



We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities. Serving Washington County since 1918, Extension educators take pride in delivering programs which apply the research, knowledge, and resources of the University of Wisconsin to meet the issues and needs of Washington County.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Positive Youth Development prepares the youth of today to become the effective, empathetic adults of tomorrow. Our research-based youth enrichment programs like teens in governance build youth and adult capacity and partnerships that help both sides grow. 4-H clubs, camps and after-school programs give young people the hands-on experiences they need to develop an understanding of themselves and the world.

Positive Youth Development Ron Jakubisin, 4-H Program Educator

There were 26 youth applying for 4-H Summer Camp Teen Counselor positions. Youth attended a panel interview and were asked specifically about their skills related to problem-solving, conflict resolution, and group leadership. The interview process challenged their knowledge of camp policies with scenario questions that focused on youth safety, homesickness and engaging reluctant youth to participate in scheduled camp activities. The interviews also identified their personal training needs that will be incorporated into two training events prior to camp to assist in their leadership skills development.

Other Program Highlights

- Facilitation of youth Application and Interview workshops for youth to learn about cover letters, applications and strengthening interview skills. Workshop is open to all youth and highly encouraged for those youth applying to participate in the local county funding process for countywide, statewide and national educational travel experiences for 2024. The goal of workshops is to assist youth in increasing application accuracy, expand their vocabulary in describing their skills, sparks and goals, as well as practicing face-to-face interviews.
- Monthly Cloverline Newsletter to all 4-H families, volunteers and leaders which includes Upcoming Events & Opportunities; Updates and Reminders; Project News; Attn: Club & Project Leader info; and Submitted News (all clubs/projects invited to submit). Distributed via 4HOnline database and posted on webpage for all to access. Newsletter keeps 4-H members informed of opportunities to learn, grow and engage as a county program.
- Collaborative summer camp planning and training sessions for adult volunteers and high school camp counselors to engage in team-building activities learned about the essential learning elements, and develop camp activities in order to be prepared to hold our June 2024 4-H Summer Camp successfully.



Youth Development Continued

Kelly Dione, Community Youth Development Educator

A series of classroom presentations to fourth grade youth, in collaboration with West Bend School Counselors, where students will learn about problem-solving strategies, focusing on team problem solving, consensus building, experiential team-work and team reflection. The purpose of this effort is improve social-emotional learning and provide opportunities to learn more about 4-H and other programs.

The workshops will be with West Bend WI School District School Counselors in 3 Elementary schools with community presentations (by Extension) that address Social Emotional Learning Standards for elementary students (including positive communication skills, emotion/anger self-regulation, cooperative play, and consensus building). Success would be measured by implementation of a minimum of two workshops presented to 4th graders: 1) Problem-solving strategies and 2) T.E.A.M.: together everyone achieves more (focusing on team problem solving, consensus building, experiential teamwork, and team reflection on developing successful planning of strategies)

A series of meetings with Germantown's Youth Futures Youth Committee where students learn leadership skills in order to design, plan and deliver prevention activities to their middle and high school peers.

The learning targets focus on understanding why and how to work as a team, (positive communication, consensus, compromise, goal-setting works within the family and how words and actions affect others and how to resolve conflict in a respectful way. These key learning objectives contribute to building a positive home environment as well as transferable skills in the school community by emphasizing the importance of teamwork, setting goals and developing meaningful relationships that foster success in goal-setting. Youth organize, plan and implement social activities that address the local prevention needs of the youth in Germantown.

Germantown Youth Futures: A monthly board meeting for Germantown key stakeholders where year-round planning of positive youth activities occurs that promote positive peer norms, Alcohol and Other Drug prevention messaging, and adult/youth connections.

As part of this community non-profit organization Extension contributes as a key community sector that makes up Germantown Youth Futures to organize, plan, and implement skill-building sessions as well as social activities that address the local prevention needs of the youth in Germantown.



AGRICULTURE



If it happens on a farm or in a field, the Extension Institute of Agriculture works with you to achieve better results. Our innovative dairy management programs range from genetics to farm and business management. Extension researchers work hand-in-hand with row crop, forage and fresh produce growers to provide best practices for every aspect of the growing phase. We also advise communities on using sustainable practices to create inviting spaces free from invasive species.

Crops

Liz Gartman, Regional Crops Educator

A dairy production newsletter for farmers, managers, employees and agribusiness professionals that provides the reader an introduction to upcoming UW Madison Division of Extension Programming including the Manure Handling training opportunities, Badger Dairy Insight and Focus on Forage webinar series, along with information about evaluating alfalfa stands. This newsletter provides timely updates on Extension recommendations, events and industry news.

Dairy producers rely on many different resources to obtain information that is important to their success and profitability. It is necessary to provide regular updates related to Extension programming and resources, and including timely, relevant research and upcoming events via this newsletter increases awareness of topics that impact their business, allowing them to make more informed management decisions. This newsletter is mailed to 300+ dairy producers that are part of a milk testing program, and manure handling, alfalfa persistence and dairy ration management are key topics that can improve their farms.

