



# Epsilon Sigma Phi

ALPHA SIGMA CHAPTER, WISCONSIN  
MARCH 2013

*Your Key to Professional Excellence*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings ESP Members!

Memphis, Tennessee...home of Beale Street and the Blues, Elvis Presley's Graceland Mansion, and Memphis-style barbeque, and host of the 2013 JCEP Leadership Conference! JCEP, the Joint Council of Extension Professionals, is an umbrella organization for Extension organizations and associations. In Wisconsin, the JCEP member organizations are WAE4-HYDP, WACAA, WEECDA, WEAFCs and ESP\*. Similarly, on a national scale, JCEP has membership from the national associations representing 4-H, Ag, Family and Consumer Sciences, Community Development and Natural Resources, and ESP.



\*Wisconsin Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals, Wisconsin Association of County Ag Agents, Wisconsin Extension Environmental and Community Development Association, Wisconsin Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, Epsilon Sigma Phi

ESP President-elect Patrick Nehring and I represented Wisconsin ESP at the JCEP Conference a few weeks ago. The annual conference focuses on developing "leaders" for our respective states and extension organizations. The keynote speaker was Jay Rifenburg, president of Rifenburg Training and Development and author of "No Excuse! – Incorporating Core Values, Accountability and Balance into Your Life and Career" and "True to Your Core – Common Sense Values for Living Life to Its Fullest." Jay's presentations were insightful and motivational. Along with Jay's presentations, the conference provided plenty of opportunities to learn more about ESP in general, about the National structure and committees, and to share success stories and ideas amongst the state ESP chapters. One message that came through loud and clear to me was the true value of our ESP memberships. The dollars you spend to retain your annual membership or become a life member, can come back to you many-fold. There are scholarships on the national level, as well as our state ESP chapter – money YOU could use to attend the national ESP conference or participate in other professional development opportunities. There are also many opportunities to serve, stretch, and grow by becoming involved in National ESP committees, conferences, or other activities. The National ESP website is very well maintained and informative. Take a look, if you haven't done so before, and start thinking how you might take advantage of the many opportunities that ESP provides for you nationally and here in Wisconsin.

<http://espnational.org>

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I hope to see MANY of you at our Wisconsin JCEP Conference on April 17-18, at Glacier Canyon Lodge and Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells. Our annual ESP meeting is Thursday, April 18, at 11:00 am, just prior to the All Association Luncheon. I encourage all members to attend the meeting to learn more about our association and meet other current and new ESP members. Conference registration can be found at <http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/jcep/conference/>

As I close out my remaining weeks as your ESP President, let me say it has been a wonderful experience serving this organization and I look forward to staying involved as your “past-president” and with the important work of the committees.

Peggy Compton, ESP President  
Wisconsin Alpha Sigma Chapter  
[peggy.compton@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:peggy.compton@ces.uwex.edu)



Representing Wisconsin at JCEP National Leadership Conference in Memphis were Katie Wantoch (WACAA), Amber Rehberg (WAE4-HYDP), Judy Knudsen (WEAFCS), Alissa Grenawalt (WAE4-HYDP), Patrick Nehring and Peggy Compton (ESP).

**NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**  
Joan LeFebvre, Committee Chair

The nominations committee is pleased to announce they have a complete slate of candidates for the ESP board. Elections will take place at the ESP annual meeting at JCEP.

- President Elect – Mary Novak
- Secretary – Aerica Bjurstrom
- County Director – Mike Koles
- State Director – Patrick Robinson
- Retiree Director – Marilyn Herman

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**  
Faye Malek, Committee Chair

The annual membership drive was conducted between November 1<sup>st</sup> and February 15<sup>th</sup>. Through a combination of emails, newsletter articles, personal phone calls and letters done by the ESP Membership Committee, current and retired Cooperative Extension employees were invited to either join ESP or to renew their membership.

At the time of writing this article, 2013 membership statistics include 15 new and 103 renewed annual members, 152 life members including three new members, for a total of 270. We are hopeful that colleagues will attend the annual meeting at the JCEP Conference in April. New members will be introduced and receive a membership certificate.

Congratulations to all members on their decision to join ESP!



