

## Eastern District Funding for Innovative Programs

### Report

**Project Title:** Winnebago County AmeriCorps Connects Member  
4-H Youth and Family Outreach  
**Project Timeline:** September 2006 – August 2007  
**Funding Received:** \$3,500.00  
**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 assisted in “purchasing” the current full-time AmeriCorps member for 2006-2007. Winnebago County was fortunate to have additional dollars available (due to county staffing changes) to increase from the originally planned half-time AmeriCorps member to a full-time member. The impact of the staffing increase has been great. The member has been able to better document educational activities in current outreach efforts for easier replication in the future. The member has become involved with the Family Living program, “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren” by serving as a child care provider at their monthly meetings. He serves as a positive role model for the many young boys and shares educational activities with the youth. He has partnered with Land and Water Conservation Department on an abandoned well project.

Within the 4-H community club program, the member revived “4-H Fun Day”, a day for project learning. 4-H Fun Day isn’t only a day for 4-H members, it’s also being advertised to other youth including perspective members in the county as an opportunity to learn more about 4-H. “4-H Fun Day” would NOT have happened without the extra staffing of the AmeriCorps member.

The member began his term of service in September. 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.

Being a former 4-H member of Winnebago County, his expertise has been tapped into as many 4-H staffing changes have happened in the past year: new 4-H Program Assistant and new 4-H secretary.

#### **Budget: (To date)**

\$3,500 Resource Management Funds received for a portion of the site match required to fund the AmeriCorps Connects member.  
\$4,800 from Department Budget-Contractual Services (which includes a \$300 payment from the Winnebago County 4-H Leaders Board.