



# 2017 Impact Report

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION  
SERVING COOK COUNTY

**I** ILLINOIS

Extension

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER  
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



# ILLINOIS

## Extension



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### A Note from the Director

The impact of programs delivered to residents of Chicago and suburban Cook County for 2017 were successful and required human capital and financial resources to implement. The 52-member team of educators, coordinators, community workers, and work program

participants – supported by the 9-member team of office support, office manager and county director – delivered ongoing programs and initiatives throughout the county. The unit continues to increase equal access to the University of Illinois land-grant institution for underrepresented and underserved populations.



This impact report will provide a glimpse of the initiatives completed in 2017. A total view of all activities and programs is on the Cook County Extension website: [web.extension.illinois.edu/cook](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cook)

The following pages highlight of a number of innovative programs, including:

- › Urban agriculture from both community food system and entrepreneurial perspectives, using a variety of digital platforms and experiential training.
- › (STEM) professional development for K-12 educators in Cook County with a focus on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), providing teachers with tools, skills, and confidence to teach effectively science and engineering.
- › Promoting healthy lifestyles among low-income families and youth by applying nutrition and physical activity knowledge
- › Future veterinary medicine students exploring animal-focused careers.

In addition, please take note of the countless number of hours the team of Master Gardeners and Master Naturalist have contributed to preserving the ecosystem throughout the city and suburbs. Many thanks to these dedicated volunteers and their support the mission, vision, and values of the land-grant institution.

I trust that you will enjoy this report.

Thanks

Willene Buffet  
County Extension Director



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## NEW in 2017 Addressing the issue...

### When trauma touches the classroom: U of I Extension workshops train teachers to offer hope

Excerpt from featured article, originally published February 13, 2018 by Abigail Bobrow

CHICAGO, Ill. - They happened within a week of each other. One during spring break, followed by the other.

Two students who attended Brighton Park Elementary School in Chicago attempted suicide in 2017.

The school of about 450 was shaken and hurting.

“It was really hard for me to process what happened,” recalls Osvaldo De Santiago, assistant principal for the pre-K through eighth-grade school. “I was more in just survival mode, just trying to deal with it.”

#### Trauma-informed care

From 1995 to 1997, Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente conducted a study that surveyed thousands of people who had suffered abuse and neglect as children. The findings, termed ACEs, or adverse childhood experiences, demonstrated the devastating, long-term effects—socially, behaviorally, and emotionally—childhood trauma can have on a person’s life. ACEs has become the basis for what health care professionals now use in trauma-informed care.



**Michele Crawford**, University of Illinois Extension community health educator, has spent a career working in public health and yet it wasn’t until about five years ago that trauma-informed care began to be regarded as a public health issue.

“It was always something on my personal radar,” Crawford says. “And being an Extension educator that spends so much time in schools, I was hearing the need from schools to have some training for teachers around trauma.”

“They know they’re seeing this in their classrooms among students, but they didn’t know what terminology and strategies to use or how trauma affects learning in the classroom.”

Working under the guidance of Audrey Stillerman, associate director of Medical Affairs for the University of Illinois Office of Community Engagement and Neighborhood Health Partnerships, Crawford learned how

to offer trauma-informed care resources to some of those who needed it most.

Crawford took advantage of the existing Summer Teacher Institute, which is unique to Cook County, to begin offering trauma-informed care retreats to education professionals. The two-day, intensive retreats take place at Extension offices. She also teaches three-hour workshops during the school year at the schools. Last summer, at one of those retreats, Crawford met De Santiago and Stevenson.

#### A safe space

Eighty percent of children receive no mental health services, and among those who do, most receive the services at school. Crawford’s workshops are part of an effort to help the educators who come in regular contact with the students identify the mental health signs of trauma.

Crawford recognizes “trauma” is different for everyone, so rather than dwell on the traumatic event, she’s more concerned with the child’s response—ability to cope, especially considering a child’s brain is still developing and maturing. What kind of impact did this event have, is still having? Being able to process these traumatic events can make a huge difference in the students’ ability to thrive and learn.