**RETIREE COMMITTEE**

Paul Roback, Committee Chair

Since the adoption of the ESP Strategic Plan in April 2011, the Retiree Committee has annually nominated colleagues for the ESP Retiree Service Recognition Award. This is a special Wisconsin chapter level award to recognize an ESP member who continues to contribute to the mission and program of Extension following retirement. Mary Mennes received this recognition in 2011 and Dwayne Rohweder in 2012. Mary and Dwayne join 18 other retirees that have been recognized since 1996. Who will receive the award in 2013? We look forward to the announcement at the JCEP Conference April 17-18 at Glacier Canyon Lodge and Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells.

The ESP Retiree Committee needs you! Are you interested in becoming involved with ESP in retirement to ensure that you and others stay connected with Cooperative Extension? We are looking for a few additional committee members to help provide guidance in keeping retirees engaged with ESP and Extension. The committee performs most of its work through e-mail communications and meets by teleconference as needed. If you are interested in serving, please contact Paul Roback at [paul.roback@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:paul.roback@ces.uwex.edu).

Numerous ESP Retirees joined the Cooperative Extension Centennial Committee and served on most of the sub-committees to ensure a successful celebration in 2012. Marv Beatty, member of the History Committee, was busy writing stories for posting on the Centennial website (<http://100.ces.uwex.edu/>) and engaged other retirees to join him in writing. The stories are wonderful! Throughout 2013, we would like to share a few of these stories with you.



Professor Emeritus Palmer McCoy tells his story about becoming the first County Resource Agent, back in the beginnings of the Community, Natural Resource & Economic Development program area.

In November of 1961, I stopped at Ag Hall to say hello to my undergraduate advisor, Dr. Gale Vandenberg. I was working for the International Harvester Corporation at the time. Gale happened to be in his office and proceeded to tell me about a new position that was to be established in Columbia County.

Dr. Gale Vandenberg poses with E.L. Luther at the December CES Centennial Celebration at the Pyle Center. Vandenberg was a director for Wisconsin Cooperative Extension and the 1982 ESP Distinguished Service Ruby Recipient.



The University had received a Ford Foundation grant; a small portion of the grant was earmarked for Cooperative Extension, to be used to carry out a pilot project to extend University resources to new clientele. He urged me to apply. Details were scarce, but for the next several days I couldn't help but think about the concept, excited at the possibility of being a part of such an effort. My undergraduate degree was, after all, in "Extension Education."

The guidelines were broad, and such a project had never been attempted in a single county. A few agents in northern Wisconsin had carried out regional programs in recreation and tourism. Sherm Weiss was one of these early agents.



I applied for the position and was selected by the District Director and the Columbia County Extension Committee. When my wife asked what I would be doing, at that point I had some difficulty describing what that would be. The starting salary was \$7,000 (that's per year, not per month). I started on January 2, 1962.

Columbia County was a progressive county with a long history of good Extension programs and solid support of those programs. New clientele was not hard to find; the challenge rather was to match University personnel and resources to the problems and opportunities. We reached over 1,000 small business people with educational programs the first year alone.

We worked closely with community leaders as we planned and built our programs. Initial citizen surveys, which identified priorities and opinions, were an important part of the program. These surveys also identified the power structure. As priorities and needs were identified, we designed projects and programs to address them. I had countless meetings with Chambers of Commerce, local governments, small businesses, and industry and community leaders. Most programs and meetings took place in the evenings; the hours were long but productive.

Cooperative Extension and General Extension at that time were separate arms of University Extension. In the Columbia County project we found many ways to extend both through a county extension office. In later years these two Extension outreach services were merged into a single UW-Extension. We like to think that the Columbia County experience facilitated that process.

After the initial three years of Ford Foundation funding, the Columbia County government voted to continue the Resource Development position on a similar financial arrangement as other county Extension positions (Youth, Home Economics, and Agriculture). The success of the project caused other counties to establish similar positions, and the Community Development Program became established in the UW-Extension.

As the program expanded to other counties, resource agents requested specialist support at the state level. Training programs were developed for community development resource agents in the field.

This is a very brief overview of an important part of Extension's history. I was fortunate to be a part of the founding of a key program. It was an exciting time, and an example of the University of Wisconsin meeting citizen needs, something we all know as the "Wisconsin Idea."

