



Skipton honored with Omtvedt Innovation Award

Sharon Skipton, extension educator for water quality in the Southeast Research and Extension Center received the 2009 Omtvedt Innovation Award. Skipton has 29 years of service to UNL. Her areas of expertise are: drinking water quality, on-site wastewater management, and healthy homes. She recently co-lead a project to integrate all water-related extension, research, and teaching content into the single web site, water.unl.edu. There are 180 different individuals at UNL who work with water and it took more than a year of Sharon time working with individuals, departments, and entities to unveil the web site at the 2008 Husker Harvest Days. The site continues to be expanded and has been viewed by individuals from many states and at least 32 countries.

Sharon has continued to be active in her own areas of expertise, developing training seminars and helping to form the Nebraska Onsite Waste Water Association (NOWWA). She helped develop Private Onsite Waste Water Treatment System Contractors Certification and System Registration. She has continued to co-author publications related to drinking water and onsite waste water treatments. She is currently serving on the national eXtension Community of Practice leadership team to direct development of a web site designed to integrate extension drinking water content from all 50 states. In partnerships with other faculty in the College of Biological Systems Engineering, she has helped maintain more than \$1.6 million in grants. Sharon has received the Holling Family Award for Teaching Excellence, a Gamma Sigma Delta Extension Award, the Nebraska Extension Wildlife Award, and awards from the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

Dr. John Owens, Vice Chancellor of the Institute of Agriculture and natural resources presented Sharon with her watch and a representation of her \$5,000 award. Sharon commented that this was such an honor, humbling and overwhelming at the same time. She feels fortunate to work in such a supportive environment, with administrators, mentors and colleagues. She recognized her husband who has always supported and pushed her to go outside her comfort zone. She concluded, "It's easy to do if you have a passion for what you are doing and support for your efforts. Thank you very much and it's been a team effort."

Omtvedt Innovation Awards are made possible by a gift from Lee Harlan and her late husband, Neal, to recognize and support outstanding strengths and innovative work in the Institute. This award was presented to IANR in honor of Irv Omtvedt on his retirement. We are appreciative of the Harlans' support for IANR and their belief in the work we do here and its importance.