As part of the training, Crawford shares self-regulation and introspective approaches for educators to introduce to their students. She also helps the educators understand the role of compassion and resiliency when working with students who have been exposed to trauma.

“The focus on the strategies in the classroom is to get children to recognize their emotions, to be able to have words for them. To be able to have conversations when you’re talking about emotions,” Crawford says. “Give children tools where they can show you what they’re feeling or have the words to tell you what they’re feeling.”

Those strategies that Crawford shares often prove just as useful for the educators. The curriculum she uses is equal parts “compassionate classroom” and teacher self-care.

You can find out more about Michele Crawford's self-care strategies in her blog, "Refill your cup with self-care."



View entire article:  
[web.extension.illinois.edu/state/discover.cfm?DiscoverID=211](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/discover.cfm?DiscoverID=211)



## Conservation @ Home Partnership with Forest Preserve District of Cook County

2017 marked the first year Cook County residents were invited to participate in the Conservation @ Home (C@H) Program. This is a partnership between The Conference Foundation, Forest Preserves of Cook County, and University of Illinois Extension. The C@H Program recognizes and certifies residential properties that demonstrate environmentally sound landscape practices. A pair of Master Gardener and/or Master Naturalist volunteers visited and evaluated each property. Properties meeting the criteria in the rubric were certified and the home gardener received a sign for their yard. **In 2017, certifications were awarded to 42 properties out of 69 applicants.**

Further efforts to educate home gardeners on the principles of C@H, included staff and volunteers delivering six different programs at Forest Preserves of Cook County nature centers and publishing a quarterly newsletter.



Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists evaluated a residential property for consideration of Conservation @ Home certification.



## The Chicago Excellence in Gardening Award (CEGA)

In 2017, University of Illinois Extension Cook County partnered with a group of horticultural and environmental groups to recognize the contribution of gardeners to the City of Chicago. The goal was to acknowledge how the simple act of growing things creates more beautiful, vibrant, sustainable and socially just communities. Award categories included ornamental, vegetable, container and specialized gardens.

The competition was presented by University of Illinois Extension – Cook County, The Mike Nowak Show, Shedd Aquarium, Chicago Community Gardeners Association – CCGA, Natural Awakenings Chicago Magazine, and the Chicago Flower & Garden Show, with awards provided by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County.





# School and Community Gardens



	<b>71</b> School Gardens		<b>60</b> Community Gardens
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## Natural Resources

### Master Gardeners



**486**  
Volunteers



**23,893**  
Volunteer Hours



**\$620,023.25**  
In Donated Community Services



### Master Naturalists



**78**  
Volunteers



**7,300**  
Volunteer Hours



**\$189,435**  
In Donated Community Services



## Urban Farms

The Master Urban Farmer Training Program (MUFTP) provides new urban farmers in Cook County the basic knowledge and skills to start an urban farm. At the end of the program, participants are able to visualize a business plan better and have the information necessary to move forward with their urban farming goals.

The program started in 2016 and has subsequently trained 65 participants over two 12-week sessions in 2016 and 2017. A one-year follow-up evaluation with a sub-sample of 13 MUFTP 2016 cohort participants revealed that **100 percent** had created a new urban farm site, were actively urban farming (for profit or not), and/or were farming commercially.



MUFTP participant's harvest at farmers market

**We have an ongoing design for a new urban farm expansion. Thanks to the class we have updated the design to accommodate streamlining growing systems, modular set-ups and equipment. We hope to one day include a pack and wash farmstand.**

**PROGRAM PARTICIPANT**

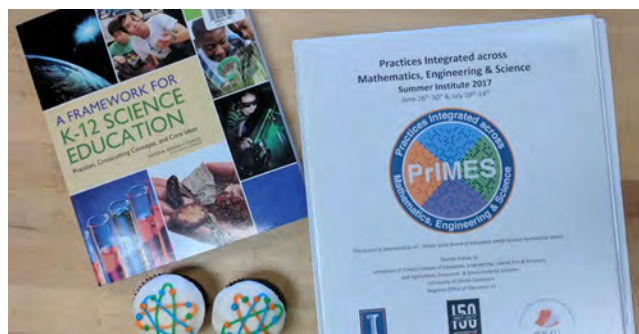




35 urban and rural teachers spent two weeks on the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana campus, where they received 90 hours of professional development.

