



2023

ANNUAL REPORT



NORTH CENTRAL
REGIONAL CENTER
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ABOUT THE CENTER



OUR MISSION

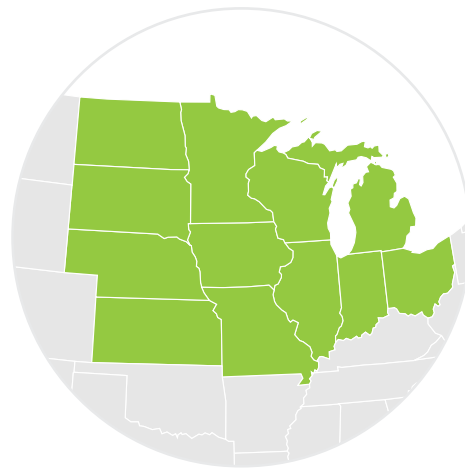
To build the North Central Region's rural communities through cutting-edge research and Extension programs and innovative partnerships. To achieve this mission, we seek to engage research and Extension at all of the land-grant institutions across the North Central Region.

WHAT WE DO

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development (NCRCRD) is one of four Regional Rural Development Centers in the United States. NCRCRD's work links the research and educational outreach capacity of our region's 34 land-grant universities with our region's communities, local decision-makers, entrepreneurs, families, farmers, and ranchers to help address a wide range of development issues unique to our region.

NCRCRD promotes regional collaboration by elevating the research and Extension programs in our region; offering grant opportunities to support new and ongoing regional research, Extension, and integrated activities; establishing a North Central Region dataset to encourage regional exploration; and creating networking opportunities through webinars, sponsorships, and making introductions between our partners.

We approach our endeavors from three thematic areas: Creating Resilient Communities and Economies; Developing Leadership and Civic Engagement; Promoting Community Health and Wellness.



NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas,
Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri,
Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio,
South Dakota, Wisconsin

THEMATIC AREAS



Creating Resilient Communities

The NCRCRD is committed to building a more resilient North Central Region by improving the adaptive capacity of households, businesses, and communities through impactful research and outreach.



Developing Leadership & Civic Engagement

The NCRCRD is committed to working with partners to address constraints and enhance the capacity for inclusive leadership and civic engagement in the North Central Region.



Promoting Community Health & Wellness

NCRCRD's health initiatives focus on enhancing health and wellness in rural communities across the North Central Region by raising awareness, engaging community members to improve public health, and building community partnerships.

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The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development receives core funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (award # 2021-51150-34732 and 2022-51150-38141) as well as from the North Central Regional Association of State Agricultural Experiment Station Directors, North Central Cooperatives of Extension Association, and Purdue University, College of Agriculture. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or those of other funders.

@ 2024 The North Central Regional Center for Rural Development hosted by Purdue University.



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our staff and partners for their dedication and hard work. Our programs and initiatives have continued to provide valuable resources, training, and support to individuals, organizations, and local governments striving to make a difference in the North Central Region (NCR). We are committed to working with all of you to foster sustainable growth in our rural communities. The Center is dedicated to facilitating innovation and collaboration, empowering local economies, preserving cultural heritage, and enhancing livelihoods. We want to work with you to enhance the potential of our region by leveraging knowledge, resources, and partnerships.



Maria I. Marshall, Ph.D.
Director, North Central
Regional Center for
Rural Development

The Center continues to advance in our three focus areas of creating resilient communities and economies; developing leadership and civic engagement; and promoting community health and wellness. In many ways the past year was one of completions and firsts. In 2023 we had a large number of grant projects complete their work with documented impacts throughout the region. In addition, initiatives we introduced in previous years presented new opportunities for us to facilitate work across the region at the intersection of community, business, and household systems to build a more resilient and prosperous NCR.

Highlights from 2023 include:

- In the inaugural year of NCRCRD's first open access regional dataset, use and citations grew for the NCR-Stat: Baseline dataset. NCRCRD also developed two additional NCR-Stat surveys toward our goal of building a series of regional datasets meant to incentivize interdisciplinary collaboration across institutions and across research and Extension.
- We funded our first Working Group and also named another NCRCRD Fellow in 2023.
- The NCRCRD grant program awarded five new grants. Two of these grants were awarded to projects in our new funding categories introduced in 2022 – the 1994 Land-Grant Innovation Grants and the Extension Collaboration Implementation Grants.
- Eleven NCRCRD grant projects completed their work. A portion of the completed grants were interrupted in 2020 by COVID-19 and the Center's move to Purdue. Summaries and their impacts are presented in the Thematic Activities sections in this publication.
- NCRCRD Associate Director, Michael Wilcox and I visited the faculty, Extension, and staff of land-grant institutions in Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, and Minnesota. The visits are part of our goal to visit all of the land-grant institutions in the North Central Region.
- NCRCRD along with other entities at Purdue University received a \$500,000 grant that is part of a larger \$10 million USDA NIFA grant awarded to Michigan State University to develop more resilient food systems for coping with multiple disasters.

Thank you for all that you do to enhance rural communities in our region. Together, we have made a tangible difference in countless communities, and I am confident that we will continue to do so in the years to come. I hope that you will continue to engage with us to foster prosperity throughout our region for a brighter future.

We wish you a productive 2024!

Maria I. Marshall, Ph.D.

Professor, James and Lois Ackerman Endowed Chair in Agricultural Economics

Director, North Central Regional Center for Rural Development

Director, Purdue Institute for Family Business

NCRCRD Board of Directors, Advisors, and Staff

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**NORTH CENTRAL
REGIONAL CENTER
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

NCR-Stat: A North Central Regional Dataset

As one of its major projects, the Center continued work on building a series of open access regional datasets to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration across the North Central Region.



NCR-Stat: Baseline Survey 2022

The NCR-Stat: Baseline 2022 dataset released late last year, is NCCRCRD's initial regional household survey that included questions related to topics crucial for household and community development and wellbeing.

The primary purpose of this initial survey was to get a better picture of the North Central Region and learn more about respective topics. The Baseline Survey is also a starting point for additional surveys on specific thematic areas.

A year since its release, NCR-Stat: Baseline 2022 data is beginning to be used in conferences, journal articles, and graduate student theses.



2023 OUTPUTS FOR NCR-STAT: BASELINE 2022

- 1,316 total views of dataset
- 214 dataset downloads
- 11 publication citations*
- 1 presentation using NCR-Stat*

* See next page for the complete list of 2023 articles and presentations citing NCR-Stat: Baseline.

Additional information and link to dataset:
<https://nccrdr.org/data-resources/nccr-stat/>

Development of Additional NCR-Stat Datasets in 2023

In 2023, NCCRCRD began work on two additional surveys that will expand and build upon the currently available NCR-Stat: Baseline 2022 dataset. These additional datasets are the first of several that begin to fulfill the Center's goal of building a series of regional datasets meant to incentivize interdisciplinary collaboration across institutions and across research and Extension.



The NCR-Stat: Caregiving Survey was developed by researchers from the NCCRCRD, The Ohio State University, the National Farm Medicine Center, Penn State University, AARP, University of Minnesota, Purdue University, University of Rhode Island, and South Dakota State University. The dataset focuses on child, adult, and elder caregiving as an integral part of household and community well-being. The survey is a project of NCCRCRD 2022-2023 Fellow, Dr. Shoshana Inwood, The Ohio State University, and NCCRCRD Faculty Collaborator, Dr. Florence Becot, Penn State University. Available early 2024.



