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H.L. Goodwin, Jr.

H.L. Goodwin is professor and poultry economist at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. He joined the University of Arkansas' Center of Excellence for Poultry Science as a faculty member in Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness in December 1997. Before 1997, he was the Agricultural and Food Systems Policy Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture in Slovakia (1996–1998) and a Fulbright Scholar in Czechoslovakia (1991–1092). Goodwin was on the faculty of the Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Economics from 1982–1995 and served as the associate director of the Texas Agriculture Market Research Center from 1989 through 1995. He received his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Oklahoma State University in 1982.

His current research and extension responsibilities are in economic and business issues related to the poultry industry, specifically, poultry litter management, animal-waste systems, grower profitability, and grower relations. Other areas of his program include international trade, food-safety linkages, and comparative analysis of the industry with other food and nonfood industry segments. Dr. Goodwin's teaching duties are in the area of agribusiness and market structures, marketing management, and integrated poultry systems.

His most recent significant professional contributions include serving on the American Soybean Association Task Force on Assisting U.S. Animal Agriculture and serving as chair of the Food Safety and Animal Health Workgroup for the 2006 Farm Foundation effort "The Future of Animal Agriculture in North America in the 21st Century." He is also at the forefront of establishing unique and sustainable solutions to surplus nutrients in poultry production areas.

Goodwin has been married to his wife Debby for 23 years and has three children ages 20, 18, and 13. He serves on the Washington County Quorum Court and coached girls' softball for 8 years and Cal Ripken baseball for 6 years. He makes his home in Springdale, AR.

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Are We Living in Our Sweet Spot: Land–Grant Institutions and Land–Grant Professionals—Past, Present, and Future

H.L. Goodwin

I am very happy to be here speaking to my colleagues in agricultural economics. Today I am reminded of how excited I was recently to be the speaker for the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Banquet. In fact, I was so excited that I showed up a day early. They told me it was Thursday the 26th, so I put it on my calendar on Thursday, but Thursday was the 25th. So, I got there a day early. That reminded me of something Daniel Boone once said, "I can't say that I was ever lost, but I was bewildered once for 3 days." That's how I was for this particular event.

My wife, Debby, is here. I'll tell a little story about something that happened when we were first married. As Damona said, I got my degree from Oklahoma State University (OSU). One day I was helping Debby do the laundry. I was going to wash a load of clothes, and I had a sweatshirt in there, and I didn't quite know what to do with it so I hollered out "What setting do I use on this sweatshirt because I don't really know what to do with it." She said, "Well, what does it say on the sweatshirt." And I said "Oklahoma State University."

I will say today that I'm here in large part because of Jim Nelson. Many of you may have known Jim Nelson. Jim was my Master's thesis advisor and gave me my first experience with SAEA. I was a Master's student when SAEA met in Hot Springs, AK, and I rode down there with Jim Nelson and a couple of other faculty members from OSU. I thought, "Isn't it neat that faculty would take a lowly graduate student to a professional meeting to help them present a paper." So I dedicate my talk today to Jim. He died in December this past year. He was a great man, he loved life, and he was an inspiration for me. So with that I will begin my talk.

You see the title of my talk, but what you don't see is that I'm going to sort of take a circuitous route to get to my endpoint. I'm going to start out reviewing the history of the Land–Grant System very briefly, and then I would like to transition into a few of my other points.

The Land–Grant System essentially was started in 1862 as the result of an effort to pass the Morrill Act. Senator Morrill was from Vermont. There was an attempt to pass this bill in 1857, but the proposition was vetoed by President Buchanan. Then, in 1862, Congress passed the Morrill Act to begin the system as we have come to know it. There are a couple of key components that establish the Land–Grant System as it exists today. One is the Agricultural Experiment Stations, which were constructed by the Hatch Act of 1862, and many of us owe our livelihood to the Hatch Act. Others here owe their livelihood to the Smith–Lever Act of 1914 that established the Extension Services. Those were the two seminal events that established the Land–Grant System whose detailed purpose is related in Figure 1.

H.L. Goodwin, Jr., Professor and Poultry Economist, Center of Excellence for Poultry Science, Division of Agriculture, University of Arkansas.

