



**Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
WAUPACA COUNTY

# Extension Impact: Education Makes a Difference

## The Impact of 4-H

By Penny Tank, UW-Madison Extension 4-H Educator for Waupaca County

Annually each fall, we recognize and thank the 4-H members and volunteers for their accomplishments, achievements, and contributions to the program. The last two years graduating 4-H members have been asked to complete some reflection questions about their 4-H experience and those narratives have been made into facebook posts. Members themselves say best what 4-H has meant to them. Below are shared some of the highlights from 4-H graduates in 2021:

**Jessica Beckendorf**  
Community Development

**Christi Gabrilkska**  
FoodWise

**Sandy Liang**  
Human Development &  
Relationships

**Hailee Struck**  
FoodWise

**Penny Tank**  
4-H Youth Development

**Chris Viau**  
Area Extension Director

**Support Staff:**  
Amy Ebert, Annette Spieth

**Extension Committee:**  
Bob Ellis, Dick Rohan, Ken  
Jaeger, Bernie Ritchie, Dennis  
Wengelski



*“Something that I will take with me from 4-H is the importance of helping out in one’s community and really making a difference outside your own home.”*

*“I learned how to lead a meeting while serving as our club president.”*

*“My favorite memory [of 4-H] would have to be going on the Washington Leadership Focus trip and learning about all of the different types of leadership skills to bring back to the community and group.”*

*“I want the young members to know that they’ve made the best decision to join 4-H and should participate in it as long as they can. The 4-H community is going to be extremely beneficial for leadership skills and reaching out to the community.”*

*“One skill that 4-H helped me develop over the years was the ability to speak in front of a group of people. From club demonstrations to speaking at 4-H award banquets, I learned that I can be comfortable with public speaking.”*

*“I am going to miss my club. The leaders and members of my club have helped me over the years and I in turn have helped younger members.”*

*A favorite memory for one member, “Dropping off my projects at the fair and then getting a milkshake at the 4-H Food Stand!!”*

*“4-H has lots of opportunities that fit all kinds of interests for all ages... don’t be afraid to meet new people, they may become lifelong connections.”*

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### **Congratulations to all of the 2021 Waupaca County 4-H Graduates**

Morgan Federwitz	Clintonville, Woodland Badgers
Nicole Kirchner	Clintonville, Woodland Badgers
Megan Zarling	Clintonville, Woodland Badgers
Anna Rustad	Iola, Peterson Mill
Andrew Elmhorst	Manawa, Friendly Valley
Giselle Handschke	New London, Lebanon Cedars
Shane Kimball	New London, Lebanon Cedars
Colin Rowley	Waupaca, Baldwins Mill
Joshua Barnett	Weyauwega, Country Pride

## **Waupaca County Early Childhood Network**

*By Sandy Liang, UW-Madison Extension Human Development & Relationships Educator for Waupaca County*

Early childhood is a critical time where positive and adverse experiences have a significant influence on the trajectory of a child's life. Professionals across public and private sectors have reported the need for more quality early childhood centers, concerns about recent increases in child abuse and neglect rates, and the importance of supporting young families. The **Waupaca County Early Childhood Network** launched last fall for professionals working with young children to connect and collaborate to increase positive, quality experiences for young children.

There were two meetings this past November and December 2021, where participants began identifying opportunities, goals, and action planning short and long-term goals. This strategic planning process was a cross-programming effort between Sandy Liang, Human Development & Relationships Educator and Jessica Beckendorf, Community Development Educator. These meetings have been well-attended, with 14 attendees, representing local, regional, and state organizations which included: educators and directors from child care centers across the county, public library services, Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA), Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR), and the county Planning and Zoning office.



Attendees will focus on taking action in the following identified areas this year: 1) professional development opportunities; 2) connection to peers for support and growth; and 3) learning about local resources.

Investment in the county's young children and those who work with them is key to significant social and economic long-term outcomes. The network's development is one way Extension work transforms communities—educators lead through capacity building, bringing together community members' skills and strength to address complex issues.

## FoodWise Collaborates with Foundations for Living and the Waupaca County Hunger Network to Assemble and Distribute 101 Holiday Meal Bundles

By Christi Gabrilska, UW-Madison Extension FoodWise Coordinator for Calumet, Outagamie, Winnebago & Waupaca Counties  
Hailee Struck, UW-Madison Extension FoodWise Educator for Waupaca County

Waupaca Counties FoodWise program collaborated with the Waupaca County Hunger Network and Foundations for Living to assemble Holiday Food Bundles to be delivered to individuals and families who may not have otherwise had a Turkey and other holiday dishes at Thanksgiving.

