

# Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension

## Building Strong Communities

- ◆ Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension works with residents, small businesses, and agencies in three low-to-moderate income neighborhoods in the city of Waukesha to prioritize neighborhood needs, and develop goals, objectives, and action strategies to address immediate and long-range issues. Each year over 2,000 residents attend educational programs through block clubs, youth and adult leadership classes, after-school programs, garden programs, and community building events. As a result, more residents are actively engaged in building their neighborhood's future.
- ◆ The Waukesha County Drug Free Communities Coalition is a county-wide collaboration of 90 partners working together to prevent the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs by underage youth. The Coalition is funded by a federal grant from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Projects include: substance abuse forums, substance-abuse prevention programs for middle school students, and collecting unused prescription drugs. During two drug collections, 250 volunteers donated 950 hours to collect 8,000 pounds of unused prescription drugs from 4,100 households.
- ◆ The Waukesha County Nutrition Coalition has over thirty member agencies committed to eliminating hunger and creating a thriving community. Projects are supported through grants and volunteer support. Annual projects include; poverty simulations, fresh produce donation program providing over 20,000 pounds of fresh produce to low-income residents, and a partnership with the Food Recovery Program that coordinates the diversion of edible food from the land fill from 127 business to 71 local agencies.
- ◆ UW Cooperative Extension community gardens provide over 250 Waukesha County residents an opportunity to grow nutritious food, save money, and become active in their community. Over 75% of gardeners report saving money by growing their own vegetables.

## Creating Learning Opportunities

- ◆ Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program educates over 15,000 low income seniors, adults, and children annually in Waukesha County. These residents learned to improve their diets and increase physical activity which can prevent or delay chronic diseases and obesity.
- ◆ Over 700 people in Waukesha County have participated in poverty simulations provided by the Waukesha County Nutrition Coalition that help participants understand the challenges of a typical low-income family. This knowledge is then utilized by participants to work more effectively in educational and workplace settings.
- ◆ UW-Extension's Walk One Hour in My Shoes / Camina Una Hora en mis Zapatos is a workshop focused on building understanding of the Hispanic Culture. As a result of attending this program, over 800 participants have gained a better understanding of the Latino culture and learned tools to assist them in working with this growing population.
- ◆ Jail education programs reach over 645 inmates each year. Evaluations show 94% of participants value the opportunity to participate in an educational program, 92% can apply decision-making and/or problem solving skills learned in programs to other areas of their lives, and 100% said they learned at least one way to stretch their food dollars.
- ◆ To help prepare youth for science, technology, engineering and mathematical (STEM) careers, 4-H launched an initiative focusing on robotics as a vehicle for teaching STEM skills. As a result, 4-H youth enrollment in mechanical science related projects increased by 9% and enrollment of youth in robotics has increased from 20 to 55 members.



Waukesha County  
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# Waukesha County University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension

## Developing Economic Opportunity

- ◆ Waukesha County is home to over eleven farmers' markets that serve as the primary sales outlet for local family farms and many small businesses. UW Cooperative Extension provides these markets and their over 250 vendors with education and technical assistance in the areas of promotion and marketing, food safety, market start-up, laws and regulations, insurance and liability and many more vital areas. This education and support add to the viability, success and sustainability of these local markets.
- ◆ Strategic Planning for Non-Profits utilizes a research-based educational approach to diagnose issues, identify needs, develop a process, and engage stakeholders. Through this planning process, UW Cooperative Extension teaches non-profit organizations how to identify when change is necessary and develop an effective goal implementation strategy. Past participants in this program include the Village of Hartland, Association for the Rights of Citizens with Handicaps, and the Downtown Waukesha Business Improvement District.
- ◆ Community Development Educators provide design and analysis of public opinion surveys that help local government units enhance local decision-making and assist with community planning and economic development visioning. Program participants have included: Waukesha County Parks and Land Use Department, New Berlin Parks Department, Town of Merton Library, Downtown Waukesha Business Improvement District, Waukesha West Side Neighborhood, and the Waukesha County Federated Library System.
- ◆ The Entrepreneurship Education Program connects Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension's Community Resource Development Program with families through the UW Cooperative Extension Going Solo: Building a Family Business series. Outreach education currently focuses on business plan development, application and connecting business owners with additional resources. Over 90 families have participated in this program. Nine business start-ups have resulted employing over 30 people. Seven are from the Hispanic community.

## Impacting the Community through Volunteers

- ◆ Over 575 UW Cooperative Extension SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardeners volunteer approximately 25,000 hours each year. These volunteers are trained by UW Cooperative Extension educators and specialists in many aspects of horticulture. In return for their training, Master Gardeners volunteer to help UW Cooperative Extension with horticulture educational programs and a wide variety of community service projects.
- ◆ 4-H is a youth leadership program designed to give youth skills that make them college and workforce ready. The 4-H Club members develop confidence, capability, and leadership skills. In Waukesha County, over 350 certified 4-H adult volunteers offer 130 projects to over 700 enrolled youth members. Youth are enrolled in one of the 28 community clubs distributed throughout the County.
- ◆ Lead to Succeed is an industry-driven youth leadership development program that was piloted with nine 4-H Club Members. These high school 4-H members worked with UW Waukesha students as a team on high-level service learning projects that meet the critical needs of local nonprofit organizations while being exposed to the careers that will be in high demand in SE Wisconsin. Evaluations showed an increase in the skills outlined by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction's Youth Leadership Skill Standards.

