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## Extension Impact: Education Makes a Difference

### Building Bridges Across Communities

It has been about a year since the formation of “Building Bridges across Communities”, an initiative to engage and reach the growing Latino/Hispanic population in the county through understanding needs, relationship-building and leadership empowerment. The “Building Bridges” program highlights the value of UW-Extension’s transformational education perspective. The combination of relationship-building, group vision and bridging university and local knowledge that transform lives and communities in impactful ways. The past year was successful in growing its membership and strengthening relationships.

The work in the past year opened a door for a unique opportunity. Building Bridges group is one of 45 projects selected to be part of the *eXtension Foundation’s* 2017 Diversity & Inclusion Issue Corps—an initiative to improve diversity and inclusion within Cooperative Extension, its partners, and the public. This opportunity combines virtual and face-to-face support to give “Building Bridges” clarity, focus and innovation to make a measurable impact at the local level.

The first event will take place this February, with three “Building Bridges” representatives attending a 2-day “eXtension Designathon” in Cincinnati, Ohio. Participants will be connected with three elements:

- Hands-on dynamic concept mapping exercise to refine project design
- One-on-one consulting to understand and use goal-oriented innovative approaches
- Opportunity to share work and build connections with colleagues across the country

This information will be brought back to the rest of the group, and together they will continue its efforts to learn together, and work collaboratively to achieve its goals.

~**Sandy Liang**

La Universidad de Wisconsin-Extensión, un empleador con igualdad de oportunidades y acción afirmativa (EEO/AA), proporciona igualdad de oportunidades en empleo y programas, incluyendo los requisitos del Título VI, Título IX, y de la Ley para Americanos con Discapacidades (ADA).

## Extension Impact: Education Makes a Difference

### Field Day Demonstrates Cover Crop Benefits for Farmers and non-Farmers

The first step in any successful cover crop system is to establish a primary goal. The list of potential benefits is long, including: ground cover to reduce erosion; forage as hay or grazing; nitrogen credits for future crops; natural weed control, not to mention better quality soil with increased organic matter, improved soil structure, greater water infiltration, and nutrient recycling for better yields. That’s why experienced cover crop farmers advise others to start with one goal and build from there. Early goals may include ground cover for erosion control or additional forage for livestock, with longer-term goals to improve soil quality and yield potential for primary crops.

Last fall, Greg Blonde, Waupaca County UW-Extension Agriculture Agent, helped organize and host a Cover Crop / Soil Health Field Day near Bear Lake south of Manawa. The event was co-sponsored by the Waupaca County Forage Council and also featured Extension specialists from UW-Madison, as well as a well known cover crop specialist all the way from Indiana. Seventy-five people attended the outdoor event, which included field tours of nine cover crop mixes, a below ground soil pit to assess soil health and a rain simulator to show the effect cover crops and soil health have on soil erosion and runoff.

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*Greg Blonde, UW-Extension Agriculture Agent, talks about using cover crops as part of a rainfall simulation demonstration during a Cover Crops Field Day near Bear Lake in October.*

Video of the rainfall simulator is available on the Waupaca County UW-Extension website at: <http://waupaca.uwex.edu/agriculture/>. Additional follow-up videos were also produced as a result of this local Extension field day event with filming, editing and statewide distribution through the UW-Extension Nutrient and Pest Management (NPM) program.

*Nine cover crop demonstration plots were featured during a Field Day along Hwy 22/110 on the east shore of Bear Lake last Fall. Several training videos were also recorded at the site and are now available on-line at: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/covercrop/>*



~**Greg Blonde**

University of Wisconsin, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin counties cooperating. UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming including Title IX and ADA.



