



EMPOWERING YOUTH TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, WORKING AND LEARNING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES, AND TEACHING SAFE AND PROPER GARDENING PRACTICES FOR A BEAUTIFUL AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT.



CREATING STRONG, HEALTHY FAMILIES THAT SERVE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY LIFE

# UW Extension

## Cooperative Extension

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## RACINE COUNTY 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



# Community focus

### Bringing Added Value to Racine County

The core investment of county, state, and federal Cooperative Extension partners results in educators multiplying the investment in the following ways.

#### Volunteers

142 UW-Extension Master Gardener Volunteers contributed 8756 hours in 2010 to their local communities, teaching youth, families and interested residents on topics such as growing healthy foods, preserving the environment, and basic yard and garden care. In 2010, MGVs answered over 1,500 gardening questions. Other Master Gardener projects include three community gardens and four demonstration rain gardens to help manage stormwater runoff.

4-H Leaders—youth (85) and adults (297) leaders serve on the 4-H Leaders Board, as club officers, project leaders, ambassadors, camp counselors, and event coordinators.

Four AmeriCorps\*VISTAs (Volunteers in Service to America) worked with youth programs at Burlington Area School District and Racine Unified School District, and helped initiate the Rent Smart program for local tenants.

#### University of Wisconsin - Extension Specialists

UW-Extension Cooperative Extension's network of specialists work with local staff to develop and implement community programs. For example, child development specialists' parenting newsletters are distributed in Racine County to new parents. A financial management specialist helps local partnerships such as the Financial Fitness Coalition improve financial literacy. Numerous specialists are utilized by educators to bring the UW research base to Racine County.

UW System 41%

County 24%



Program Revenue 8%

Federal 27%

### Grants and Local Partnerships

The core investment also leverages funding to provide additional programming throughout the county, by working closely with local and state partners.

- The Racine/Kenosha Nutrition Education Program garners \$320,227 in federal funding to provide workshops and programs for FoodShare eligible families and youth. An in-kind match is provided by local partners and UW-Extension staff.
- USDA's Children, Youth and Families at Risk grant (\$42,667) helps expand outreach to Hispanic youth and families in the Burlington area, in partnership with several local organizations.
- Horticulture grants provide funding for Green Works internships (\$4,500), Green Works expansion to other counties (USDA, \$31,070), and Community Gardening publications, podcasts and videos (USDA, \$35,000).
- United Way of Racine County helps fund the Touchpoints Project (\$18,750) focusing on child care provider training and parent education on challenging child development stages, and the Kiwanis of West Racine contributes \$500 to send Parenting newsletters to new parents.
- The Racine County 4-H Leaders Association provides \$5000 to support 4-H-related office operations and the Summer 4-H Intern. The 4-H Leaders investment in the intern position was matched by the state Summer Affirmative Action Intern Program.
- The Tri-County (Racine/Kenosha/Walworth) Agriculture Clean Sweep is funded by a Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection grant (\$9,160), and the Tractor Safety course is supported a UW-Center for Agricultural Safety and Health grant (\$500).

# SUPPORTING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

## Tracy Strother

4-H Youth Development  
Educator

## Linda Lueder

4-H Youth Development  
Program Assistant

## Richelle Kastenson

Summer 4-H Intern

## Elizabeth Rebollar

Youth & Family Community  
Coordinator

### 3089 Educational Contacts



- All4One 4-H  
Franksville
- Burlington Back 40  
Burlington
- Caldwell Busy Bees  
Mukwonago
- Clever Clovers  
Racine
- Clover View  
Waterford
- Country View  
Waterford
- Crazy4Clovers  
Yorkville
- Franksville Rocking Horse  
Franksville
- Kan-Do  
Kansasville
- Norway 4-H  
Wind Lake
- Raymond 4-H  
Raymond
- Raymond Trail Blazers  
Franksville
- Rising Stars  
Union Grove
- Sturtevant 4-H  
Sturtevant
- Sunnyside 4-H  
Kansasville
- Tucker 4-H  
Racine
- Yorkville 4-H  
Yorkville

## Certified Babysitters

Youth can start babysitting at the age of 12, which is a very young age to be responsible for other children without adults present. Child development is one of the Racine County 4-H projects yet limited venues exist for youth to learn about the business of babysitting in Western Racine County. 4-H Youth Development staff, Tracy Strother and Linda Lueder, participated in the American Red Cross Babysitter's Training Instructors Course so they now can teach local youth.

To complete the babysitting course, youth go through six lessons including: leadership, role modeling, diversity, decision making, and best practices of running a business while also keeping themselves safe. Youth also learn about ages and stages and the best decision making models for each age; basic child care; and how to deal with emergencies, when are appropriate times to call for help, and simple lifesaving techniques.

