



# VOICES

Advancing diversity and its unique contributions in the NPA

## Seven Steps to Making A Good Hire: It's Not all About "Fit"

By Barbara King

Imagine that you have just received permission to fill a vacancy. What will be your first steps? What can you do to ensure that your search will attract a competitive pool of applicants and ultimately result in hiring a highly-qualified individual? And, finally, what can you do to ensure that diversity will be featured in all aspects of your recruitment?

This column suggests seven steps for conducting a good search. These steps follow good practices for making informed, fair, and thoughtful hiring decisions.

1. Demonstrate that your unit/location is an open, friendly, and engaging work environment.

If employees believe their contributions are recognized and valued, are genuinely open to hiring people they don't know and who aren't like everyone else, where real efforts are made to welcome new employees and respect current employees, chances are good that the overall environment is one where all employees – new and current – feel welcome. Most people can get a sense very quickly of how open, friendly, and diverse a work environment is, and most people prefer working in an open, friendly, and diverse environment. Creating and



Career Fairs: Getting the word out to potential applicants...

ARS-Lincoln representatives at a recent University of Nebraska Career Fair. Pictured from left are Amber Isenbart, Administration Staff, and Molecular Biologist Gautam Sarath, a Diversity Task Force member.

maintaining a welcoming environment requires the support of all employees, although the unit/location leader often sets the overall tone. Additionally, a workforce that is visibly diverse (race, ethnicity, gender, age, disabilities, etc.) sends a powerful message that your unit/location does indeed value diversity.

2. Write a clear job announcement. A well-written announcement draws attention and interest, while a poorly written one may not earn more than a passing glance. Announcements that grab attention clearly describe the job duties in language that applicants outside of ARS can understand.

Continued next page

## Making a Good Hire... *Continued from page 1*

Ditch the acronyms, and don't simply repeat passages from a position description. Not only should the job duties and qualifications be clear, so too should the specific unit/location. The person listed as the contact must be able to enthusiastically talk about the job, application instructions, location, and community.

### 3. Actively recruit.

Active recruiting goes beyond posting a job on USA Jobs and the ARS websites. Word of mouth is a powerful recruiting tool, especially when spread among more than just friends and co-workers. Use your connections with professional networks, alumni groups, and community groups to spread the word and ask others to help spread the word. A location website with easily navigable links to the location and the community is a treasure trove of information for applicants.

### 4. Use a diverse search panel.

Search panels with men and women of different races, ages, ethnicities, disabilities, and even education and occupations sends the message to applicants that the location is diverse and that diversity is valued. Valuing diversity is simply a recognition, put into action through hiring and promotion, that people of different backgrounds (race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, ethnicity, disability, etc.) bring different perspectives to the workplace that create a synergy of experiences and perspectives that benefit everyone. Don't underestimate the value of diversity.

### 5. Fairly review every applicant on the certificate.

EEO and AA require transparency in hiring through fair and open searches, with the goal of having a workforce that reflects the gender, racial, and ethnic make-up of the available and qualified labor pool. Neither EEO nor AA require quotas, nor require that

unqualified members of under-represented groups be hired solely by being a member of an under-represented group.

### 6. Construct good interviews.

Interviewing gives candidates the chance to demonstrate their strengths and to evaluate the location and potential colleagues, and gives the location the opportunity to assess each candidate. All interviews should be consistent. Search panelists are reminded not to let any biases they might have about cultural, racial, and ethnic groups unfairly affect their decisions. For instance, race, culture and national origin may influence communication styles without having any effect on one's ability to perform the job.

### 7. Making a selection.

Even if the search panel covers all these bases, making the call on who to hire may still be unsettling. Usually there isn't a clear choice, in which case decisions might be based on gut feelings about a candidate, on a matrix selection

process based entirely on qualitative measurements, or on a matrix based solely on quantitative measurements, or on an assessment of how well a candidate does or does not "fit" the organization, or some combination of all those assessments.

The assessment of "fit" can be slippery, especially if "fit" is based on assumptions about gender, culture, national origin, race, age/generation, regionalism ("someone from New York City will never be happy in our tiny town"), etc. Basing a hiring decision on "fit" is walking a very fine line. Hiring officials should be careful not to let biases creep into their decision under the guise of "fit" since such decisions are subjective if not outright discriminatory.

Three last comments:

- 1) move quickly, especially from the closing date to the offer;
- 2) remember that every search is an opportunity to showcase ARS; and
- 3) retention starts with the very first communication you have with an applicant. ■

## 'Flashy' New Recruitment Tool Available!

The ARS Careers Office has developed a new tool for helping Locations with identifying and hiring new personnel. The new 8-page pdf file, called *ARS in a Flash*, discusses ARS career opportunities and can be used for outreach, career fairs, etc. This is an easy-to read/navigate document full of good advice and links for job seekers and can be used in a variety of ways to reach potential job applicants.

