

From: Criss, Jeremy

Sent: Friday, April 27, 2012 4:43 PM

To: 'Cheng-I Wei'; Nick T. Place; 'rwalter3@umd.edu'

Cc: 'weitzer@erols.com'; Zawitoski, John; 'Ferguson, Colby'; 'cfs@umd.edu'; 'dwt@umd.edu'; 'tepoole@umd.edu'; 'Fultz, Stan'; 'kzimmerman@hceda.org'; 'rensor@howardcountymd.gov'

Subject: RE: Response to the Memo from Dean Cheng-i Wei and Dr. Nick Place-Agronomy Educator Position

Attachments: Memo from Dean Cheng-i Wei and Dr. Nick Place

Hello Dean Wei, Nick and Rick,

On February 23, 2012 representatives from the Central MD UME Cluster received your attached memorandum.

The representatives from Howard and Frederick needed time regarding the commitment of local funding that we proposed in our February 14, 2012 letter.

The FY13 budget process started last fall for the Counties at a time when the Agronomy Educator position was first being discussed.

Therefore, the local funding for this position was not included in the original budget submission for FY13.

In our letter dated February 14, 2012 the counties offered to provide 50% of the Salary and Fringe cost for the Agronomy Educator Position with the UME identifying the remaining 50% of funding. Montgomery County has sufficient funds on hand to fund 50% of the FY13 funds needed for the Agronomy Educator Position.

Montgomery County has offered to fund the FY13 share of funds for Frederick and Howard counties contingent upon:

1. Both Frederick and Howard counties will need to approve their share and commitment of the salary and fringe for FY14 and beyond.
2. The UME identifies the remaining 50% of salary and fringe for the position for FY13 and beyond.
3. The representatives from the Central Md Cluster will be given an opportunity to provide comments and concerns to the UME on the Agronomy Educator Job Description; And this new Position will not jeopardize the current part-time (20 hr/week) contractual positions for Terry Poole and Doug Tregoning to cover small farm workshops, nutrient management farmer training, pesticide applicator training, grain marketing, and close encounters with agriculture.

There are two sections of your February 23, 2012 response letter that we need to specifically address.

On page 2-paragraph number three you suggested-"utilizing salary savings money from the College to cover half of the cost with the remaining amount be derived through the effort of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee from other sources; i.e. Local government, organizations, associations, commodity groups, contracts, etc." The representatives from the Central MD UME Cluster believe the offer and three conditions outlined above are in line with your suggestion and that other sources of funding outside of local governments should be identified by the UME. The efforts of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-AAC for FY12 resulted in \$21,000 from the Montgomery County Farm Bureau being allocated to one County administrative staff assigned to UME-Cathy Yingling as well as \$20,000 from the Montgomery Soil Conservation District being allocated to District staff. The efforts of the AAC to identify \$41,000 in private funds

were done in light of budget reductions of County General Funds and the AAC is reluctant to seek additional private funds for additional UME staff at this time.

The last paragraph on page 3 you state: "The three-county proposal that is noted in your February 14 letter is different from what Dean Wei was initially proposing; i.e. he was originally suggesting that there be a leveraging of resources from the Montgomery County farmers that could be matched with College resources for a non-tenure-track position. This multi-county funding proposal can also be considered; however, there will need to be evidence of a long-term commitment from each of the counties. If this commitment exists, we welcome the discussion to find ways to fund such educator position(s)." The representatives from the Central MD UME Cluster recognize the long-term commitment requested from the Dean must come from the legislative branches of government in our counties. The representatives from the Central MD Cluster are committed to the offer and three conditions outlined above and we will recommend support for this approach as part of the budget process that we must go through in our counties. While there is a question on the long-term commitment from the counties, it is our view that the UME may find it more challenging to secure a long-term commitment for other sources of funding outside of local governments.

The representatives from the Central MD Cluster agreed to address the sources of funding for the Agronomy Educator position first and then discuss the merits of the non-tenured-track "boots-on-the-ground" programming in critical topical areas verses tenured track educator position. The representatives believe that tenured track educators represent a higher qualified "boots-on-the-ground" type of position that we would prefer for the Agronomy Educator in the Central MD Cluster.