### Practices Integrated across Math Engineering and Science (PrIMES)

Extension’s PrIMES team created a series of high quality integrated Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) professional development opportunities intended to bridge the gap between theory and practice to help teachers develop a deep understanding of key science and engineering practices, and learn how to leverage these practices to enhance student learning in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). In summer 2017, 30+ K-8 teachers from Cook County and the Charleston area received stipends to attend 90 hours of professional development on campus using a research-based facilitation platform, the Next Generation Science Exemplar System. In facilitator-led groups, teachers experienced NGSS-aligned instruction, used an online learning environment to access expert and classroom videos, and began grade-specific curriculum development. Teachers’ classrooms will be used for data collection and observation to aid in the development of future research-driven professional development as they pilot their curriculum throughout the rest of the grant period.



### Do the Math

Since the adoption of the Common Core State standards in Illinois in 2010, Extension’s Math STEM training program has focused on leading teachers to deeper understanding of mathematical concepts so that they may creatively work with their students to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of the concepts of mathematics. In 2017, 650 pre-kindergarten through eighth grade teachers gained additional meaningful knowledge about engaging students in their teaching. The number of students engaged exceeds 11,000 this year.



157 Workshops



2,869 Teachers





Real Colors with teachers from summer program at Rush University

## Project-Based Learning

In the fall of 2016, STEM and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) educators collaborated to develop an instructionally essential workshop focused on project-based learning (PBL). Project-based learning lessons align well with all standards due to the student skills acquired and classroom methods used. It reinforces self-directed learning, classroom collaboration, the incorporation of modeling, reflection, and arguing evidence. The goal of the workshops is to have teachers walk away with a clear understanding of project-based learning while encompassing critical aspects of the Next Generation Science Standards, the Social and Emotional Learning standards, and the 21st century skills. Teachers participate in a four-week cohort with the option of an initial six-hour extended professional development. The four-week cohort incorporates online interactions and discussions, encouraging teachers to form a support system that extends beyond the face-to-face cohort sessions. In total, teachers receive 14 hours of continuing education, which research demonstrates has a positive and significant effect on student achievement.

**Personally, it has helped me to become a better listener. I've taught the same things at the same grade level in the same room for 12 years. I'm more than ready to make some changes, and PRIMES is helping me to see how to do it.**  
**PROGRAM PARTICIPANT**

85 teachers completed the workshops in 2017, of which 100 percent agreed that their participation gave an understating of how project-based learning connected to the 21st Century Competencies, the Next Generation Science Standards, and the Illinois State Standards for Social and Emotional Learning. Additionally, teachers better understood the process of critical thinking and how it connected to PBL, felt more comfortable advocating for PBL in the classroom, and were well-equipped with learning resources and materials to assist them in classroom implementation.



## Social and Emotional Learning in Action



Girls and Boys Empowerment Community Service Project

On average, every dollar invested in SEL programs yields \$11 in long-term benefits, ranging from reduced juvenile crime, higher lifetime earnings, and better mental and physical health. It essentially prepares youth and adults to achieve success and address challenges in school, work, and life. In Cook County, opportunities were made available that emphasized the development of the five core competencies of social and emotional learning: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

In 2017, more than 1,000 K-12 educators, parents, youth, and agency staff participated in SEL programming in Cook County. As a result, 92% of K-12 school staff reported they are better equipped to address the SEL needs of their students. Teen participants from several workshops and camps during the summer indicated significant increases in their knowledge of core SEL skills, and parents have a common language to support their child's social and emotional development.