In 2010, 15 youth received American Red Cross Babysitting certification, including 12

## Dual Language Reading Program

Brady (age 16) and Santiago (age 9) met after school one day. For the next several weeks they met to read passages from dual-language books — Santiago practicing English, and Brady practicing Spanish. But, without the efforts of a visionary 4-H teen, dedicated teen mentors, UW-Extension and a public/private school partnership, Santiago and Brady may have never met.

The "Amigos Leyendo/Reading Friends," program introduced Spanish-speaking elementary school students to high school students who are learning to speak Spanish. The teen mentors and elementary students read dual-language books together and participated in hands-on activities for six weeks.

Having now completed its second year and having connected 62 youth and teens, this project supported existing UW-Extension efforts to reach underserved Hispanic families in Burlington. Kristin Hildebrandt, a 17-year-old Girl Scout, 4-H member and senior at Catholic Central High School originally planned and coordinated the program in 2009 as a Girl Scout Gold Award Project.



Youth become certified babysitters.

female and 3 male participants (seven sixth-graders, seven seventh-graders, and one eighth-grader).

All of the youth agreed that as a result of the training, they feel better prepared to respond to an emergency. One participant wrote, "[Because of this training, learning] rescue breathing and first aid helped me better understand what to do if something would happen."

The project's success resulted from Kristin's vision and ability to motivate 17 of her high-school peers to give of themselves that first year. Even more importantly, Kristen developed not a one-time event, but built a framework and partnership between community organizations that was sustained for a second year in 2010, and hopefully for years to come.



Reading friends at Waller School, Burlington

# TEAMING UP TO DEVELOP BUSINESS SKILLS

## *Partnerships and Agricultural Entrepreneurs*

The economy is challenging and many individuals are finding themselves unemployed or underemployed. A segment of this population is using this opportunity to begin or expand their own businesses.

To provide educational resources for these potential agricultural entrepreneurs, Rose Skora, UW-Extension Agriculture Educator, in collaboration with Matt Wagner, Director of the UW-Parkside Small Business Development Center (SBDC) utilized the online course entitled "Business Feasibility: A First Cut Analysis," which had been modified by the UW-Extension Agricultural Innovation Center (AIC).

While individuals can work through the course on their own, the most impact would be felt if the online course was combined with in-person classes. A hybrid program was developed

where participants completed the online portion at home and then came together once a week for six weeks to discuss entrepreneurship basics and learn from existing successful entrepreneurs. This gave participants a chance to review their own personal and financial situations as well as do some market research.

During the last class, participants spoke of their own personal next steps. One bluntly stated that the class had shown him that there wasn't a market for his idea, while another couple stated that they were much more hesitant. Although this might not seem like a success, preventing business failure is just as important as seeing businesses succeed. On the other hand, another couple in the class did go forward and start a business.

**Rose Skora**  
*Agriculture Educator*

**Carol Reed**  
*Agriculture Assistant*

**427 Educational Contacts**

## *Horticulture Skills Training for Adults with Disabilities*

Administered by UW-Extension Horticulture Educator, Patti Nagai, Green Works is an innovative green industry vocational training and supported employment program for adults with developmental disabilities

Master Gardener Volunteer Meryl Strichartz proposed the training program in response to a need for day services expressed by parents of adults with disabilities. Master Gardener Volunteers are an integral part of the program, participating in the greenhouse training, attending classes to learn more about adults with disabilities, and attending training sessions to learn how to job coach.

In 2010, certificates of achievement were awarded to seven adults with developmental disabilities who completed the 12-week Green Works Program. Participants completed 36 hours of plant care training and 36 hours of employment skills training. They were also introduced to ideas of entrepreneurship and self-employment as they developed business plans.

Following the training, three of the participants were employed as interns through a partnership with Racine County Public Works in outdoor flower bed maintenance through the summer and fall of 2010. The others chose employment in non-green industry fields.

The inventive ways that Green Works delivers educational programming makes it a model program for sites throughout the nation.

**Patti Nagai**  
*Horticulture Educator*

**Meryl Strichartz**  
*Horticulture Assistant*

**4,286 Educational Contacts**



*Green Works participants from throughout the county learn plant identification and care, seeding and transplanting at the greenhouse at Southern Wisconsin Center.*

# STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

## Bev Baker

Family Living Educator/  
Department Head

## Barbara Stoffel-Emde

Family & Community  
Educator

## Nelly Martinez

Bilingual Family Projects  
Facilitator

## Elizabeth Rebollar

Youth & Family Community  
Coordinator

### 1635 Educational Contacts

## Aimee Martinez

Nutrition Education Program  
Administrator

Nutrition Educators:

## Cynthia Armstrong

## Valerie Arnold

## Rocio Bailey

## Fabiola Diaz

## Delace Ruth Dyson

## Paula Schmidt

### 17483 Educational Contacts

## *Raising a Thinking Child*

Organizations serving Spanish language learners often request programs for their participants to improve parenting skills, yet few programs are available in Spanish.

