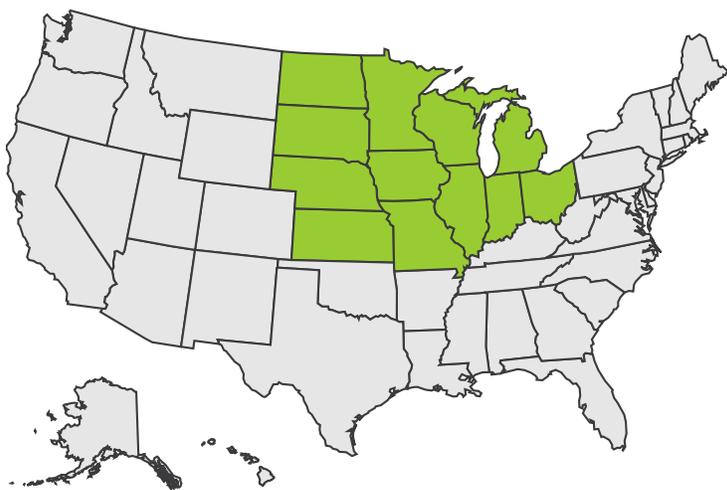


NORTH CENTRAL REGION



University Extension leaders from the twelve North Central 1862 Land-Grant universities developed common indicators for reporting the impacts of community and economic development educational programs. The states collectively developed this report based on in-state action.



Number of Community Development Extension program participants

247,366
TOTAL

23,708
BIPOC

\$162 Million

Dollar value of resources leveraged by businesses



\$2.1M

Dollar value of organization and/or community-generated volunteer hours



\$50M

Dollar value of grants and resources generated by communities



Existing jobs that were **at risk**, protected by programs

35,000
JOBS RETAINED



NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED

9.6K

490
BUSINESS PLANS DEVELOPED



NUMBER OF BUSINESSES CREATED

422

1,755

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS reporting new leadership roles and opportunities undertaken



845

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY or organizational plans/policies developed



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

University of Illinois Extension convened conversations to explore how communities can manage when coal-powered utilities are decommissioned, and how to **scale up renewable energy**. Working with local stakeholders, Prairie Rivers Network, and the Just Transition Fund, Extension created a matrix that outlines community recommendations, precedence from other states, and Illinois proposed legislation around four key areas of concern – assessment and taxes; displaced workers; redevelopment considerations and incentives; and environmental impact. This summary was shared with state legislators, state agencies, and the Illinois Governor and his staff.



PURDUE
UNIVERSITY®

Extension

Navigating Difference is a cultural competency training Purdue Extension provides to deepen participant's knowledge, skills and appreciation for connecting across diversity with clientele, coworkers and community members. Five modules include elements from social justice, intercultural communication and organizational development. Indianapolis Public Library System (IPLS) wanted to improve outreach and service to underserved and vulnerable populations. All IPLS staff completed the intensive training (108) or built cultural awareness skills in a half-day workshop (500). Representatives from IPLS, community leadership programs in seven counties, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and Community School staff reported improved cultural competence, which they apply in interactions in their communities across Indiana.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY Extension and Outreach

In March 2020, Iowa State Extension Community and Economic Development (CED) was poised to launch the **Rural Housing Readiness Assessment (RHRA)** program statewide with funding provided to cities by the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA). With the onset of COVID-19 restrictions, CED converted the program from a face-to-face series into an interactive, virtual workshop experience, and was still able to deliver a quality program with demonstrated local impacts. Since April 2020, CED has successfully conducted eleven RHRAs virtually, with another four about to begin. In recognition of the successful turn toward virtual delivery IEDA has secured funding for ten more communities to be awarded in May 2021.