## Wanted: Newsletter Editor

René Mehlberg, ESP Newsletter Editor

Since July 2009, I have served as the ESP Newsletter editor. I willingly volunteered for a position that wasn't even being sought to be filled, as a way to learn more about ESP while giving back to the organization. It is now time for someone else to have this opportunity.

Commitment is about 1-2 days the months before the newsletter comes out in March, July, November. Responsibilities include soliciting newsletter articles from the board, compiling and editing articles, putting the newsletter together, and working with the Dean's office for distribution. You are welcomed to participate in the ESP Board meetings which are mostly by Wisline.

I am happy to work with anyone to transition into this role. If interested and or want more information, please contact me at [rene.mehlberg@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:rene.mehlberg@ces.uwex.edu).



**From the Editor**

## AWARDS COMMITTEE

Joan Wimme, Committee Chair

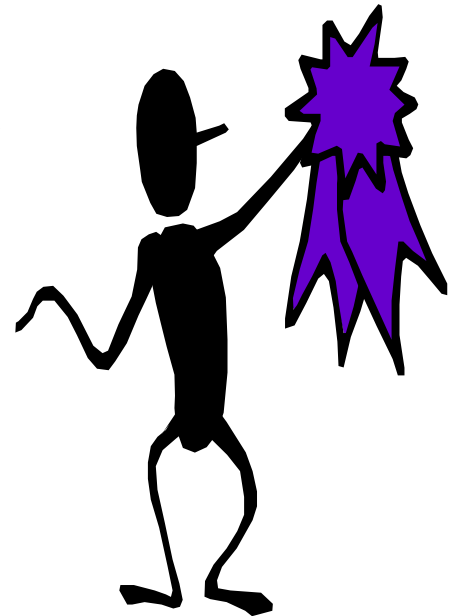
Greetings fellow ESP members! The ESP Awards Committee has begun their work. We received nominations/applications to review in six award categories.

- Friend of Extension
- Early Career Service
- Visionary Leadership
- Distinguished Service
- Retiree Service
- International Service

Our primary purpose between now and the JCEP conference is to select the award recipients, discuss nominations for regional and national awards, and prepare for the JCEP All-Association Awards Luncheon.

This is the third year applications were entered on-line by the nominator and the entries were emailed to me from our National ESP organization. It worked like a charm and I want to thank all the nominees (or those making the nomination) for a flawless process this year! Speaking of nominees, I really do hope that you will start thinking about nominating yourself or a colleague next year. The forms haven't changed much so copy one and work on it over the spring or summer. Then come next December and January, you'll be set to go.

The Awards Committee includes Matt Hanson, Monica Lobenstein, Linda Bruce, René Mehlberg, and Joan Wimme (Chair). The ESP Awards Committee welcomes new members to join. If you are interested, call Joan Wimme at 715-395-1365 or email me [joan.wimme@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:joan.wimme@ces.uwex.edu) See you in April at the Conference!



## YOUR WISCONSIN RETIREMENT FUNDS IN ACTION

Dwayne A. Rohweder, ESP Representative to the Coalition of Annuitants

The stock market was volatile but generally up for 2012. The market closed the first half up with the best June since 1999. August was the second best for 86 years since 1926. The third quarter closed with the Dow up 10% and the S&P 500 up 14.6% for the year, indexes within shouting distances of all time highs. At year's end, the Dow was up 7.3%, the S&P 500 up 13.4%, and the Nasdaq up 15.9% for the year, the best year since 2009.

The Dow surged at the start of 2013 and had the best January in nearly two decades. As of this writing, the Dow rose to its highest close of the year placing it within one percent of the record close of 14,164.53 in October 2007. It reached 14,000 several times during this period. With the major indexes near record highs, many think this stock market's six-week rally is ready for a correction. Solid earning reports have helped feed the rally—typical stocks appear fairly priced compared to earnings, corporations keep finding ways to boost profits, and Americans having few alternatives are looking for places to put their savings. The best year for stocks measured by the S&P 500 was 1933 in the midst of the Great Depression.

**Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) Pensions** WRS funds followed the stock market trends with the Core trust fund closing up 13.6% and the Variable Trust fund up 16.9% for the year on December 31, 2012. Both funds closed above their bench marks. WRS members want to know what to expect for this year's effective rates that apply to active employees and the annuity adjustments to retirees for both funds.

