

## **Extension: Partnership in Education**

University of Wisconsin-Extension is a unique partnership of counties, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the University of Wisconsin working together to help people put knowledge to work. It reflects the vision that has become known as The Wisconsin Idea.

This partnership brings education to people where they live, through Extension offices, in each of Wisconsin's counties. It supports educational programs for farmers, businesses, communities, families and young people.

UW-Extension uses education to help people understand and solve problems. Educational programs developed and conducted by county-based educators reflect local concerns. They apply knowledge from the University of Wisconsin, other universities and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Through this unique partnership, educators work with county Agriculture and Extension Education Committees and other local groups to identify needs for education and design programs to meet those needs.

The University of Wisconsin-Extension provides affirmative action and equal opportunity in education, programming and employment for all qualified persons regardless of race, color, gender/sex, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental status, arrest or conviction record or veteran status.

### **County Partner**

County UW-Extension offices are departments of county government. Wisconsin Statute 59.56, as passed in 1914 and amended over the years, permits county boards to establish and maintain an educational program in cooperation with University of Wisconsin-Extension.

This statute was designed to create a partnership of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the land grant universities and county governments. The statute also defines employment of University program staff and financing and supervision of county Extension programs. It designates the county extension education committee as the county's representative in partnership with UWEX.

The county provides approximately 40 percent of salary support for county-based faculty. The county also provides adequate travel expenses, clerical support, office facilities and general supplies to meet the county programming needs.

By statute, Extension agents (county-based educators) are employed with county, state and federal funds. Therefore, both the county and the University of Wisconsin-Extension are involved in selecting agents.

### **State/University Partner**

Extension specialists on campuses of the University of Wisconsin System teach, conduct applied research and interpret research of other scholars in response to local and state needs. These specialists provide statewide educational leadership in their disciplines and serve as resource people to extension offices, state agencies, the legislature, professional associations, business and industry and other state and national groups.

State and federal funds pay 100 percent of salaries for campus-based faculty and staff who work with and support county educational programs. The University provides bulletins, postage, educational materials, satellite downlinks, computer technology and professional improvement training, as well as program support and assistance for campus-based faculty.

State and federal funds also support approximately 60 percent of salaries for county faculty and staff positions.

### **Federal Partner**

U.S. Department of Agriculture funds that support county and campus Extension educators are defined in the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, which provides federal support for land grant institutions to offer education programs to enhance the application of useful and practical information beyond their campuses through Cooperative Extension efforts with state and local communities.

A majority of Smith-Lever funds are distributed to states on a formula basis and, in Wisconsin, they provide a crucial component to the partnership that funds local extension programs. Some funds are also available on a competitive grant basis or earmarked for specific institutions. Smith-Lever funds account for about 25 percent of the Cooperative Extension budget.

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The logo for the University of Wisconsin Extension, featuring the letters "UW" in a small font above the word "Extension" in a larger, bold, italicized font.