The NCR-Stat: Small Business Survey launched data collection at the end of 2023 and focuses on the intersection of small businesses, benefits, and rural health. The NCR-Stat: Small Business dataset will be available in late-Spring of 2024.



2023 NCR-Stat: Baseline Articles



Armesto Gómez, A. (2023, April 25). *How does the North Central Region perceive residents from different cultures and belief systems?* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/04/25/how-does-the-north-central-region-perceive-residents-from-different-cultures-and-belief-systems/>

Armesto Gómez, A. (2023, May 1). *Does your local community treat all residents fairly? Perspectives from the North Central Region.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/05/31/does-your-local-community-treat-all-residents-fairly-perspectives-from-the-north-central-region/>

Armesto Gómez, A. (2023, September 18). *Unraveling local living: A peek into the diverse preferences of family households with and without children.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/09/18/unraveling-local-living/>

Bednarik, Z. and Wiatt, R. D. (2023, January 12). *Who cannot afford to pay medical bills in the North Central Region?* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/01/12/who-cannot-afford-to-pay-medical-bills-in-the-north-central-region/>

Bednarik, Z. (2023, February 22). *Community awareness of substance use disorder programs in the North Central Region.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/02/22/community-awareness-of-substance-use-disorder-programs-in-the-north-central-region/>

Bednarik, Z. (2023, April 17). *How happy are people in the North Central Region?* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/04/17/how-happy-are-people-in-the-north-central-region/>

Carrillo-Siller, K. I. (2023, March 22). *Perception of equal access to education in communities of the North Central Region.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/03/22/perception-of-equal-access-to-education-in-communities-of-the-north-central-region/>

Carrillo-Siller, K. I. (2023, June 6). *How COVID-19 changed workforce participation preferences in the North Central Region.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/09/18/how-covid-changed-workforce-preferences/>

Carrillo-Siller, K. I. (2023, June 6). *Perception of equal employment opportunities in NCR.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/06/02/perception-of-equal-employment-opportunities-in-communities-of-the-north-central-region/>

Chowdhury, A. (2023, March 14). *Protecting environment in the North Central Region.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/03/14/protecting-environment-in-the-north-central-region/>

Chowdhury, A. (2023, June 6). *How often do North Central Region households run out of food.* North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://ncrcrd.org/2023/06/05/how-often-do-households-in-the-north-central-region-run-out-of-food/>

2023 Presentation Using NCR-Stat: Baseline

Yu, H., & Zuiker, V. S. (2023). *Navigating economic hardship: The impact of losing work hours, working remotely, and childcare in families with children.* [Poster] National Conference in Family Relations (NCFR) 2023 Annual Conference. Orlando, FL.

Looking ahead

In 2024, NCRCRD is working with our sister centers – the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development (NERCRD) and the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) – to conduct the Caregiving Survey for the Northeast Region and the Baseline 2024 Survey for the Southern Region. Be sure to keep an eye out for these new regional datasets – **NER-Stat: Caregiving** and **SR-Stat: Baseline 2024** in the year ahead!

NCRCRD Funding Initiatives Awarded in 2023

We are please to announce that all NCRCRD funding opportunities — Grants, Fellows, and Thematic Working Groups – were funded in 2023 with three awarded for the first time.

GRANT HIGHLIGHTS

► Three Small Grants Awarded in 2023

The small grants program supports the preliminary work necessary to develop Extension programs, curricula, or the initial research for larger projects, as well as organizing regional conferences or presenting results of emerging rural issues. The awarded projects are unique in scope and range from developing peer learning networks to emergency preparedness to elder care.

► First Extension Collaboration and Implementation Grant Awarded (inaugural year)

This grant opportunity is meant to incentivize the implementation of Extension programs available through any of the 34 land-grant institutions (LGIs) in the North Central Region (NCR), in another NCR state where the program is currently not being implemented. The award was given to Central State University for their proposal titled, Growing the Capacity and Resources for Rural Communities. *Learn more on p. 12.*

► First 1994 Land-Grant Innovation Grant Awarded (inaugural year)

Turtle Mountain Community College was award this grant to enhance their leadership program. The 1994 Land-Grant Innovation Grants program aims to enhance the ability of LGIs to positively influence the quality of life for 1994 land-grant stakeholders in rural areas, sovereign nations, and Native American communities in the NCR. *Learn more on p.16.*

LEARN MORE

All 2023 small grants are detailed in the Thematic Activities sections (pp. 12-21) or online at: <https://ncrcrd.org/funding-opportunities/recent-funding-examples/>.

THEMATIC WORKING GROUP

► First NCRCRD Thematic Working Group Funded

Working group funding can be used for team development and meetings, preliminary data collection, or other activities that facilitate multi-state regional and sustainable collaborations that lead to relevant regional outputs. The new working group of seven states is led by Lisa Bates of Iowa State University and focuses on rural housing.

LEARN MORE Thematic Working Group Project detailed in the Creating Resilient Communities and Economies Thematic Activities section (p. 12).

NCRCRD FELLOWS

► 2023 NCRCRD Fellow:

Armin Yeganeh, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Construction Management, Michigan State University

Dr. Yeganeh will be working on an AI project focused on housing in rural communities. He began his project in the Fall of 2023 and will complete in 2024.



Armin Yeganeh,
Ph.D.

► 2022-2023 NCRCRD Fellow:

Shoshanah Inwood, Ph.D.

Rural Sociologist and Associate Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources, The Ohio State University

Dr. Inwood continues her project to lead a team in coordination with the NCRCRD, to develop and implement the NCR-Stat: Caregiving survey instrument. In 2023, the team finalized the survey instrument and finished data collection. NCR-Stat: Caregiving to be released in early 2024.



Shoshanah Inwood,
Ph.D.

► 2022-2023 Faculty Collaborator:

Florence Becot, Ph.D., M.Sc., Associate Professor, Pennsylvania State University

Dr. Becot works in close collaboration with Dr. Inwood to support the development, implementation, and analysis of the North Central Region Caregiving Survey.



Florence Becot, Ph.D.

LEARN MORE

<https://ncrcrd.org/funding-opportunities/current-fellows/>

Eleven Small Grants Completed in 2023

NCRCRD is pleased to announce that eleven small grants completed their projects this year. In 2020, grant projects were delayed both by COVID-19 and the Center's move to Purdue University, so NCRCRD extended the deadline of these grants. In addition, grant projects awarded in 2022 completed their funding cycle this year and added to the final count.

This unprecedented number of completed grant projects, produced a large number of regional outputs and impacts which we have detailed in the Thematic Activities sections in this publication (pp. 12-21) and indicated below.