Before I continue, please allow me to tell you a little about my family background. I was raised in eastern Oklahoma. My dad didn't finish high school; he was the oldest of nine children, and he went to work in the Civilian Conservation Corps right before World War II began. He was a bridge-builder for the railroads, a job considered to be strategic. He went to World War II, fought in the Battle of the Bulge, spent almost 2 years in hospitals, came home, completed his high-school diploma work, worked in a glass plant as a foreman, took a job driving trucks, sold cars, and was a bowling alley mechanic until he saved enough money for us to move back to his home in eastern Oklahoma. He bought a couple of farms in Adair and Cherokee Counties, and that's how I got involved in agriculture. I have 37 first cousins; of course, both my father and my mother came from very big families. My sister and I were the first two of only four of the cousins to ever complete higher education, and we both went to land–grant schools.

I am unabashedly a champion of land–grant education because without it, I wouldn't have received a college education, and probably, many of us in this room would not have either. How many people in here got their degree, or are getting it, from a land–grant school? Almost everyone here is included. You know, the Land–Grant System was really started because there needed to be an education system for what was then being called the industrial and agricultural classes, the common man, the masses of society that weren't landed gentry, that weren't highly educated, that didn't come from the mercantile class. This was an effort to broaden education to those people just like ourselves in this room.

There were three things that the Morrill Act was really geared toward (1) a protest against the dominance of the Classics in higher education, (2) a desire to develop college-level instruction related to the practical realities of an agricultural and industrial society, and (3) an attempt to offer to those belonging to the industrial classes some type of preparation for the "professional life." Until the Morrill Act, higher education was Greek, Latin, classic literature, philosophy, and a lot of things that weren't really applicable to the everyday working person that was trying to scratch out a living.

The Morrill Act was intended to provide a broad segment of the population with practical education that has direct relevance to their daily lives. The second Morrill Act (referred to as the 1890 Land–Grant Act) was passed, and states were required to show that race was not a criterion for admission; 17 institutions were created by this Act. land–grant status was conferred on 29 (now 37) Native American Colleges in 1994.

Every state has at least one land–grant college. The responsibilities when they started were agricultural research, teaching, and extension. The system has educated millions of people who otherwise would not have an education. I think the philosophy behind this is the following: "Ability is a poor man's wealth." Your ability is your wealth. Those of us that did not, or do not, have material things to launch us into society have to depend on our ability and our hard work. Education has become the new currency of exchange in the United States and worldwide. Without an education and without personal development you really can't progress, or in many cases, you can't survive, in today's society.

Let's look briefly at some funding numbers. Because we're all economists, I had to briefly put up some numbers. In Table 1, we see the story of what has been happening in research: formula funding, special research grants, U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) National Research Initiatives grants, other research, and higher education in total. You can see that the total funding over the past 10 years has gone up about $200 million in nominal terms, but formula funding has only gone up $20 million. The bulk of the increase has come from special grants and national competitive grants. That's where the research money is, and this frames a major debate that's going on now. I'm sure Dr. Martin will speak to this tomorrow morning, and I'd urge all of you to roust yourselves from your beds, get over here, have a free breakfast, and you will hear a tremen-

Table 1. Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service: Research and Education Activities 1997–2006

Programs	1997	2001	2006
Formula	221,741	239,734	241,198
Special research grants	61,536	99,172	141,591
National research initiative competitive grants	94,203	105,767	181,170
Other research	23,874	33,765	72,549
Higher education	20,150	26,642	35,667
Total	487,811	513,395	686,752

dous speaker. I know Mike, and he is a fantastic individual. I think it will be a treat for those who make it.

Table 2 reflects the funding proposals for this year—the President's budget, last year's appropriations, and what the House and the Senate are considering for this year. The President is proposing about a $100 million cut over the previous year's budget, whereas the Senate's version is slightly greater than last year's budget. The Senate and the House are just kind of shuffling shells in reality, but under the president's budget, there would be a $100 million cut into Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) funding. There is reorganization talk, "earmark strips," and all kinds of other things happening. Who knows where it will settle out, but I'm certain there'll be some change that will affect all of us.

