

2019 NECV Posters

Florida 4-H Shooting Sports - Reducing Barriers, Preserving Integrity and Equipping Volunteers

Presenter: Julie Pigott Dillard, County Extension Director & 4-H Agent
UF/IFAS Extension

Abstract:

Reducing volunteer participation barriers while preserving the integrity of training materials was the driving factor behind the project to convert part one of the 4-H Level 1 Shooting Sports Instructor Training from traditional face-to-face instruction to an e-learning platform. The agent took on this challenge as a professional development leave project. Using the Articulate software program, the resulting project yielded a series of five e-learning modules that were narrated, interactive and allowed the learner to complete the training on his/her own time schedule. End-of-module quizzes provided immediate evaluative feedback with two homework assignments rounding out the course. The training was vetted by the Florida 4-H Shooting Sports Committee and two additional outside reviewers as well as pilot tested with a group of 12 volunteers before being adopted for state-wide implementation in December 2017. Since implementation, 53 volunteers have completed the modules online. In addition to the e-learning modules, the agent authored three shooting sports project books and a training/certification guide as well as five forms to assist agents and volunteers in organizing and keeping records for their shooting sports program. Supplementary materials are available to agents and clientele through the Florida 4-H webpage and the UF/IFAS Electronic Data Information Source.

From Garden Gripes to Grateful Gardeners

Presenter: Terra Freeman, Urban and Commercial Horticulture Extension Agent and Master Gardener
Program Coordinator
UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County

Abstract:

So how does a new Master Gardener Coordinator take control of a failing demonstration garden that is maintained by a disgruntled, previously-mismanaged volunteer base? Develop a series of landscape design workshops that simultaneously address programmatic needs and volunteer issues. The volunteers needed direction, education, and leadership. The Horticulture Agent/Volunteer Coordinator needed to assert leadership, make the gardens more manageable, develop programs to report impacts from, impart the mission of the demonstration gardens to the volunteers, and build relationships with volunteers. Throughout this six workshop series, Master Gardeners were provided the education, skill set and tools needed to redesign the demonstration gardens under leadership of the horticulture agent. 100% of 15 participants improved their landscape design skills, increased their understanding of the mission of the gardens, and felt more unified as a Master Gardener team. Throughout this workshop series objectives were met, contributing to a more functional and unified volunteer program and gardens that meet the horticulture department's programmatic needs.

Creating a Culture of Appreciation: Improving Volunteer Relations and Retention

Presenter: Jamie Morris, Extension Specialist
University of Maryland Extension-4-H Youth Develop

Co-Presenters: JoLynn Miller, 4-H Youth Development Advisor - University of California Agriculture and
Natural Resources

Abstract:

Receiving a Thank You note from a youth, a "good job on your presentation" from a colleague or small token of gratitude for presenting can certainly make you feel appreciated. These are but a few ways we receive appreciation, but how do we show appreciation to those who make our jobs possible and easier? Come learn some simple ways to incorporate appreciation in your daily life in order to cultivate a Culture of Appreciation. You may be surprised how easy and beneficial it can be, especially when working with volunteers!

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Tea and Talk, Strengthening a Program's Volunteer Force

Presenter: Toni Gwin, Associate Professor
Washington State University

Abstract:

In the Washington State University Pacific County Extension 4-H youth development program time is spent onboarding volunteers. After the first year volunteer are encouraged to participate in structured meeting on specific program topics. After the first year volunteers indicated feeling removed from the staff. Especially those volunteers joining the program looking for a social outlet. The average county 4-H volunteers is sixty-two, female and retired living in communities with less than one thousand residents across Pacific County Washington.

At the start of the new program year staff organize a county tour, stopping for two hour beverage breaks in each community. Volunteers are invited to join staff. There are no agendas. In this study 193 adults were invited to visit with staff in their community. Tallies were kept of the topics of conversation, exit and mid-year surveys are examined for this activity. Sixty-eight percent of the volunteers participate with staff over eleven years.

These two way multifaceted exchanges foster a volunteer friendly environment and encourage a sense of team. Personalizing the volunteer to the staff helps to view the volunteer in a positive manner. This positive connection benefits when addressing a volunteer's behaviors. Every volunteer report these talks increase their satisfaction, commitment and intent to stay engaged with the program. More volunteers equal increased program capacity.