## 4-H Teen Winter Camp; Preparing Youth for the Future

The temperature on Saturday morning was -5 degrees, but this did not stop 22 youth from Waupaca, Portage, and Marathon Counties from enjoying a weekend of teambuilding, leadership, workforce preparation, and outdoor adventure at Winter Camp. 4-H Teen Winter Camp is for youth in grades 7 and above and the group travels by bus to Upham Woods Outdoor



Education Center near Wisconsin Dells, Friday night through Sunday morning January 6-8. 4-H Program Advisor, Penny Tank, worked with the other 4-H agents to plan the schedule for this educational and fun weekend. Campers participated in a low ropes course and group initiatives facilitated by Upham Staff, and a variety of hands on exercises related to 4-H and workforce preparation led by Tank. After brainstorming group work, games with real life scenarios from 4-H curriculum, and activity cards with role plays about helping youth prepare for their future, the 4-H members indicated increased knowledge on the Winter Camp evaluation. Evaluation results included:

On a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much), rate the following statements for before camp and after.

- “I feel like I could communicate the connection between 4-H opportunities and workforce or career readiness” Before Camp average=3.90 and After Camp average=4.62
- “I understand the similarities between [4-H] life skills and skills employers are looking for” Before Camp average=3.71 and After Camp average=4.62

Other reflections about 4-H involvement helping to prepare youth for their future included:

- *The market animal auction helps me learn money management and personal responsibility.*
- *4-H State Youth Conference helps me learn about better life choices.*
- *One goal I will make for myself in 4-H is to make sure I pursue what I want to do and keep at it.*
- *I learned I can start my own business.*
- *Through 4-H Art Team I broadened my look on other points of view.*



~Penny Tank

## Leadership Waupaca County Takes on Madison

On January 11-12, Leadership Waupaca County traveled to Madison for the state government session. While in Madison, the participants were able to meet with many elected and appointed officials, including Rep. Kevin Petersen, Assistant Deputy Secretary Dan Buttery, Wisconsin Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Attorney General Brad Schimel, Dir. Of Government Relations for Electric Cooperative Network Association Beata Wierzbza, WTA Executive Director Mike Koles, Senator Luther Olsen, Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch, Justice Rebecca Bradley, and Fiscal Bureau Director Bob Lang. Each team was also able to meet with a representative that has had experience with their chosen topic. The team working on broadband access met with Rep. Kevin Petersen, the team working on opportunities for young professionals met with Rep. Jason Fields, the volunteer development team met with Rep. Amy Loudenberg, and the team working on access to drug treatment options met with Rep. Paul Tittel.

~Jessica Beckendorf



LWC Class XVII participants in the Governor's Conference Room

## Yuck To Yum, Using Fresh Fruits and Vegetables when Cooking with Kids



The Waupaca UW-Extension FoodWise team has increased programming this year to include grant-funded Yuck to Yum cooking classes. These 4-week combined parent and child classes address two of the barriers to cooking with fresh fruits and vegetables— lack of education around cooking with children and access to the tools needed to prepare nutritious meals at home.

The FoodWise team of Kelly Hammond and Christi Beilfuss partnered with the Waupaca Family Resource Center to host the first series of Yuck to Yum Classes back in October of 2016. WIC, Healthy Beginnings and Head Start were also key partners in promoting the classes. The evidence-based, *Feeding for Healthy Eating Curriculum* was used, along with family-friendly recipes. Families learned how to make simple soups, salads, wraps and smoothies; and went home with a knife and cutting board, vegetable peeler, a salad strainer/spinner and a multi-use ninja blender.



Families enjoyed time eating a meal that they learned to prepare at class.

Using pre-post survey data of the 10 families that participated in all 4 lessons, results showed an 80% increase in parent's willingness to let children serve themselves, a 40% increase in parents saying they would turn off the TV during mealtimes, and a 30% increase in parents willing to engage in family mealtime by sitting together as a family. *"It helped to develop new and good cooking and eating habits. It was very fun and I learned a lot"* said one of the parent participants.

The second series of Yuck to Yum Cooking classes will take place in Clintonville in March of 2017



L: One of our littlest learners helped her parents make a fruit smoothie. R: Another learner helps Kelly prepare soup. All of the families went home with Ninja blenders on the final day.



~Kelly Hammond and Christi Beilfuss

Got a minute? Tell us how Waupaca County UW-Extension programs and people have helped you learn, grow or succeed. Visit <https://uwcx.org> to share your story.

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The purpose to which we commit...  
“We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities in Waupaca County.”

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