

**Agenda Brief:** Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC)

**Date:** November 16, 2015

**Presenter:** Richard Rhodes III/Daniel Rossi

**Background Information:**

1. Committee Membership:

<b>Voting Members:</b>			
Chair (CES)	Scott	Reed	West
Incoming Chair (ESS)	Richard	Rhodes III	Northeast
Past Chair (AHS)	Nancy	Cox	South
AHS Representative	Wendy	Wintersteen	North Central
CES Representative	Tony	Windham	South
ESS Representative	Daniel	Scholl	North Central
AHS Chair	Walter	Hill	1890
ECOP Chair	Delbert	Foster	1890
ESCOP Chair	Shirley	Hymon-Parker	1890
ACOP Representative	Cameron	Faustman	Northeast
ACE Representative	Faith	Peppers	South
CARET Representative	Connie	Pelton Kays	North Central
APLU CGA Representative	Dustin	Bryant	South
Nat'l Impacts Database Representative	Sarah	Lupis	West
<b>Non-Voting Members:</b>			
kglobal Liaison	Darren	Katz	
Cornerstone Liaison	Hunt	Shipman	
AHS ED/Admin. Rep	Ian	Maw	
ECOP ED/Admin. Rep	Jane	Schuchardt	
ESCOP ED/Admin. Rep	Daniel	Rossi	

## 2. Meetings

- The Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC) met by conference call on October 22, 2015.
- The next scheduled quarterly conference call is January 28, 2016
- The CMC will have a face-to-face meeting on March 6, 2016 at the CARET/AHS meeting in Alexandria, VA.

## 3. Updates

- The leadership of the CMC will rotate following the APLU meeting. Rick Rhodes III will become chair and Scott Reed will serve as Past Chair. An AHS representative, yet to be confirmed) will serve as the Incoming Chair.
- kglobal has released its third quarter report (<http://nera.rutgers.edu/cmc/kglobalOct2015Report3rdQ.pdf>). A separate Executive Summary (<http://nera.rutgers.edu/cmc/kglobalQ3ExecSummary.pdf>) is also available for those who just need a broader overview of activities. The message testing study conducted last year is providing specific guidance in targeting audiences through both traditional and digital media. Three Twitter Town Halls have now been conducted – Montana State University, the Northeast Integrated Pest Management Center and the National Extension Directors and Administrators.
- kglobal will be providing a proposal to update last year's message testing study in a response to a request from the CMC. Funding will need to be secured.
- The CMC has approved a 2016 Plan of Work (see attached). The POW establishes four goals and specific strategies for each. The CMC will be working on implementing the POW over the next several months.
- The CMC is proposing a strategy for reaching out to presidential candidates to explain the value of the LGU's. The CMC chair will be meeting with the chairs of the PBD, BAC and CLP to discuss this proposal.

**Action Requested:** For information only.

# Communications and Marketing Project

## 2016 Plan of Work

*Approved by CMC on October 22, 2015*

### **Background:**

The Communications and Marketing Project (CMP) is a coordinated and targeted educational effort to increase awareness of the value of Land-grant University agricultural and related programs, Agricultural Experiment Stations (AES) and Cooperative Extension Services (CES). More specifically, it supports the creation of unified messages and targeted educational efforts to raise awareness, understanding and appreciation of the impacts and outcomes of federal funding through competitive grants and capacity lines to the state agricultural experiment stations and Cooperative Extension services. The stakeholders of this effort are our state citizens, community leaders, opinion makers and institutional allies, with close connections to identified congressional decision makers.

Two consulting firms, kglobal and Cornerstone Government Affairs, are contracted to lead this effort. These firms assist to identify key targets (thematic areas of interest to stakeholders) and develop appropriate corresponding strategies to focus communication and education efforts. kglobal then implements targeted media strategies utilizing Land-grant University and stakeholder assets. These strategies include traditional media, the use of grassroots engagement and grass-tops advocacy, and digital and social media approaches (Agriculture is America website [<http://agisamerica.org/>], Twitter, Facebook and YouTube).

The CMP is supported by three sections of the APLU Board on Agriculture (BAA): Administrative Heads (AHS), Cooperative Extension (CES) and Experiment Station (ESS). The annual CMP budget, \$400,000 is equally shared by AHS, CES and ESS.