CREATING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES & ECONOMIES

An Extension Guidebook to Help Communities Plan for Drought Using Scenario-Based Exercises

PI: Deborah Bathke,
University of Nebraska–Lincoln

Homegrown: Entrepreneurship in Your Community — An Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Curriculum

PI: Tessa Conroy,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Enhancing Cost Estimates of Rural Child Care in Indiana

PI: Jennifer Finders,
Purdue University

Supporting Rural Resilience Through the Rural Grocery Specialist Certificate

PI: Rial Carver,
Kansas State University

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Updating Marketing Hometown America Curriculum and Expanding to Additional States

PI: Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel,
University Nebraska–Lincoln

The Impact of Volunteers of Rural Festivals in Sustainable Community Development

PI: SoJung Lee,
Iowa State University

NON-COMPETITIVE GRANT

Special allocation for a collaborative project between NACDEP and NCRCRD

Community Development Extension Library

Tanya Hall, Purdue University; Zach Kennedy, University of Illinois; Tamara Ogle, Purdue University; Anne Silvis, University of Illinois; Gary Taylor, Iowa State University; Michael Wilcox, Purdue University

PROMOTING COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS

Resilient Couples, Resilient Communities: Enhancing Family and Community Well-being Through Sustainable, Evidence-based Programming for Couples in the North Central Region

PI: Allen Barton, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Local Policymaker Perceptions of the Opioid Crisis and the Efficacy of Extension Communications

PI: Daniel Bergan,
Michigan State University

Gathering with Extension Professionals from Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities in the North Central Region to Seek Understanding and Create Collaborative Partnerships in Aging

PI: James Bates,
The Ohio State University

COLLECTIVE IMPACTS OF THE 11 COMPLETED GRANTS



16

presentations



6

websites



1

published article



8

workshops



16

webinars



3

curriculums

2 train-the-trainers

5 professional developments

Small Grant Completed in 2023

Non-competitive Grant: Special allocation for a collaborative project between NACDEP and NCRCRD

Community Development Extension Library –
<https://cdextlibrary.org/>

Collaborators:

Tanya Hall, Purdue University; Zach Kennedy, University of Illinois; Tamara Ogle, Purdue University; Anne Silvis, University of Illinois; Gary Taylor, Iowa State University; Michael Wilcox, Purdue University

Project Goals:

This project aims to create a robust and user-friendly electronic library of resources for Community Development Extension professionals.

Project Accomplishments:

- 1) Library was created, and resources have been added.
- 2) A 2.0 version is being completed, which will allow for a more streamlined and automated uploading process. Two large-scale curriculum efforts FORWARD and TASC have been added to the site. Recruitment efforts have been conducted at NACDEP.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

- NCRCRD Webinar:
 Silvis, A., Kennedy, Z., Ogle, T., Hall, T., and Wilcox, M. (2021, June 15). *How to get the most out of the Community Development Extension Library* [Webinar]. North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v13umPRW480>
- NACDEP 2022 session:
 Kennedy, Z., Hall, T., and Ogle, T. (2022). *Using the online CD EXT Library* [Conference session]. National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) 2022 Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN. <https://virtual.oxfordabstracts.com/#/event/2658/submission/77>

Impact: The Community Development (CD) Extension Library offers a user-friendly home for CD-related electronic resources (i.e., curriculum, fact sheets, and tools), which can be used in the field by CD Extension professionals. The CD Extension Library fosters collaboration between Community Development Extension professionals by connecting end-users to content and content creators. In 2023, the CD Extension Library had 82,651 visitors and 3,937 file downloads.

OUTPUTS

1 website

1 webinar

1 presentation

NCRCRD now maintains and supports the growth of the CD Extension Library. <https://cdextlibrary.org/>

NCRCRD Collaborates with Other Institutions on 5-year Grant to Develop More Resilient Food Systems

Early in 2023, the NCRCRD along with other entities at Purdue University received a \$500,000 grant which is part of a larger \$10 million USDA NIFA grant awarded to Michigan State University to develop more resilient food systems for coping with multiple disasters, such as when flooding occurs during a pandemic.

The five-year integrated project is funded through the Sustainable Agricultural Systems program of the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The portion of the larger grant that NCRCRD is engaged with will develop and test a curriculum to help farmers better prepare for multiple natural disasters. The NCRCRD will assist in deploying the pilot program for the curriculum in Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan.



(Photo: Purdue Agricultural Communications / Tom Campbell)

Conference Development

NCRCRD supported several conferences in 2023 to continue our work encouraging collaboration and facilitating partnerships among land-grant institutions within the region.

FORWARD Train-the-Trainer Workshop

Little Rock, Arkansas • January 26-27

In 2023, NCRCRD and APLU supported the first Train-the-Trainer event for the rural workforce development curriculum, FORWARD. While held at the University of Arkansas, attendees hailed from Tuskegee University, West Virginia State University, Prairie View A&M University, North Carolina Agriculture and Technical State University, University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, Oklahoma State University, and University of Kentucky!

FORWARD curriculum: <https://bit.ly/3LXmizt>



The first FORWARD Workforce Development Train-the-Trainer Workshop held at the University of Arkansas in January 2023. The rural workforce development curriculum, FORWARD, was released by APLU and NCRCRD earlier that month.

2023 National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) Annual Conference

Coeur d'Alene, Idaho • April 30 - May 3

- NCRCRD participation included the Program Leaders Meeting, the North Central Regional Meeting, two presentations, and one poster session.
- NCRCRD also maintained a display table that was shared with our sister Regional Rural Development Centers.



NCRCRD Director, Maria Marshall (at podium) with NCRCRD Associate Director, Michael Wilcox addressing attendees of the 2023 NACDEP North Central Regional meeting.

Rural Sociological Society 2023 Conference

Burlington, Vermont • August 2-6

NCRCRD Research Specialist, Zuzana Bednarik presented, "Urban stayers vs. rural stayers: Understanding location decisions among millennials."

2023 National Extension Tourism (NET) Conference

Milwaukee, Wisconsin • September 24-27

NCRCRD's Shelly Surber served on the 2023 NET Conference Planning Committee and assisted in managing the conference.

Land-Grant Partners Summit: A 2023 FALCON Pre-Conference Event for North Central Region

Denver, Colorado • October 12-13

The Land-Grant Partners Summit brought together 1994s and 1862s to enhance working relationships of faculty and staff at land-grant institutions in the North Central Region. NCRCRD's collaboration on the Pre-Conference Summit continued our work facilitating partnerships among land-grant institutions. The project, led by the first NCRCRD Fellow, Stephen Gavazzi (2022), targeted faculty that want to establish and strengthen relationships between 1994, 1890, and 1862 land-grant institutions.



Shelly Surber (left), NCRCRD and 2023 NET Conference Planning Committee member shown at the registration table with Conference Chair, Natalie Chin, University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Sea Grant. (Photo courtesy Lisa Chase, University of Vermont Extension).

Amplifying the Region's Research and Extension

NCRCRD WEBINAR SERIES

In its third year, the 2023 NCRCRD Webinar Series offered ten webinars that sought to facilitate and enhance collaboration between researchers, Extension professionals, and stakeholders across the North Central Region. To that end, NCRCRD webinars explored a diverse set of topics related to the NCRCRD thematic areas of Creating Resilient Communities, Developing Leadership and Civic Engagement, and Promoting Community Health and Wellness. As in previous years, the webinar content included North Central Region (NCR) rural development Extension projects, research and integrated work of multiple NCR institutions, and results of NCRCRD-funded grant projects.

NCRCRD WEBINAR SERIES:
<https://ncrcrd.org/webinars/>

NCRCRD webinars proved to be a popular avenue for regional engagement in 2023.

- ▶ **Total registrations in 2023 grew 17.6%** over the previous year with a total of 1,230 registrants (an average of 123 registrants/webinar).
- ▶ **Total views of all NCRCRD webinar recordings (1,085 views) increased 36.8% in 2023** from the total views in 2022 (793).