For its part, the Careers Office loaded the document onto flash drives (hence the name) and is distributing them at major career

fairs. Interested Locations can do the same, although flash drives can be pricey, or they may choose to load the file onto CDs, print hard copies, or e-mail the file in response to job inquiries. Locations can also post the file on their websites or just send it to folks they know and/or to professional organizations they belong to.

The file (in both English and Spanish) is now available on the NPA Careers webpage. Just select the link "*Additional ARS Jobs Listings*" at the top of the page and then the desired "*ARS in a Flash*" language link found in that section. ■

# Northern Plains Notes

By Northern Plains Area Director Will Blackburn

The Presidential campaign and the uncertainty surrounding Wall Street and other financial institutions have riveted the attention of Americans. Regardless of whom our next President is, or what financial solutions are taken to shore-up the US financial situation, the federal budget will come under increasing scrutiny. Congress recently approved a continuing resolution through March of 2009, and both the Agricultural Research Service and Northern Plains Area budgets are on solid ground.

All of us understand the extra attention that federal employees receive especially in tough economic times. There is no doubt that taxpayers who are familiar with the Agricultural Research Service have a high regard for our research and for the impact of that research. While we cannot personally lobby or otherwise try to influence elected officials, each of us can be sure to always present ourselves and the work we do in a positive way.

No decisions have been made on the proposed closures or relocations, and probably no decisions will be made until sometime in mid to late 2009. Although Area and most location funds are tight, and will likely remain tight for the foreseeable future, we can continue to do what we do best – conduct excellent research to meet customer expectations.

## Area Excels in Peer Reviews

Clearly, our scientists are writing excellent project plans that have been very well received by peer reviewers this fiscal year. A total of 13 National Programs have been reviewed through a second cycle. I am very happy to report that Northern Plains Area Office of Scientific Quality Review scores, on average for the second cycle, were higher than all other Areas. This is a vast improvement from scores received in FY 2007. This rise in scores reflects

a concerted effort on the part of all research units to produce project plans that demonstrate well conceived and solidly developed projects. Additionally, this rise also reflects the dedicated attention of the Office of Scientific Quality Review folks in the Area Office – Dr. Mickey McGuire, Dr. Mark West, and Ms. Reagan Heese. Expert reviews are also progressing nicely and earning locations good results, and maintaining the outstanding track record of the Area. The Brookings location was reviewed this past April. In October, the Plant Science and Insect Genetics and Biochemistry units in Fargo were reviewed, as were the Biological Research, Grain Quality and Structure, and Engineering units in Manhattan.

## Area Award Winners

Several individuals in the Northern Plains Area have received Agency or Departmental awards for their outstanding contributions. Congratulations are extended to the following: Dr. Timothy P.L. Smith of Clay Center for receiving the Northern Plains Area Senior Research Scientist award for 2008; Dr. Scott R. Bean of Manhattan for being selected to receive the award for the Northern Plains Area Early Career Research Scientist; Kevin Dahl and Jackie Couture in particular and the Sidney location generally for receiving the prestigious USDA 2008 Federal Electronics Challenge Silver Level Award for reducing the environmental impact of electronics at the location (only one other Agricultural Research Service location has received this departmental award); and to Jan Jones of the Area Office for receiving the Silver 2008 AFM Support Award.

## Area Leadership Openings

The Area continues to recruit several leadership positions, and this month

interviews for the Clay Center Director and the Miles City Research Leader will be conducted. With a bit of luck, we should have both positions filled soon. Dr. Larry Chandler is settling into his new role as Director of the Mid West Area, and while we regret our loss, we salute this new leadership opportunity for him. Dr. JL Willett joined the Area Office on October 1 for a 10-week detail as Associate Area Director.



As we enter this new fiscal year, despite the uncertain budgetary situation in Washington, there is no doubt that the expertise and dedication of the Northern Plains Area employees remains our biggest strength. My sincere thanks to each of you for your contributions to the Northern Plains Area and the Agricultural Research Service. ■

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2150 Centre Avenue, Building D, Suite 300  
 Fort Collins, CO 80526  
 970-492-7057

Executive Editor: Barbara King  
 Production Editor: Bethany Redlin

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## Gender In Science

• Special Feature •

*“A lack of women in the higher echelons of the scientific positions is not because women fail to obtain higher degrees in science. A survey of biology departments at major universities showed that almost half of 2005 Ph.D. recipients were female, but that only 15% of full professors were women.”*

*(Source: Handelsman et al., 2005, Science 309: 1190-1191)*

## Ascending the Scientist Ladder: Does Gender Matter?

By Theresa Pitts-Singer

I grew up in a big family and spent much time in the neighborhood with my 5 brothers and 6 male cousins playing sports, abusing bikes and motorcycles on my grandparents' farmland, building stuff, working outdoors, and ending up with my fair share of stitches and black eyes; I guess I was a typical tom-boy. I had 3 sisters and 5 female cousins in the neighborhood, but I didn't share as much in common with them. I was “one of the gang” and for a while bested the boys as quarterback, H-O-R-S-E champion and such.

