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Editors' Introduction to This Special Issue

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Editors' Introduction to This Special Issue

In December 2012, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) created a Health and Wellness Task Force charged with helping expand Cooperative Extension's work on health-related issues. In 2014, the Task Force presented a National Framework for Health and Wellness (Braun et al., 2014) that described national trends, a strategic analysis, priorities, outcome indicators, potential partners, and recommendations for moving Extension's work forward in this area.

Six program priorities were identified: 1) Chronic Disease Prevention and Management, 2) Health Insurance Literacy, 3) Health Literacy, 4) Health in All Policies Education, 5) Positive Youth Development for Health, and 6) Integrated Nutrition, Health, Environment, and Agricultural Systems (identified as a Board on Agriculture Assembly [BAA] and Board on Human Sciences [BoHS] effort). Action Teams were then formed in each of these priority areas.

This issue of the *Journal of Human Sciences and Extension* describes the initial work of the Task Force and then focuses on conclusions and implications from the ECOP-commissioned Health Implementation Action Teams. The purpose of this special issue is to feature the scholarship emanating from the Action Teams and to host that scholarship in one volume to showcase the depth and breadth of work accomplished by the teams. This work speaks to the future of Cooperative Extension. David Buys and Sonja Koukel served as Co-Editors for this special issue.

- In the first article, Bonnie Braun and Michelle Rodgers chronicle the process of moving from the Health and Wellness Task Force to Health Implementation Action Teams.
- The second article, by members of the Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Action Team, describes a survey of Extension administrators, faculty, and Extension agents/educators to determine their perceptions of the role of Extension in chronic disease prevention and management, both currently and into the next century of Extension.
- In the third article, members of the Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Action Team describe the process and results of an environmental scan to document health and wellness programming from Extension administrators, faculty, and Extension agents/educators engaged in chronic disease prevention and management-related programs and partnerships.
- The fourth article, by members of the Health in All Policies Action Team, presents recommendations for increasing Extension's engagement in Health in All Policies programming through an assessment of Extension Family and Consumer Sciences program leaders and state specialists.

- In the fifth article, Health Insurance Literacy Action Team members describe the development and testing of a national mobile messaging campaign designed to change health insurance knowledge, confidence, and behaviors of millennials.
- In the sixth article, members of the Health Literacy Action Team discuss Extension's role in health literacy and provide recommendations for incorporating health literacy into Extension programs and educational materials.
- The seventh article, by members of the Positive Youth Development for Health Action Team, presents results from an assessment of Extension professionals' readiness to integrate public health approaches with youth program efforts and provides examples and recommendations based on the transtheoretical model to enhance readiness.
- In the final article, Guest Editors David Buys and Sonja Koukel discuss the implications of the work of the teams and offer points for consideration about a way forward for Extension, especially as it pertains to promoting health and wellness.

Extension's history as a trusted resource for research-based educational programming and ECOP's support for work in health and wellness positions Extension to make a substantial contribution to the future health and well-being of its constituents. We hope that the information and ideas found in the articles of this special issue will provide *JHSE* readers with a better understanding of the work occurring in these areas of health and wellness education and will provide ideas that can be implemented to develop and expand efforts to improve the overall health and wellness of our communities.

Donna J. Peterson and Rich Poling, Co-Editors
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Reference

Braun, B., Bruns, K., Cronk, L., Kirk Fox, L., Koukel, S., Le Menestrel, S., . . . Warren, T. (2014). *Cooperative Extension's National Framework for Health and Wellness*. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/national-framework-health-and-wellness>