Table: Webinar Registrations for 2022 and 2023

Year	No. of webinars	Total Registrants	Average registrants per webinar
2022	10 webinars	1,046	105
2023	10 webinars	1,230	123

- ▶ **High Ratings in post-webinar attendee surveys:**

★★★★☆

4.45 stars

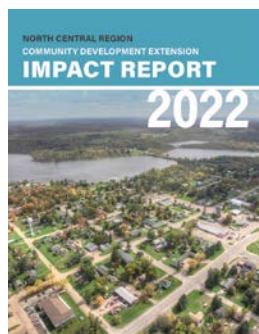
Overall attendees' rating for the 2023 Webinar Series.

★★★★☆

4.46 stars

Likelihood of attending another webinar.

NCR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EXTENSION IMPACT REPORT



NCRCRD hosts and provides logistical support to community development program leaders for their monthly meetings. NCRCRD also facilitates the compilation and reporting of the North Central Region (NCR) Annual Community Development Extension (CDE) Impact Report. The report gathers the common indicators that NCR university Extension leaders from the twelve North Central 1862 land-grant universities developed for reporting their impacts. In 2023, NCRCRD worked to extend representation of CDE programs in the report beyond the 1862s, by reaching out to 1890 and 1994 programs.

- For the first time, the 2022 report included the program highlights of Central State University, an 1890 land-grant university in the North Central Region.
- We also expanded our online presentation of the report to make it easier to explore an individual university's impact and their stories.

EXPLORE IMPACTS / DOWNLOAD REPORT:
<https://ncrcrd.org/community-development/impact-reports/>

Moving Forward: In 2024, an Impact Indicators Retreat is being planned to update the indicators so that they better reflect Extension's work related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; the perspectives of the 1890 and 1994 land-grant institutions (LGI); and to align with current NIFA priorities and reporting expectations. The retreat will bring together the North Central and Southern Regions' 1862, 1890, and 1994 LGI's to develop a proposed list of indicators and make progress toward data collection. The retreat is funded by the North Central Cooperative Extension Association, the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, and the Southern Rural Development Center.

NCRCRD Directors Visit Region's LGIs

In 2023 NCRCRD Director, Maria Marshall and NCRCRD Associate Director, Michael Wilcox visited the faculty, Extension, and staff at land-grant institutions (LGI) in Illinois, Kansas, Nebraska, and Minnesota. The visits are a chance to introduce the Center and its resources and to encourage collaborations among the region's land-grant institutions.

- **Illinois (January)**
 - University of Illinois
- **Kansas (January)**
 - Kansas State University
 - Haskell Indian Nations University
- **Nebraska (October)**
 - University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 - Nebraska Indian Community College
 - Little Priest Tribal College
- **Minnesota (November)**
 - University of Minnesota
 - Red Lake Nation College



Maria Marshall (left) with Rachel King-Siert, Director of Student Services, Red Lake Nation College – Minneapolis.

Presentations and Publications, 2023

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Bednarik, Z., Hall, T., & Anderson, G. (2023). *Building Bank Relationships: The small business banking guide & building relationships to financial services program* [Conference Presentation]. National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP). 2023 Annual Conference, Coeur d'Alene, ID.

Bednarik, Z., Marshall, M.I., & Kumar, I. (2023). *Rural small business loan access and their adaptive capacity in times of crisis using data* [Conference presentation]. Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA). 2023 Annual Meeting, Washington D.C.

Bednarik Z., & Unay-Gailhard, I. (2023). *Urban stayers vs. rural stayers: Understanding location decisions among millennials* [Conference presentation]. Rural Sociological Society (RSS). 2023 Annual Meeting, Burlington, VT.

Wilcox, M., Hall, T., White, M., Sherman-Duncan, J., Burkhart-Kriesel, C., Hill, P., Goodman, H., James, T., Duvall, T., & Ure, K. (2023). *Future Opportunities for Rural Workforce and Rural Development (FORWARD): Workforce development program developed for Extension educators by Extension educators* [Poster]. National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP). 2023 Annual Conference, Coeur d'Alene, ID.

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Bednarik, Z., Marshall, M.I., & Kumar, I. (2023). *Rural small business loan access and their adaptive capacity in times of crisis using data* [Conference paper]. Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) 2023 Annual Meeting, Washington D.C. <https://ageconsearch.umn.edu/record/335449>

Entsminger, J., Green, J., Wiatt, R., & Bednarik, Z. (2023). Multi-method research in the digital age: A methodological case study of a broad-scale rapid rural appraisal. (Under review). *Community Development*.

NON TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS

Press Releases

<https://ncrcrd.org/newsroom/ncrcrd-news/>

NCRCRD. (2023, February 2). *2022 NCRCRD small grant recipients.*

NCRCRD. (2023, February 9). *NCRCRD 2022-2023 fellowship awarded.*

NCRCRD. (2023, May 13). *2023 NCRCRD Small Grants Recipients Announced.*

NCRCRD. (2023, May 18). *First North Central Region 1994 Land-Grant Innovation Grant awarded.*

NCRCRD. (2023, May 18). *First North Central Region Extension Collaboration and Implementation Grant awarded.*

NCRCRD. (2023, August 16). *New NCRCRD Fellow to focus on affordable housing.*

NCRCRD. (2023, August 16). *North Central Region Housing Working Group begins September 1.*

NCRCRD. (2023, November 29). *New microcredential program aims to fill need for grocery transition specialists.*

NCRCRD Quarterly Newsletter

<https://ncrcrd.org/newsroom/newsletter/>

- NCRCRD Quarterly. Q1. (2023, March 2)
- NCRCRD Quarterly. Q2. (2023, May 25)
- NCRCRD Quarterly. Q3. (2023, August 23)
- NCRCRD Quarterly. Q4. (2023, November 30)

Creating Resilient Communities and Economies

Thematic Activities, 2023

Building a more resilient North Central Region by improving the adaptive capacity of households, businesses, and communities through impactful research and outreach.



Grants Awarded in 2023

NCR Extension Collaboration & Implementation Grant

Growing the Capacity and Resources of Rural Communities

Principal Investigator: Eric Smith

Organization: Central State University

State: Ohio

Project Abstract:

Central State University Extension, Community and Economic Development (CSUE CED) team seeks to establish a new “Resilient Communities” program area in accordance with their FY 2022-2023 Plan of Work. To accomplish this, the funding will be used to support the CSUE CED team as they seek to establish the support infrastructure for effective rural development.

The team will utilize the funding for:

- 1) Professional Development: The CSUE CED team will participate in the Community Coaching Learning Circle. This experience will increase our knowledge of the principles and practices of community coaching, an essential component of building community capacity to achieve their preferred future.
- 2) Curriculum Acquisition: CSUE CED team would like to coach communities using the Hometown Collaborative Initiative, or HCI, developed by Purdue University Extension staff.
- 3) Field Trip: With any remaining funds the CSUE CED team will take a field trip to Indiana to tour some of the Indiana communities that have gone through the HCI program and meet with Purdue Extension staff that developed, or have coached communities, through the HCI curriculum.

Housing Working Group

Collaborate, Scan, Develop: A Multi-State DEI Rural Housing Program Based in the North Central Region

Principal Investigator: Lisa Bates

Organization: Iowa State University

States: Multiple

Project Abstract:

The lack of safe and affordable housing accessible to all residents is one of the most important problems for rural communities across the country. This multi-state proposal seeks the NCRCD's support to work across state boundaries and develop research-based housing resources and programming. Improving rural housing conditions across the region will help communities support their local economies that are better able to attract businesses, create jobs, and improve local wages.

