

# Racine County UW-Extension



Impact Report — 2013



# 4-H Youth Development: Building Tomorrow's Leaders



Racine County UW-Extension's 4-H Youth Development program gives young people a chance to gain self-confidence, learn new skills and contribute to their communities. Many 4-H programs are available: club settings, after school programs, 4-H camp, and



other educational programs. 4-H programs always center around three areas: leadership, citizenship and life skills. 4-H community clubs consist of youth in kindergarten through one year beyond high school graduation coming together to learn. Each club is unique and youth select 4-H projects to participate in. Racine County has a very strong network of community clubs. In 2013, there were 1,010 youth and 237 adult volunteer leaders participating.



## 4-H Shooting Sports Program Improvement

The membership within the 4-H Shooting Sports project is high in Racine County. The archery project alone has approximately 232 members participating in three different sites. In 2013, because of its growing popularity, UW-Extension 4-H staff worked with archery project leaders to provide more structure and standardization among the different clubs to encourage collaboration. These improvements in the organizational procedures will ready the clubs for future growth and expansion in this project area.



## 4-H Summer Fun Clubs Established at COP Houses

One of our greatest achievements in 2013 was our cross-programmatic approach to youth programming in high-risk neighborhoods being served by Racine COP (Community Oriented Policing) Houses. Tracy Strother, 4-H Youth Development Educator took the lead and brought in Nutrition Education Program Administrator, Aimee Martinez and Horticulture Educator, Patti Nagai to help develop complementary programming. Efforts were focused on the Mead and Villa Street COP Houses. Each house had access to raised garden beds and appropriate meeting space for youth activities which best served the goal of cross-programmatic education. Staff and volunteers led the "4-H Summer Fun Club" which was held Monday through Thursday. Each youth received 72 contact hours for a total of 1,800 contact hours in total. The program was very successful and preliminary plans for 2014 include program modifications to again work with COP House sites.



# Youth in Governance: Making Youth Voices Heard



The development of youth leadership is critical to building civic capacity and long-term community sustainability. When youth develop useful skills and build self-confidence, we establish capable, effective leaders for the next generation.

Data from a 2010 Search Institute study, “Developmental Assets: A Profile of Your Youth – Racine County Schools,” documented that only 20 percent of youth living in Racine County perceive that their community values youth; and only 24 percent believe that youth are given useful roles in the community. These results were among the lowest of all the assets measured and were lower than similar assets measured at a national level.

In direct response to these results, the Racine County Board of Supervisors partnered with UW-Extension to create the Racine County Youth In Governance program. In June of 2013 with the introduction and passage of Resolution No 2013-41, the Racine County Board officially established the Racine County Youth In Governance program to allow youth to serve on County Board committees. This program promises to bring a youth voice to community issues while developing confident, independent, and motivated youth leaders.

## 4-H Tech Wizards

Starting in 2013, Racine County 4-H Tech Wizards partnered with Starbuck Middle School’s Engineering Club to build a strong afterschool program and expand STEM opportunities to youth throughout the community. They began by competing in the FIRST Lego League competition where teams designed, built, programmed and tested autonomous robots to perform a series of tasks during two-and-a-half minute matches. The Racine County 4-H Tech Wizard teams—the Knatural Knights and Super Storm Spartans—received the Inspiration Award and the Young Adult Mentor Award. In addition to the FIRST Lego League, Racine County 4-H Tech Wizards:



- Participated in the National Fluid Power Association Challenge at the Milwaukee School of Engineering, December 2013 earning the “Portfolio Champions” award
- Had 84 youth and adults participate in Exploring Engineering Day at UW-Madison
- Toured Pioneer Products and Nelson Brothers & Strom Company (both are contract production and custom engineering machine shops)
- Participated in Discovery World Camp, making backpacks and cantilevers

# Family Living: Helping Families Thrive

Raising kids  
Eating right  
Spending smart

Family Living programs respond to local needs through education and partnerships that support stability and the well-being of Racine County families.