We look forward to working with you to expand the Extension partnership with County Governments.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Jeremy V. Criss
Agricultural Services Manager
Department of Economic Development
Agricultural Services Division
18410 Muncaster Road
Derwood, Maryland 20855
301-590-2830
301-590-2839 (Fax)
jeremy.criss@montgomerycountymd.gov
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices>

From: Loretta P. Carstens [lcarsten@umd.edu]

Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2012 3:16 PM

To: Criss, Jeremy; Charles Schuster; Douglas W. Tregoning; cferguson@fredco-md.net; Terry E. Poole; Stanley W. Fultz; kzimmerman@hceda.org; Ensor, Robert R

Cc: Cheng-I Wei; Nick T. Place; Andrew M. Lazur; Thomas H. Miller; Constance Boone

Subject: Memo from Dean Cheng-i Wei and Dr. Nick Place

Attachments: Memo to Montgomery-Frederick-Howard Counties (2-23-12).pdf

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a memo from Dean Wei and Dr. Place in response to your letter of February 14, 2012.

Best regards,

~Loretta Carstens

Loretta Carstens, Assistant to Dean Cheng-i Wei
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
301-405-1573



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

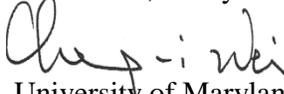
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Office of the Dean and Director
Agricultural Experiment Station
University of Maryland Extension

1296 Symons Hall
College Park, Maryland 20742-5551
301.405.2072 TEL
301.314.9146 FAX

MEMORANDUM

via E-mail

TO: Montgomery County: Jeremy Criss, Chuck Schuster, Doug Tregoning
Frederick County: Colby Ferguson, Terry Poole, Stan Fultz
Howard County: Robert Ensor, Kathy Zimmerman

FROM: Dr. Cheng-i Wei 
Dean and Director, University of Maryland Extension

Dr. Nick Place 
Associate Dean and Associate Director, University of Maryland Extension

DATE: February 23, 2012

RE: Response letter regarding Agronomy Educator for the Central MD Cluster

We are writing in response to your letter dated February 14, 2012. In this letter you address a number of issues and concerns that you have regarding Agriculture & Natural Resources position(s) for the Central Maryland Cluster. In your letter you state that you want to keep Doug Tregoning and Terry Poole on their current UME contracts; you propose a new Agronomy Educator with particular technical expertise; you suggest that the location for this Educator should be in Howard County; you recommend a salary split for this position ($\frac{1}{2}$ from UME and the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ split among the three counties); and you are concerned that this should be a tenure-track position. We will address and provide critical background information related to these points.

In regards to background information and discussion related to these issues, Jeremy and others have been involved in a number of discussions. The idea of leveraging funds was discussed a number of times in the meetings that were held with the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee. This was first mentioned at the September 20 meeting. Then there was subsequent discussion about this at the follow-up meeting with this committee on November 1, which included Dean Wei, Nick Place, Tom Miller and three of the AEDs (Jennifer Bentlejewski, Karen Reddersen and Christine Lothen-Kline). At these meetings Dean Wei challenged the group to work with him to find resources that could be leveraged with AGNR funds for hiring Educators. He suggested working with Farm Bureau, commodity associations, other agriculture organizations, and local governments. The discussion focused on hiring non-tenure-track faculty who could be focused on providing "boots-on-the-ground" programming in critical topical areas.

Subsequent to this initial discussion, there was further dialogue about this on November 17, 2011 when we (Dean Wei, Nick Place and Jeremy Criss) met with Montgomery County Executive Isaiah Leggett. In this meeting with Mr. Leggett we discussed the current budget situation with University of Maryland Extension, organizational staffing, programming in Montgomery County, and opportunities to broaden and expand our reach through the County. During the staffing discussion, we discussed the need for expanding UME staffing resources with the use of various revenue sources and the importance of leveraging resources.

Following the meeting with Mr. Leggett, Dean Wei, Nick Place and Jeremy Criss talked further outside of the County Executive's office near the elevator about the need to pool and leverage resources for non-tenure-track rather than tenure-track Educator positions. The beauty of this arrangement would be the opportunity to leverage available resources for hiring Educators that can provide specific educational programming that is of the greatest concern to a particular area and/or specific commodities.

In these discussions, Dean Wei mentioned that he would utilize salary savings money from the College to cover half of the cost with the remaining amount be derived through the effort of the Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee from other sources; i.e. local government, organizations, associations, commodity groups, grants, contracts, etc.