Eight land-grant institutions in the region have confirmed their commitment to working together on this proposed housing working group including Iowa State University, Kansas State University, Michigan State University, Purdue University, University of Illinois, University of Missouri, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and University of Wisconsin. This group is committed to working with diverse and underserved populations through research, experience, and best practices to improve all citizens access to quality housing through research-based education and programming. Housing disproportionately impacts underserved communities negatively, this group will work toward the improvement in housing solutions that affect an equally diverse segment of the population across the region.

Small Grants Completed in 2023

An Extension Guidebook to Help Communities Plan for Drought Using Scenario-Based Exercises

Principal Investigator:

Deborah Bathke, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Project Goals:

The overriding goal of this project is to translate existing research findings on how drought scenario exercises are used to engage stakeholders in drought planning and policy discussions into an interactive Extension guide. This interactive guide will provide Extension specialists and others working in community planning with a tool to engage communities in discussions of drought resilience and sustainable water use by using drought scenario-based exercises.

Project Accomplishments:

- Held several team calls and advisory team meetings. These meetings were used to review and validate the information being put on the website. Extension colleagues from Kansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa participated as the advisory team for the project.
- Twenty-eight people from seven different states attended the project workshop that was held in March 2021. We used the input from attendees to revise the Collaborative Drought Planning Using Scenario Exercises interactive website.
- Completed the development of the website, *Collaborative Drought Planning Using Scenario Exercises*. <https://drought.unl.edu/scenarioguide/Overview.aspx>
- Finished two case studies that discuss using the online guide.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

- Held two webinars to disseminate the online guide.
- Online guide showcased on the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) website.
- Created the case studies and helped plan and facilitate scenario workshops which was great professional development for those involved.

Impact:

- The online guide has been used to help create three scenario exercises (that we have specifically helped with).
- Held a workshop that engaged 28 Extension folks.

Links:

Collaborative Drought Planning Using Scenario Exercises: <https://drought.unl.edu/scenarioguide/Overview.aspx>

OUTPUTS:

2 webinars

1 website

1 workshop

6 presentations

2 case studies

Impact Details:

The NRCDC funded website, *Collaborative Drought Planning Using Scenario Exercises* (<https://drought.unl.edu/scenarioguide/Overview.aspx>), presents guidance to help communities plan, develop, and evaluate drought scenario exercises. Since its prototype launch in late 2020, this website has had approximately 10,920 page views, 4,095 users, and 663 downloads of the worksheets and resources available on the site. Since then, these resources have been used in the development of at least a dozen exercises, including those in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin, two Nebraska Natural Resource Districts, Northwest Iowa, and Alaska. In turn, these exercises have contributed to the development of plans at the state and natural resource district level. Other related outcomes include four funded projects (USDA, NSF, and foundation funding) which use the website and its resources. Data collected during the exercises/games are part of two journal articles (in preparation) and the research of one doctoral student. Additionally two publicly available serious games have been developed based on the resources gathered and presented on the website (<https://drought.unl.edu/Education/DroughtGames.aspx>) with an additional in the development stage. The site includes ten case studies from past exercises which describe outcomes and lessons learned from past exercises serve as examples and contribute to the knowledge surrounding the use of scenario exercises in preparing for drought.

Of particular note is the NDMC's work with the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint (ACF) River Stakeholders Board in using the website guidance to develop, facilitate, and evaluate the 2023 ACF River Basin Drought Tabletop Exercise. This exercise marked the first time that stakeholders from Alabama, Georgia, and Florida came together since the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 2021 regarding the equitable apportionment of water in the basin. Approximately 60 participants from federal, state, and local governments and utilities had structured dialogue about how they respond to different stages of drought. Notable outcomes include 83% of participants stating that they learned more about drought planning, 78% learned where to find drought and climate resources, and 72% learned how to use those resources for decision-making and planning. Nearly all (88% - 100%), noted that they met a beneficial contact or identified opportunities to collaborate or coordinate drought management efforts. Most importantly, the workshop helped open the door to building a more resilient future for the ACF Basin. Since this exercise was held, the ACF Board voted to fund and hold an exercise in April 2024.

Small Grants Completed in 2023

Homegrown: Entrepreneurship in Your Community – An Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Curriculum

Principal Investigator:

Tessa Conroy, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Project Goals:

- The major goal is to have an established program that helps communities achieve stronger entrepreneurial ecosystems.
- Developed a workshop for Extension to build and strengthen local entrepreneurial networks. It is a series of five modules typically offered in day-long format with content on entrepreneurship as an economic development strategy and how to engage the local entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Project Accomplishments:

We have a curriculum/content, a train-the-trainer manual, and completed pilots in Wisconsin and Missouri and several in Minnesota. This effort has also been part of other accomplishments including getting a large grant to support rural entrepreneurship and add capacity for programming from Extension in this area.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

- Shared about Homegrown, as well as elements of its content with economic development professionals through webinars and meetings focused on broader discussions of entrepreneurial ecosystems and community economic development.
- Shared about the program at a multistate meeting and are replicating the program as part of entrepreneurship programming in Minnesota.
- Webinar:
Johnson Jorgensen, J., & Conroy, T. (2021, Sep.16) *Using Q methodology to measure rural entrepreneurial perceptions and an overview of Homegrown: Entrepreneurship in Your Community* [Webinar]. North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://youtu.be/16jYwgGrjuM>

Impact:

- Completed a curriculum/content and train-the-trainer manual
- Completed pilots in Wisconsin and Missouri and several in Minnesota.
- This effort has also been part of other accomplishments including receiving a large grant to support rural entrepreneurship and add capacity for programming from Extension in this area.

OUTPUTS:

6 presentations

5 workshops

6 webinars

1 curriculum

1 train-the-trainer manual

Enhancing Cost Estimates of Rural Child Care in Indiana

Principal Investigator:

Jennifer Finders, Purdue University

Project Goals:

The overarching goal of this project is to collect detailed cost data in rural counties to understand how to improve the validity of the cost survey tool and the underlying model assumptions. The primary activities that will be executed to address this goal are: 1) quantitative analysis with existing cost survey and cost modeling data; 2) qualitative focus groups with a subset of rural providers; and 3) pilot implementation of the enhanced tool.

Project Accomplishments:

Under this goal, we have completed the quantitative data analysis and qualitative data collection. We are currently transcribing and coding the qualitative focus group data to identify the major themes that emerged among rural childcare directors as it relates to their operating costs.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

The project has provided many professional development opportunities to Purdue University students.

- One graduate student contributed to survey and focus group protocol development, implementing the focus groups, setting up tracking systems and monitoring progress, and training and supervising undergraduate students.
- Three undergraduate students were involved in recruitment, supported focus group implementation (e.g., note taking, time keeping), transcribed focus group data using a Sonix software, and conducted literature reviews.
- One staff member assisted with creating recruitment postcards. In the future, we plan to engage Purdue Extension to develop toolkits and guides that will accompany the revised cost survey tool.

Impact:

This project will generate knowledge about the costs of high-quality programming across the state of Indiana, as well as the challenges and barriers experienced by childcare directors in rural communities. It also has the potential to inform future reimbursement rate setting for childcare subsidies and identify strategic investments in the workforce.

