



Eastern District Innovative Grant Program

Fiscal Year 2007/2008 Application Form

Completed application form should not exceed (3) pages, using a minimum font size of 11 point, retain form formatting, and no less than 1-inch margins. Submit completed application electronically to karen.smiley@ces.uwex.edu, and fax signature page (if electronic signature not available), by **noon on Friday, April 18, 2008**.

Project must be completed by December 31, 2008, unless prior approval received for extended timeline.

1. **Project Title: Welcome to the State of Poverty**
2. **Funding Requested: \$ 2,775**
3. **Project Lead/Grant Applicant (Name & County): Pam Peterson, Door County**
 - a) **Project Collaborator(s)** W-2 Children's Services Network, Sturgeon Bay Schools

4. **Signature:** 
Grant Applicant/Lead

5. **Project Description**
 - a) Situation Statement (Describe how this relates to the UWEX strategic plan and/or your plan of work), and outline the following criteria that relate to your project.
 - i) Fosters teamwork and collaboration with other agencies, campuses, or colleagues
 - ii) Incorporates the use of other funders
 - iii) Includes a new program direction that may be replicated
 - iv) Focuses on reaching new audiences
 - v) Exposes potential employees to UWEX

According to 2000 Census data, 8.7% of Wisconsin citizens and 10.8% of Wisconsin children are in poverty. In many more households, incomes are considered above the poverty line, but are still low enough to qualify families for government assistance programs such as food stamps and Badgercare health insurance. The recent economic downturn is contributing even more stress for families. Use of emergency food sources, such as food pantries, is increasing.

In Door County a record number of 617 families are currently receiving food stamps as of March 2008. That number represents five percent of all families in Door County and nearly seven percent of families with children. The pre-buy cost of propane has risen to \$2.59 per gallon compared to \$1.99 per gallon last year for those families who can afford pre-buy contracts; oil is priced at more than \$3.00 per gallon. Propane and oil are the primary heating sources for homes located in mostly rural Door County. Many families have been unable to meet rising energy costs and nearly 600 families have applied for limited energy assistance funds. The Lakeshore CAP food pantry, one of two pantries serving the county, served 278 households in March 2008 for a total of 564 children and adults. The number of families utilizing the food pantry has continued to increase over the winter months. For the first time, Sawyer Elementary School in Sturgeon Bay has indicated that more than half of their students are free or reduced lunch eligible.

Poverty is a serious but often overlooked concern in Door County which is promoted throughout the state and nation as a family vacation destination. County government is the largest single employer in the county. The bulk of other jobs are in the service sector, many of which are seasonal employment. Per capita income in 2000 was \$21,356; the median rent was \$481. Adding to woes of workers is the lack of any public transportation in the county. Those with vehicles struggle with fuel costs, often among the highest in the state. Growing numbers of families continue to be invisible as they fall further behind in their struggle to provide basic needs for their families.

Welcome to the State of Poverty is a poverty simulation program which will include additional program activities from the PACE: Poverty Awareness for Community Engagement Curricula. Participants will be assigned a family profile with the goal of helping their family survive for one month or four 15-minute weeks. The participants must maintain secure shelter, utilities, feed their families, make loan payments, meet living expenses such as transportation, handle unexpected emergencies, access local support services, keep their children in school - all while subsisting at or below the poverty level. The poverty simulation experience is designed to help participants begin to understand what it might be like to live in a low-income family trying to survive from month to month. The goal is to sensitize participants to the realities faced by low-income people. The experience includes a briefing, the simulation exercise, and a debriefing period in which participants and staffers share their feelings and experiences and talk about what they have learned about the lives of people in poverty. The simulation serves to create a common frame of reference for people and to dispel some of the myths about people in poverty.

