



## Community Development

Addison Vang | *Community Development Educator*

January has been a month of brainstorming. I have been doing outreach and engaging with partners and stakeholders on developing programs. Trying to find opportunities to work with County Departments such as the Health Departments.

It has been great interacting with the Chippewa Valley Hmong farmers through increased farm-related workshop engagements. I believe that the Hmong farmers are beginning to open up about their needs and expectations of workshops. The interactions have helped with development of workshops that target Hmong and other underserved populations. I have continued engaging and raising awareness of Extension and farm related-services.

There will be a Grant Writing Basics virtual workshop this month. The workshop has garnered high interest and some were turned away due to the high number of participants. It is a collaboration between multiple Educators from around Wisconsin that covers about 12 counties in total.

- **Wednesday, February 15, 2023 from 10am-12pm**
- **Register by:**
  - Clicking the link [Grant Writing Basics Virtual Workshop, 2/15/2023, 10:00-12:00 \(google.com\)](https://tinyurl.com/ExtGrantBasic)
  - Copy and paste in browser: <https://tinyurl.com/ExtGrantBasic>
- An educational program for underserved Hmong and BiPOC Farmers where they learned about the importance of food safety and left with handwashing stations for use at their own farms, and also learned about the Wisconsin Local Food Purchase Assistance program. The goal is to reduce challenges and barriers to support and/or expand underserved farm operations with good agricultural practices and economic growth.
- Planning for a series of virtual FEED workshops for food business entrepreneurs in Wisconsin. The goal of this effort is for entrepreneurs that are considering expanding or starting a food based business to learn about types of food business and what is involved in operating these types of business so that they can decide if they want to pursue their business idea and what it would entail.
- Planning for a basic grant proposal workshop for local government, businesses, and organization members and staff. The goal of this effort is to for people to learn how to find and apply for grants, so that they can carryout the activities or their organization, business, or government unit.

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## Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | *Horticulture Outreach Specialist*

Currently, I am shaping the curriculum for the 2023 youth garden program with the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Greater Chippewa Valley Menomonie Center. The program runs for six weeks plus, plant days and clean up days. This year's focus will include the basics of growing a garden but will extend to include an interdisciplinary approach that integrates health, wellness and sustainability.

I am finishing up a draft list of possible plantings for the space in front of the Dunn County Government Center. The goal is beautification with plants that, once established, are lower in maintenance and water needs. I will be reaching out to Scott Nabbefeld, Facilities and Parks Manager to talk about a possible landscape plan.

Small space gardening (keeping gardening accessible) - much has been written about the positive impacts plants and gardening have on our physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. To encourage people of all ages to keep gardening with movement, mindfulness and purpose, I am working on a garden plan for some of the round planters in the Dunn County Government Center's courtyard to demonstrate food growing in small spaces and how to incorporate sensory aspects to support wellness.



New mini garden webinar series to begin: Get Ready to Garden Again! These mini-webinars are free and 20 minutes each followed by Q&A. Registration is required for each mini webinar.... attend only one or all three! This series is open to the public. All webinars will be recorded. Go to <https://bit.ly/3J2Bbk6> to find out more and to register!

February series:

- **Indoor Plant Care During Winter** - Wednesday, February 8, 12:00 p.m.
  - **Rejuvenating Neglected Apple Trees** - Wednesday, February 15, 12:00 p.m.
  - **Planning for a Seed Saving Vegetable Garden** - Wednesday, February 22, 12:00 p.m.
- A community of practice for horticulture educators where we explore strategies and resources to expand horticulture education and outreach to underrepresented audiences. The goal of participating in this group is to dig into ways we can locally continue to grow and enhance our horticulture programs to reach more diverse audiences.

## Health and Well-Being

Sandy Tarter | *FoodWise Coordinator*

Hillarie Roth | *FoodWise Educator*

Joy Weisner | *FoodWise Educator*

Jael Wolf | *FoodWise Educator*

Our FoodWise Team welcomes Hillarie Roth! She will be based out of the Chippewa office but will also serve Dunn County FoodWise programming. Hillarie comes to us with a varied background that will serve her well in this position: nursing, substitute teaching, and lots of community involvement!