## Improve Access to Child Support & Family Court Information

In 2013, two “Racine County Child Support and Family Court FAQ” session for human services professionals and community volunteers was convened with a total of 76 participants. The training arose from the stress the child support system causes among families, and its impact on infant mortality prevention efforts. A team consisting of Racine County UW-Extension, Racine County Child Support Enforcement, the Family Court Commissioner, Racine County Human Services and Workforce Development, YMCA, and the Racine Kenosha Community Action Agency developed the session to answer questions and correct misconceptions about the system. The sessions and the resource materials developed as a result have been heralded as important first steps towards encouraging families to connect with child support and family court information.



## Sharing Research and Resources on Children with Incarcerated Parents

UW-Extension Family Living hosted the “Racine County Conference on Children with Incarcerated Parents.” It featured the preliminary findings of research conducted at the Racine County Jail by a partnership between UW-Madison, the Racine County Sheriff’s Department, and UW-Extension. The National Institutes of Health funded-study will shed light on a subject important to the well-being of U.S. children affected by incarceration. 42 people attended the conference. Also, a new section of the “Racine County Family Resource Directory” was developed to share resources with these families.



## Strengthening Families Program Collaborates to Reach Hispanic Families

In 2013, Racine County UW-Extension collaborated with Focus on Community and John XXIII Educational Center to bring the evidence-based Strengthening Families Program to Latino families with middle school students. Thirteen families including their middle school youth participated. The collaborative approach serves as a new model for delivering the program to Racine’s at-risk families and respond to the gap in family-focused adolescent prevention programs in the county.

## CYFAR Grant Program Builds Trust and Offers Quality Programing

The federally funded Children, Family and Youth At-Risk (CYFAR) grant, which supported outreach programming to Latino families in Burlington, concluded in 2013. During the 5-year grant (2008-2013), UW-Extension Family Living and 4-H Youth Development offered a variety of parenting and youth development programs. The grant also raised awareness of the literacy needs of Burlington’s Latino families, and created “HOLA” (Hispanic Outreach for Literacy Achievement). HOLA provides an on-going framework to address the needs of this growing community.



# Horticulture: Gardening for Sustenance, Health and the Environment



Racine County UW-Extension horticulture programs provide educational support for our community through public classes, publications, Master Gardener Volunteer training, soil testing, diagnostics and community projects.

A horticulture “help line” is staffed by specially trained Master Gardener Volunteers, called Plant Health Advisors, to help homeowners with their yard and garden questions. In 2013, there were 1,285 incoming calls to the hotline. Additional outreach services at the farmers’ markets and other community events provide additional venues for public education on gardening practices and environmental concerns, such as invasive species identification and control. Additionally, two community gardens run by UW-Extension Master Gardener Volunteers grow thousands of pounds of produce for Racine County’s neediest.



## **The Teaching Garden focuses on Sustainable Gardening**

The Teaching Garden at the Racine County Food Bank grew 2,000 pounds of fresh produce in 2013 and numerous classes and demonstrations focusing on sustainable gardening practices were held throughout the growing season. A total of 65 adults and 119 youth volunteered at The Teaching Garden in 2013. The Teaching Garden is open to the public six days a week and is actively promoted through newspaper articles, websites and Facebook™.



## **The Garden of Giving grows for the Food Bank**

The Garden of Giving is a Master Gardener run garden in partnership with Lakeside Curative Services and the Racine County Food Bank. Master Gardener Volunteers there grew 4,500 pounds of produce for distribution through the food bank to help feed hungry families.

## **Promoting rain gardens and native plant landscapes**

We also partnered with Root-Pike Watershed Initiative to host a landscape contractor’s workshop at the SCJ iMET Center in Sturtevant. Over 100 landscape professionals learned about the importance of rain gardens. Landscapers understand how to design beautiful gardens to improve landscape and home value, but are looking for new ways to incorporate native plants and functional rain gardens to benefit pollinators and help improve water quality. Protecting the environment is a goal for all gardeners and landscapers.

# Agriculture: Helping Farm Families Prosper

The Racine County UW-Extension agriculture program offers educational programming to a variety of audiences. Farmers and rural landowners in Racine County receive access to local and state resources that include soil labs, diagnostic advice, a variety of specialists and much more.