In 2010, Nelly Martinez, UW-Extension Bilingual Family Projects Facilitator, collaborated with Busy Bee's Child Care Center to provide "Raising a Thinking Child" for Spanish-speaking providers who were also parents. Busy Bee's recruited participants and provided food and child care, while UW-Extension facilitated the workshops, provided promotional materials and workbooks in Spanish and child care Registry credits.

Raising a Thinking Child is an evidence-based 8-session program focused on learning a problem-solving vocabulary and teaching children how to listen. Parents learn to use a problem-solving style of communication, how to discover their child's view of the problem, and how to engage their child in the process of problem solving.

Nine adults fully completed the program in 2010; 100% of the participants were Hispanic and low-income. As a result of the program, parents indicated that they were more likely to encourage their children to evaluate solutions

## *Stop the Mealtime Madness*

"Madness" is one word that parents and caregivers use to describe their family or childcare's meal time. When caregivers are able to plan and execute meals, research shows that time and money can be saved, family ties can be strengthened, learning can occur, and opportunities to eat healthy foods increase.

Barbara Stoffel-Emde, UW-Extension Family Living Educator worked with Cindi Armstrong, Nutrition Educator to facilitating an Early Learning Series workshop for parents and caregivers of young children. The workshops are also sponsored by United Way of Racine County as part of the Touchpoints Project.

"Making Mealtime Happen" focused on quick and healthy meal and snack ideas, tips to handle grocery shopping with young children, how to build good eating habits, and how to stretch the family food budget.

One activity showed participants the ease of preparing whole grain couscous. When



Family recognized at Raising a Thinking Child graduation

and to help them recognize their own and other's feelings.

One participant said that before the workshop she was the chief commander. After the workshop, she and her children started to dialogue. This mother used to feel overwhelmed all of the time. Due to the workshop, the mother felt she is parenting more effectively and feeling better about her children being able to make good decisions rather than having to dictate their every move.

sampling the couscous, many participants commented that it was the first time they had tried it. Because this grain is affordable, cooks quickly and can be used in a variety of meals, it is a good option for busy parents and caregivers. The participants also tasted brown rice and discussed how it could be used in meals.

The workshop was attended by 49 individuals. Of those, 20 were child care providers, 19 parents and 10 grandparents.

Evaluations showed that the workshop really motivated the participants! The majority (88%) were able to name at least one thing they will do as a result of the workshop. A few examples include:

- "I will make sure my family has at least 3 food groups for meals."
- "I will make sure the kids do NOT eat in front of the TV."
- "I will invite children to cook with me."



# CONNECTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## *Rent Smart Pilot in Racine*

The Homeless Assistance Coalition of Racine County and the Racine Housing Coalition initiated Rent Smart, a 6-hour tenant education workshop designed to help renters acquire and keep decent housing. The Rent Smart program covers topics of leasing, rights and responsibilities, positive communication, home care and managing finances.

Bev Baker, UW-Extension Family Living Educator, had been meeting with partner agencies about the possibility and benefits of providing Rent Smart; however, no one was able to dedicate the extra time to make it happen.

Thanks to Mary Ritt, an AmeriCorps Summer VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), Rent Smart launched in Racine on August 7. The partners included Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, Legal Action, Housing Authority of Racine County, Racine Fair Housing and the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation.

The first Rent Smart workshop was a success with 24 participants and four presenters. A grant awarded to the Racine/Kenosha Community Action agency covered the print materials, childcare, food, and household products for a raffle.



*Rent Smart workshop at Head Start in Racine.  
(Photo provided by Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency.)*

Evaluations of the workshop indicated that everyone had gained valuable knowledge. One participant wrote, "I loved the program and I learned a lot of things that I wasn't sure about. Thanks for all of those who worked hard to present this program."

The Rent Smart partners, through the support of another AmeriCorps\*VISTA at Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency, secured a grant from Runzheimer International to provide a full-day program in 2011 for participants leaving shelters.

