed. The aggregate work of

these committees will assist us in making policy and strategy decisions that will advance our efforts to meet the needs of adult students across Pennsylvania.

Other initiatives underway are also enhancing the connection between the resources of Penn State and our constituents across the Commonwealth. The Blended Learning Initiative (BLI) has identified eight courses to move into the BLI pipeline, and the first of two degree programs supported under the BLI has now been identified. Courses within the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice out of Penn State, Harrisburg, are now being developed. Other efforts to provide new programs from University Park academic units to Continuing Education at the campuses are making progress. Seven new programs for distribution to the campuses were launched for the spring 2006 semester.

Another operational priority for Outreach this year is **Resource Optimization**. Thanks to the integrated efforts of a committed staff, a highly effective marketing strategy, and some innovative new approaches, Continuing Education at University Park is on target to exceed its enrollment and revenue targets for 2005-2006. Likewise, the World Campus faculty and staff and the World Campus marketing team are to be congratulated. World Campus enrollments are up 35 percent and applications are up 18 percent over this same time last year. Congratulations to the many Outreach personnel who made this happen!

Another way we are optimizing resources is through collaborative professional development efforts between Outreach and Extension. Extension has invited interested Outreach units to attend the Extension Spring Statewide In-Service program, March 14-17, 2006. This program offers a great opportunity to learn more about Extension and identify ways to enhance services and offerings by marshalling the full breadth of Outreach resources to address the needs of our constituents.

Innovation is also a strategic priority for Outreach and a personal interest of mine. Outreach is committed to integrating innovation into our processes, and developing products and ideas that set us apart from our competition. Through the GRO (Generate Revenue for Outreach) team, Outreach will systematically cultivate innovative, revenue-generating opportunities within the organization. As a pilot project, the team has chosen to capture conference presentations on DVD. Five conference programs have been selected to develop and market over the next 16 months. We are confident the project will be successful, but learning more about the process of managing innovation is equally critical. I am committed to developing our innovation capabilities across Outreach. Please let me know if you have ideas or suggestions on how we can advance an innovation culture within Outreach.

Using **Technology Accelerators** to fuel organizational innovation, create process efficiencies, and attract new business is another Outreach priority. In this area, Penn State Public Broadcasting has been busy launching the Digital

Service Grant. The Keystone Digital Education Pilot will encompass a web site, professional development for teachers, and the datacasting of educational materials. Partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, WGBH in Boston, WLVT in Lehigh Valley, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PSPB has already identified eligible school by testing which schools can receive our datacast signal. The next step will be to identify 15 school partners. Meanwhile, the design of the web portlet is well underway with a projected launch to coincide with the beginning of the 2006-2007 academic year. One project, 3-to-8 Educate!, developed with matching funds from Verizon, can be found on PSPB's Educational Services web site at www.wpsu.org/3to8 . Take a look at what our colleagues in PSPB have created thus far in an Outreach priority area—K-12 education. Their work is amazing!

Working with our academic partners across the University to meet the needs of our constituents in Pennsylvania is another priority area. The Outreach Thematic Initiative Fund was established to enhance collaborations, partnerships, and innovations among Penn State academic and Outreach units to address challenges in the areas of health, pre-K to 12 education, and workforce and economic development. Thematic Initiative Fund investments will leverage additional funding from other Penn State and external sources to address key strategic priorities. Leadership of the initiatives is being provided by Kyle Peck and Babs Bengtson (pre-K to 12 education); Fred VonDracek, Luanne Thorndyke, and Stephanie Tyworth (health); and Martin Shields and Jack Gido (economic and workforce development). Project proposals have been reviewed and a variety of single- and multi-year projects will be funded totaling approximately \$475,000. The Outreach Thematic Initiative Fund is designed to support innovation that contributes to the sustained engagement in the three focus areas. We look forward to following the progress of these projects that will advance Penn State's connections with our external partners. For more information, visit the Thematic Initiatives web page at <http://www.outreach.psu.edu/themes/> .

Today Penn State Outreach is a leader among higher education institutions in contributing to the economic, community, and workforce development of the Commonwealth. In December, we solidified that leadership role by co-sponsoring *Creating Pennsylvania's Future: A Higher Education Economic and Community Development Summit*. Working with our partner, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, and our many sponsors, Penn State hosted a unique summit, bringing together the best thinkers and doers in economic and community development to focus on the role of higher education in economic and community development in the Commonwealth. Attendees included over 500 individuals representing more than 65 higher education institutions and 150 private sector, state and local government, K-12 education, and non-profit organizations across Pennsylvania. Take a few minutes to visit the web site at www.creatingpennsylvaniasfuture.org and review the many exciting presentations delivered at the summit.

As I review our progress over the last few months, I can see that we have much to celebrate—Outreach has made great strides on our path from Good to Great. But we still have much work to do. Because of your dedication and hard work, I know that we will continue to make progress and achieve our strategic goals. Thank you for your commitment to the Promise of Outreach!

Craig