## **Farm Succession Workshop Offered for First Time**

New in 2013 was the Farm Succession Workshop. In Racine County, 26% of farm operators are 65 and older and only one in five farms are passed to the next generation, not surprising since 73% of all farmers have not identified a successor. To address this emerging issue in agriculture, Extension Educators in Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties developed a workshop targeting multiple members and generations of the same farm families to begin the discussions necessary for transfer of the farm business to the next generation; the successful retirement of the current generation, and; for the fair and equitable distribution of farm estates to heirs. 39 farmers representing 12 farms participated in this new workshop.



## **Rural Landowner Conference Hosted**

We also proudly hosted the Rural Landowner Conference which is a long-standing annual event connecting many partner organizations—Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and local Land Conservation Departments—to offer workshops focusing on conservation, entrepreneurship and general farming topics. 60 people attended the conference. In conjunction with this conference, an Agriculture Clean Sweep collected approximately 5,000 pounds of assorted electronic waste.



## **Farm Fresh Atlas of Southeastern Wisconsin Improved**

Efforts were also taken in 2013 to technologically improve the financial process of the Farm Fresh Atlas of Southeastern Wisconsin. Now, applicants can complete their application online and be taken directly to a “point and pay” site to complete their transactions. Making the system easier to use helps farmers access this important market channel.



## **Meat Animal Quality Assurance (MAQA) & Tractor Safety Youth Training**

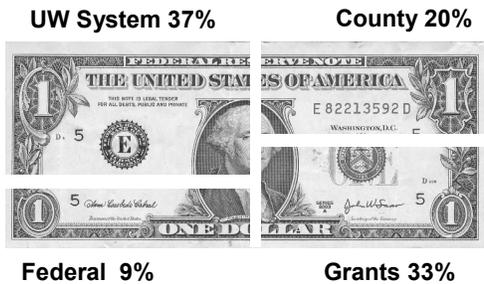
In 2013, we continued to offer youth training in Meat Animal Quality Assurance and Tractor Safety. 200 participated in the MAQA and 20 youth received tractor safety training.

# About UW-Extension

We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin and engaging them in transforming lives and communities. The Racine County UW-Extension office is one of 72 county offices statewide, staffed by professional educators. We develop high impact educational programs and bring resources of the University to the local level.



**Fabiola Diaz,**  
**Racine County**  
**Nutrition Educator**  
 Honored as University of Wisconsin System Outstanding Woman of Color in Education



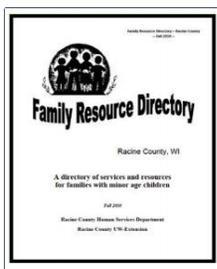
Core funding for Racine County UW-Extension programming comes from three partners: (1) the University of Wisconsin-Extension; (2) the Racine County government, and; (3) the United States Department of Agriculture. Additional program support and funding comes from grants and revenue

generated through programming. In 2013 the Racine County tax levy of \$229,708 leveraged an additional funding of \$ 614,427 to the Racine County UW-Extension educational efforts.

## Racine County UW-Extension Publications



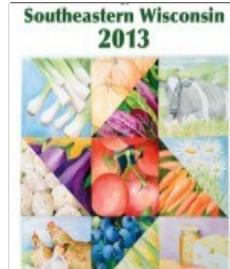
**2013/2014 Kenosha Racine Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Guide** is a recently updated guide to recycling in our community.



**Family Resource Directory** is a valuable resource for families in Racine County.



**Ties to the Land** is a quarterly newsletter to farmers and landowners in Racine, Kenosha and Milwaukee counties.



**The Farm Fresh Atlas™ of Southeastern Wisconsin** is a local food guide for the Milwaukee metropolitan area and surrounding counties



**The Racine Kenosha Master Gardener Association** is a quarterly newsletter distributed to Master Gardener Volunteers and available to the public.

All publications are available upon request or via our website at [racine.uwex.edu](http://racine.uwex.edu)

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