



Visiting Scholar at Michigan State University

M. Ray McKinnie

Issue: Visiting Scholar, Michigan State University - College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

What has been done: In an effort to gain greater insight and understanding of the complexity of the Land-grant Higher Education System and its role in the design and development of the comprehensive/responsive university of tomorrow, I accepted an offer to become a Visiting Scholar at Michigan State University (MSU) in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR). Three visits were established. Each visit focused on a different aspect of the college and the administrative/leadership skill set associated with its operational excellence. Visits were scheduled for May 27 – June 2, 2008, October 12-19, 2008 and April 19-24, 2009.

- The first visit in May 2008 was directly linked with my participation in the Food Systems Leadership Institute (FSLI) sponsored by the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC). During the visit, time was spent visiting with and shadowing Dr. Jeffrey D. Armstrong; dean of the college and FSLI mentor. Dean Armstrong afforded me the opportunity to become immersed in the activities involved in leading a unit the size of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.
- The second visit, in October 2008, was associated with my status as Visiting Scholar to the College and the Extension Service. I organized and presented during a session entitled “Making the Connection: Serving Underserved Communities and Audiences” at the MSU-Extension (MSUE) Fall Conference in Detroit, MI. Following the conference, I visited some of Detroit/Wayne County’s urban youth centers, Kellogg Biological Station at Battle Creek, the teaching/research field laboratories of CANR and attended the MSU-Ohio State University football game courtesy of Dean Armstrong and CANR.
- The third visit, in April 2009, was designed to create bridges and greater collaboration between MSU and North Carolina A&T State University. To further strengthen this effort, I was joined by Dr. Donald R. McDowell (Dean – School of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences) and Dr. Ralph C. Noble (Dept Chair – Animal Sciences). Several visits were scheduled with distinguished university faculty and invited lectures, along with visits/tours to the Graduate School, College of Veterinary Medicine, Dept. of Animal Science and Food Science, Kellogg Biological Station and the CANR Dean and Directors Meeting. The central focus of this visit was to share information about the programs offered at NCA&T and to take back programmatic ideas from MSU.

Impacts:

- Establishment of greater relationships and bridges between MSU and NCA&T relative to Teaching, Research and Extension priorities and capabilities.
- Creation of major discussions/dialogues, with CANR faculty and students, regarding exchange visits between the institutions.
- Greater insight gained as to the intricacies and complexities of managing a major teaching, research and outreach entity of a global comprehensive/responsive Land-grant university, i.e. fundraising, scholarship, promotion/tenure, advisory leadership, public relations, etc.

Funding Sources: North Carolina A&T Cooperative Extension Program, MSU-CANR, MSUE, MSU-Graduate School, and MSU-Provost Office. **Mentors:** Dr. Jeffrey D. Armstrong, Dr. Tom Coon and Dr. Brenda Alston-Mills.

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