Let's just look at cooperative extension funding specifically (Table 3). I have a three-way appointment now. How many people in here have a teaching, research, and extension appointments? There are about eight of us that have enough strength to raise our arms, but there may be more of you out here. It's an interesting kind of thing isn't it? It's an interesting position. So, I want to talk a little bit about Extension. You can see what's happened to the share of federal and state funds. Practically, funding is flat over the 4-year period that I'm showing, and federal funding has gone down about $30 million over that period. States have made up some of it; grants, contracts, sales, and other things make up the remainder that is not shown.

I tried to find some consistent expenditure information for every state. You can forget that; I couldn't find it anywhere. CSREES didn't have it; the National Association of State Universities and Land–Grant Colleges (NASULGC) didn't have it; I couldn't find it any place. I wanted to show a trend, a pattern, but I think if you look at Arkansas, OSU, and Kentucky you will see the lion's share of funding comes from nonfederal sources (Table 4). We're down to about 20% of total funding from federal sources even if you include grants.

Table 2. Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service: Proposed FY 2007 Research and Education Activities

Programs	2006 Appropriations	2007 President	2007 House	2007 Senate
Formula	241,198	236,771	249,280	253,217
Special Research Grants	141,591	18,114	118,423	133,991
National Research Initiative Competitive Grants	181,170	247,500	189,000	190,229
Other Research	72,549	23,385	60,210	62,514
Higher Education	50,244	55,510	49,573	53,118
Total	686,752	581,280	666,486	693,069

Table 3. Funds Allocated for Cooperative Extension Work: Southern States

Year	Grand Total	Total Federal Funds	State Funds
2001	765,206,994	196,296,671	400,065,301
2002	625,781,749	311,057,324	298,444,225
2003	776,387,623	177,175,508	407,843,530
2004	765,136,139	165,505,603	411,385,746

Land–grants have major impacts on the communities and the states where they are; they influence jobs, they affect of investment dollars. States get a big return on the dollars that they invest in the Land–Grant System. The average land–grant university employs more than 6,000 full-time workers, and for every job on campus, another 1.6 jobs are generated beyond campus. Land–grant universities multiply the effect of state tax dollars, generating an average return of $5 for every state tax dollar invested. Land–grants attract significant outside revenue—on average, $105 million per year in research grants and contracts. An average of $284 million in yearly spending makes land–grant universities major economic players in the cities in which they are located. Employees, visitors, and students spend $393 million a year, $138 for every $100 of university spending. Interestingly, two out of three undergraduates from land–grants stay in the state where they were educated and become contributing members to the economy of that state, and I think this is a very, very important thing. Arkansas has this perpetual fight over public education and higher education. The pie is a certain size, and you have to slice it up, and the intriguing part has been recently for people to realize, that higher education is an economic tool.

Now I want to transition toward the larger point of the address. This summer, I had some health challenges. Any of you that have had prolonged health issues, you find yourself with a lot of time to reflect on who you are and where you've been and where you want to go in your life. Much of what I'm going to share in the remainder of this talk stems from that experience. During those several months, I read three books dealing with our lives and what we are doing with them, *Cure for the Common Life* by Max Lucado, and the books *Half Time* and *Game Plan*, both by Bob Buford. I'm going to talk especially about identifying the "Sweet Spot" in our lives.

How many people in here play golf or tennis or baseball? I used to play golf when Bill Herndon, our president-elect, and I were in graduate school. We'd go out and play golf and everybody would say "Oh, when you get into a faculty position, you'll have lots of time to play golf." I've played two rounds of golf since 1982, so about golf . . . any of you graduate students that want to go into faculty life, don't believe that you will play a lot—it won't happen. But, all of you know when you

Table 4. Land–grant Funding, Selected Universities, by Source and Year

	Arkansas, 2005	OSU, 2004	Kentucky, 2005
Research	57,142,254	63,126,062	31,527,814
Extension	42,859,212	N/A	78,500,000
Sources			
State appropriations	57.5%	55%	37%
Federal appropriations	9.4%	9%	13%
County appropriations	2.6%	N/A	36%
Federal grants/contracts	14.2%	19%	14%
Sales	4.6%	10%	N/A
Private	9.4%	7%	N/A
Other	2.3%	N/A	N/A

hit that golf ball in the "sweet spot" of the club, there's that sound, that tremendous sound, and you get good carry on your ball. When we look at ourselves, when we're in the place we were designed to be, that's when we hit our "Sweet Spot."