As an adult, I am a veteran rugby player and current coach, a step-mom, and a career-climbing scientist. But I am wondering if I am still “one of the gang” and if I will be able to continue my quest unhindered by gender perceptions to be among the best, especially in such a male dominated field.

Researchers have been exploring the topic of equality of women in science since at least the 1970s. Although there is less disparity than in the past, this topic still gains attention today. One of my Utah State Biology Department colleagues, Dr. Kim Sullivan, has been involved in gender equity studies in academia, especially in Science, Engineering and Technology, and her presentations have started me to question (and even worry about) my chosen career path. Here I share some of the information concerning Ph.D. biologist-types that I have found helpful for answering my question.

A lack of women in the higher echelons of the scientific positions is not because women fail to obtain higher degrees in science. A survey of biology departments at major universities showed that almost half of 2005 Ph.D. recipients were female, but that only 15% of full professors were women (see table, page 5). One would think that this ratio would have changed over time as more women have entered the professoriate,

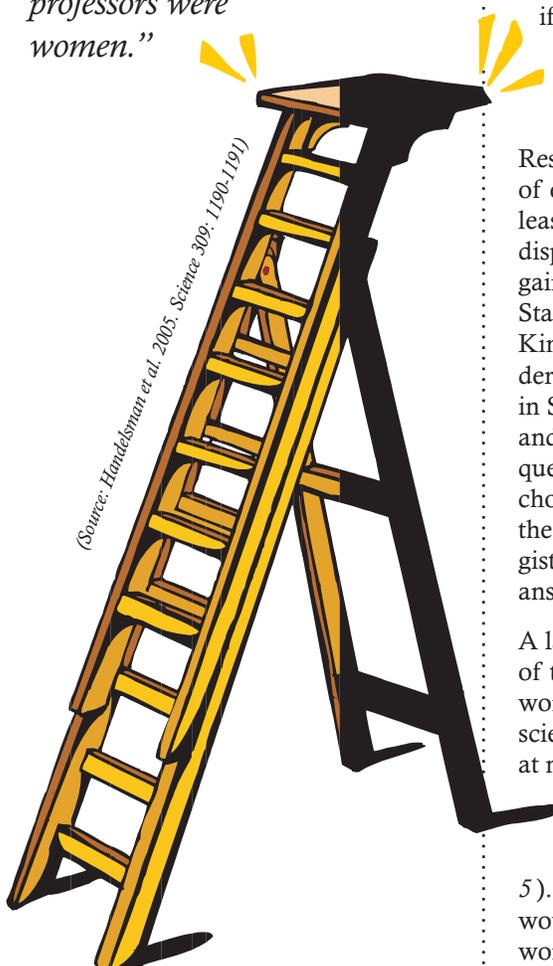
although there is not strong evidence yet that any such shift has occurred or is occurring.

A 2005 national survey from NSF (see “Top 50” table on page 5) revealed that while women earned 46% of all doctorates awarded in the biological sciences at the Top 50 universities, only 30% of assistant professor positions were held by women at those same institutions. However, looking at a larger pool of employees (Biological/Life Scientists) in academia and the federal sector, the picture looks much more promising for women (see table). For instance, 36% of all federal Biological/Life Scientists are female, and female participation in all three academic ranks nation-wide is notably higher than found at the Top 50 schools. Further, it is expected that the percentage of women in the associate and full professor levels will increase over time as women earn tenure and promotion.

The picture for women in ARS is somewhat mixed, especially in the higher levels (see table). Although women hold a slight majority of GS 12 positions, their participation in the higher GS levels is lower than men at every level. However, as with academic promotions, it is to be expected that if women remain in ARS, their participation in the higher levels should increase as they attain promotions. According to 2007 statistics for NPA, women hold just 14% of all research scientist positions (no table).

Furthermore, 2007 NPA data show that female technicians outnumber men (55% to 45%), while employees in positions at GS 10 and above are predominantly male (82%). If the anticipated wave of retirements of Baby Boomers occurs, one must question whether the predominance of men in higher positions in ARS will change.

