

University Educational [Outreach](#) Philosophy of Constance P. Hargrave

My approach to University Educational Outreach is grounded in the purpose of the [Land Grant University](#) and the spirit of the [Smith Lever Act](#) that established the [dynamic infrastructure](#) to provide the American people with local access to practical, research-based knowledge to improve their lives.

University Educational Outreach

Due to their technical prowess and mission, I believe that land grant universities in general (and Iowa State University in particular) are uniquely positioned and commissioned to address growing state and national needs in preK-12 youth development.

The people of Iowa have invested in and entrusted to Iowa State University (ISU) resources, opportunity, and the charge to engage in exemplary scholarly work and then share the practical results with Iowans (and the nation) to enhance our individual, and subsequently, collective lives.

In turn, the university has a responsibility and obligation to extend its expertise, knowledge, and resources to the people of Iowa (and the nation) in such a manner that people are empowered to better their lives.

Universities Must Lead. Because of its capacity and social capital, ISU (and other land grant universities) must take a leadership role in addressing complex social, educational, and economic development challenges that

stifle communities. In so doing, ISU serves the greater good at the local, state, and national levels.

How then, should we at the University engage in Educational Outreach? Guided by Philosopher [Nell Noddings' ethics of care](#), I believe that acts of Educational Outreach must be personable, respectful, trustworthy, timely and engender a degree of reciprocity.

How we engage people (i.e. who we reach out to and the ways we are attentive to others) has far-reaching implications for how they engage the world around them. Care theory¹ stems from a feminist theoretical framework and is concerned with conditions of vulnerability and inequality. Being cared for; caring for, and learning to care about has far-reaching implications for all aspects of community life.

Challenges & Opportunities for University Outreach

The 21st century has brought about a great deal of change in our world, nation, and state. Two of these changes include the growing need for **STEM Talent** and rapidly **Changing Demographics**. Both of these changes present us with incredible opportunities and character-defining challenges.

Talent Development. We have a growing and significant need for Talent in STEM in Iowa and across the U.S.

¹ Noddings, N. (2002). *Educating moral people: A caring alternative to character education*. Teachers College Press, PO Box 20, Williston, VT 05495-0020 ISBN-0-8077-4168-X.

In the last century, fossil fuels became the primary energy resource for the United States. And, although the potential to cultivate other sources of energy existed, we did not develop them. The prospects of solar or wind energy were intriguing, but never pursued on a large scale. Entire industries were developed based on fossil fuel energy sources. Today, we are cultivating other sources of energy – renewable and sustainable forms of energy.

We must cultivate STEM talent in the same manner. There are oceans and forests of talent we have never tapped. We must learn to find talent in places we may have overlooked in the past.

STEM talent exists in places we never seriously considered. We need to learn how to recognize STEM talent that emerges from places with which we are not yet familiar and create new ways to develop this talent.

Changing Demographics of the country and the state present us with tremendous opportunities; but if we don't take these opportunities they may become formidable challenges.

Age: In the next 12-15 years, it is predicted that 20% of Iowans will be 65 or older.

Ethnicity: The current population of Iowa is approximately 90% white and 10% people of color. Yet the school population of Iowa is 77% white and 23% people of color. The fastest growing segment of our population is young people of Hispanic origins.

While many young, college-educated professionals continue to move out of the state, more and more Hispanic families are choosing to live in Iowa. Like all Iowans, our Hispanic neighbors want to live in comfortable, welcoming places where they can raise families and pursue their dreams. By fostering inclusive, healthy communities young people of all ethnicities will develop their talents; and flourish, as will educational achievement, creativity, innovation, and economic stability so that everyone -- young and old, urban and rural -- can thrive.

So, what must we do? As university professionals, who have been entrusted with both the resources and the opportunity to positively impact communities, we must intentionally engage in meaningful and impactful outreach endeavors based on sound research that directly improve the quality of life for Iowans and the American people; and we must do so with the highest integrity. This is our solemn obligation and responsibility.