



# Center of Excellence Advisory Board Meeting

**Tuesday October 15th, 2013**

***Technology Center, Walla Walla Community College***

**4:00pm – 5:30pm, Dinner to follow**

## *Advisory Board Members in Attendance:*

Stewart Padelford, Leslie Hammer, Mike Swan, and Ramon Benavides

## *Others in Attendance:*

Jerry Jr. Anhorn, Bill Griffith, LaKatherine Stanger, Patricia Hurin, and Jason Selwitz

## ***Welcome & Introductions***

Bill Griffith welcomed Advisory Board Members and asked each member to introduce themselves and who they represent on the Advisory Board. Bill gave a brief background on himself and how he came into the Ag Center of Excellence Director position. He thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the meeting, and reminded the group about dinner to follow the meeting in the main building.

## ***Action Items***

The June 2013 meeting minutes were reviewed by the Advisory Board members. Leslie moved to approve the minutes and Stewart seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## ***Center of Excellence Updates & Activities***

Patty gave an update on the Curriculum Assessment Testing; plant systems test is online with difficulties getting commitments from students and teachers to move it forward. The animal systems test has been revised and updated to be more relevant to current curriculums. She will be moving the test on for review and be implementing the pilot stage in winter or spring. The power structural test was also revised to be more in line with what is taught in the classrooms. The tests contain roughly about 130 questions depending on the test and content required. Patty was apart in writing a new grant for LEAD and is for about \$144,000 and it focused on gaining interest from high school students in agriculture and the first year will be in the Urban, Latino, and Native American populations. FFA teachers are a partner in the grant and are actively working with the Center and Stewart. Patty gave descriptions and examples of each of the grants' goals through promoting and outreach. Ramon asked how easy it would be to create internships for the LEAD program and Leslie said a Job Shadow may be more relevant for the age group targeted. Bill mentioned the programs for CTCs generally provide a 2 semester or longer internship for enrolled students, however bringing that to the high schools even if it is informal to the instructors may make a difference to the younger students. Promoting between high school and industry will need to take place and be marketed before the end of the year. Bill announced the banner promoted on the WA School Counselor website for CAT, Biofuels, and Ag Center of Excellence. The analytics are tracked for the Center website through the banner link used on the counselor website to see how useful it truly is for marketing and promoting the programs.

Jason discussed the Bioenergy course development process that took place this summer with a team of educational and industry partners. Bioenergy programs of study are currently based at Walla Walla Community College and the program launched this fall with 10 current students enrolled. Jason is promoting the program statewide – as the bioenergy courses are offered via eLearning and support development of skills transferable to a variety of processing and conversion industries. AAAS, Certificate, and a short certificate series are the programs of study offered. The short certificate series is awarded upon proper completion of every two Bioenergy courses in the sequence and is designed to attract incumbent workers for Continuing Education, as well as, students at aligned Community and Technical Colleges. The USDA grant is now in the 3rd year of a 5 year grant cycle and Jason is working on revising the new courses, adding material in wastewater treatment and solid waste management, managing the scholarships, purchasing equipment, and formalizing articulation agreements with universities and Community and Technical Colleges throughout the Northwest. Ramon recommended Jason reach out to industry partners and gain educational partners in Alaska.

Bill stated the onsite assessment scheduled for November 19th and announced the need for a couple advisory board members to participate in the process. Bill offered to cover expenses for the travel to participate in the assessment using ACE funding. The state board is sending 6 people to Walla Walla to complete the assessment process. Bills main goal is to show the hard work the center has done, is doing, and plans on continuing.

Bill met with Kathy Goebel and Jim Crabbe to discuss the vision of the Center. He had the feeling they were uneasy about the direction and the past of the Center. Bill gave them the open door to direct him on all expectations and guide him on the correct path provided through the State Board. They opened up and were more helpful with the development and transition of the director and assisted in the completion of this year's workplan.

The work plan and expectations have been revised and completely changed during the summer for all Centers of excellence. The plan has been sent in a total of 4 times for approval. The state board doesn't want the normal functions on the work plan such as the visits, marketing materials, and etc.; they strictly want to see the projects above and beyond the general expectations in the new work plan. The quarterly reports are the same new way; simple and straight to the point with real basic templates. A copy of the work plan was provided in the advisory committee folders along with the core expectations and general requirements that have been changed. Bill gave a brief overview of what is in the work plan and why. Stewart spoke on the ideas for the Survival Spanish online courses for the needs of farmers with Spanish speaking workers. He suggested bringing in instructors to teach the courses. Bill noted the classes are online and the courses could be facilitated onsite. Ramon noted that WSDA provides free courses for recertification credits and gives 1 credit for every 50 minutes completed of a presentation. He discussed the fact it is the supervisors needing the training more than the land owners. Ramon has presented at Farm Bureau and marketed the need for the clear communication and responsibilities between supervisors and workers. Stewart agreed with Ramon's topics and the high demand for the workers and supervisors for different language. He mentioned Yakima Valley and Wenatchee provide the Spanish programs for vineyards industry; Bill agreed following up with WWCC providing the vineyard needs are offered. Bill announced that the projects the Center has been working on will be continued even though the work plan won't show it; they will be discussed through the newsletters.

A copy of the Center's tentative year calendar was provided in the Advisory Committee's folders. Bill is busier than the calendar shows due to prior commitments from his previous job. The trade shows and directors meeting are scheduled. Visits for community and technical colleges have been scheduled this fall and more will be scheduled next spring. Leslie requested Jason make a presentation on the new

program opportunities at the WEC conference. She will be in contact and ask WEC representatives if it is appropriate. Ramon brought up that the Spanish radio station KDNA at Granger, WA has been bought by SEA-MAR of Seattle. A new facility was built recently which contains classrooms that will house the Northwest Communities Education Center. Their aim is to provide training for the farm worker community. They have offered the facility to anyone that can provide beneficial training. LNI is planning to partner with Industry workshop sponsors to provide safety and health related training; with LNI providing the trainers.

Center is fully funded, USDA year 3 was fully funded, and NIFA Lead grant is being finalized in the accounting office with Walla Walla Community College. The funding will be tracked and the projects will remain within the requirements of available funding.

State Ag Mech contest is on a 3 year rotation with others and the District Ag Mech will continue to be hosted by ACE and at Walla Walla Community College.

### ***Feedback and Discussion***

Leslie thanked Bill for taking the Director position and the staff for the support given to him.

### ***Next Meeting***

The next Advisory Board Meeting is *tentatively* scheduled for February 2014. LaKatherine will send out meeting reminders and materials as the date approaches.