## *Connecting Racine County Organizations*

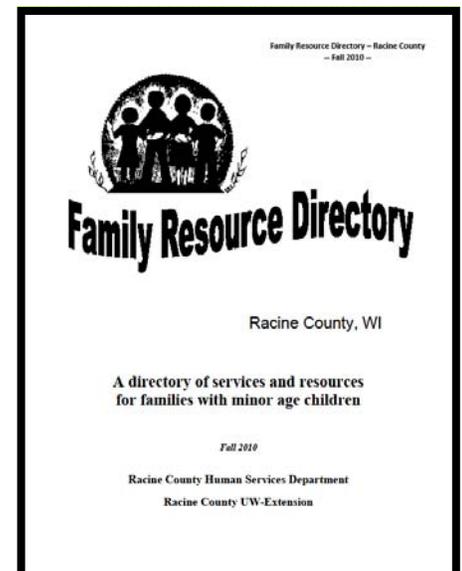
Nonprofit organizations often lack marketing budgets to promote their programs. New family workers need to build their community networks to be effective in their work with families. Complex issues make it necessary for family-serving organizations to work together. Building relationships among service providers is important in the process of connecting families with community resources.

Bev Baker, UW-Extension Family Living Educator, coordinates the annual update of the Family Resource Directory, as well as the Networking Breakfasts in her role as W2 Children's Services Network Coordinator.

In 2010, the Networking Breakfast at Gateway Technical College in Racine was attended by 70 professionals, and 57 at Runzheimer International near Waterford. Evaluations reflected a significant increase in knowledge gain

regarding community resources. At both events participants listed numerous connections or new resources discovered, including UW-Extension and the nutrition education program. One participant shared, "I have only been in Racine for two weeks! It was excellent for me. Everyone is a new connection." United Way of Racine County sponsored the annual breakfasts.

The updated Family Resource Directory, a 50-page listing with community resource descriptions and Quick List: Resources for Families brochure are distributed at the networking events, the Leadership Racine class, Human Services Department orientation, Workforce Development Center community resources workshop, and all child care programs, in addition to making it available online.



## *Growing Together/Creciendo Juntos*

The Burlington Area School District has a growing Latino population, and is a key partner in the Children, Youth and Families at Risk project focused on expanding UW-Extension outreach to Latino youth and families. Instead of assuming what youth and families need, local needs assessments showed that literacy continues to be major barrier to connecting with the community and participating in programs. As a result, literacy partners are developing a continuum of literacy programming that increases accessibility and more fully utilizes existing programs.

In the fall, Family Nights addressed another identified need: to connect Latino families with each other. During the family interviews, they expressed how appreciative they were to be living in Burlington, but felt very isolated—not only from the overall community, but also from other Hispanic families.

At the family night at Dyer Intermediate School, families brainstormed a list of ideas for making the school year a successful one.

## *Community Gardens Help Feed Families*

Food insecurity is an issue in Racine County, and the need to rely on emergency food suppliers has become a chronic situation for many families. In 2010, the Racine County Food Bank provided 23,324 families and more than 25,000 children with needed food.

UW-Extension Horticulture Educator Patti Nagai partnered with the Racine County Food Bank and Master Gardener Volunteers to develop and maintain two community gardens and one prison garden. These gardens provide vegetables and fruits for hungry families while teaching families how to grow their own food in an environmentally sustainable way.

Community partners are essential to the gardens' success.

- The Garden of Giving is located at Lakeside Curative Services, a non-profit vocational rehabilitation service organization for people with disabilities. Educational programming targets individuals with developmental

Elizabeth Rebollar, the UW-Extension Youth and Family Community Coordinator, commented, "It was nice to see that after the parent meeting one of the fathers introduced himself to the parent who had lived in the area for four years, but didn't know any Hispanic families in Burlington. He told her his name and welcomed her to the community."

At Waller Elementary School, the family time activities included an Edible Art project, facilitated by Fabiola Diaz, Nutrition Educator. Families worked together to design their plates with fruit, then ate their product. Some foods the children hadn't tried before so it exposed them to new foods. Parents commented that it was nice to have time together learning as a family, which was a stress reducer.

At both family nights a survey was done with a variety of program possibilities based on findings from the interviews, and discussions with youth, families and community partners. They further prioritized the topics and programs to ensure another successful year.



*Family at Waller Elementary School in Burlington working on Edible Art.*



*Mom and son with Edible Art Project at Waller Elementary School.*

disabilities, the elderly, and community volunteer groups.

- The Teaching Garden, located behind the Racine County Food Bank, is designed as an inner city intergenerational demonstration garden with accessible areas, a compost demonstration site, a functional rain garden and a teaching pavilion.
- The third garden is located in at Racine Youthful Offender Correctional Facility. Master Gardener Volunteers teach and guide the inmates through planning, planting and harvesting.

In total, the three gardens provided 12,698 pounds of produce in 2010, all of which was donated to the Racine County Food Bank for distribution to others. Providing gardening education is a way of not only trying to meet growing demands for food, but also to lower the demands of an already overburdened system by teaching individuals how to grow their own food.



*Harvesting produce from the Teaching Garden located behind the Racine County Food Bank*



*The Garden of Giving*