It is important to point out that these non-tenure-track positions are supplemental to the established tenure-track positions that are identified in the UME Strategic Staffing Plan which was implemented effective July 1, 2011. The UME Staffing Plan is the result of extensive work in planning and input from faculty and staff for more than a year and a half. Faculty and staff brought forward many recommendations and ideas that are foundational to the Plan and have strived to represent the diversity of the state related to population, geography, trends and program areas. They have also worked to bring forward suggestions from Extension Advisory Committees and various stakeholder groups with whom we work. As a Unit within the University of Maryland, the Plan was reviewed by the University's Legal Office and Faculty Affairs Office, adjusted in accordance to their recommendations, and received official University approval. Moreover, the Plan has met the approval of USDA.

This Strategic Staffing Plan is necessary for dealing with the programming and economic realities that UME is facing at this time and for positioning UME well into the future. The Plan affords a number of key components that primarily include:

- Grouping the state into six geographic clusters based upon several criteria such as population, trends, geography, existing services and programming needs;
- Utilizing the criteria as noted above, allocating a baseline number of tenure-track educators in Agriculture & Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H/Youth Development and Sea Grant to each of these six clusters; (These Educators will draw upon their areas of expertise in focusing on the educational programs they will be conducting across these clusters.)
- Utilizing reciprocal programming efforts within and across clusters which are critical for this approach to be most effective; (Sharing of programming expertise will be accomplished through team planning and delivery. Statewide and cluster team approaches are being emphasized for program delivery.)

- Streamlining and downsizing administrative functions of University of Maryland Extension, i.e. moving to Area Extension Directors (AEDs) rather than County Extension Directors (CEDs) and transitioning to one Regional Extension Director; (The AEDs will provide oversight over multiple local units for administrative and leadership functions, rather than one unit as a CED would do. In addition, the AEDs will play a key role toward identifying and enhancing alternative funding streams which is critical for UME's future.)
- Making greater use of technology for program planning and delivery to help UME achieve overall organizational effectiveness and to enable broader reach to clientele across the state;
- Outlining a specific approach for identification and prioritization of future hires based on the input from faculty, staff, County & Area Extension Directors, and Extension Advisory Committees; (This prioritized input will then be aligned with the positions allocated for the clusters as future hiring opportunities become available.)
- Utilizing enhanced local, grant and contractual funding to grow and expand programming efforts to meet the most critical needs of residents we serve. (For example, AEDs are exploring ways to pool local resources to hire Faculty Extension Assistants, Associate Agents, Program Assistants, etc.)

It is important to point out that UME tenure-track educators have the responsibility of leading major programmatic efforts across clusters. Because these faculty are tenure-track with the University of Maryland, they have the added responsibility of conducting and framing their work so that they can attain tenure. Along with strong teaching, this also requires a high level of scholarship work involving applied research, writing and publishing. In addition, they need to show a strong level of service at the local, departmental, college and university level.

In comparison, non-tenure-track educators can focus on local educational and programming needs without the added responsibility of attaining tenure. It also has been mentioned in these discussions that there will be opportunities for highly successful non-tenure-track educators to apply for any available tenure-track positions, and they would be encouraged to apply. Because of their work within the organization, they will be familiar with Extension work and the needs of these types of positions, and this will give them an advantage over other potential candidates who are not familiar with Extension and clientele needs.

In addition to discussions noted above involving Dean Wei, Nick Place also discussed these points on January 13, 2012 with Chuck Schuster and Stan Fultz in Montgomery County prior to the AED interviews. Nick also met with Jeremy Criss at the end of the AED interviews on January 13, 2012 to discuss and clarify the points noted above.

The three-county proposal that is noted in your February 14 letter is different from what Dean Wei was initially proposing; i.e. he was originally suggesting that there be a leveraging of resources from the Montgomery County farmers that could be matched with College resources for a non-tenure-track position. This multi-county funding proposal can also be considered; however, there will need to be evidence of a long-term funding commitment from each of the counties. If this commitment exists, we welcome the discussion to find ways to fund such educator position(s).

If you would like to discuss further about the position(s), please let us know. We will be happy to meet with you in College Park.

Thank you again for your support of University of Maryland Extension.

cc: Andy Lazur
Tom Miller