

TO: County Board Chairs & Members
Joe Maehl, President, Wisconsin Counties Association
The Wisconsin Counties Association Board
Mark O'Connell, Executive Director, Wisconsin Counties Association

FROM: Margaret Cleek, Interim Chancellor, UW Colleges
Marv Van Kekerix, Interim Chancellor, UW-Extension

DATE: April 11, 2005

On behalf of our faculty and staff members across the state, we would like to provide you with some information about the integration of administrative functions at the University of Wisconsin Colleges and the University of Wisconsin-Extension.

As you may know, the UW System Board of Regents in February authorized UW System President Kevin Reilly to recruit a single Chancellor to lead both the UW Colleges and UW-Extension. This new chief administrative officer will be responsible for integrating administrative services located at our two Madison offices. That executive will also lead efforts to explore and study additional operating efficiencies that might be achieved through closer collaboration across our two institutions.

Our goal is to demonstrate the University's strong commitment to efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, while preserving the integrity and quality of educational programs at both institutions. In an era of persistent fiscal challenges, our public university must lead the way in embracing creative strategies that provide all taxpayers with a greater return on their investment in higher education.

At this stage, we are not in the process of merging the two institutions. We have no plans to relocate county offices or campuses. Rather, we are focusing on the effort to recruit and hire a single Chancellor. At the same time, faculty and staff from our two institutions are examining Madison-based administrative functions that might be integrated.

The Regents and President Reilly have consistently commended the UW Colleges and UW-Extension for providing broad access to education – serving as public gateways for Wisconsin citizens. They also recognized our shared histories, including our longstanding partnerships with county and local governments. Those partnerships are critical to the entire UW System.

Working with all of our county and community partners, we are searching for ways to maintain and enhance the quality and quantity of services and educational programming provided across the state. We do not anticipate that this merger of the administrative functions will detract from

that work. In fact, we are hopeful that this new collaboration will result in even better service to you and everyone in your communities.

We will do our best to keep you informed about the progress of this administrative integration. Look for an article in the April issue of *Wisconsin Counties* magazine, as an example of the many ways that we are working to disseminate this information to our valued partners.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call, write or e-mail either of us at any time:

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You may also contact the following staff members with questions or concerns:

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Thank you very much for your steadfast support of the UW Colleges and UW-Extension programs in your county. We hope our partnership continues to thrive as we sail in new waters.

cc: UW-Extension Board of Visitors
WACEC Board of Directors
President Reilly