Nutrition Educators Joy and Jael have been busy with youth programming. This gives a chance for Hillarie to see the curriculum in action and learn from all the experience that Joy and Jael have gained over the years.

Our team will present at UW Stout's Community Nutrition class in February. We often get asked to shadow our programming from these future professionals wishing to learn more about where and how nutrition education is offered in the community.

Sandy continues to work with the Health Dunn Right- Chronic Disease Prevention Action Team. We are looking for the funding to make the Menomonie Farmers Market -Market Match program a continued success. The Winter Fun in Dunn participation is growing. This initiative will continue through March.

Sandy is providing leadership and education with the virtual StrongBodies program during this winter series.

- Participation in the transition meeting of Healthy Communities Coalition and Alliance Mental Health teams including active support for the local chronic disease prevention action team. This effort will help guide objectives and strategies that support initiatives to help improve the health of local residents.
- A significant effort in time and leadership to onboarding our new nutrition educator and planning FoodWise programming with local partners. This effort will enhance relationship building with staff and reinstate in-person programming in Chippewa County.
- A series of virtual statewide strength training sessions (StrongBodies) where older adults learn best practices along with nutrition and health education. Participants engage in regular strength training exercises to improve strength, balance, and flexibility so they can stay healthy and socially connected.



## Human Development and Relationships

Luisa Gerasimo | *Human Development and Relationships Educator*

During the four hour in person co-parenting class, all five of the court-ordered individuals went from quiet, and reserved, to receptive and positive. Post class measurement showed that the usefulness of the topic was clear to the parents, especially in the area of taking care of their children. That rated a 5/5, with 5 representing "very useful." There was a clear gain in knowledge across all categories surveyed, using a rating scale of zero for no knowledge to five for very knowledgeable. Knowledge of taking care of themselves moved up an average of 1.4 from what was known before the class to what was understood afterwards. Knowledge of how to be more successful with the other parent showed a gain of 1.2, while understanding of how to take care of the children moved up by .4.

Parents were asked if they thought the information provided would be useful in their lives and all five parents gave that question a 5 or "very useful" rating. Asked to list examples of what information was particularly useful, one reported that learning to use the conflict management statement of "I feel" would be useful. Another parent said they found the parent handbook helpful because they had not considered all the areas it covered before.

Other comments included that they would recommend this class to others, and that it was a good thing to go through. One parent wrote: "I hope my ex hears this as well as you presented it, but I see how I can try to approach it better than I have been."

- An evidence-based in person 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.

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

- 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.

## Positive Youth Development

It's been a busy first month for me. I've completed most of my onboarding and training. I am currently working with the Area 6 team to offer programming for our youth. We are putting the finishing touches on the Performing Arts Festival which will take place on February 25th. We are also working on two more programs, Art University and Clover University.

Art University is a virtual program that partners with UW- Stout and Art Integration Menomonie. It will be offered on Mondays in March and April, with an in person showcase in May.

Clover University will be put on for the older youth in the county. We will be offering 2 and a half hour sessions that will allow the youth to dig deep into a topic. There will be a session in the morning, and one in the afternoon. We hope to have about 12 sessions the youth can choose from.

Finally, I have started the process of finding and hiring a summer intern. I am working on getting a description together and it will hopefully be posted soon.

- Planning for the Area 6 4-H Performing Arts Festival where young people speak or perform a play or musical number in front of an audience and judge in order to build confidence and the life skill of public speaking.
- Interviews for camp counselors for our Eau Claire, Dunn, Clark summer 4-H Camp where we provided a realistic job interview experience to youth in order to increase their interview skills and also to select the best young people for



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the role of camp counselor for summer camp.

- Planning for two 4-H camps for over 80 youth from Clark, Dunn and Eau Claire counties, where youth will sleep overnight in cabins and tents. The goal is to bring youth together to try new activities, make new friends, and experience nature and time away from home in a safe setting.
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## Agriculture

- An in-person educational presentation for farmers, where participants learned about soil erosion issues and ways to mitigate soil erosion in pastures in order to drive research-based solutions that address erosion and improve the efficiency and profitability of local livestock farms.
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## Support

Vacant | *Outreach Support Associate*

The hiring process for the Outreach Support Associate is ongoing.

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## 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.