



Community Development

Addison Vang | *Community Development Educator*

- A facilitated conversation with nonprofit leaders in Northeast Wisconsin where participants discussed contact and appearances with various media. The purpose of this effort is to learn ways to connect with creators and reporters from various media sources and the production of materials for various types of news outlets, and as a result, increase organizational capacity to address community needs.

Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Horticulture Outreach Specialist*

With year's end, I am excitedly looking forward to the 2023 garden season. One project I'll be working on is to demonstrate small space gardening techniques and design by utilizing some of the round planters in the Dunn County Government Center's courtyard. The gardens will illustrate food growing in small spaces and how to incorporate flowers and herbs, which can provide pollinator support and wellness benefits. The goal is to show the benefits of gardening and to encourage everyone to garden even if with limited space.

With this project, I will also include items identified by Stepping Stones of Dunn County in their 'Grow-A-Row' initiative. This initiative encourages gardeners to grow items for donation to the food pantry that better meet the needs of Hmong and Hispanic families in the area.

I am currently putting together the curriculum for the 2023 garden program with the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Greater Chippewa Valley - Menomonie Center.

I have recently joined Extension's Climate Leadership Team, which helps build Extension's climate programming. This work will dovetail with our program focus to continue education that emphasizes proper plant selection, plant placement and soil health to build more sustainable, resilient landscapes. I hope to demonstrate this with the plant list I am working on with facilities to add plants around the building.

I have had a stimulating season of horticulture inquiries. Questions covered a wide range of topics – always good for keeping me on my toes. So far in 2022, I have recorded 315 one-to-one contacts with community members asking yard and garden questions. I anticipate questions to pick up after the holidays as winter is the time for questions on home insect invaders, houseplants and spring garden planning. Happy Holidays, Everyone!

- A community of practice meeting winter 2022-spring 2023 for educators working with outdoor youth programs where we explore ways and resources to ensure all youth can flourish in the outdoors. The goal of participating in this group is to dig into ways we can locally continue to grow and enhance our youth gardening programs to include a multifaceted approach that embraces more nature / environment based topics.
- Four sections of an online Lab component for the 2022 Foundations in Gardening (previously Foundations in Horticulture) course where participants from the Foundations in Gardening course (home gardeners) apply what they learned from the Foundations course through interactive activities. This effort is designed to encourage best horticultural practices in Wisconsin for better environmental outcomes.
- An online course for consumer audiences (home gardeners) where participants learned fundamental knowledge of Wisconsin horticulture with an emphasis in Integrated Pest Management. The goal is to increase decision-making and problem-solving skills, improve the productivity / health of gardens and landscapes, and to implement gardening practices that have a positive impact on the environment.
- Planning for a statewide webinar series for consumer horticulture audiences where participants will learn about pollinator decline, climate change and environmental contamination and pollution. The goal of this effort is to increase adoption of horticultural practices addressing identified environmental issues in Wisconsin.



Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | *FoodWise Coordinator*

Joy Weisner | *FoodWise Educator*

Jael Wolf | *FoodWise Educator*

Vacant | *FoodWise Educator*

- A collaborative effort with Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Health Dunn Right, and Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions to promote diabetes awareness by sharing a prediabetes risk assessment flier through our Chippewa Valley communities. This effort helps promote community engagement in the reduction of chronic diseases and responds to the needs identified on the community health assessments.
- A collaborative effort with Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Health Dunn Right, and Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions to promote our 2022-2023 Winter Wellness Initiative. This effort helps promote community engagement in winter activities that include increased physical activity, increased access to local food in winter farmers markets, and stress reduction as action steps to reduce chronic diseases.
- A collaborative effort with Mayo Health System providers and St. Francesca Resource Center to implement a program that screens for chronic diseases and connects people to healthy food and nutrition education at a food pantry. This program aims to promote healthy eating and active living as action steps to reduce chronic diseases.
- Monthly meetings with the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Health Dunn Right, and Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions. This effort helps guide the action teams in providing community awareness and activities concerning healthy food access, food security, and increased physical activity for local families.
- Monthly Steering Committee meetings with the executive leadership of the Chippewa Healthy Improvement Partnership and Health Dunn Right during which organizational needs are reviewed and discussed. The purpose of this effort is to help the organization identify a strategic direction in order to more effectively guide its action teams including the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams.
- A series of virtual strength training sessions for older adults where they improve strength, balance, and flexibility. This effort helps them to stay healthy and socially connected with other seniors throughout the state.
- A 12-week virtual strength training series for older adults where participants improve strength, balance, and flexibility. This effort is designed to help individuals stay healthy and socially connected during a difficult time of isolation.

Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*

Early this month I presented at the All Colleagues Conference in Madison on the topic of Universal Childhood Savings Accounts, and was able to submit a short video on the topic of aging and wisdom. It was wonderful to finally meet some of my colleagues in person after years of online meetings. My colleague Yia Lor from Eau Claire and I co-facilitated a presentation on self-compassion to Head Start educators from our region that same week.

Work with justice-involved families continued this month with several recording sessions in partnership with Deputy Pyka at the Dunn County Jail. Five children will receive beautiful children's books that were picked out by their parents. Caregivers will also get a video link where the child can see and hear their mom or dad reading them the book. I include tips for interactive reading and helping children with their emotions for the caregiver, and a tiny stuffed animal for the children.