SEL and community health programs continue to empower adolescent girls and boys (9-12 years old) to make healthy choices related to their physical, social, and emotional well-being. New in 2017, both groups participated in a community service project, helping with the Old Schoolhouse Garden. The garden is instrumental in providing fresh food to the local food pantry. The experience imparted lessons on giving back to the community and working together.

## Animal Related Career Summer Intensive

The Animal Related Career Summer Intensive (ARCSI) program is a 4-week program designed to expose urban youth, from Cook County, to the world of animal related careers, from veterinary medicine to agricultural sciences. Students participate in hands-on workshops and field trips. The uniqueness of this program is that high school students are given the first-hand opportunity to explore both standard and outlying career paths in animal science. Students are exposed to animals and subjects that urban youth typically have minimal interaction with on a daily basis. The goal is to expand students' career exploration. This marks the third successful summer for this program, with 92% of the students expressing a desire to choose a career dedicated to working with animals.



2017 ARCSI students  
[uofixtarcsi2017.shutterstock.com](http://uofixtarcsi2017.shutterstock.com)



Youth Development



Youth Development



Campers used an HTC Vive or an Oculus Rift to do a virtual reality simulation of the International Space Station.

## Space Camp Reunion

4-H Space Camp participants from the classes of 2015 and 2016 had the opportunity to catch up with fellow campers and meet those from the other cohort. Some of the things that campers have been doing since visiting Space Camp include: visiting camp again for advanced Space Camp, starting a tech company at a University of Chicago incubator, applying for patents, doing research at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and attending an aerospace engineering camp on campus in Urbana-Champaign.





# Partnering with U.S. Cellular for 4-H National Youth Science Day



4-H members with U.S. Cellular President & CEO, Kenneth Meyers

Cook County 4-H members visited Starcom for a day of STEM fun with U.S. Cellular staff. Guest speakers, including U.S. Cellular President and CEO Kenneth Meyers, spoke to 4-H members about STEM-related careers and opportunities in the cellular industry. Speakers shared their career paths, interests, and challenges. U.S. Cellular staff worked with 4-H members in small groups to build and test a fitness tracker. Once fitness trackers were tested, groups conducted experiments using their fitness trackers.

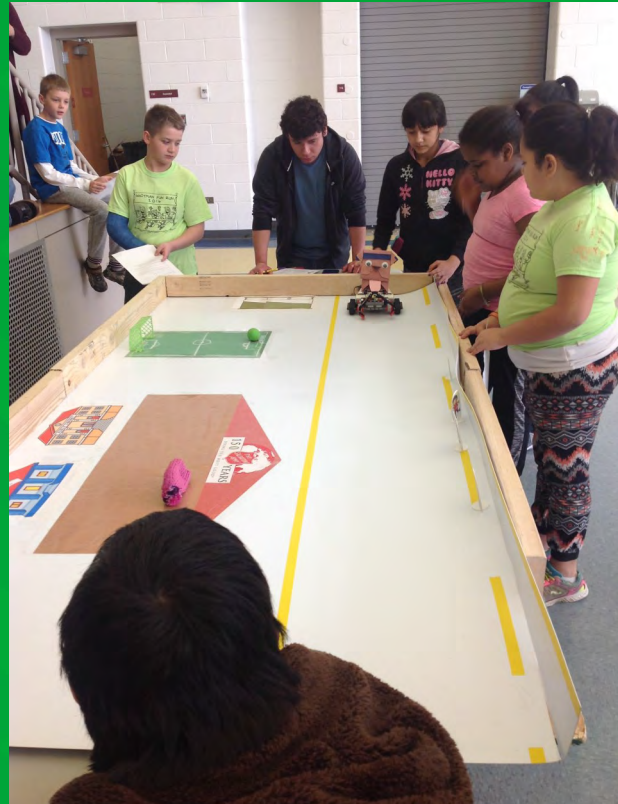




261  
Robotic Participants



Growing 4-H Science: Robotics Grant





### SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION (SNAP-Education)

SNAP-Education works with limited-resource audiences to make healthier choices where they eat, shop, live, play and learn in their communities. Through classes and workshops, and by working towards policy, systems, and environmental changes, SNAP-Education positively impacts the nutrition and activity choices of people and communities we serve.