OUTPUTS:

data collection

data analysis

3 lab trainings

Small Grants Completed (cont'd)

Supporting Rural Resilience Through the Rural Grocery Specialist Certificate

Principal Investigator:

Rial Carver, Kansas State University

Project Goals:

The goal of this project is to develop a curriculum that will provide baseline support to resource providers already supporting rural grocers, but without any prior training. This certificate will expand their understanding of the challenges rural grocers face and the support role they can play in rural grocery business transitions.

Project Accomplishments:

Curriculum development for the new course began in the fall of 2022 and was ready to pilot late-spring of 2023 to a select number of Extension Professionals in the North Central Region. By fall 2023, RGI launched the course and opened registration for its first offering of the 13-week, online course which began January 2024. The course includes seven self-paced online modules covering key topics for supporting rural grocers through business transition. Each module consists of between five and ten video lessons led by subject matter experts from across the country.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

The pilot program provided the opportunity for North Central Extension personnel to participate in this program for free. The goal of this project is to develop a professional development opportunity for resource providers including Extension agents, community leaders, economic developers and others.

Impact:

The first 13-week online course of the Rural Grocery Transition Specialist micro-credential program began in January 2024. Two more 13-week courses will be offered during 2024 to train Extension professionals, economic developers, and other rural stakeholders in business transition planning fundamentals so that they may promote long-term economic resilience in their communities.

Links: Rural Grocery Transition Specialist

<https://www.ruralgrocery.org/specialist/>

OUTPUTS:

1 curriculum

1 online micro credential program

15 presentations

1 website

1 webinar

Webinars in 2023

Rural Broadband Tools and Resources in the NCR (2/27/23)

Presenters: Thomas Keene, Ph.D. Student, Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics and Department of Economics, Michigan State University; Liz Mack, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Environment, and Spatial Sciences, Michigan State University; and Roberto Gallardo, Director, Purdue Center for Regional Development & Associate Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics, Purdue University. <https://youtu.be/vbYwkOnBlYo>

Be Prepared, NCR: A Community Planning Approach to Green Infrastructure, Hazard Mitigation, and Flooding (3/7/23)

Presenters: Kara Salazar, Assistant Program Leader and Extension Specialist for Sustainable Communities with IL-IN Sea Grant, Purdue University Extension, and Purdue University Department of Forestry and Natural Resources; Carrie McKillip, Extension Educator of Community and Economic Development, University of Illinois Extension; Kenneth Hellevang, Professor, Extension Engineer, Department of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering, North Dakota State University. The March webinar was co-presented by NCRCD and the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN). https://youtu.be/4-V_FTtFanc

Siting Clean Energy and Spent Nuclear Fuel Facilities: Rural Opportunities and Impacts (4/25/23)

Presenters: Vincent Ialenti, Social Scientist, U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Nuclear Energy, Consent-Based Siting Team; and Sarah Banas Mills, Senior Research Specialist, Graham Sustainability Institute and Lecturer, School for Environment and Sustainability, University of Michigan. <https://youtu.be/zNnzXcLj3so>

Rural Tourism in the North Central Region and Additional National Resources (5/16/23)

Presenters: Andy Northrop, Extension Educator, Community Vitality – Tourism, Michigan State University; Global Scholar; Chair, National Extension Tourism Network; Xinyi Qian, Director, University of Minnesota Tourism Center; Vice Chair, National Extension Tourism Network; and Natalie Chin, Climate and Tourism Outreach Specialist, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute. <https://youtu.be/9TcZGyO6s84>

Developing Leadership and Civic Engagement

Thematic Activities, 2023

The NCRCRD is committed to working with partners to address constraints and enhance the capacity for inclusive leadership and civic engagement in the North Central Region.



Grants Awarded in 2023

NCR SMALL GRANT

Leadership Chautauqua: Utilizing Peer Learning Networks to Revolutionize Extension's Approach to Community Leadership Development Systems

Principal Investigator: Lindsay Hastings

State: Nebraska

Organization: University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Project Abstract:

Today's global challenges have complicated the world so much that community leaders can no longer rely on traditional leadership practices. Yet, transformative change demands new ways of thinking about and practicing leadership development that considers both global realities and local norms.

Through this project, we will engage leadership scholars and practitioners with peer networks of community leaders in a Chautauqua to develop a new approach to leadership development that goes beyond individual leader training to engage communities in creating a leadership ecosystem that builds more robust leadership capacity and culture.

Enhancing land-grant institutions' capacity for influencing the quality of life in rural areas lies in moving past the band aid approach of swooping in to do leader training at a single point in time. Rather, this approach will concentrate on creating community-based systems that support community members in developing their efficacy and capacity for leading community level change.

1994 LAND GRANT INNOVATION GRANT

Turtle Mountain Community College Leadership Internship Program

Principal Investigator: Anna Ross

Organization: Turtle Mountain Community College

State: North Dakota

Project Abstract:

The Bachelor of Arts in Ogimaawin Leadership and Management program of study is designed to prepare leaders in the areas of businesses, organizations, and tribal governments. Students will also have an understanding of the principles of good and effective leadership practices and strategies. Holders of the degree are grounded in Ojibwe culture, history, values, and in leadership techniques and practices.

Ogimaawin Leadership and Management Program is centered around native nations to have the needed skills to strengthen and rebuild nations that will have the necessary leadership and management skills. Internships are very important to the program to provide hands-on experience not available in the classroom. It is also very important for the learner to take advantage of the experience.

Leadership Internships consist of a minimum of 15 weeks for the student's final senior semester. Though some of our internships are paid, many of the students work in unpaid positions, leaving a tremendous financial burden on our students who are often single-parents and need to pay for childcare while working the internship.

TMCC's proposal is to use the funding from the grant through the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development to pay for six internships for our students. Currently the program has a cohort of nine students, and TMCC anticipates we will be able to find paid positions for the remaining three students. Payments to the students will be made at four different intervals following successful completion of performance milestones developed at the beginning of the internship program.

Small Grants Completed in 2023

Updating Marketing Hometown America Curriculum and Expanding to Additional States

Principal Investigator: Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel, University Nebraska – Lincoln

Project Goals:

The main purpose was to refine and update the Marketing Hometown curriculum, which is a community engagement process using study circles and action planning to help communities market themselves to new residents and businesses. Initially, the group was interested in adding more diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) information to the conversation host experience and updating the photos and text to be more inclusive in the participant guide. The abrupt change with COVID-19, allowed the group more time to do a much more expansive revision via distance.

In addition, this project created a suite of resources to help local Extension staff initiate the program, recruit participants, and successfully conduct the program in their communities. And with the travel aspect of the proposal eliminated with COVID, the funds were allowed to be used for curriculum graphic design and promotion.

Project Accomplishments:

- A writing team of ten Extension faculty from four states who put in countless hours of brainstorming, ideation, development, coordination, and revisions produced:
 - Substantial additions to the curriculum in diversity and inclusion, the marketing process, and the conversation host training guide.
 - A new corresponding participant workbook.
 - An online library of resources.
- Our team is working with communities who have gone through the program to develop a short video that showcases both the program and their community.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

- 1) NACDEP 2022 Annual Conference Session:
Linscheid, N., Burkhart-Kriesel, C., Schlechter, P., Schlake, M., Adams, L., O'Neill, K. (2022). *Marketing Hometown America: A multi-state collaborative program* [Workshop]. NACDEP 2022 Annual Conference, Indianapolis, IN. <https://virtual.oxfordabstracts.com/#/event/2658/submission/45>
- 2) A multi-state, train-the-trainer event in 2022 for the "new to the program" was held in Bozeman, MT specifically for Montana and Michigan Extension faculty. Faculty from Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota were also in attendance.
- 3) Two training webinars: One Marketing Hometown America all-team webinar training and one for Nebraska Extension faculty affiliated with the Rural Prosperity Nebraska team.
- 4) In Iowa, four regional trainings across the state were held to help local county faculty and staff become more familiar with the program.