Other Program Highlights

- A regional agriculture newsletter for Fond du Lac, Sheboygan, Washington and Ozaukee county agriculture producers, industry representatives and agency staff that provides timely crop production updates, dairy and farm management resources and upcoming agriculture events. The goal is to create awareness of Extension programming and research in the region and maintain a connection between UW and the ag community.
- Planning for a Regional Ag Day program for farmers, agronomists, nutritionists and other agriculture professionals in collaboration with the Cedar Creek Farmers in Washington county. The goal is to provide timely livestock, dairy and crop production and marketing updates to producers so they can make informed animal and crop management decisions in 2024.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Community Development provides educational programming to assist leaders, communities, and organizations realize their full potential. We work with communities to build the vitality that enhances their quality of life and enriches the lives of their residents. In short, the Community Development Institute plants and cultivates the seeds for thriving communities and organizations.

Paul Roback, Community Development Educator

A staff development workshop (Real Colors Refresher) for Leadership Germantown class participants where they learned to understanding others strengths, clarify misperceptions of others, understand how to communicate change to others, and recognize the strengths that others bring to the team when implementing change. The workshop is intended to help workplace teams work together more effectively.

The executive director of Leadership Germantown, a local nonprofit, contacted Paul to provide a follow-up Real Colors training for class participants. Real Colors is an interactive workshop that teaches skills to understand human behavior and improve communication with others. Paul, along with Extension Human Development and Relationships Educator Carol Bralich, have provided ongoing Real Colors workshops for organizations since 2015.

In response, Paul and Carol taught and facilitated a two-hour Real Colors Refresher workshop for 12 participants. During the workshop, participants brainstormed and discussed key lessons they could recall from their first Real Colors workshop. Then participants paired off with opposite color partners to clarify misperceptions they may have about that color. Lastly, participants worked in primary color teams to brainstorm how their color responds to change, and then they shared with all participants during a large-group discussion.

The West Bend Community Memorial Library's Outreach Librarian contacted Paul to facilitate a process that would engage staff in determining a future direction and focus for outreach programming. As part of this process, staff wanted to gain an understanding of demographic trends that could provide insights into future programming.

As a result of Paul's facilitation, 83% of participants (N=6) agreed that the discussion assisted them in identifying the target audience and purpose for the Outreach Programs. Additionally, 83% agreed that the discussion helped them to determine a future direction and focus for outreach programming. One person responded neutrally to the evaluation questions, and no one disagreed with the statements. Overall, participants evaluated Paul's facilitation 4.8 on a 5-point Likert Scale (1=poor and 5=excellent). One participant commented that the meeting "helped us specify what we are doing." After the session, library staff commented by email, "thank you so much for making sense of all of this. I feel good about what we came up with and this will help us focus our efforts."



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS



*The Extension Institute of **Human Development & Relationships** provides the tools Wisconsinites need to thrive as well-rounded, capable individuals and families. We support families in caring for each other in ways that promote growth and understanding. Our programs promote aging-friendly communities, coach effective parents and help families put technology, mindfulness and financial awareness to use.*

Carol Bralich, Human Development & Relationship Educator

Last fall, Carol was contacted by the West Bend Community Library Adult Outreach Librarian who was exploring the creation of a multi-agency financial literacy program series in 2024. She approached Extension because she wanted the library to have more of a neutral approach for this financial literacy education effort and provide substantial programming in the next few years. With the effects of inflation still impacting families in Washington County, a financial education series and providing resources was, and still is, relevant. Carol provided guidance on monthly financial topics, community speaker expertise, and the framework for the monthly financial topics that began in January of 2024. The library also provided a “topic-immersion” approach for their patrons. Accordingly, for the Budget Check Up workshop, the library created a display of books and reliable informational resources, including those from UW-Extension and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Carol presented the first session on a “Budget Check Up” to start off the new calendar year. The workshop included discussion on the areas that affect financial well-being: day-to-day expenses, financial goals, unexpected expenses, and freedom of choice. On the post-session evaluation survey results, participants indicated that after attending this session, 6 (n=7) participants planned to set a financial goal, and 5 planned to track their spending in the new year. Participants also wrote: “Thanks for your time, you are a great presenter, very knowledgeable and enthusiastic!” and “This workshop has been informative and helpful without being judgmental!” Through this workshop participants can create financial goals, track their spending, and revisit their spending plan that allows them to manage their monthly income and expenses and increase their financial well-being.



ADDED VALUE

Community Youth Needs Assessment

Kelly Dione, Community Youth Development Educator

From August through October 2023, Community Youth Development Extension Educator conducted 15 interviews with Washington County youth-serving organizations to gain an understanding of the needs of youth in Washington County to create strategies with community partners and research-based programming to more effectively serve the youth. The questions below are a few examples of the survey and responses from the youth-serving organizations.

What does success look like for youth in this community?

- Youth Mental Health: have a feeling of acceptance and belonging, feel supported and needs met (housing/stability)
- Have a clear idea of a path after high school (know what are the options) Youth are engaged and making connections, excited about learning, academic success
- Youth have a safe place to go after school

What does meaningful change look like so all youth have a chance at success?

- Resources for diverse populations and low-income families. Trauma Informed Care Training for youth-serving organizations and school staff
- Free/accessible services (transportation, language translation access)
- Support for LGBTQ+ students
- Education on obstacles underrepresented and diverse youth face.

What are the critical skills/opportunities young people need to achieve success?

- Life skills: leadership, effective communication, advocacy, strong work ethic, independence, perseverance
- Stress management
- Motivation

Ron Jakubisin
4-H Program Educator

Carol Bralich
Human Development & Relationships Educator

Cindy Sarkady
Area Extension Director

Kelly Dione
Community Youth Development Educator

Liz Gartman
Regional Crops Educator

Karen Girard
Megan Zimmerman
Support Staff

Cassi Worster
Area Marketing Specialist