### Serving Local Residents



**11,684**  
Total SNAP-Ed Participants



**4,682 (40%)**  
Adults



**7,002 (60%)**  
Youth



**5,957 (51%)**  
Participants Who Identified as Hispanic



### Our Partners



**39**  
K-12 Schools



**21**  
Stores or Markets



**16**  
Youth Centers



**41**  
Community Centers



**44**  
Early Childhood Centers



**13**  
Food Pantries and Food Banks



CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) after-school program kids are making a fruit pizza.

**I made stir fry for the first time after learning to chop vegetables and it's all I cook now for dinner.**

**PROGRAM PARTICIPANT**



Following the recipe!



Providers prepare delicious and healthy meals at the Extension Healthy Habits for Tiny Tummies workshop.

Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.

HIPPOCRATES



### EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM (EFNEP)

In Cook County, EFNEP staff members serve limited-resource families to help make the healthy choice the easy choice, even on a budget. Through hands-on classes that focus on improving eating habits and physical activity, EFNEP makes a difference in the lives of those we serve.

### Serving Local Residents



842  
Total Adult Participants



2,027  
Total Youth Participants



459 (55%)  
Participants Who Identified as Hispanic



- 44% White (371)
- 41% Black (344)
- 15% American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (127)

### Our Partners



57  
K-12 Schools



54  
Youth Centers



14  
Early Childhood Centers



51  
Community Centers





## How healthy is your brain?

Wits Fitness is a custom-designed “brain exercise” class that has kept audiences coming twice a month in Chicago. In 2017, Family Life Educator Molly Hofer saw participants returning at a rate of 75 percent. Cook County is leading the way in piloting parts of a new 26-session “Wits Workout” curriculum guidebook designed for older adult service providers to facilitate their own brain exercise classes. Four sessions from the curriculum were piloted to older adults at Bremen Township Senior Services. The “Wits Workout” guidebook will be available in spring 2018.

Extension’s goal is that participants will adopt long-term healthy behaviors to enhance mental performance and potentially delay the onset of cognitive decline, thus increasing their ability to age in place independently. This contributes to their overall physical and emotional health, thus helping them remain socially engaged and viable contributors to their communities longer. This further increases the generational and economic vitality of communities, and may delay the need and thereby reduce the costs of publicly-funded long-term care.



Learning is Timeless participants that attend Wits Fitness workshops monthly.



## Sensible Health

Understanding and securing healthcare coverage is an essential component to health preservation. The need to build residents’ understanding of how health insurance works surfaced through discussions with program participants. Extension’s community health team worked collaboratively to substantiate this need by interviewing key stakeholders such as the Cook County Health and Hospital System, University of Illinois School of Public Health (Mid America Center for Public Health Practice), and University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System, among others. Their interviews resulted in *Sensible Health*, a program geared to teach healthcare literacy with a focus on insurance.

Evaluation results showed evidence that the *Sensible Health* program was effective in raising participants’ knowledge about health insurance terminology and about the benefits of having health coverage. Retrospectively, participants required information specific to Medicare and Medicaid that went beyond the scope of these lessons.



## Financial Report



- 77% Wages
- 12% Operating Expenses
- 11% Leases

**Sometimes if you have financial restraints, it's a benefit. It forces you to come up with a more creative way.**

**ROBERT DE NIRO**

### 2017 EXTENSION COUNCIL MEMBERS

- |                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
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| Jeremy Chia        | Bob Mead            |
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Durriyyah Bryant, *Social & Emotional Learning*

Aruna Budhram, *EFNEP*

Michele Crawford, *Community Health*

Susan Gasper, *STEM*

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Nancy Kreith, *Horticulture*

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University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any program, please contact the county Extension Office.

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