### Employee Trust Funds made the following projections based on December returns

	Core Fund	Variable Fund
SWIB Investment Return	13.6%	16.9%
Effective Rate	1.8% to 2.2%	13% to 15%
Annuity Adjustment	0% to -13%	7% to 9%

The effective rates are the starting point for calculating the annuity adjustments for retirees. The annuity adjustments are approximately 5% to 8% lower because there is already a 5% earning assumption built into the initial benefit amount paid to retirees. In addition, actuarial factors such as mortality, carryover, etc. are factors in the adjustment calculation process. Remember you can never go below your initial annuity amount or floor.

Of the 165,000 annuitants, 54% or 71,000 will not have a loss, 36,000 or 22% will have a partial loss, and 42% or 61,000 will experience the full loss in the Core fund. Who will pay the loss? Those that retired in 2008 to 2012 have never received an increase, so will have no loss; 2005 to 2007 have previously lost all increases; 2000 to 2004 will lose any remaining increases; and 1999 and before will experience the full expense.

This will be the last reduction from the 2008 loss of 26% in the Core Fund. Core Fund gains or losses are smoothed over five years. Losses paid to date are in 2009 -2.1%, 2010 -1.3%, 2011 -1.2%, 2012 -7%, and 2013 -0 to -13%. If you were also in the Variable in 2012, you may break even or make money this year, depending when you retired.



**The Future** SWIB (State of Wisconsin Investment Board) has been able to earn positive returns each year in the Core Fund and in three of the last four years in the Variable Fund. Over the last ten years, the Core Fund has had eight years of positive returns while the Variable Fund has had seven years of positive returns. To assure that WRS remains solid, a number of initiatives have been adopted to help meet the goals of SWIB and the WRS. The investment strategy continues to focus on managing risk and reducing costs. Increasing amounts of investments have been moved in-house to save WRS money, and they will consider ways to cut costs. Because the biggest risk is the stock market, which accounts for 84% of the risk, exposure to stocks has been reduced by 5% over the past three years. Because 75% of the assets in the trust funds come from returns on investments, SWIB will continue to diversify holdings to protect from severe market downturns and better protect participants. If SWIB achieves its target of 7.2% for the Core, we should be in a position to receive a positive annuity in 2014.

Federal: Remember you are receiving a 1.7% COLA on your Social Security and Federal pension.

**RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
Cara Carper, Resource Development Committee Chair

ESP Auction Items Needed

Plan to help us build the ESP endowment fund at the Joint Council of Extension Professionals Conference April 17-18 in Wisconsin Dells. Consider contributing to the silent auction with a donation of a week at your cabin, a fishing trip to northern Wisconsin, a craft item, or a gift package of Wisconsin products.

In these times of shrinking budgets, scholarships for professional development are critical to the continued success of Cooperative Extension. If you have questions or need assistance getting your item to Wisconsin Dells on April 17, contact Peg Reedy at 262-741-4961 or [peg.reedy@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:peg.reedy@ces.uwex.edu)).





## GRANTS COMMITTEE

Patrick Nehring, Committee Member



ESP has awarded \$9,400 in grants to UW-Extension staff and retirees for professional development.

- Price County Family Living Agent Barbara Haynes will present a poster session at the National Urban Extension Conference.
- Retiree ESP Member Linda Kustka will present at the Galaxy Conference using the ESP Alpha Sigma Wisconsin National ESP Conference Award.
- Dunn County Agriculture Agent Katie Wantoch and Polk County Agriculture Agent Jennifer Blazek received a Henry Ahlgren Award to attend the 2013 Extension Risk Management Education National Conference. They have submitted a proposal to present at this conference.
- Grant County Family Living Agent Beverly Doll was awarded the Marvin and Ellouise Beatty Award to attend the Investor Education, Economics and Insurance training session offered by the National Institute of Financial and Economic Literacy.
- Iowa County Family Living Agent Ruth Schriefer will present at the Galaxy Conference.
- Rusk County Agricultural Agent Richard Toebe will be taking a course from Colorado State University as he works toward a Masters Degree in Integrated Resource Management.
- Nutrition Education Program Specialist Gayle Coleman will attend the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Conference entitled "Nutrition Education - Moving from Good to Great."
- Walworth County Nutrition Educator Karie Lutz will receive the Ellen Fitzsimmons Award to take the first semester Spanish course through the University of Wisconsin's Independent Learning.

