



Effective Leadership Yesterday, Today and in the Future

“Tomorrow’s leaders will be challenged as never before. Across the Cooperative Extension System, the demands for – and on – leadership will be even more taxing in the decade ahead. Cooperative Extension is currently operating in a transition period – the System is diversifying; working on high priority, public issues: spreading wings over a much broader set of issue areas; and dealing daily in a highly complex technological environment.”

(Excerpted from the presentation delivered by Myron D. Johnsrud, Administrator Extension Service, USDA at the first meeting of the NELD program, June 13, 1991, Madison, WI.)

From its beginnings in 1991, the National Extension Leadership Development program (NELD) has offered a four-pronged approach to developing Extension Leadership:

- **National Intern Seminars** (now LEAD 21) enhance the current and future leadership capability of Extension at the federal, state and county level by implementing a series of four seminars:
 - Developing a personal working philosophy of leadership
 - Understanding organizational development and renewal
 - Experiencing diversity
 - Gaining an international perspective
- **Directors and Administrators workshops**, held on a regular basis, face to face and via Satellite conference,
- **National Conferences** that bring together presidents, regents and trustees of land-grant universities, top industry CEO’s and other leaders from both public and private sectors.
- **Regional Programs** focused on emerging leaders within Cooperative Extension across the nation. Extension staff members are selected by their institutions to spend four sessions, in a cohort learning environment. This effort initially resulted in four geographic regional programs and one formed with the 1890’s institutions.

The North Central NELD program was the first of the Regional programs to form. The NC NELD held its first session in January of 1992 and remains a lasting tribute to an ambitious effort to prepare Extension for its future leadership needs. Its mission is ...” *to build leaders in Cooperative Extension at all levels and provide them with the vision, courage, and tools to lead in a changing world.*”

The North Central NELD program (now referred to as NELD) includes participants from 13 states and boasts more than 520 graduates.