All of us have been designed for a unique and special purpose, whether we're talking about our land–grant institution, our own department, or us as individuals; everybody is designed for a specific purpose. And when we get to the intersections of our affections and our successes, we find our uniqueness—how we are unique. When we find that area of convergence, we have found our "Sweet Spot." If we look at a Venn diagram with three characteristics—your everyday life, your strengths, and your benefit to others—the center portion where they intersect is your "Sweet Spot" (Figure 2). If we can live there as institutions, as departments, and as individuals, I think we'll be a lot more productive in our lives to come.

One thing is for sure—we are entering a new agricultural era. I read a piece by Charles Muscaplot and Carla Carlson that was given at the 2004 NASULGC conference entitled "Agriculture, I Don't Want to Talk About It." It was about the changing face of agriculture, the transition to the "new–agriculture." What is the new agriculture? We're not just talking about cows and corn any longer; we're talking about healthy and safe foods and nutraceuticals. We're talking about food security, nutrition, obesity prevention, and environmental quality. I would have never thought the state of Arkansas would now be considering a $15 per ton tax credit for people who use poultry litter on rowed crop land. The environment is taking center stage in a lot of issues. We're talking about alternative energy sources. There is a tremendous invited-paper session tomorrow about alternative energy. We're talking about revitalizing rural communities, about what's happening to the youth in rural communities, and about how can we keep our rural communities vital. Zoning has come to rural areas—who would have ever thought 10 years ago, or even 5 years ago, that agriculturalists would be coming to

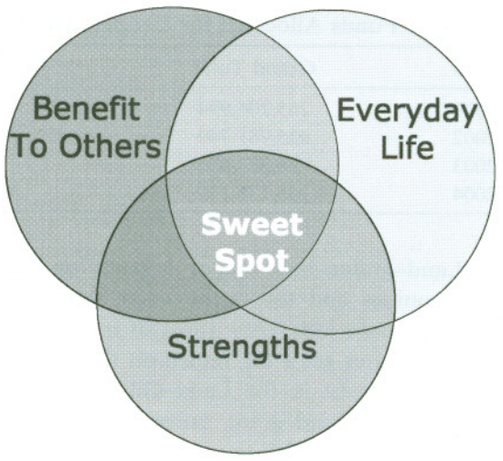

Figure 2. Finding the Sweet Spot

county governments asking for zoning to protect them and give them the right to conduct their farming operations. We're talking about urban audiences that we need to reach.

I've got a little reading that I think points out what I'm talking about. "A new church was built; they put in an appropriate Bible verse for each room over the door. It read over the door of the Sanctuary 'I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord'; over the choir room door 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord'; over the Bible-class doors, 'Study to show thyself approved'; over the youth-room door, 'Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to all'; over the door leading to the children's area, 'Let the little children come unto Me, for to such belongs the kingdom of Heaven'; and over the door to the nursery, they were initially stumped, but finally found this verse 'We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.'" That's kind of what is going on in agriculture today; we're all going to be changed, whether we like it or not, and if we're sleeping, we're going to be found in an interesting situation.

An Extension Committee on Policy (ECOP) study entitled "Managing a Changing Portfolio," released January, 2006, addressed many of the issues the Cooperative Extension Services (CES) are currently facing. Its major

premise was to focus on base funding, what trend base funding is taking, and how alternative sources of funding may be affecting CES program areas. The study highlighted certain areas that CES needed to keep in focus, so they can continue the tradition of unbiased and objective programs and research delivery. These included (1) potential conflicts of interest, whether they be individual or institutional; (2) impacts from funding shifts to state and local, away from national; and 3) fees and copyrights to fund programs and program delivery so that the purpose of CES is not lost. State and local funding are becoming more prominent, and accordingly, state and local issues are becoming more prominent. That is the situation CES is facing.

