programs and add new things that are needed? Where, in five years, should we be?

You have had input into your Society by filling out questionnaires and surveys and have been engaged in communities, committees, and Society activities. (If you have not, then get involved!) You are a member and should have a voice in the Society’s activities—what should we be doing better?

Later this summer, the ASA board will be putting out an updated strategic plan that you, as members, will have the chance to comment on. As I stated in an earlier article, community analysis and input are critical. We want to improve and hone our vision for the Society. After reading the document, if you have comments, concerns, or suggestions, please make sure you contact a board representative or myself with your feedback.

On the river, we gathered up our flotsam, put safety straps on the oars, and headed back out into the current to ride down Waterspout Rapids. You can only sit in an eddy for so long! If you have comments or suggestions, please contact me at Sharon.clay@sdsstate.edu.

How Can You Share Your Expertise with Others?

I trust you are all enjoying your summer. As you spend your summer in the community or traveling, think about how you can better reach out to others to share your expertise. This sharing process is often called “outreach,” which Wikipedia defines as “an activity of providing services to populations who might not otherwise have access to those services. A key component of outreach is that the groups providing it are not stationary, but mobile; in other words, they are meeting those in need of outreach services at the locations where those in need are (located).” The University of Colorado partly defines outreach by saying that it “…benefits everyone by providing learning and growth opportunities to people and communities. Whether through research, teaching, civic engagement, or service learning, the reciprocal nature of outreach and engagement enriches both our academic mission and the communities we serve.”

As members of ASA, CSSA, and SSSA, we should consider outreach as a professional responsibility. Our Societies provide resources to better accomplish these activities. For example, each of our Societies has a K-12 committee that is charged with better communication with our future leaders, and SSSA has a link on its website for K-12 outreach activities. Our Societies also publish current information in the form of written documents and emails that we can share with others. Most of us are engaged in outreach but may not recognize it. Crop, soil, and environmental consultants engage in outreach daily when they interact with producers, processors, environmental regulators, and the general public. Teachers reach out to students to engage them in experiential learning, student club activities, field trips, and in classroom settings. Some of us are involved in outreach in a more subtle manner, such as public speaking, volunteering with service organizations, or providing leadership to youth organizations such as Boy/Girl Scouts, 4-H, FFA, or other organizations. These activities share one thing in common: they are all collectively beneficial to the participants. Our role and mission as teachers, researchers, practitioners, and citizens allow us to share our knowledge and experience to inform and help the public. Activities such as community gardens, field days, workshops, and others provide us the perfect opportunity to have an impact.

Please think about how you can enhance your outreach opportunities and include them as a regular activity of your daily professional life. Share these ideas and your favorite outreach activity with your Society division/community chairs, K-12 committees, or presidents. Most importantly, enjoy and embrace these activities as part of being a professional. Have a great summer, stay safe, and I will see you in Tampa this fall!

Mark Brick
CSSA President
mark.brick@colostate.edu
970-491-6551

do:10.2134/csa2013-58-6-8

2 See http://outreach.colorado.edu/about/outreach-definition.
3 See www.soils.org/about-soils/people-community/k-12-resources.