The FoodWise staff have helped to facilitate a Food Drive for the past three years to be donated to Waupaca Area Food Pantry. Foundations for Living had procured funding for nearly 120 turkeys, so the Hunger Network decided they'd host a food drive to collect food to assemble holiday meal bundles that would accompany a coupon for one 14-16lb turkey from Piggly Wiggly. This was truly a community effort with donations and volunteers stepping up left and right. Large amounts of food were donated from community members, organizations, and largely from the staff at the Waupaca County Courthouse. Feeding America donated reusable grocery bags for the food to be packed in. Piggly Wiggly worked with Foundations for Living to set aside over 100 turkeys with the funding procured. FoodWise created a nomination form and sent it to all of Waupaca County Health and Human Services and other surrounding



agencies serving individuals in need. Extension staff helped to pack and hand out bags to nominators for delivery. Originally, the team had set out to collect 90 nominations and after all said and done, had distributed 101 holiday food bundles with the help of all of the kind individuals who took time to nominate and distribute the bags to all who received them.

Recipients of the food bundles were grateful for the food they received and the individuals who had submitted the nominations had really nice things to say about the whole process. Each bundle included the reusable grocery bag, two cans of green beans, fried onions, two cans of cream of mushroom soup, stove top stuffing, gravy and one coupon for a turkey from Piggly Wiggly. Additionally, there were instructions on safely handling a turkey, recipes, a 2022 recipe calendar and a cutting board. We look forward to seeking funding for turkeys and hosting a food drive again next year to assemble and distribute to individuals and families.

## 2021-2022 Leadership Waupaca County Program Participants Choose Team Projects

By Jessica Beckendorf, UW-Madison Extension Community Development Educator for Waupaca County

For over 20 years, the Leadership Waupaca County program has been focused on developing leadership skills and knowledge for Waupaca County residents that want to take on or grow in their community leadership roles.

Part of this learning occurs through service learning projects. Leadership Waupaca County is different. LWC

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Waupaca County Courthouse  
811 Harding Street  
Waupaca, WI 54981  
Phone: (715) 258-6230

*Connect with us online:*

**Web:** [waupaca.extension.wisc.edu](http://waupaca.extension.wisc.edu)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/WaupacaCountyUWEX](https://www.facebook.com/WaupacaCountyUWEX)

**Twitter:** [@uwexwaupacaco](https://twitter.com/uwexwaupacaco)

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encourages participants to choose a topic they care about deeply.

The thinking behind this is that something special happens when people get involved in volunteering to work on projects in the community that they both *care about and are above and beyond* what they would normally do. *They feel more connected to the community and to the people in the community.*



Since the inception of this program, LWC participants have logged *thousands of volunteer hours* for these community projects.

We are proud to share this year’s LWC project topics: **Broadband; Keeping and Attracting Young People;** and **Shared Revenue & Budgets.** We will have more information about each project on our website as the teams refine the details of each project. If you’d like to see what some of the past classes have done, you can view that on the website, as well: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/leadershipwaupacaco/>.

## Connecting with Extension Waupaca County Educators & Staff

Extension Waupaca County is closely monitoring the impact COVID-19 is having on our community and our Extension programming. We are following the guidance from UW-Madison, Waupaca County Public Health and our Waupaca County partner and adjusting our procedures for events and staffing as needed.

To continue to be a resource, Extension Waupaca County Educators continue to **work safely and deliver programming using the most current guidance and best practices.** We are very much available—email is best. **Staff are working on innovative methods to serve YOU!** Please check our website for the **latest** information and resources:

**[waupaca.extension.wisc.edu](http://waupaca.extension.wisc.edu)**

You may also **call** our office at 715-258-6230 or **email** [amy.ebert@wisc.edu](mailto:amy.ebert@wisc.edu) for assistance.

### Connect via EMAIL:

#### Educators

**Jessica** [jessica.beckendorf@wisc.edu](mailto:jessica.beckendorf@wisc.edu)  
**Christi** [christi.gabrilska@wisc.edu](mailto:christi.gabrilska@wisc.edu)  
**Sandy** [sandy.liang@wisc.edu](mailto:sandy.liang@wisc.edu)  
**Hailee** [hailee.struck@wisc.edu](mailto:hailee.struck@wisc.edu)  
**Penny** [penny.tank@wisc.edu](mailto:penny.tank@wisc.edu)  
**Chris** [chris.viau@wisc.edu](mailto:chris.viau@wisc.edu)

#### Support Staff

**Amy** [amy.ebert@wisc.edu](mailto:amy.ebert@wisc.edu)  
**Annette** [annette.spieth@wisc.edu](mailto:annette.spieth@wisc.edu)

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