An Evening of Inspiration for Women in Agriculture Life Sciences

ABSTRACT

An Evening of Inspiration for Women in Agriculture & Life Sciences will create a fertile environment for women to evaluate their own professional status and future, including students, practitioners in the fields of secondary agricultural education, Cooperative Extension, and CALS women faculty members. In addition, women from the College of Engineering, the Eller School of Management and the College of Science will be invited to enhance and expand the audience input. The event will span four and one-half hours on Friday evening, April 1, 2005. This intense connection, linking women to their future potential goals and aspirations, will serve as a springboard to develop an on-line mentoring program for women in CALS.

Dr. Chris Townsend, professor and undergraduate coordinator for Agricultural Education at Texas A & M University, specializes in delivery strategies, leadership theory and leadership education. Chris presents a dynamic look at the role of women in leadership positions. Chris will be the keynote speaker and centerpiece of the project. By providing opportunities for women in Arizona to network and develop their connections among peers, this project also provides stimulation of ideas and career direction. The inclusion of the Eller Management School, the College of Engineering and the College of Science opens the door to potential collaboration among women from various disciplines.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CALS 607, Women in Academic Agriculture is a graduate level course offered during spring semesters at the University of Arizona. The course examines the status of women involved in higher education in a variety of agriculturally related fields. Students enrolled in this course become immersed in the stories and challenges of women in agriculture and life sciences fields as well as gaining in-depth perspectives on their own potential for building a professional career with an advanced degree. An Evening of Inspiration for Women in Agriculture & Life Sciences will expand the audience of women evaluating their own professional status and future to include practitioners in the fields of secondary agricultural education, Cooperative Extension, and CALS women faculty members. In addition women from the College of Engineering, the Eller School of Management and the College of Science will be invited to enhance and expand the audience input.

Dr. Chris Townsend, professor and undergraduate coordinator for Agricultural Education at Texas A & M University, specializes in delivery strategies, leadership theory and leadership education. Chris presents a dynamic look at the role of women in leadership positions. As the centerpiece of this project, Chris would provide an interactive keynote designed to encourage women to expand their horizons and opportunities. Prior to her presentation a reception for Chris and all participants would kick-off the evening with light snacks. Following the keynote, the participants would divide into smaller groups for directed discussion of the evening’s presentation.

- Operational framework

When: Friday, April 1
Time: 4:00-5:00  Registration/Meet & Greet
5:00-6:00  Reception and continued interaction
6:00-7:30  Keynote Speaker
7:30-8:30  Discussion groups
8:30  Wrap and release

Graduate level women in CALS and other colleges invited to participate. Estimated 50 students

CALS 607—Women in Academic Agriculture
Spring 2005 class—estimated 20 students

Motivational Guest
Speaker—Dr. Chris Townsend,
Texas A & M University

Arizona Women Agricultural Education Teachers—secondary level
Estimated 28 individuals

CALS Women Faculty
76 individuals

UA Women in Engineering, Business and Science
50 individuals

Arizona Women in Cooperative Extension
20 individuals

If the approximate 144 targeted women invitees, we estimate attendance by 75 individuals.

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GOALS, INPUTS, OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES

- Provide opportunity for women in the fields of agriculture, extension and education a venue of support and inspiration to succeed in their chosen fields.
- Create an atmosphere for interaction among age groups and inter-related professional groups.
- Initiate ongoing dialogue between generations of women in agriculture and life sciences through an on-line mentoring program.

HOW IT MEETS THE ENDOWMENT MISSION

The USDL recognizes nontraditional occupations as those in which women make up less than 25% of the total workforce. Today, in general agricultural related jobs, (ranch managers, etc.) women represent only 22% of the workforce (USDL web site). In Cooperative Extension less than 12% of agricultural extension agents (dealing primarily with adults) are women (Seever & Foster, 2004). Women make up approximately 23% of the total secondary level agricultural education teacher workforce (Camp, 2003).

By providing opportunities for women in Arizona to network and develop their connections among peers, this project also provides stimulation of ideas and career direction. The inclusion of the Eller Management School, the College of Engineering and the College of Science opens the door to potential collaboration among women from various disciplines.

PERSONNEL FOR COMPLETION

Students enrolled in CALS 697 will serve as welcome hosts for the reception and group leaders for the discussion sessions.

Dr. Townsend as keynote.
Dr. Foster and Ms. Noon as event coordinators.

HOW IT WILL BE INTEGRATED INTO THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Personal invitations will be issued to women faculty of the aforementioned colleges (CALS, Eller, Engineering and Science), women in Arizona Extension with off-campus appointments and women secondary agricultural education teachers in Arizona. In addition, notices and announcements will be distributed to all women graduate students on campus.

Reminding women of the career opportunities available to them helps create a more diverse community for the future of CALS and the University. This event will serve as a catalyst of thought and the beginning of ongoing connections between students and faculty mentors. The creation of an on-line mentoring program provides a simple form of connection that is flexible enough to fit the busiest schedules. Providing young professionals with direct contact with women already in their chosen fields allows them to better direct their own careers.

In addition to the stand-alone benefits of this project, it would also serve as a pre-event for the 3rd Annual Women’s Leadership Conference (April 2, 2004) for women in Business, Engineering, and Science. This year CALS has been invited to participate in the conference.
BUDGET

Conference room rental $300
Chris Townsend (keynote speaker) $2000 stipend
Townsend travel expenses (air and room) $750
Reception food for 75 people $400
Total $3450

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Budget request reflects known and estimated expenses based on contact with U/A Student Union. Participants will be asked to pay a $10 non-refundable participation deposit to offset the reception expense.

Although total estimated budget is $3450, we are only requesting support in the amount of $3050.

Billie Foster, Ed.D. 10/14/04  Teresa Noon 10/13/04
Supervisor/Advisor 10/14/04

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