Continued next page →



**Gender...** *Continued from page 4*

Contested arguments for the unequal representation of women in science include:

**Nature** – biological differences between the sexes in abilities and talents, both physically and emotionally, make women unsuitable for doing science.

**Nurture** – people have a choice in career based on interests, circumstances, opportunities, and constraints, which are influenced by role models, encouragement, parenting, and “gender-role socialization” (i.e., successful women are deemed deviant or unfeminine).

**Social Control** – complementary to nature and nurture arguments; educational and career processes are reflected in cultural, economic, and political arrangements, resulting in cultural bias and stereotypes; underscores lack of female scientist role models, presence of women in more service careers, negative science experiences for women in early schooling, and existence of “old-boy network.”

**Environmental** – complementary to other arguments; the pull of marriage and family in addition to the push of discouragement by lack of mentors and limited career prospects keep women from succeeding; perceptions of gender roles in work and family work against women being successful scientists, but work well for men.

Remedies for changing the face of a scientific workforce that can address these arguments are difficult to define or institute. A “climatic” change may be necessary to help propel deserving women and minorities into higher science ranks. Changes would include more responsive mentoring and encouragement of women in sciences throughout their education and careers, more equal and outward acknowledgement and respect of administrators to all scientists in the workplace, better socializing and collaborating among all workplace scientists, and an acceptance of the dif-

**Biological Scientist at “Top 50” Universities**  
*(source: Handelsman et al. 2005 Science 309: 1190-1191)*

2005	% Women	% Men
Doctorates Awarded	46	54
Assistant Professor	30	70
Associate Professor	25	75
Full Professor	15	85

**Biological / Life Scientist**  
*(source: NSF 00-327)*

2003	% Women	% Men
Federal Government Employees	36	64
University Employees	44	56
Assistant Professor	44	56
Associate Professor	35	65
Full Professor	25	75

**USDA - ARS**  
*(source: ARS Management Directive 715)*

2007	% Women & Minorities	% White Men
GS-12 Level	51	49
GS-13 Level	47	53
GS-14 Level	36	64
GS-15 Level	22	78
Senior Executive Service	40	60
Other Senior Science Leaders	10	90

Other Sources: *Thom, M. 2001. Balancing the Equation: Where are Women and Girls in Science, Engineering and Technology? National Council for Research on Women, New York.*  
*Tang, J. 2006. Scientific Pioneers: Women Succeeding in Science. University Press of America, Lanham.*  
*Hult, C. Callister, R., and Sullivan, K. 2005. Is there a global warming toward women in academia? Liberal Education 91: 50-57.*

ferences in gender, age, ethnicity, religion, etc.

The NPA has addressed the need for mentoring of new scientists, and so far that effort seems to be working. NPA and ARS also show every indication of wanting to hire and promote female scientists, but for some reason, progress is slow. A rethinking is needed of allocation of resources, how colleagues network and collaborate, who dedicates time to family needs, how time away for family matters is perceived or accommodated, how to blind reviewers of promo-

tion and funding applications to the gender of the applicant, and how the model workplace system could be remodeled for affording equal chances of reaching career potential.

From my experience in exploring this topic, I have begun to examine myself and my situation and ask if I match the statistics presented here, and if I have any choices and changes to make that would influence where I can go in my career or how I can help others (regardless of gender) to succeed in reaching their potential career goals. ■

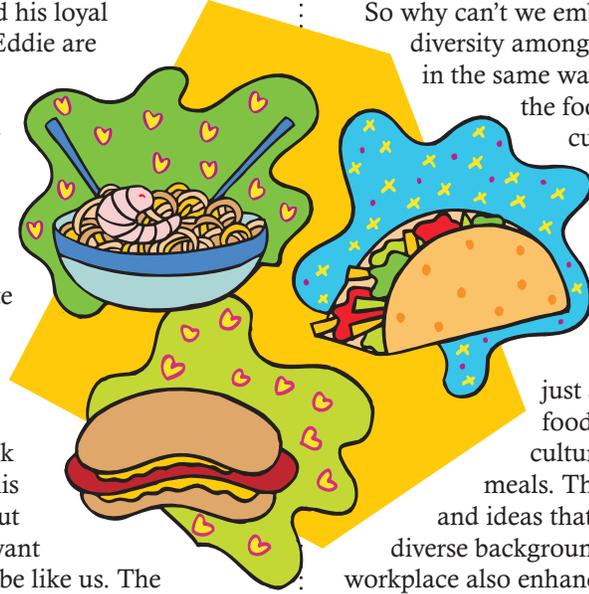
## Diversity – We're All in This Together!

By Leonard Cook

**Editor's Note:** The following article by Leonard Cook was originally published in the November-December 2007 edition of the "Union Catalyst," the newsletter of AFGE Local 3748. Leonard is a chemist with the Sunflower Research Laboratory at Fargo, ND. We encourage others to follow his example by submitting their own articles on diversity issues for publication in VOICES.