I want to segue into public policy. I see several of my friends here who deal with public policy all the time—Larry Sanders, Joe Outlaw, I saw Jim Novak earlier. We're all over the room, people who deal with public policy. I think public policy is primary in maintaining our relevance. We've got issues like this interface of rural and urban societies, people I call 'rurbanites.' They are people who moved to rural areas expecting a pastoral scene, where animals don't smell, and fields don't have dust, etc. The cows are chewing their cud pastorally under a tree somewhere. This is not the way it is, but it is what 'rurbanites' expect. Shrinking farm and rural populations, the aging of farm operators and land owners, and the issues already spoken about are proliferating. Agricultural economists are the ones best equipped to deal with these issues. We have to come to the forefront in these very crucial areas.

I have this story about a consultant that I will shorten because I think we're going to be pressed on time. A guy pulls up to a sheepherder's farm and says to the shepherd "If I can tell you how many sheep you have, will you give me one?" The shepherd looks at him and says, "Well, yeah, that sounds like a fair deal." So he goes through all this gyration, gets on his palm pilot, and links into the NASA satellite, and takes GIS imaging, and ships it around for analysis. Finally, he gets an answer and prints out a 15-page color report on his portable printer through his BlackBerry. "You've got 1,586 sheep." And the shepherd looks at him and says, "Well, that's right; I guess you can get a sheep." So he watches this guy, who was obviously a yuppie (I mean he drove up dressed to the nines in a BMW), put the animal in the trunk of his car. The shepherd says, "Well let me ask you a question. If I can tell you what kind of business you're in will you give me my sheep back?" And the yuppie says, "Well, yeah, that's a fair deal." So the shepherd looks at him and says, "You're a consultant." The man said, "Yeah, that's right; how in the world did you know that?" "No guessing required," answered the shepherd, "You showed up here, even though nobody called you; you want to get paid for an answer I already knew to a question I never asked; and you obviously don't know crap about my business; now give me back my dog!"

We can't be like that consultant. We've got to be on the interface, the grinding joint of these sensitive issues to really keep our relevance. We have some major challenges ahead—issues related to funding, to conflicts of interest, to shifts in funding, to fees for services and copyrights, to other issues that we have to face; and we've got to embrace the evolving clientele we now have. I was on the Farm Foundation Task Force "The Future of Animal Agriculture in North America in the 21st Century." Of the seven issues identified—trade and competitiveness, community, environment, consumers, food safety, and animal health and welfare, and labor—only one of those is what we traditionally think of as impacting agriculture directly; all the other things are surrounding issues that we've got to embrace as public-policy professionals with relevance and acuity. We don't really know exactly what we're going to get into. My youngest son is a seventh grader, and they're studying geography right now by continents. He's studied the Latin American countries, and when he was studying Africa, he came home one day, and he said "Dad, did you know that in some people groups in Africa, spouses don't know each other until they get married?" I looked at him and said, "Well John, that's no different than it is here."

We've got to see what we're getting into with emerging issues; we can't be like that—when we deal with our clientele groups, we have to know each other. And we have to be able to get in there and really mix it up and make some headway. Maintaining our relevance in public policy is so absolutely critical. Half the world is composed of people who have something to say, but can't; and the other half, by those who have nothing to say, but keep on saying it. We've got to insert ourselves in that nexus of what's going on in agriculture. We have to look for that balance.

Now I want to ask the question, "Are we after success, or are we after significance, as institutions, as departments, and as individuals?" And if our lives can be measured in halves like the Super Bowl, what do we do at half time; what happens; what's our strategy? Often our first half is characterized by rushing through life, building our career, establishing a family, all the things that keep you running nonstop. Will Rogers said that "Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we saved rushing through it." So for those of us that are starting to get a little long in the tooth, like me, for the last half of your career, what are we going to do? Are we going to continue to be content with success, or are we going to move to a situation where significance is more important?