What professional development are you considering? ESP Professional Development Grant Applications are due August 1. Applications available at <http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/esp/grant/>

## GLOBAL RELATIONS

Mary Ann Schilling, Committee Chair

The ESP Global Relations Committee has worked with the UWEX International Team to organize a very exciting workshop for those interested in an International Professional Development experience. The workshop is to prepare Extension colleagues for host agency qualifications (Participatory Rural Appraisal), expose us to potential opportunities, create a stronger resume, and show us how to prepare and secure approval from Department Chairs or county committees. UW-Extension Administration has been a strong supporter of International experiences and allows travel (after approval) on work time. In fact, they are sponsoring this workshop at no cost to your assigned budget. Last year UWEX colleagues from all disciplines and program areas traveled to St Kitts Island, Guyana, Kenya, Ghana, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Chile, Colombia, and Guatemala.





More information follows for the March 18<sup>th</sup> evening Fireside Chat and the March 19<sup>th</sup> workshop can be found on pages 10-11. There is room for 30 participants so get your registration in ASAP; registrations are due March 11.

Forward questions to:

Arlen Albrecht  
Co-Chair International Cmte  
715-748-3327  
[alren.albrecht@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:alren.albrecht@ces.uwex.edu)

Mary Ann Schilling  
ESP Global Relations Chair  
608-339-4237  
[maryann.schilling@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:maryann.schilling@ces.uwex.edu)

Gary Kirking  
Juneau Co UWEX Host  
608-847-9337



**IN MEMORIAM** -- We are saddened to share that we received information of losing 3 friends and colleagues since our last newsletter.

**Laurel Huibregtse**, age 85, died unexpectedly as a result of an accident on November 27, 2012. A graduate of the UW-Madison, Laurel majored in food service administration. She served as the Eau Claire County Home Economist in the 1950s. Laurel and her husband Don published community newspapers in Wisconsin from 1953 until their retirement in 1988. She also was the director of school food service for the Monona Grove school district from 1969 to 1989. All family members and countless friends considered Laurel to be the best cook they had ever encountered. Laurel was a many year member of the Monona Branch of the American Association of University Women and served on its Board and as its President. With three friends, she started a gourmet dining club for twelve couples, which has continued to meet since 1972. An avid bridge player, she was proud to be a Life Master.

**Everett Earl Olsen**, age 89, died January 17, 2013. Following service in the U.S. Navy during World War II, he returned to UW-Madison to complete his interrupted study for a degree in agriculture. Everett and his wife, Zella, settled in Dodgeville where he worked for the UW-Extension as a Resource/County Agent for more than 30 years. He returned to the UW from 1965 to 1968 to complete his master's degree in Extension Education. One of his accomplishments as a County Resource Agent was assisting SCS and DNR with three multi-purpose flood control/recreation areas in Iowa County. Everett was an environmentalist and community activist who was involved in the formation of the Uplands Group to promote tourism and the economy in Iowa County. He was also a founding member of the Iowa County Historical Society.

**Dennis Presser**, age 54, died unexpectedly of natural causes on February 16, 2013. Dennis earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Humanities from North Dakota State and went on to earn master's degrees in Public Administration and Urban and Regional Planning from UW-Madison. He served UW-Extension as the Juneau County CNRED Agent. Dennis was an avid conservationist, hunter and trout fisherman and held active roles in many conservation organizations. He also served his country in both the US Army and the National Guard. Dennis was much loved by many for his humor and full-hearted generosity and, to his last day, lived his life fully.





