

Welcome from the University of Wisconsin–Extension and the University of Wisconsin Colleges . . .

The University of Wisconsin–Extension and the University of Wisconsin Colleges are delighted to have had the opportunity to host the Outreach Scholarship Conference 2007, held in Madison, Wisconsin, October 7–9, 2007. This issue of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* is devoted to showcasing some of the outstanding work presented at the conference.

The conference theme, “Access through Engagement,” was selected to show how institutions can increase access to university knowledge and resources through collaborative trust-based partnerships that foster dialogue on critical social issues. Through these partnerships, universities gain access to real-world environments and research opportunities, and can apply new knowledge to critical societal needs. Our understanding of our partners informs and augments our ability to teach, conduct research, and engage in public service in meaningful ways.

We hope these articles encourage additional discussions that help advance our efforts to promote and strengthen the public service and outreach mission of public universities.

Engagement is increasingly becoming a core value across the breadth and depth of the university. Its recognition in the promotion and tenure process is clear evidence of an enduring commitment to the principles of mutual respect for partners and appreciation for the application of knowledge—the hallmarks of engagement.

The Outreach Scholarship Partnership began with Penn State, Ohio State, and the University of Wisconsin–Extension. The University of Georgia was added in 2005. Most recently, Michigan State, North Carolina State, Alabama, Purdue, and the University of Kentucky were invited to join the enduring and growing collaboration.

We are grateful to the University of Georgia for dedicating this issue of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* to sharing examples of successful engagement. Sharing our experience, knowledge, and success can pave the way for new initiatives and encourage those already engaged to increase their resolve and expand their sphere of influence.

All best wishes from the University of Wisconsin–Extension/
University of Wisconsin Colleges.

David Wilson
Chancellor