Additional educational activities include information about poverty in Door County, a making ends meet/budgeting activity, a lesson on class/case studies and strategies for working with low income families. Target audience will include teachers and school personnel, staff of W-2 and other human services agencies, elected officials, hospital staff and service organizations. Additional in-kind funds will be contributed by partner agencies. Potential UWEX employees who will be exposed to the program include teachers and staff of partner agencies who will learn more about UWEX through this collaboration. Programming fostering resiliency factors in at-risk individuals and vulnerable family systems was included in the Door County Family Living 2008 Plan of Work. The program will expand existing collaborations between UWEX and W-2 Children's Services Network and create a new partnership with Sturgeon Bay Schools.

b) Project Objectives/Expected Outcomes (include plan for sharing results with colleagues)

The program will increase participant's understanding of the problems and obstacles faced by low income families and raise awareness of challenges for the working poor. This program replicates the 2002 WNEP poverty simulation but includes recommendations in their summary findings to target teachers and policy makers and include strategies for working with low income families to achieve broader impact through program or policy change. As a result of the program, participants will increase awareness about poverty issues, increase empathy for families living in poverty and create positive changes in the way participants interact with low income clients. Outcomes will be shared with the Poverty & Food Insecurity Team to add to the intellectual history of this program and improve program effectiveness and with the Families in Stress & Transition Team to explore ways to address work-life stress issues for these families.

c) Project Timeline (include planned responses/activities)

Planning sessions will be held with representatives from Sturgeon Bay Schools and W-2 Children's Services Network in late spring and early fall. The workshop will be planned during fall teacher in-service days to maximize participation by school personnel. Door County UW-Extension Family Living, WNEP and state staff will provide a one-day workshop in fall 2008 with assistance from W-2 Children's Services Network ad hoc Committee members and staff.

d) Evaluation Plan

Participants will complete a retrospective pre-post survey measuring knowledge, attitudes and behavior regarding low income families and working poor. A follow-up survey of participants six months after program completion will assess behavioral changes with clients and identify any policy or procedural changes in organizations or agencies.

6. Detailed budget breakdown (specifying the amount and purpose of funds requested from District Resource Management funds, and clarifying the source and amounts from other funds):

Welcome to the State of Poverty

| Expenditures | In-kind/Cash Collaborator Contributions | District Resource Management Funds |
|---|--|---|
| Travel expenses/lodging for co-facilitators | | \$700 |
| Additional staff to facilitate program | \$600 | |
| Food | | \$1425 |
| Facility usage | | \$400 |
| Program materials | \$150 | \$250 |
| Printing/Postage | \$50 | |
| Additional supplies | \$100 | |
| Total | \$900 | \$2775 |

Grant request is based upon an estimate of 75 participants. In-kind costs include participation of area professionals, i.e. income maintenance and energy assistance staff who will assist with program facilitation. The cost of printing, postage and additional supplies will be supplied by Door County UW-Extension Family Living Programs. Additional in-kind contributions (not included in the table above) include staff time from Door County UW-Extension, W-2 Children’s Services Network and Sturgeon Bay Schools for program preparation and facilitation, developing outreach materials and project evaluation.

Resource Management Funds will be utilized to cover mileage, meals and lodging for UW-Extension state and county colleagues assist with program facilitation, facility use of conference center, food for participants provided by the conference center and miscellaneous program materials. Grant funds will allow the program to be offered at no cost to participants.

7. If you have received Resource Management funds for a similar/related project, in the past, include the following information: I have not previously received Resource Management funds for a similar/related project.

- a) Briefly describe your past experiences with resource management grants – project focus, funding received, project collaborators
- b) How is this project proposal new or different?

I received Resource Management funds in 2006 for Fathers Reading Every Day (FRED) a literacy program targeting low income fathers and their children. Collaborators included Sturgeon Bay Library and Passtimes Books. In 2007 I received funds for Everyday Wellness Solutions for Law Enforcement a collaboration with local sheriff and police. The current request focuses on poverty issues and includes a new collaboration with Sturgeon Bay Schools and new target audience including school staff and elected officials.