

Nevada Farm Bureau

President's Perspective...

By: Hank Combs, Nevada Farm Bureau President



Last summer, University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) President Milton Glick assigned a committee to review Cooperative Extension and Extended Studies. In this assignment he observed, "Two University of Nevada, Reno units with special responsibility for assessing needs and supporting the delivery of these services and more generally for the organized outreach effort of the University, are Cooperative Extension and Extended Studies."

"We will undertake a review to provide a basis for University decisions about how learning, discovery and outreach at the University of Nevada, Reno could be organized and managed to achieve more synergies and better serve the public," President

Glick directed.

The report was released for public review on January 23, 2008.

The report has generated a lot of discussion and concern throughout the state, especially in rural counties.

Nevada Farm Bureau reviewed the report and participated in several group meetings to try and get a clear understanding of what the report was attempting to propose to be accomplished.

Becoming frustrated over the unclear content of the report and concerns our members were having, Doug Busselman and I arranged a meeting with President Glick on February 22. We were looking to gain an understanding to why President Glick formed the review committee and what he wanted to achieve from the report.

Shortly after President Glick took his position at UNR Doug and I met with him to introduce Nevada Farm Bureau and develop a positive relationship. At that time President Glick informed us that he would maintain an open-door policy with Farm Bureau. We were invited to make contact with him at any time we felt the need to talk things through and he was given the same opportunity to contact us.

President Glick has stayed true to his commitment and

graciously greeted us and openly discussed his concerns and desired direction with respect to Cooperative Extension and Extended Studies.

President Glick feels that there needs to be greater communications with UNR Colleges and Nevada citizens and he believes there needs to be greater emphasis on outreach with all aspects of the University connecting through Cooperative Extension and Extended Studies to reach the state's population.

As we discussed Nevada Farm Bureau's interests in maintaining the structure and systems used by Cooperative Extension, we made it clear that we did not want to lose the foundation of service we have been receiving.

From our meeting and discussions it did not appear that President Glick had intentions of going forward with implementation of the ideas expressed in the report in their present form and he would very much appreciate receiving your input and ideas (to contact President Glick -- his email address glick@unr.edu)

He also offered us the opportunity to sit down for further discussions with himself, Interim Executive Vice President and Provost Jannet Vreeland, and the Nevada Association of Counties (who had also held a face-to-face meeting with President Glick).

It's telling to note the Goals President Glick has in building a better and more effective University...on the back of his business cards he has five bullets points:

- Create "culture of completion"
- ✓ Improve graduation and retention
- ✓ Increase diversity to reflect state
- Create a "sticky" campus
- ✓ Facilities and programming that keep students engaged
- Do more/better as we grow

- Increase research capacity and quality
- Service to community and state

- ✓ Blur the lines between campus and community
- ✓ Economic anchor

As he gave us his card he drew special attention to the last bullet and he noted the importance of making certain that no walls or barriers should be permitted between the campus and community.

As part of his intentions on future steps he indicated that

Provost Vreeland and a representative of the University Regents will be visiting communities throughout the state to listen to the stakeholders.

As members of Nevada Farm Bureau and a stakeholder of UNR and Cooperative Extension, I urge you to also participate in the process of "blurring the lines". Please feel free to share your ideas on how the University of Nevada can be more meaningful to you.

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