This summer I asked myself, "What am I going to do with the rest of my life? Personally and professionally, what's it going to amount to?" So I've got a little map here on how to become significant, drawn in part from three books I read during my illness that really have begun to change me. First, identify how we are built. We should conduct strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat (S.W.O.T.) analyses on ourselves, much like the one George Washington Carver conducted informally on himself in 1915. For decades, the South had depended upon cotton for a cash crop, to the point that most of the soil was farmed out, until Carver suggested planting soil-building crop, such as legumes, particularly peanuts. Try as he might, only after the boll weevil invasion from Mexico that devastated cotton was his aim accomplished. But there was no market for the piles of harvested peanuts and the acres left to rot in the ground. Carver, a devout Christian, recalls how he sought God's wisdom to find his role in helping the people.

"Oh, Mister Creator," he cried out, "Why did you make this universe?" And the Creator answered, "You want to know too much for that little mind of yours. Ask me something more your size." So I said, "Dear Mister Creator, tell me what man was made for." Again He spoke to me and said, "Little man, you are still asking for more than you can handle. Cut down the extent of your request and improve the intent." Then I asked my last question. "Mister Creator, why did you make the peanut?" "That's better," the Lord said. And he gave me a handful of peanuts and went back with me to the laboratory, and together we got down to work. (Lucado, pp. 11–12).

We know the result—hundreds of uses for the peanut that brought much of the South to profitability in a few short years—all because one man discovered his "Sweet Spot" by unlocking what he was made to do for himself and for mankind.

Secondly, we must live out of the bags we brought with us. I remember right after I first came to Fayetteville I was going through the old Fayetteville airport. You had to fly down into this hole, and about half the flights were cancelled because it was always foggy. I had been at some meetings in Florida. When I flew in and got my bag, I picked it up, and it said Fayetteville, NC, on the tag. And I said to myself, "Self, this is a problem." I opened my bag, and in that bag, there was a woman's volley ball uniform and equipment, knee pads and shoes and everything. I don't even want to think what that poor girl that opened my bag thought. The point is we have to work with what we've got in our bag. We need to identify what's in there, and we need to work with it.

Thirdly, what are we naturally geared toward? What are the positive, productive, and benevolent things that give that warm feeling of putting others before ourselves? What gives us satisfaction? We need to look back on our lives—where were we when we've been most satisfied? Where have we gotten the greatest fulfillment? We have to plan our

future backwards by looking to identify where our "Sweet Spot" was and look back. Remember that just as the oak indwells the acorn, our future significance indwells the fulfillment of our past.

Fourth, what's our motivation for significance? We can't consult our greed. There are many aspects of greed that are very damaging, not the least of which is you'll lose a lot of things if you become controlled by greed. I want to read a little excerpt from *Cure for the Common Life*:

"Greed comes in many forms. There's greed for approval, greed for applause, greed for status, greed for the best office, the fastest car, the prettiest date. Greed has many faces but still speaks one language and that is the language of 'I want more.' Epicurus noted that 'Nothing is enough for the man to whom enough is too little.' John D. Rockefeller was asked one time how much money it takes to satisfy a man. and his answer was 'Just a little bit more.' We can't get caught up into greed. Greed has a growling stomach. If we feed it, you risk losing your purpose because greed can seduce you out of your Sweet Spot."

We have to be vigilant and remember that we're here not for greed but to do things for a higher purpose.

So how are we going to make our mark? The answer is we must strive for something outside ourselves and reach out beyond our own abilities. Winston Churchill said "We make a living by what we get, but we make our life by what we give." We must get outside ourselves and do something beyond our own personal abilities, broaden our minds. One principle Einstein based his life on was "We can't solve our problems by the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." If we always think the same, then the rut we're in will only get deeper.

We have to open our eyes and our ears. Calvin Coolidge said, "No one has ever listened themselves out of a job." We need to spend a little bit of time listening and watching. We must also stick out our necks. If there was a purpose for the Creator giving us a neck, surely it was so we could stick it out. Harry Truman, a man perhaps most famously known for the phrase "The buck stops here," often stuck his neck out. But does anybody know what the 'S' stands for in this president's name? Well, it's just the letter, 'S.' You see, both of his grandfathers' names started with 'S,' and his mother didn't want to disappoint anybody, so she put 'S' as his middle initial. We can't do that; we've got to stick our necks out; we have to make the decision, not to try to please everybody, but to stand on principle.