Last November, Jane Austinson, an Employee Assistance Consultant for Federal Occupational Health, presented a seminar at the Fargo RRVARC on "Understanding Multicultural and Multigenerational Diversity." It was an excellent seminar that included discussion about both the challenges and advantages of diversity in the workplace. The seminar reminded me of a Hagar the Horrible cartoon in

which Hagar and his loyal sidekick Lucky Eddie are discussing why people just can't get along. Lucky Eddie observes that there would be less conflict if people would just communicate with each other, to which Hagar replies "But how do we get everyone to speak Norwegian?" This cartoon points out that we always want everyone else to be like us. The trouble is, if we were all Norwegian, we'd be stuck with a diet of lefse and lutefisk. No more Mexican food, Chinese take-out, or pizza, and forget about ribs and onion rings.



So why can't we embrace the diversity amongst our coworkers in the same way we embrace the food of different cultures? Working with and getting to know people of different ages, cultures, sexes, and faiths can enrich our lives just as much as the food of different cultures enriches our meals. The talents, skills, and ideas that people of diverse backgrounds bring to the workplace also enhance the performance of our job duties. Let us appreciate our differences. We don't have to change to become like someone else but we do have to respect others and accept them as they are. ■



### Where in the NPA?

.....  
*...is my garage? The demolished structure was ultimately found in this nearby parking lot. Can you identify the Location?*

*(Answer on page 11.)*

*Show your own location pride!  
Share your pictures of scenic landmarks, fun festivities or occupational oddities that make your location uniquely you!*

*Please e-mail your pictures (with captions) to Beth Redlin at:  
Beth.Redlin@ars.usda.gov  
or to Barbara King at:  
Barbara.King@ars.usda.gov*

# On the Shelf and on the Screen:

By Barbara King

## Book and Video Recommendations on Diversity



With this edition of “Voices,” we have started a new column “On the Shelf and on the Screen” to provide our readers with recommendations on books and videos that deal with diversity as another means of learning about diversity. We invite you, our colleagues in the Northern Plains Area, to contribute your recommendations for your favorite or compelling books and videos with diversity themes (very broadly defined) for inclusion in future editions of “Voices” – simply email your recommendations with a short description to:

***NPA-DTF@ars.usda.gov***

My picks for this issue reflect the universality of this incredibly diverse world we inhabit and how people of all backgrounds experience life with all the complications of love, despair, family, culture, making a life, and finding meaning in all of it.

### Books

***The Absolute True Diary of a Part Time Indian, by Sherman Alexie.***

This is a great read, for teenagers on up. The story line is honest, the writing superb, and the sketches are hilarious and on point. Alexie, a Spokane/Coeur

d'Alene Indian, grew up on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Wellpinit, WA. This novel is loosely based on Alexie's teen years when he left his reservation school for the white school about 20 miles away.

Reading this book can move you from tears to laughter and deep thought, all in a few pages. Alexie's real life is compelling, and this novel captures the delicate balancing he experienced moving between the reservation world and the white world.

Here is a link to Alexie's web site:  
[www.fallsapart.com/biography.html](http://www.fallsapart.com/biography.html).

***Any of 3 books by Jumpha Lahiri, a Bengali American*** who weaves wonderfully intricate short stories about family and immigrants and love and loss, and finding your way in an adopted country. Her first book, *Interpreter of Maladies* (2000) won the Pulitzer. Her second book, *The Namesake* (2006) was the basis for a film by that same title, and her third book, *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008) is another best seller. Lahiri has a captivating writing style and her stories deftly resonate with readers no matter our background. Lahiri is able to tell stories that link families and traditions and food and love and everything that makes life so hard and yet so divine.

### Films and Videos

***The Namesake.***

This video aptly tells the story of an Indian couple, through an arranged marriage who make a life in America. The images of their early awkward moments in a small apartment, to rearing their teenagers, to annual visits back to India, to maintaining their cultural traditions and beliefs, to dealing with death and finding one's personal and cultural identity, are all shown with humor and empathy in this wonderfully entertaining and moving film.

***Did You Know?/Shift Happens.***

There are many iterations of this, but my recommendation is: ShiftHappens2.0, which is supposed to be a version that cannot be edited, plus it has a catchy tune. This is available on You Tube, so you need to access this from a non-ARS computer (trust me) – just Google Shift Happens and select the 2.0 version. This 8-minute “documentary” touches on fascinating demographic data, global predictions, and thought-provoking mini commentary on how the world is changing and turning with people, and cultures, and connectivity, and non-connectivity, and rich, and poor, and everything in between and stuff you never even thought of. ■

## A Taste of the NPA!

**Editor's Note:** The following article was written by Information Officer Brenda Ling and the related recipe was provided by Chief Research Dietician Bonnie Hoverson, both with the Grand Forks (ND) Human Nutrition Research Center. Our thanks to them! The recipe is easy to make, light and tasty, and great as a snack. It is high in vitamin C, low in fat and a good source of fiber. In addition, you can change this recipe to include different kinds of fruit according to season or preference.