Creating Community Science: Engaging Volunteers through Citizen Science Programs

Presenter: Katie Higgins, Marine Educator and Volunteer Coordinator
UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant

Abstract:

Using citizen science programs to engage Extension volunteers integrates research, education and outreach in a real and tangible way. Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant has a long and successful history of involving volunteers in collecting data to support scientific inquiry, evaluating project outcomes and long-term environmental monitoring. Those involved in such projects are often those with the longest and most consistent retention in our volunteer program. They become experts in their field allowing them to participate fully in engaging with the public during special events and tabling outreach. Many volunteers use their expertise to participate during summer marine science camps, especially the Women in Marine Science camp geared for middle-school-aged girls. All enjoy their role in training interns and newer volunteers. The combination of specialized training, consistent contact with researchers and an overall sense of contribution to scientific knowledge are powerful motivators for these volunteers. This fealty translates into staunch support for overall programming in terms of impact hours, consistent participation in outreach and special events and fund raising. This session proposes to introduce Extension agents to a variety of proven citizen science programs and approaches to training, support and retention of volunteers involved in such programs.

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Volunteer Development 2.0: Using You Tube to Reach Volunteers

Presenter: Carla Kidwell, Extension Educator
Purdue University

Co-Presenters: Cheven May, Extension Educator - Purdue Univeristy
Megan Hoffherr - Purdue Univeristy

Abstract:

To provide 4-H volunteers with innovative and convenient resources for club meetings, three 4-H Youth Educators collaborated to create six short YouTube videos. Topics included self-esteem, bullying, etiquette, a food science experiment, permanent marker tie dye how-to, and a parliamentary pizza lesson. Videos were less than five minutes long, and links to each video/topic were released and promoted monthly to county volunteers. Video views, likes and comments were used to measure the video's effectiveness, and volunteers were encouraged to share their feedback after utilizing the activities. The Extension Educators also received positive verbal feedback from the video lessons from their volunteers.

Agent Planning Team Vital to Vibrant MGEV Advanced Training Program

Presenter: Sheri Dorn, State Master Gardener Extesnion Volunteer Coordinator
University of Georgia

Co-Presenters: Anne Randle, Extension Agent - University of Georgia
James Morgan, Extension Agent - University of Georgia
Tim Daly, Extension Agent - University of Georgia
Frank Hancock, Extension Agent - University of Georgia
Charlotte Meeks, Extension Agent - University of Georgia

Abstract:

When well prepared and trained on relevant topics, Master Gardener Extension Volunteers (MGEVs) offer a valuable resource to Extension agents for expanding educational outreach at the local level. Quality opportunities to learn more about plants and gardening beyond the initial MGEV training are valued by MGEVs and provide motivation for continued volunteering beyond the first year. To ensure that advanced training opportunities offered to MGEVs equip them to address topics needed by Extension agents, an agent planning team was created in fall 2017. Meeting once in person and thereafter via webconferencing, a team of six Extension agents collaborated with MGEV state program office staff to plan the 2018 MGEV Advanced Training series. 202 volunteers participated in 9 trainings available to MGEVs, including 2 new trainings being offered for the first time. Trainings met or exceeded expectations for 67% of participants, and 94.4% of participants would recommend the training to another volunteer. An agent planning team has been assembled for the next year, comprised of reappointed members of the 2018 team as well as agents new to the team.

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What a Common Garden can Provide, adding to the Master Gardener Toolkit

Presenter: LayLa Burgess, Extension Agent/ Pickens, Oconee, Anderson County Master Gardener
Coordinator
Clemson Univeristy/Cooperative Extension

Abstract:

Individuals work jobs for most of their lives, affording little extra time for gardening where they gain knowledge and experience through trial and error. Those fortunate or able to retire with energy and time in their favor look to programs like Master Gardener to follow their passions, gain knowledge, and give back through volunteering. Some potential MG candidates have a solid understanding of gardening fundamentals and are able to build on that foundation. Others do not have much of a base at all, but begin to build that foundation through the course. However, once candidates diligently learn, test their knowledge, and collect volunteer hours to become a certified MG, they complete the course timid about sharing their knowledge. This theme has been repetitive in the MG courses I have taught in South Carolina. Candidates come into the program a blank book ready to be filled, and they do a terrific job! They struggle and achieve, but remain skeptical of their ability to foster the same experience. I propose that a common garden for candidates to plant, grow, and monitor throughout the course allows them to build confidence in their ability and convey course material learned to others as applicable practice.

Becoming an Advanced Master Gardener

Presenter: Mallory Kelley, Regional Extension Agent, Home Grounds Gardens and Pests
Alabama Extension

Abstract:

The poster will include the guidelines and purpose for becoming an Advanced Master Gardener (AMG) as well as the outcomes seen through its development. Advanced Master Gardener encourages retention in the local association as it allows the MG to refine their knowledge and become a respected local resource. This program rewards those who truly carry out the heart of Master Gardener and that is to assist their county agent through education to the community around them. Advanced Master Gardener certification not only rewards the AMG for their time and interest, but also the local and state MG program and the community in which they live.