The Communications and Marketing Committee (CMC) oversees and guides the CMP. The CMC is policy-making body that oversees the development, implementation and effectiveness of the targeted educational efforts, including coordination with the APLU Board on Agriculture Assembly, kglobal and Cornerstone Government Affairs. The CMC has a standing Plan of Work Committee which prepares an annual statement of work that articulates clear and focused goals and strategies for the coming year.

## **Goals:**

The CMC will focus on the following goals for 2016:

1. Enhance the effectiveness of the CMC by providing clear guidance and oversight to CMP
2. Support and contribute to unified system messaging
3. Effectively engage institutional communications specialists
4. Promote internal advocacy within the “system” for the communications and marketing project

## **Strategies for goal implementation:**

Below we outline the strategies for achieving the 2016 goals. The CMC recognizes that any communications efforts are constantly evolving and responding to changing external conditions. Hence, the specific strategies identified below may have to be adjusted accordingly.

Goal 1: Enhance the effectiveness of the CMC by providing clear guidance and oversight to CMP

- 1) Restructure CMC meetings to ensure timely provision of advice to kglobal on:
  - Different interests within the system to be promoted
  - Different types of programs to be promoted
  - New programs that might be of interest to promote
  - Different impacts and outcomes that should be promoted
  - Unique relationships with media, members of Congress or Congressional staff
  - The internal politics of the system
- 2) Regularly review and evaluate metrics and overall results of kglobal communications efforts as presented in quarterly kglobal reports, provide feedback to kglobal, and provide updates to deans and directors. (Any assessment of communications and marketing efforts should not be confused with or focused on advocacy.)
- 3) The CMC in cooperation with kglobal will provide the deans and directors with a quarterly executive summary of the communications and marketing efforts.
- 4) Solicit input from Cornerstone personnel on effectiveness of communications efforts.
- 5) Continually evaluate messages and delivery mechanisms through qualitative and quantitative research.
- 6) The CMC will commission kglobal, on an as needed basis, to conduct periodic message testing surveys to ensure overall effectiveness of the project.

Goal 2: Support and contribute to unified system messaging

- 1) The CMC will develop ways to coordinate activities with the BAA and its committees including the Budget and Advocacy Committee (BAC) and the Committee on Legislation and Policy (CLP). While the system's educational and advocacy efforts are separate, it is critical that the system messaging is unified and coordinated.
- 2) Continue to focus the communications efforts during 2016 on the themes of *Health and Nutrition* and *Water Security*.
- 3) By November 1 solicit the sections (AHS, CES and ESS) and the BAC for confirmation of continuing current communications themes or consideration of new themes (identified by the sections) for 2017.
- 4) Monitor the new BAA Process for Advancing New Budget Initiatives to identify potential theme and targets for educational activities.
- 5) Engage kglobal to assess the resonance of the identified issues through appropriate methodologies including message testing surveys.
- 6) The final decision on thematic areas of focus will be made through a consensus building process.

Goal 3: Effectively engage institutional communications specialists

- 1) In cooperation with the Regional Executive Directors/Administrators, annually survey institutions to ensure that kglobal has a current database of institutional points of contact including: deans, administrators, and directors, their assistants, communications specialists and government affairs specialists.
- 2) Identify opportunities for added value by fully engaging communicators upfront as communications targets and strategies are developed.
- 3) Collaborate with kglobal and Cornerstone to develop sessions at the annual joint CARET/AHS meeting and at any New Deans/Directors/Administrators Orientations programs to stress the importance of engaging institutional communications specialists in the CMP efforts.
- 4) Send periodic reminders to encourage institutional leadership and communications specialists to:
  - Continue to submit impact statement to the Land-grant Impacts Database
  - Notify kglobal of important institutional events/activities with broader communications potential

- Consider co-hosting with kglobal Twitter Town Halls

Goal 4: Promote internal advocacy within the “system” for the communications and marketing project

- 1) Communicate regularly with deans, administrators, and directors, their assistants, communications specialists and government affairs specialists on the activities of the communications and marketing project (referred to as constituencies).
- 2) On a quarterly basis, share project metrics including message testing results with deans and directors.
- 3) Solicit input from deans and directors on the project.