The USDA Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center joined the Grand Forks Park District for a summer program, "Healthy Choices Camp."

Throughout the month of July, staff from the Nutrition Research Center used its Mobile Nutrition Research Laboratory at 10 city park sites.

The 40-foot-long Mobile Lab, the only one of its kind in the world, offers assessment of the nutritional, health, disease, and functional status of poorly-defined, underserved, and at-risk populations, such as children, adolescents, the rural elderly, and Native Americans. The Mobile Lab also serves an outreach role by providing



Photos courtesy of Brenda Ling

### Healthy Choices Camp

Participants in the Grand Forks (ND) Nutrition Research Center's "Healthy Choices Camp" enjoy a healthy snack made up of their choice of fresh fruit topped with low-fat vanilla yogurt in an ice cream cone! The children were also given other nutritious snack recipes, like the one reprinted below.

hands-on learning for all populations. Camp participants, about 370 school-age youngsters, learned about proper hand washing for a personal hygiene lesson. They washed their hands with soap and water, rubbing their hands for no less than 20 seconds. Music and songs such as, "Do the Hand Wash" and "Henry the Hand" played during the lesson.

After cleaning their hands, the children donned chef hats to learn about healthy food choices and making healthy snacks.

Each child was given an ice-cream cone, which they filled up with fresh fruit, such as strawberries, grapes, peaches, blueberries and pineapple. After making their choices, they topped off the fruit cup with low-fat vanilla yogurt.

The Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center conducts research in obesity prevention, health roles of food, and dietary prevention of chronic disease. ■

## Fruit Salsa & Cinnamon Chips

### Ingredients

4 kiwis, peeled and diced  
2 Braeburn Apples  
1 pint raspberries  
1 pound strawberries  
3 tablespoons apricot preserves  
10 (10-inch) flour tortillas  
Butter flavored cooking spray  
Cinnamon sugar

1. In a large bowl, thoroughly mix kiwis, apples, raspberries, strawberries, and apricot preserves. Cover and chill in the refrigerator at least 15 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
3. Coat one side of each flour tortilla with butter flavored cooking spray. Cut into wedges and arrange in a single layer on a large baking sheet. Sprinkle wedges with desired amount of cinnamon sugar. Spray again with the cooking spray.
4. Bake in the preheated oven over 8 to 10 minutes. Repeat with the remaining tortilla wedges. Allow to cook approximately 15 minutes. Serve with chilled fruit mixture. ■



Learning about nutrition  
Healthy Choices Camp participants fill their ice cream cones with delicious...and healthy...fruits.

# National Disability Awareness Month: "Did You Know?" *By Barbara King*

In 1990 President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This act guarantees that people with disabilities will receive equal opportunity in employment, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, state, local and federal services, and telecommunications. The passage of this act did much to open doors and remove barriers to employment, recreation, entertainment, public transportation, and communication for people with disabilities.

While obstacles to full participation remain, many people with disabilities report that their lives have been improved since passage of the ADA (National Council on Disability, July 2007). People with disabilities seek many of the same things people without disabilities seek – a good job, good pay, meaningful relationships with friends, family, and co-workers, and the ability to live independent lives. For people with disabilities, things such as automatic doors, curb cuts, lifts on public transportation, ramps, text messages, email, closed captioning, and audio pedestrian signals to name just a few, have made the world more accessible and have given people with disabilities the opportunity to more fully participate in the fabric of society.

## Did You Know?

According to the US Census Bureau:

- About 18% of the population has some level of disability, with about 12% having a severe disability.
- About 11% of children aged 6-14 have a disability, while 72% of Americans 80 and older have a disability.
- The largest category of disabilities include limitations in cognitive functioning, including emotional or mental illness, Alzheimer's; followed by mobility impairments, speech recognition, visual

impairments, and hearing impairments.

- About 4% of Americans with disabilities require personal assistance with performing one or more life activities.
- About 43% of Americans with a severe disability are employed, compared to 82% of those with a non-severe disability, and 88% with no disability.

The Agricultural Research Service strives to employ individuals with disabilities. In the NPA, about 9% of our workforce has some level of disability, and about 9% of the ARS total workforce has some level of disability. Whenever jobs become available, every effort should be made to recruit people from all walks of life, including reaching out to people with disabilities.