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## International Opportunities Workshop

**Tuesday, March 19, 2013**

**8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Woodside Ranch Resort & Conference Center**

**4015 Hwy 82**

**Mauston, WI 53948**

### Agenda:

#### **8:00am – 8:30am Registration**

- Introductions
- Connecting to organizations that provide international opportunities
- Rapid Rural Appraisal training
- Cultural understand and sensitivity

#### **12:00pm (Provided) – 1:00pm – LUNCH**

#### **1:00pm – 2:00pm – Workshop (choose to attend A or B)**

##### **A. Preparing Yourself for an International Experience**

- a. Writing Your Resume
- b. Getting Office, County and Program Support
- c. Paperwork Needed
- d. Deliverables to County

##### **B. Consultant vs. Volunteer**

- a. Negotiating Scope of Work (SOW)
- b. Pre-trip Preparations
- c. Expenses and Trip Reports
- d. Making Promises
- e. Working with an interpreter – language barriers

#### **2:15pm-3:15pm Workshop (choose to attend A or B)**

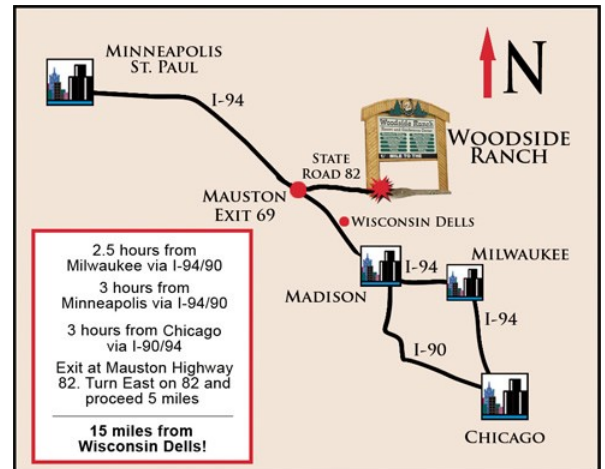
##### **A. Preparing Yourself for the Trip**

- a. Health Issues, Vaccinations, etc.
- b. Money Issues
- c. What to Pack and What to Leave Home
- d. What to Bring as Gifts and What to Buy as Souvenirs
- e. Lodging – hotels, guest houses, out-houses
- f. Need for Flexibility –and adapt to changes

##### **B. Reports and Scholarships Opportunities**

- a. Trip Reports
- b. Sharing your Work Experiences with County and Colleagues

#### **3:15pm – 3:30pm –Closing Remarks and Evaluations**



**THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR WORKSHOPS.**

ALL COSTS FOR TRAVEL, LODGING AND MEAL IS COVERED BY THE DEAN'S OFFICE.



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## **International Opportunities Workshop**

*International Experiences offer an opportunity to contribute to the improvement of Wisconsin and international communities as well as an opportunity for professional development.*

**Open to the first 30 registrants**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2013**

**8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Woodside Ranch Resort**

**4015 Hwy 82**

**Mauston, WI 53948**

**608.847.4215**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

County/Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Type:  Current UW-Extension Employee  Retiree  Guest (non-Extension employee)

Association Affiliation(s):  ESP  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**LODGING:** Lodging needed for 3/18/2013  Yes  No

**RSVP is required:**

Please EMAIL registration to [gary.kirking@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:gary.kirking@ces.uwex.edu) 608.847.9336 / Fax: 608.847.9332

Seminar will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. Attendance is limited to those who register by March 11, 2013.

Meal is provided please note if there is a special dietary requirement, check for vegetarian meal option.

(Vegetarian)

Special Meal Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Information / Contact:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

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## **EPSILON SIGMA PHI**

Newsletter

432 N. Lake Street, Ste. 601

Madison, WI 53706-1498

This newsletter is published in March, July, and November. The deadline for submission is the 1st of the month preceding publication.

### ***MISSION OF ESP***

The mission of Epsilon Sigma Phi is to foster standards of excellence in the Extension System and to develop the Extension profession and professional. Since Epsilon Sigma Phi was established in 1927 in Bozeman, Montana, members have worked to strengthen the impact of the Extension System to address needs of individuals and communities through research-based education. ESP is one of the oldest and is the largest organization of Extension Professionals. Epsilon Sigma Phi is an equal opportunity/affirmative action organization. The organization values and seeks a diverse membership.

### **Save the Dates!!**

April 17-18, 2013—JCEP Conference,  
Glacier Canyon Lodge and Convention  
Center, Wisconsin Dells

April 22-24, 2013— Public Issues  
Leadership Development Conference;  
Alexandria, Virginia

August 20—the ESP Summer Picnic at  
Lakeview Park in Middleton at 2:30p.m.

September 16-20, 2013—Galaxy IV;  
Pittsburgh, PA