Impact:

Our impact is the development of the curriculum materials which are being used in our partner states. In 2022, two communities in South Dakota have completed the program with a third in the planning stages. Three locations in Iowa have ordered materials which indicates an intent to deliver in 2023. Conversations with communities are happening all across the nation where the Extension faculty are trained (Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Michigan, and Montana). States are ramping up at different speeds, depending on the availability of faculty.

OUTPUTS:

1 curriculum

3 webinars

1 website

1 workshop

1 train-the-trainer

Small Grants Completed in 2023

The Impact of Volunteers of Rural Festivals in Sustainable Community Development

Principal Investigator: SoJung Lee, Iowa State University

Project Goals:

- 1) Identify how volunteers influence community sustainability by measuring the relationships among factors of motivation, psychological ownership, engagement, and community support.
- 2) Examine if volunteers' demographics (e.g., age, gender) and festivals' profiles (e.g., theme, size, season) moderate the impact of volunteers on the rural community in the model.
- 3) Create an initial assessment tool that can serve as a foundation for developing a toolkit and a training program used by rural festival organizers, Extension specialists, and rural community stakeholders.

Project Accomplishments:

- We identified how volunteers influence community sustainability by measuring the relationships among factors of: motivation, psychological ownership, engagement, and community support. We found psychological ownership is a critical factor that connects rural festival volunteers to community activities.
- We examined if volunteers' demographics (e.g., age, gender) and festivals' profiles (e.g., theme, size, season) moderate the impact of volunteers on the rural community in the model and created an initial assessment tool that can serve as a foundation for developing a toolkit and a training program used by rural festival organizers, Extension specialists, and rural community stakeholders.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

- *Published paper:*
Lee, S., Jang, J., Niehm, L., & Kim, M. (2023). The role of festival volunteers in supporting rural community development: A psychological ownership perspective. *Current Issues in Tourism*. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2023.2280163
- *Presentations at professional meetings and conferences:*
 - Lee, S., Jang, J., Kim, M., & Niehm, L. (2022). *The role of volunteers in sustainable rural community development* [Conference session]. ICHRIE Conference 2022, Washington D.C.
 - Shin, H., Jeon, S., & Lee, S. (2022). *The role of volunteer's psychological ownership in forming attachment and loyalty to rural festivals* [Conference session]. THEREPS Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
 - Park, H. & Lee, S. (2022). *Rural festival volunteering: Investigating the moderating effect of psychological ownership on festival attachment, community support and attachment* [Conference session]. The 39th Annual Conference of the International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators (virtual).
- *Webinar:*
Lee, S., L. Niehn, and M. Kim. (2023, October 25). *The role of festival volunteers in supporting rural community development: A psychological ownership perspective* [Webinar]. North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <https://youtu.be/7TP0R6UXqOs>.

Impact:

This study sheds new light on important perspectives to better explain volunteers' roles in rural communities, highlighting psychological ownership as a significant mediating factor from a community capital perspective. Results suggest that rural festival organizers should be advised to collaborate with community developers to attract and motivate volunteers, transform leaders with strong psychological ownership, foster community involvement, and develop support networks.

OUTPUTS: 4 presentations

1 article

1 webinar

Webinars in 2023

Reach, Teach, and Engage! (9/12/23)

Presenter: Amber J. Twitty, Extension Educator, Community and Economic Development, Central State University.
<https://youtu.be/8n059X1yzSI>

The Role of Festival Volunteers in Supporting Rural Community Development: A Psychological Ownership Perspective (10/25/23)

Presenters: SoJung Lee, Associate Professor, Iowa State University; MiRan Kim, Associate Professor, Michigan State University; and Linda Niehm, Professor, Interim Department Chair, Iowa State University.
<https://youtu.be/7TP0R6UXqOs>

Guiding the Work of a Changing and Diverse Field: The Updated Community Development Principles of Good Practice (12/18/23)

Presenters: Margaret Stout, Professor of Public Administration, West Virginia University and current Board Chair of the Community Development Society; Celina Tchida, Ph.D. Candidate, Arizona State University; and Stephen Jeanetta, Associate Dean, Department of Community Development, University of Minnesota Extension and Vice Chair of Programs for the Community Development Society.
<https://youtu.be/cMlx2AJ696U>

Promoting Community Health and Wellness

Thematic Activities, 2023

NCRCRD's health initiatives focus on enhancing health and wellness in rural communities across the North Central Region. The Center increases the quality of life for individuals and communities by raising awareness, engaging community members to improve public health, and building community partnerships.



Grants Awarded in 2023

NCR SMALL GRANT

Rural Family Caregiving: Building Selfcare and Resiliency of Rural Women Family Caregivers for Older Adults

Principal Investigator: Nasreen Lalani

State: Indiana

Organization: Purdue University

Project Abstract:

One in five older adults (65 years or older) live in rural America. This number is expected to double by 2030 (CDC, 2022). With a high proportion of older adults with chronic illnesses and disabilities in the rural areas, there is a greater need for caregiving among rural residents. Caregiving in rural areas is uniquely challenging due to several disparities, such as lack of access and resources, longer travel time to health care facilities, lack of transportation, discrepancies in rural service delivery systems, and the unique needs of the rural primary caregivers. Nearly 65% of unpaid family caregivers are women, 80% of these women care for someone aged 50 years or older (Gausman & Ana, 2020). According to National Alliance for Caregiving report (2021), most rural primary caregivers have no paid help, have lower education and household income.

Often, caregiving roles are mandated on rural women without any options. They also tend to provide more hours of weekly care (26.3 hours on average) than their male counterparts. Formally and informally, employed rural women are expected to do domestic and or care work after their working hours. This dual burden of care and employed work on women reduces their ability and time for self-care and wellbeing. Research has shown that an estimated 36–43% of rural women caregivers prioritize needs of their care recipient over their own self-care needs while putting their own health at risk (Sarrasanti et al., 2020).

Our study aims to examine the lived experiences of women rural caregivers caring for their older adults, identify their self-care needs, and determine the ways to promote the resilience and subjective wellbeing of rural women caregivers. Having a deeper understanding of caregiving needs and behaviors would assist in establishing meaningful caregiver support programs as well as informing policy in the rural communities.

NCR SMALL GRANT

Emergency Preparedness for Rural Families

Principal Investigator: Jenna Nees

State: Indiana and Nebraska

Organizations: Purdue University and
University of Nebraska

Project Abstract:

It is estimated that approximately one out of every nine Indiana farms annually experiences a farm work-related injury requiring medical attention. However, these nonfatal farm injuries may not be documented and easily tracked. According to The Mid-West Farm Report (Jahnke, 2019), the decentralized nature and diversity of work practices within the agricultural industry contributes to it being one of the most hazardous occupations. Additionally, it makes tracking the number of incidents difficult.