## Myth Busters

There are many myths circulating about people with disabilities. For instance:

### 1. *Employees with disabilities require expensive accommodations.*

**Not true** – most employees who have a disability do not require an accommodation, and of those who do, the average accommodation is less than \$500. One of the most common requested accommodations is a flexible work schedule.

### 2. *Co-workers will be uncomfortable around people with disabilities, and productivity may decline.*

**Not true** – many employers report that productivity and morale actually increases with the hiring of an employee with a disability.

### 3. *It is too complicated to find an employee with a disability.*

**Not true** – two recruiting sources are: your local State Vocational Rehabilitation Office;

www.Earnworks.com (on-line job listing and resume posting service).

### 4. *Disability is a devastating personal tragedy.*

**Not true** – The lives of disabled people are not tragic. What is tragic is that people make assumptions about quality of life and fail to see those with disabilities as living full and satisfying lives.

### 5. *People with disabilities are courageous.*

**Maybe – but not because they have a disability.** People with disabilities have learned how to adjust to their disability, and have satisfying lives.

### 6. *There is nothing that individuals can do to help eliminate barriers to people who have disabilities.*

**Not true** – We can all do a lot of things. We can overcome whatever bias we might harbor about people with disabilities and honestly and proactively seek to hire people with disabilities as well as make it a point to make friends with and interact with – socially and at work – people who have disabilities.

Throughout history, there have been untold numbers of people with disabilities worldwide who have made enormous contributions in science, government, entertainment, and culture, as well as countless other individuals who have actively participated in and contributed to their communities, work, families, and a host of other networks.

## Test Your Knowledge

Try your hand at identifying the many contributions made by people with disabilities in our matching game on page 10. Answers are below. ■

**Answer Key:** (to our matching game on page 10)  
 9=A, 1=H, 2=E, 3=B, 4=C, 5=F, 6=D, 7=I, 8=C.

## National Disability Awareness Month: Matching Quiz

Try your hand at matching these individuals with their accomplishments. Answers on page 9.

1. Franklin Roosevelt
2. Agatha Christie
3. Leonardo Da Vinci
4. Audre Lorde
5. Harriett Tubman
6. Thomas Edison
7. Barbara Jordan
8. Jose Feliciano
9. Stephen Hawking

A. A world-renown physicist, at age 21 he contracted ALS. Although his mobility and speech are greatly impaired, he continues to work in his field. His name is?

B. Some would say he is the archetype of the Renaissance Man. He not only remains one of the world's best known painters, he was also a remarkable visionary, who was also dyslexic. His name is?

C. Blind from birth, he is without a doubt one of the world's most gifted guitarists and musicians. His name is?

D. As a result of scarlet fever, his hearing was greatly diminished. Additionally, he was known to be easily distractible. As an adult, he invented the phonograph and a long-lasting light bulb. His name is?

E. This author, who was dyslexic, wrote 80 novels (with more than 4 billion books sold worldwide) as well as many plays. His/her name is?

F. She helped lead hundreds of slaves to freedom through what became known as the Underground Railway. She suffered from severe narcolepsy and epilepsy, both the result of having a rock thrown by a plantation overseer that struck her head when she was a young woman. Her name is?

G. A prolific poet, feminist, and activist, she challenged sexism, racism and poverty through her many writings. Legally blind from birth due to severe nearsightedness, she nonetheless learned to read by the age of 4. Her name is?

H. When he was 39 he was struck with polio which resulted in the paralysis of both legs. He continued his political career and kept his paralysis from the

American public. His name is?

I. A dynamic debater, state legislator, and member of Congress, she was struck with multiple sclerosis in her early 40s. She eventually retired from Congress and returned to Texas where she became an adjunct professor at the University of Texas Austin. President Clinton considered nominating her to the Supreme Court, President Carter considered her as a running mate, and the Democratic Party invited her as a keynote speaker at two national conventions. Her name is? ■

### Other Upcoming USDA National Observances

November  
*National American Indian Heritage Month*  
January  
*Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday*  
February  
*Black History Month*  
March  
*National Women's History Month*  
April  
*USDA Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day*

## Reaching Out to a New Generation

By Jamie Wadzink

On May 7th, staff of the Red River Valley Area Research Center in Fargo, ND participated in the 2008 Marketplace for Kids held at Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. Marketplace for Kids is a yearly event co-sponsored by U. S. Senator Kent Conrad, North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Roger Johnson, and North Dakota State Superintendent of Public Instruction Wayne Sanstead. The event encourages children to invent and market a product or an idea.

Approximately 2,500 elementary school

children from schools throughout the Red River Valley participated in this year's event. Several organizations, including the RRVARC, had display booths highlighting their services.