We have to go with what's right and what's best. We have to be willing to swim upstream and to commit ourselves to principle. Just yesterday, Debby and I went to eat breakfast at Cup of Tea, and they had a breakfast where you could get waffles for $5.99, then you could get eggs and ham for a $1.99. Of course, I took that one because I wanted some ham. I started thinking about how public policy and that what we do as educators, extension professionals, and researchers is to try to make a difference. The question is this—are we going to be like the chicken who participated in that breakfast, or are we going to be like the hog that was committed to that breakfast. That's a question we have to ask ourselves. I believe sometimes we must be willing wind up like the hog.

Lastly, we have to be servant leaders. There's a lot of research right now that shows that people's most universal complaint at work is that their boss is a tyrant. The new paradigm for selecting leaders and managers is getting away from people whose focus is on power and authority and getting more into selecting people who are proven servants as the best leaders and managers. We have a lot of examples; Christ is, without doubt, the best example of a servant leader. The Founding Fathers are good examples. I read a lot of Revolutionary War history and the Founding Fathers considered themselves born to serve their countrymen at a unique time in history. Washington referred to himself as "Your humble and obedient servant."

I want us to look at servant leadership for another moment. David Gergen wrote a very interesting piece that appeared recently in the *U.S. News and World Report*. In that article, he related that to be effective these days, you've got to push power out of the front

office and down into the organization and become a leader of leaders, not somebody who dictates and throws their weight around. People are any organization's number one asset and must be valued as such. The days of the bully boss are vanishing.

The Greeks used the phrase *carpe diem*; seize the day. To fully realize our potential for significance, we must seize the day. We are not here by accident; we were created for a purpose; we aren't unimportant, so we have to make our lives count. The world doesn't revolve around us or rest on our shoulders. We have coworkers and people around us, so we don't have to be like the Lone Ranger. We're not going to live forever, so we must build a legacy if we are to leave something behind for future generations. Let's leave a legacy of part of ourselves in the lives of others through our accomplishments, our reputation, and our impact on their lives. Primarily, we need to invest our time, talents, and treasures for an eternal purpose. We need to go apart and reflect on ourselves to see where and how we can become more significant with our lives. We have a portfolio of time and talents to invest. I think most of us spend more time figuring out what our retirement and stock portfolio is than what our living portfolio, our legacy, will be. I urge us all to step back, take a look, and figure out what it is we can do to build our legacies. What is it about our situation, what is it about our life that can make us more able to serve others?

When I was in Slovakia for 2 years with the USDA and the State Department as the Agriculture and Food Systems Policy Advisor to the Minister of Agriculture, I had a guiding principle that I used in my time there. I got this from a Peace Corp friend, who was also stationed there; she placed it over her desk. I made a copy of it, and I've kept it pinned on my bulletin board every day since I first read it. It says, "Go to the people, live with them, love them, start with what they know, build with what they have, but with the best leaders when the work is done and the task is accomplished the people will say we have done this ourselves." I think our job as land–grant professionals is to have people who are able to say "They came, they saw what we needed, they lived with us, and in the end they helped us do it ourselves." Is this not the epitome of the land–grant mission?

I want to close with this quote by George Washington Carver, the great scientist and educator from Alabama. I think it pretty well sums up his life and, certainly, what hopefully all of us could learn from the Land–Grant System. "I hold before you my hand with each finger standing erect and alert. So long as they are held thus not one of the tasks that my hand could perform will be accomplished. I cannot lift; I cannot grasp; I cannot hold; I cannot even make an intelligible sign until my fingers organize and work together. In this, we should also learn a lesson." Organize. Work together. Serve. Leave a legacy. Stay in our "Sweet Spot," and finish with significance. This is what the future of land–grant institutions and land–grant professionals must be.

Thank you for your time and this wonderful opportunity to address you all. This has been quite an honor. I look forward to serving you as president of SAEA and to continue the fine tradition that we've had in the past to make ourselves relevant and significant both in agriculture and in rural America.

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