- A program for justice-involved families where parents in jail select a book, are video taped reading the book for their child. The book is mailed and the recording is shared at home with the child and other caregiver. The goal of this program is to reduce the trauma of separation, strengthen family relationships and at the same time increase children's exposure to books and reading.
- A workshop where justice-involved parents learn the importance of reading aloud to children and ways to engage their child through books and daily interactions. The goal of this program is to help parents strengthen the child-parent bond and build key literacy skills, which are an important foundation for success in school and life.
- An evidence-based online co-parenting class designed for parents who will be sharing custody of children. This four-hour course is designed to improve parenting to protect children, increase cooperation between parents and help parents care for themselves in a time of stress.
- A community needs assessment of dozens of county partners and local service organizations. The goal of this assessment is to identify local problems, root causes, local conditions, and appropriate educational support to be offered by the Human Development and Relationships Educator.
- A wellness program for educators where participants learned the components to self-compassion and developed their own care plan. This effort is designed to increase use of positive self-management strategies for improved mental health.

Programs open to Dunn County and offered by Area 6 Human Development and Relationships Educators, Jeanne Walsh and Yia Lor

- A coaching and Money Matters program for qualifying individuals, where participants learn how to create financial goals and gain money management skills. The goal of this program is to increase meeting financial goals and increase financial capability for long term financial success.
- A coaching program for families and individuals, where participants learn how to create financial goals and gain money management skills. The goal of this program is to enable participants to prepare for and take charge of household financial situations that occur due to changes in income or unforeseen hardships.
- An article for parents of preschoolers where they learned what toddlers go through developmentally, how to build confidence and love, and stay connected to a rapidly growing and changing child. This effort is designed to support family stability and resiliency.

Positive Youth Development

Please help me in welcoming Zachary Rozmiarek as the new 4-H Program Educator in Dunn County! Zac comes to us with a degree in conservation and a minor in outdoor education along with a masters in elementary education. He has worked in the classroom setting as an elementary school teacher and has presented educational programs in his role as an interpretive ranger. He has a love for 4-H dating back to his childhood. I am excited about Zac's background, skillset, and experiences and anxious to see all the great opportunities he will bring to the 4-H position!

Zac will start his position on January 3, 2023. Welcome Zac!

- Planning for a virtual series of classes for youth where youth learn new food preparation and life skills. The goal of this effort is to help youth continue 4-H Project Learning while from the convenience and safety of their own kitchen.
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Natural Resources

- Technical assistance for a partnership group (Rain to Rivers) which raises awareness and encourages action to reduce storm water impacts. The goal of this effort is to increase storm water management awareness and implementation.
 - Facilitation of bimonthly meetings of the Red Cedar River Water Quality Partnership, with the goal to implement a ten-year watershed plan aimed at improving the water quality and soil health of the Red Cedar River Watershed
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Agriculture

- Creating instructional videos for dairy and beef farmers to aid in artificial insemination programs used on their farms. The objectives of the videos are to help visual learners by reinforcing the topics taught during the Artificial Insemination Course that aims to improve success of artificial insemination programs on dairy and beef farms.
 - Planning for a dairy/ livestock production meeting for women farmers. The goal of this effort is to educate women farmers on various production methods, so that they can keep their farms profitable or implement new enterprises to keep their farm profitable.
 - A monthly column in WI Agriculturist magazine for farmers and ag professionals, where readers learn about farm management and available Extension resources. The purpose of this effort is to improve farm business decision-making.
 - A podcast series, AgriVision, for farmers and ag professionals, where UW Extension educators answer Farm Management questions and share knowledge and expertise on how farmers can improve their farm management skills.
 - Planning for a survey of QuickBooks users in collaboration with other educators that are part of the North Central Extension Risk Management Education grant. The goal of this effort is to identify what areas of training are needed in QuickBooks, so those producers can have a better financial understanding of their farming operations.
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Support

Michelle Bachand | *Support Specialist*

December was a month that went by entirely too quickly.

- The month started with the Extension All Colleague Conference in Madison, which was an engaging and impactful opportunity to reconnect.
 - I continued to work on the redesign of our County Extension website and recorded two educator video introductions to add to the site.
 - I worked with Finance to develop a financial process for the new support position as it is transitioning to be a UW-Madison employee. I also created process documents that will assist with the transition.
 - The Outreach Support Associate position has been posted and closes on January 19, 2023. Please help spread the word, <https://go.wisc.edu/xbqb8f>!
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Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DUNN COUNTY

December 2022 Report

Area Extension Director

Kristen Bruder | *Area Extension Director – Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire Counties*

The role of the AED is similar to that of the department head in the county. If you have ideas, thoughts, or want to chat about Extension, please reach out! Below is a brief overview of the role of AEDs:

Extension fully invests in Area Extension Directors (AEDs) who oversee an area. These administrative positions are responsible for partnership management, staff development, financial management and program coordination.

Through the many interactions the AED has with county partners and local educators, the AED develops a solid understanding of the local needs and county priorities and helps to align Extension educational programs to ensure the programs address county needs. Educators also communicate local needs to their programmatic Institutes, which collectively identify opportunities to address statewide needs. Some additional primary duties of the AED include:

- They serve as the county Extension Department Budget Officer and Administrative Officer for the counties in their area. Specific signatory authority is agreed to by the county to allow the AED to serve in this capacity.
- They are the hiring authority of Extension staff and serve as the direct supervisor of Extension educators, conducting annual and mid-point performance evaluations with each Extension employee.
- They are responsible for the regular operations of county Extension offices and provide oversight to county staff within the office.
- They support educators and staff who direct Extension volunteers. They engage when volunteer behavior concerns expand beyond coaching or if dismissal of the volunteer is warranted.
- They monitor and manage risk and liability situations that might arise.