At the RRVARC booth children learned about some of the research activities at the Center. Our exhibit included lab mice, Madagascar hissing cockroaches, demonstration of colligative properties, and a game to match food products with the crop from which they were derived. Students who visited the booth and participated in the demonstrations were rewarded with a bag of potato

chips or a packet of sunflower seeds. Thank you to Jeff Suttle and the Northern Plains Potato Growers Association and to Brady Vick and the National Sunflower Association for providing the snacks.

In addition to our display booth, Sheila Sears presented a class on "How Did They Do That?" and Joe Rinehart presented a class on "Wonderful World of Insects." Thanks also to volunteers Leonard Cook, John Eide, Theresa Gross, Grant Harrington, Gerald Seiler, and Jamie Wadzink for representing the RRVARC this year. ■



# Contact Your NPA Diversity Task Force Members

## Leadership Core:

### Barbara King

NPA ODEO Program Manager  
Area Office, Fort Collins, CO  
970-492-7053  
Barbara.King@ars.usda.gov

### Diona Austill

Chair, Task Force  
Secretary, Miles City, MT  
406-874-8219  
Diona.Austill@ars.usda.gov

### JoAnne Gresens

Chair-Elect, Task Force  
Safety & Occup. Health, Manhattan, KS  
785-776-2733  
Joanne.Gresens@ars.usda.gov

## Location Members:

### Eduardo Casas

Geneticist, Clay Center, NE  
402-762-4168  
Eduardo.Casas@ars.usda.gov

### Kevin Dahl

IT Specialist, Sidney, MT  
406-433-9409  
Kevin.Dahl@ars.usda.gov

### Gautam Sarath

Molecular Biologist, Lincoln, NE  
402-472-4204  
Gautam.Sarath@ars.usda.gov

### Shannon Osborne

Agronomist, Brookings, SD  
605-693-5234  
Shannon.Osborne@ars.usda.gov

### Bill Kemp

Center Director, Fargo, ND  
701-239-1371  
William.Kemp@ars.usda.gov

### Sue Sorum

Loc. Admin. Officer, Grand Forks, ND  
701-795-8358  
Susan.Sorum@ars.usda.gov

### Holly Johnson

Rangeland Scientist, Mandan, ND  
701-667-3003  
Holly.Johnson@ars.usda.gov

### Beth Redlin

Tech. Info. Specialist, Sidney, MT  
406-433-9427  
Beth.Redlin@ars.usda.gov

### Dana Blumenthal

Weed Ecologist, FC/Cheyenne, WY  
970-492-7122  
Dana.Blumenthal@ars.usda.gov

### Francisco Calderon

Soil Scientist, Akron CO  
970-345-0526  
Francisco.Calderon@ars.usda.gov

### Theresa Pitts-Singer

Entomologist, Logan, UT  
435-797-0581  
Theresa.Pitts-Singer@ars.usda.gov

### Peggy Labadie

Accounting Technician  
Laramie, WY  
307-766-3603  
Margaret.Labadie@ars.usda.gov

## Area Advisory Team:

### Will Blackburn

Area Director  
Fort Collins, CO  
970-492-7057  
Will.Blackburn@ars.usda.gov

### Mickey McGuire

Assistant Area Director  
Fort Collins, CO  
970-492-7058  
Michael.McGuire@ars.usda.gov

### Mike Wiggett

Deputy Area Director  
Fort Collins, CO  
970-492-7001  
Michael.Wiggett@ars.usda.gov

### Jan Jones

HR & Outreach Coord., Fort Collins, CO  
970-492-7002  
Jan.Jones@ars.usda.gov

### Heather Gossel

IT Specialist, Fort Collins, CO  
970-492-7047  
Heather.Gossel@ars.usda.gov

### Garnet Francesca

Secretary, Fort Collins, CO  
970-492-7048  
Garnet.Francesca@ars.usda.gov

**Where in the NPA? - Answer Key**

*New Center Director Tom Shanower had a rude welcome to Kansas. A tornado hit the Wind Erosion Research Lab, part of the Grain Marketing & Production Research Center in Manhattan, KS, this past June, shortly after he took over the reins at the location.*

**Share Your Favorite Pictures!**  
E-mail your photos and captions to Barbara King or Beth Redlin (addresses on this page).

## ARS Office of Outreach, Diversity & Equal Opportunity (ODEO)

### Contact Information

For additional information or to report a civil rights violation, contact:

### ARS ODEO Staff

Dr. Don McLellan, Director

Phone: (202) 720-6161  
Fax: (202) 690-0109  
TDD: (202) 720-3303  
Complaints: (202) 720-6161  
Toll Free: (800) 340-4289