K-STATE Research and Extension

First Impressions, a program offered by K-State Research and Extension, allows communities to see themselves through the eyes of a first-time visitor as a method to boost community vitality. With the knowledge gained, communities can develop an improvement plan to assist in creating a desirable place to live create a pathway to thrive. Between June 2015 to October 2020, 108 communities have participated. Communities of like size are paired together, and teams of volunteers are trained to visit the match community. Volunteers evaluate the appearance, services, and other community attributes. Results are presented to the community, including recommendations.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

For over 50 years, the **New Commissioner School program** has provided county commissioners, both newly elected and returning, with the preparation they need to enter their new term prepared to lead their counties successfully. The taxpayers of Michigan who demand quality services, the administrators, other county elected officials and staff care about how the county is managed and demand that county commissioners understand their roles and responsibilities, and New Commissioner School prepares county commissioners to meet those demands.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

Northfield, Minnesota's strategic plan focuses on becoming a welcoming community by helping newcomers feel comfortable through recruitment and training of emerging local leaders who look like them. Noting that city boards and commissions lack diversity, the city coordinator collaborated with Extension to launch **Growing Local: 2020 Emerging Leaders Program**. The program attracted 15 diverse Northfielders from groups that aren't well-represented on local committees and boards. The program included sessions to help participants understand personal strengths, what it is to follow and lead in vital communities, and how to motivate others. One participant became Northfield's first Latino School Board member, a testament that the community resonates with her vision.



In 2020 the long-standing **Neighborhood Leadership Academy**, a collaboration between MU Extension and the University of Missouri St. Louis, was redesigned to utilize a virtual delivery mode and expanded to a statewide offering. The program provides leadership training emphasizing community building principles, organizational leadership and management practices, and personal leadership skills. Regional cohorts of participants (58) were organized and facilitated by County Engagement Specialists across the state with educational content provided by (10) Zoom conference meetings. Evaluation responses were strongly positive with a specific focus on engagement and collaboration with student projects to create more livable communities.



Started in 2018, the **Entrepreneurial Community Activation Process** (ECAP) program helped Plainview, a community of 1,200 people, jump-start their community toward action. In just two years, 12 new businesses were created and rejuvenated to help fill the downtown area and a new 12-lot housing subdivision with five new homes was created. In addition, a new community center is being planned as a direct result of the planning process that will create a gathering place for all residents to enjoy. Other communities that have used this planning process are also seeing results. In a two-year timespan, five communities have secured \$3.1 million in community investments.



The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in great uncertainty about the **future of communities and small businesses in North Dakota**. Community members were reaching out for resources and information to support their business community. Extension staff facilitated two virtual town hall meetings to connect communities with resources and each other. In addition, "Community Highlights" featured community partners, local Extension staff and positive examples of collaboration. By shifting to utilizing virtual formats, residents were still able to utilize Extension resources, connect and share and support with one another. The positive energy shared during the town hall meeting helped reassure community leaders that their communities were resilient enough to get through the challenges brought by the pandemic.



OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

OSU Extension Community Development partnered with Vinton County community leaders to develop a strategic plan to **holistically address the county's drug epidemic**. In Ohio, acceleration in overdose deaths coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary mortality data confirm scattered anecdotal reports of increased overdose death during the COVID pandemic and Vinton is one of three counties in Ohio that exceeded all other years. For a county of about 13,000 residents, the drug abuse and overdose issue has created a systemic crisis. The Strategic Recovery Plan brings together agencies, leaders, residents, families, law enforcement, the medical community, and others across the county to work collaboratively to address the issue and create solutions from a variety of community perspectives.



SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

With a need for funding local projects, organizations and communities are eager to learn about writing grants. SDSU Extension Community Vitality has offered basic grant writing workshops called, **Writing Your Future** in various communities across South Dakota for over five years. In 2020, the program was adapted to fit an online format that was well-received by participants. One of the unique aspects of the day-long workshop is the panel of funders and grant reviewers who join the group for a 90-minute panel of real-life tips and challenges they have experienced. While the networking was virtual, comments of new learning were encouraging.



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Small businesses are critical to the Wisconsin economy and local communities. Self-employed business owners help shape economic well-being, security, and resiliency. UW-Madison Extension delivered educational programming to small businesses and entrepreneurs by creating and sharing resources and developing and hosting webinars – a majority related to COVID-19 relief – and by providing direct support – e.g., applying for emergency funding, financial planning, marketing and e-commerce, and business expansion and operations. Additionally, Extension Community Development worked with local communities and regions to understand, analyze, and **develop local and regional entrepreneurial ecosystems** through signature efforts like Homegrown Entrepreneurs of Color Business Support team and Edible Start-up Summit.