Volunteer Learning Opportunities in the Western Region

Presenter: Gemma Miner, State Volunteer Specialist
University of California

Co-Presenters: Stacey MacArthur, Volunteer Specialist - Utah State University
Meghan Phillippi, Volunteer Specialist - Montana State University
Marilyn Lesmeister, Volunteer Specialist - Oregon State University
Sarah Torbert, Volunteer Specialist - University of Wyoming
Carrie Stark, Program Leader - University of Nevada

Abstract:

Volunteer participation at western regional face to face conferences has ranged in the mid to low 200s for at least the past eight years. Approximately 40% of those attending are staff and faculty who see conferences as an opportunity to present research and educational content to advance toward tenure and promotion. This study found that 62% of 4-H volunteer respondents prefer an online training method for regional education.

The largest group of volunteers in this sample are of an age that they likely have children still at home, are in the labor force and according to a PEW report by Parker and Patten, nearly half (47%) of adults in their 40s and 50s have a parent age 65 or older and are either raising a young child or financially supporting a grown child (age 18 or older). And about one-in-seven middle-aged adults (15%) is providing financial support to both an aging parent and a child. (2013). This would explain at least in part, why volunteers shift their preferred training style from face-to-face to online when considering participation in events that are likely to take more time to travel to and cost more.

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Building an Organizational Culture of Volunteer Celebration

Presenter: Keri Hobbs, Extension Specialist
University of Georgia

Co-Presenters: Sheri Dorn, Extension Specialist - University of Georgia

Abstract:

Volunteer engagement is mission-centric for UGA Extension. Annually, 7,612 teen and adult volunteers support the 4-H/Youth Development program, while 2,789 Master Gardener Extension Volunteers support the Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) program. An additional 2,227 volunteers support Family and Consumer Sciences and other ANR programs, such as Master Naturalists. Best practices for volunteer management include the recognition and appreciation of volunteer contributions with formal and informal methods. To create an organizational culture of volunteer celebration, specialists coordinating 4-H and MGEV volunteer programs teamed up to train Extension staff in volunteer recognition and appreciation practices and to offer public recognition of the critical support Extension receives annually from its volunteers.

Collaborative efforts across programs included co-hosted webinar for Extension agents and program staff; creation of a campaign toolbox, including stickers, images ready for social media, notecards, fun puns, and ideas for simple celebratory activities; Volunteer Appreciation Week celebrations, including daily social media posts; Project and Volunteer Spotlights; e-Newsletter from Extension's Associate Dean, heralding volunteer efforts as well as those of employees to cultivate and care for volunteers; administration of a travel scholarship to attend NECV 2017 and 2019; Extension conference lightening round presentations; Volunteer Appreciation picnics and celebration events; and more!

Promoting County 4-H Programs Through Teen Volunteer Engagement

Presenter: Jo Williams, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development
Ohio State University Extension, Scioto County

Co-Presenters: Erin Dailey, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Ohio State University Extension, Jackson County
Josi Brodt-Evans, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Ohio State University Extension, Scioto County

Abstract:

The 4-H Program has long promoted the benefits that teen leadership programming has on youth. This poster will take teen leadership to the next level and showcase how those older youth volunteers can be engaged as teachers, ambassadors and spokespersons for the program. The Ohio State University Extension in Jackson and Scioto counties, trains teens to promote camp, lead community activities, teach school programs, and speak to stakeholders.

Older youth volunteers are the best advocates for the program, because they are the prime example of why 4-H is important. By giving teens the voice to promote the programs they value, the program proves its worth. Additionally, the life skills they gain by serving as older youth volunteers are visible in their confidence, communication and decision-making.

This poster will showcase the training those teens receive, as well as the impact they make and receive from being empowered to share their voices. Participants will leave with access to evaluation results, lesson plans that teach teens to identify audiences, give elevator speeches, etc., and impacts that result from volunteer teen engagement, both on the teens and the overall program.

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The 4-H Thriving Model: Predicting a Mediating Effect of Thriving on Youth Development

Presenter: Mary E. Arnold, Ph.D., Professor and Youth Development Specialist - Oregon State University

Abstract:

This poster presents a graphic description of the development and psychometric testing of the 4-H Thriving Model. Included in the poster will be information about the model's measurement, structure, and the research base upon which the model was developed. The goal of the poster is to help viewers understand how the model was developed, the science upon which it was established, and why it advances our understanding of effective 4-H youth development practice.