A new concept, Partnering for Progress, is being proposed to assist Cooperative Extension at grassroots in securing funds that will allow programs to grow today and in the future. This partnership links the regional directors of development and State Advisory Council (SAC) members with county Extension Advisory councils. The goal of Partnering for Progress is to expand the successful Campaign for Counties in ways that provide private funding to supplement the contributions of county government, the state legislature and the USDA.

The present financial crisis that the federal, state and many county governments face has created an ever-increasing need for private dollars to support Cooperative Extension. History has shown that quality programs require more funding than is sometimes available. Among the most powerful issues and programs are alternative agriculture, water resources, community development, economic development and sustainability, health and wellness, citizen leaders, and education. Fortunately, individuals, businesses and foundations want to ensure that Cooperative Extension is addressing issues that impact farmers and agribusiness, families and consumers, homeowners and youth.

Much of that support is located right in the county but has yet to be tapped. The goal of Partnering for Progress is to uncover those resources through the Campaign for Counties.

This program allows advisory board members to become catalysts for helping develop a county plan that identifies and encourages people who have a passion for Extension to ensure its future success.

There are many past and present Extension clientele who continue to credit many of their successes to programs that Extension agents and staff members have provided through the years. While “just doing their jobs,” these Extension personnel have made a tremendous impact upon the citizens in their counties.

The foundation offers an opportunity to honor those who have given their lives to support people in their counties and to provide those who have benefitted an opportunity to pass the good works of Extension forward, so that future clients can experience cutting-edge programs today and in the future.

This concept has been piloted in several counties. SAC member Jack Parker wears another hat as the regional director of the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service Foundation. Jack approached fellow SAC member Pete Miller about working with him to explore the concept in Greene County. Pete said the process is a win-win for Advisory Council members and the respective counties.

“Jack Parker, regional director of development, and I met for 30 minutes with the County Extension director from Greene County,” Pete said. “We came out with $35,000 to start one fully funded Endowment, and two more have been added. It was much easier than I had expected. I would encourage SAC members to get involved with Partnering for Progress.”

The Plan

With a philosophy that Extension efforts happen at the grassroots level, this partnership can best be created by having the County Advisory Council and subcommittee members work with the County Extension director to invite the appropriate State Advisory Council member and regional director of development to introduce the partnership opportunity. At this initial meeting, volunteers and staff will be challenged to “dream” about new, innovative programs that can be fulfilled with additional funding.

After a brief opportunity to share those dreams, advisory council members will hear a presentation on how they might engage with the regional director to create streams of funding for specific needs. To further the Plan for Progress, groups may break off to identify one or more individuals who might be honored, as well as individuals who have the passion and capability to make gifts.

When asked about the concept, State Advisory Council member Marshall Grant said, “Partnering for Progress will help Extension deliver quality educational programs for years to come. This process

Left to right, Marshall Grant, SAC member, Northeast District; Donnie Lassiter, chair, Northampton County Advisory Council; Craig Ellison, Northampton County interim Extension director; and Jack Parker, regional director of development, CES Foundation

(Continued on back)
Partnering for Progress — continued

will lead to an exchange of information and ideas that will grow funds in the Foundation for all counties that get involved.” Grant was instrumental in raising funds from Northampton County for three rooms at the Eastern 4-H Center, and he has provided some outstanding leadership for Northampton County endowments and enhancement funds. Several other SAC members have also assisted with fund development. Mary Ann Lumpkins has been vital to the growing success of the Johnnie Cunningham Endowment in Granville, and John Schnautz has worked with congressional aides to ensure that they understand the value of the 4-H camping program.

Every County Advisory Council is challenged to accept the opportunity to explore the Plan for Progress by conducting this initial meeting and by becoming the “eyes and ears” that will lead to gifts that help sustain Cooperative Extension in the future.

How You Can Get Involved

- Organize the initial meeting between the county advisory council, Partnering for Progress sub-committee, Extension Foundation regional director and SAC member
- Become those “eyes and ears” mentioned above
- Help create a Partnering for Progress sub-committee that targets this new initiative

Extension and Youth Team
CALS Advancement
Partnering for Progress Concept

Local Advisory Leadership Council member supports 4-H endowment fund

Steve McMahan is a retired fireman who raises Angus beef cattle on his farm in Mocksville. His second career is farming and volunteering with North Carolina Cooperative Extension. He is the chair of the Davie County Extension Advisory Leadership Council and is a member of the Davie Cattlemen Voluntary Ag District and Equalization and Review Boards.

Recently, when Davie County 4-H started an endowment account with the 4-H Foundation, Steve donated half a beef to be raffled off to raise the money to build the fund. The entire Advisory Council was encouraged to participate in selling the raffle tickets. Steve, along with the Davie County Cattlemen's Association, paid for the processing, so all monies collected went to the endowment account. A total of $2,684.00 was raised — a wonderful way for Advisory Leadership to be involved with Extension programming.

Steve will be rotating out of the chair’s position this year and a great example to follow.

He has led the advisory council through a planning process for a new building, advocated with county leaders for such a building and helped maintain the continuing support of county commissioners. No one doubts his sincerity or dedication to Extension and farming.