



Unit 8 - 2018-2019 Community: Community Involvement and Leadership

Reporting Period	2018 - 2019
Level	Unit
Type	Local
Status	Finished
Program Areas	4H Youth Development
Unit	Unit 8 (District)
Grand Challenges	Community

Situation

Communities face a host of issues that demand involvement and ultimately, leadership, in the midst of increasing complexity. Community organizations and political subdivisions such as cities, school districts, library boards, and counties struggle to find qualified residents to serve as council, board and commission members, and it is critical that leaders understand external forces that affect the community. It is equally important to provide opportunities for youth to engage with adults, lending a youth voice and perspective to community decision-making and enabling youth to affect and influence others through their actions and ideas.

Challenges facing communities include the devolution of authority for action and service delivery to the community; the double bind created by trying to maintain quality and services with fewer resources; expectations for sharing power and responsibility; interdependence, diversity, collaboration, and communication. Building leadership capacity among community leaders and elected officials is critical to community viability and sustainability. Through public and private nonprofit organizations, communities achieve their objectives and increase or maintain the quality of life for all residents.

Communities need assistance in identifying strategies to address the rapidly changing social and economic landscape. Communities need assistance to understand each other, to navigate the differences found in any community no matter the size with that understanding leading to a sense of being part of the community. With that increased connection between individual and community, people are poised to take an active role in community affairs by analyzing and addressing quality of life and infrastructure issues. Some people will rise to the occasion and provide leadership for community programs. Both adults and youth have a role to play in addressing these issues. Each of these groups has a different working style based on the generation they represent. Effective leaders must know how to work with individuals from all generations, socioeconomic backgrounds and gender. The quality of information available to community decision makers and public and private non-profit organizations has a significant effect on the vitality of communities. Increasing the capacity of local decision-makers in the areas of communication, decision-making, teamwork, and learning-management will enhance community vitality and improve the quality of life in rural and urban areas. Research shows that youth who engage in their communities become adults who are actively engaged.

Through our internal civil rights compliance review, we identified seven communities for targeted outreach: Mendota, DePue, Streator, Spring Valley, LaSalle, Ottawa, and Marseilles. Mendota and DePue have a high percentage of Latino families. Extension will implement 4-H and SNAP-Ed programming in these communities. In September 2018, a part-time Extension Program Coordinator was hired for Bureau County to reach 1st Generation 4-H Latino Families through a grant supported by the State 4-H Office. The program is carried out in partnership with DePue School. The Unit's 4-H Youth Development programs provide opportunities for youth and families across the Unit's four county area: to become aware of careers and workforce opportunities; to obtain knowledge and skills relating to careers and workforce; to practice work through project activities; and through participation in workshops, SPIN club involvement and more. Each year the Unit's 4-H staff convene two meetings per year of the 4-H Expansion and Review Committee to review current programming and discuss future needs. In 2018, meetings were held on June 6, 2018, and September 13, 2018. In 2018, Unit 8 established an Education Center & Community Teaching Kitchen in LaSalle. This community-based SNAP-Ed grant pilot project is one of three sites in Illinois. Program focus areas include: prevention of obesity and chronic disease, food access, food safety and workforce preparedness. SNAP-Ed and Extension educational programs will be provided to both youth and adult audiences to address the focus areas. Interdisciplinary programming will

be provided including 4-H and Master Gardener/Master Naturalist and Natural Resources. The Unit's Multi-County Unit Council reviews the Unit's programming and outreach efforts on an ongoing basis. The council meets 5 times per year to oversee and conduct Extension business.

**Short-Term
(Knowledge)**

- Increased awareness of importance of community involvement
- Increased awareness of leadership attributes and qualities
- Increased knowledge of opportunities for community involvement
- Increased confidence in being a volunteer in the community
- Expressed intent to be engaged in community
- Expressed intent to take on leadership role
- Increased confidence for taking on leadership role
- Increased knowledge of ways to be involved in the community
- Increased knowledge about leadership attributes
- Increased awareness by youth and adults of the value of youth involvement on boards and committees
- Increased awareness of community changes as a result of volunteer contribution

Indicators

Not Specified

**Medium-Term
(Behavior)**

- Increased number of participants reporting new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken
- Increased number of volunteer hours (level of involvement)
- Increased number of programs / initiatives that are volunteer-led
- Increased citizen attendance at local government meetings
- Increased voter participation in elections
- Demonstrate the dollar value of the volunteer contributions based on Independent Sector hour pay value
- Increased number of community and organizational plans developed
- Increased youth participation on community boards and committees

Indicators

Not Specified

**Long-Term
(Change in
Condition)**

- Community members are engaged
- Volunteer rates are higher
 - Residents are proud of their community
 - Individuals to stay in their community to live
 - Clear succession plans for leadership participation within communities
 - Youth seek and participate in leadership roles in the community into adulthood
 - Community and organizational policies, plans adopted, implemented, and regularly reviewed
 - Positive changes in the community as a result of volunteer contributions
 - Increased contested community elections

Indicators

Not Specified

Public Value

Not Specified

Outputs

Activities:

- Community Garden Program
- Teen Leaders (Teen Teachers, Teen Planners, Teen Mentors, Teen Advocates, Teen Advisers, Teen Ambassadors/advocacy and Teen Promoters)
- Youth Leadership Competency Training

Participation:

- Community organization boards
- Community leaders
- Community development organizations
- Businesses
- Non-Profits
- Youth (4-H Latino Program, DePue)
- Community members/volunteers (Extension Master Gardener Community Garden, Ottawa)
- Media
- Schools (4-H Tech Wizards, Marshall-Putnam Counties/ IL Jr. Chefs, Marshall-Putnam, Bureau, LaSalle Counties/ National 4-H Health Rocks (Marshall-Putnam and Bureau Counties)
- Faith-based organizations (Bethal Lutheran church, Ottawa)
- Youth serving organizations (Bureau County 21st Century Grant Programs, Zearing Child Enrichment Center, Princeton/ Bureau County Metro Center, Princeton)
- Families (4-H Latino Program, DePue)

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