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OSU Extension Excellence in Extension Award 2019 Recipient

Columbus, OHIO – In December 2019, OSU Extension held its annual conference in Columbus, Ohio. The Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) Excellence in Extension Award was one very special award presented at the conference. This award has been given annually since 1992 to recognize a superior Extension educator. It signifies the importance of teaching, research, and service to Extension programming and serves as an incentive for Extension advancement.

The 2019 recipient, Lisa Barlage, OSU Extension educator in Ross County focusing on family and consumer sciences, is acknowledged and respected as an outstanding leader in the Extension profession throughout the state and the nation. Barlage is a valued employee and outstanding educator, delivering programs through multiple methods of teaching, from traditional learning through in-person classes to distance learning models.

Barlage has co-authored a 4-H nutrition project book and a 4-H laundry project book, which have been used across Ohio, as well as marketed by the National 4-H Foundation. She wrote a part of the peer-reviewed Million Hearts Reducing Cardiovascular Disease Across Ohio curriculum, which has also been used throughout the state of Ohio. Barlage has been part of the state Healthy People team, Food Preservation team, and Dining with Diabetes team.

She has also served as co-leader for the Live Healthy Live Well statewide program. Barlage started an email health challenge with an educator colleague as a way to disseminate traditional educational information in a non-traditional way—through online programming. The use of multimedia delivery has allowed the team to reach previously unserved populations, such as male family members, as well as to cross cultural and racial barriers. Not only has the team grown, but the reach and impact of this program has exploded. At least 17 national presentations have resulted in national awards, including the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences’ (NEAFCS) "Family Health and Wellness Award" in 2016 and the NEAFCS National "Innovation in Programming Award" in 2019 for the #LHLW 365 texting program. At least six other states’ Extension agencies have copied the Live Healthy Live Well email challenges program and given credit to the Ohio team.

Barlage also has been actively involved in several local organizations including Kiwanis, United Way, and YMCA. She has been a member of the NEAFCS and served as Ohio NEAFCS president twice. Barlage also has received the state Family and Consumer Sciences "Marilyn R. Spiegel Excellence Award,” the NEAFCS "Distinguished Service Award,” and the Ohio Epsilon...
Sigma Phi “Distinguished Service Award.” In addition, Barlage was appointed to represent OSU Extension on the National Health Literacy Committee and to attend the Cooperative Extension-Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Partnership Conference. Barlage has served on the 2015-18 A&P Promotion Committee, including serving as procedures oversight designee twice. This year, she was elected and has served as Ohio Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) president.

Per some of the peers who nominated her for this award, Barlage consistently provides innovation and excellence in programming, as well as contributes to a positive work environment. She is a skilled communicator, excellent listener, and consistent leader in all facets of her work. Barlage stays focused on delivering relevant programs by continually learning new skills and subject matter expertise because she embraces the idea of being a lifelong learner.

For more information about this award or these recipients, contact Emily Marrison, OSU Extension educator in Coshocton County, at marrison.12@osu.edu.

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