

Eastern District Funding for Innovative Programs

Report

Project Title: Winnebago County AmeriCorps Connects Member
4-H Youth and Family Outreach
Project Timeline: September 2005 – August 2006
Funding Received: \$4,000
Project Lead/Grant Applicant: René L. Mehlberg,
Winnebago County 4-H Youth Development Educator

Narrative:

To help meet the identified need of building civic capacity, Winnebago County 4-H Youth Development has been a site program for AmeriCorps Connects through UW-Oshkosh Center for Career Development and Employability Training (UWO/CCDET). AmeriCorps provides a place for people to volunteer their service to America. The program at UWO/CCDET, AmeriCorps Connects, is a multi-site program focused on community capacity building while developing an ethic of civic responsibility to participating members. In addition, members work to develop a culture of youth/adult partnerships through civic engagement.

The district funding “purchased” the current half-time AmeriCorps member for 2005-2006. The member began her term of service in November. To date, the member has assumed responsibility for ongoing after school program sessions while getting orientated with other program possibilities. This includes incorporate civic-engagement activities with on-going and new 4-H audiences for youth and adults to work together as partners.

One main responsibility beginning in 2006 will be working with the Neenah-Menasha YMCA after school program to deliver 4-H programming. She will also be exploring ways to promote ongoing 4-H opportunities to the youth and families involved in 4-H outreach efforts.

Since the AmeriCorps member has just recently begun her term of service, it is too early to determine the impact of her work. One thing is for certain, the AmeriCorps member is able to extend 4-H youth development programming in both the community club and in outreach efforts that goes beyond the work of the current 4-H youth development staff. Her past experience as a 4-H member and interest in UW-Extension as a career are huge benefits in maximizing the grant dollars received.

Budget: (To date)

\$4,000 Resource Management Funds received covered the site match required to fund a half-time AmeriCorps Connects member.