While not all emergencies result in bodily injury or death, they also may cost rural families in other ways. In order to help prepare for and reduce the effects of an emergency, the 'Emergency Preparedness for Rural Families' program will teach participants to evaluate how well their farm is prepared for unexpected situations.

The Emergency Preparedness for Rural Families proposal will fund a unique partnership between the Purdue University's and University of Nebraska's Women in Agriculture Programs to provide education to rural families to address the high rate of work-related injuries and deaths within the agriculture industry. In many farm families, farm safety is an important topic, but it sometimes gets overlooked because it does not directly impact the growing of crops/livestock or the sale of goods. Farm wives often let their thoughts drift to the importance of emergency preparedness when they hear of farm safety issues other farm families have faced. This program will cater to women by encouraging them to ask questions, connect with participants and speakers, and share their experiences. This hands-on program will focus on increasing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of attendees. Attendees of all genders and demographics will be encouraged to participate in an effort to improve the safety preparedness of rural families.

Small Grants Completed in 2023

Local Policymaker Perceptions of the Opioid Crisis and the Efficacy of Extension Communications

Principal Investigator:

Daniel Bergan, Michigan State University

Project Goals:

Conducted pre-test surveys of messaging around opiate epidemic and surveys of the public and policymakers to explore the effects of messaging on support for public policies. Develop messaging to combat policymaker biased arguing against evidence-based policies by linking policy to election outcomes. Contribute to research on political motivated reasoning.

Project Accomplishments:

- Our intervention was successful: linking the problem of opiates to elections improved ratings of the evidence.
- We have a completed paper that we plan to submit to a major peer reviewed communication journal.
- Submitting a grant based on the project to NIH for further research.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

- *Workshop:*
The PI presented at Stanford University's Political Psychology Group for faculty and undergraduate and graduate students.
- *Presentation:*
Bergan, D. E., Shulman, H., & Carnahan, D. (2023). *Accuracy motivation and policymaker evaluation of policy evidence* [Presentation]. Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, St. Pete Beach, FL.
- Our survey vendor, CivicPulse, will prepare a report that will be publicly available.
- We have a completed paper that we plan to submit to a major peer reviewed communication journal.
Bergan, D. E., Shulman, H., & Carnahan, D. (2023). *Accuracy motivation and policymaker evaluation of policy evidence* [Paper prepared for the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, St. Pete Beach, FL].

Impact:

Our project showed how messaging can improve policymaker evaluations of evidence-based policies and contributes to the literature on policymaker biased evaluation of evidence.

OUTPUT:

1 workshop

1 presentation

Resilient Couples, Resilient Communities: Enhancing Family and Community Well-being Through Sustainable, Evidence-based Programming for Couples in the North Central Region

Principal Investigator:

Allen Barton, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Project Goals:

The aims of the current proposal are to: (1) disseminate the relationship education program to rural couples throughout the NCR, (2) evaluate the effects of program participation, and (3) train Extension professionals in NCR states beyond Illinois in program implementation.

Project Accomplishments:

- *Dissemination of program:* All 12 states in the NCR expressed interest in the project, with a subset of states also expressing interest in having staff trained in program coaching (detailed below). Dissemination of the program to rural couples throughout the NCR began in late-2022 and remains active.
- *Evaluate program effects:* Data collection activities remain ongoing from program participants. Evaluation and data analyses of program effects will occur later following the collection of data from more participating couples.
- *Training workshop:* Project personnel developed and delivered a 10-session training series for Extension personnel throughout the North Central Region from October - December 2022. A total of 14 staff were involved in the training, representing Extension systems in five different North Central states (not including current coaches in Illinois). Each participating state also developed a state-specific program dissemination plan. With training completed, project personnel continue to organize weekly team meetings with newly trained Extension coaches to support ongoing program delivery and program fidelity as well as provide additional coach training.

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

Program dissemination remains ongoing to couples throughout the region as well as related data collection activities from participants. Data management, cleaning, and analysis will occur later in the funding period following the collection of data from more participating couples. Reporting of findings will be shared with Extension system state contacts for distribution through state Extension communication channels.

Impact:

- 14 new Extension professionals trained to be program coach.
- 6 state-specific communications packages created for program advertising (involving more than 100 graphics).
- 85 individuals with completed enrollment form expressing interest in participating in program.
- 28 individuals (14 couples) with program completion.

OUTPUTS:

1 webinar

1 website

1 workshop

Small Grants Completed in 2023

Gathering with Extension Professionals from Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities in the North Central Region to Seek Understanding and Create Collaborative Partnerships in Aging

Principal Investigator: James Bates, The Ohio State University

Project Goals:

1. Contact Extension representatives from the 22 HBCUs and TCUs in the North Central Region.
2. Hold a virtual get-to-know each other meeting.
3. Host a face-to-face conference gathering.
4. Reconvene a virtual follow-up meeting to reconnect.
5. Create a list of collaborative initiatives developing between universities.
6. Prepare and deliver a presentation of project activities for a North Central Regional Center for Rural Development webinar.

Project Accomplishments:

- Contacted as many as would respond to our outreach and will continue to reach out.
- Held a virtual get-to-know each other meeting ('Meet and Greet') in May 2022
- Hosted a face-to-face conference, "The Gathering: Brainstorming, Bridging, Building," on October 17-19, 2022 in Ames, Iowa. Invited representatives from all the region's land-grant universities with particular interest in engaging Tribal Colleges and Historical Black Universities, to develop friendships, learn from each other, and explore possible collaborations in Aging.
- Reconvened a virtual follow-up meeting to the conference in February 2023 to discuss progress on activities and collaborations.
- Created a list of collaborative initiatives developing between universities: Forthcoming.
- Presented an NCRCRD-hosted webinar on January 25, 2023 entitled, "Extending the Tent: NCRAN's Focus on Aging in the 2020s."

Training Provided/Dissemination of Findings:

- *Training, May 2022:* The virtual 'Meet and Greet' was attended by sixteen Extension professionals in the NCR and we had opportunities to learn about each other and each person's professional work. The highlights were learning about tribal Extension work and work being done at the two Historically Black Universities in the region.
- *Conference (the major activity of the grant project), October 2022:* In a sense, this conference was a two-day professional development training that covered numerous aging-related topics. Participants could attend in person or virtually. There were eleven people who attended in person and five who attended virtually, for a total of sixteen people who received the professional development conference trainings.
- *Webinar:*
Bates, J., Byers, C., & Miller, K. (2023, January 25). *Extending the tent: NCRAN's focus on aging in the 2020s* [Webinar]. North Central Regional Development for Rural Development. https://youtu.be/7_UZfZ-gRAk

OUTPUTS:

1 webinar

1 enhanced website

1 conference

1 national conference submission

Webinars in 2023

Extending the Tent: NCRAN's Focus on Aging in the 2020s (1/25/23)

Presenters: James S. Bates, Associate Professor and Field Specialist of Family Wellness, Ohio State University Extension; Chelsey Byers, Family Life Educator, University of Illinois Extension; and Kristin Miller, Assistant Extension Professor, University of Missouri Extension.

https://youtu.be/7_UZfZ-gRAk

Taking Action to Address Substance Use Disorder in Communities: Clinical, Community and Workforce Perspectives (8/24/23)

Presenters: Nicole Adams, School of Nursing, Purdue University; Erin Belgarde, Turtle Mountain Community Innovation, Research, and Development Department; Sheila Trottier, Turtle Mountain Community College; and Elisa Worland, Purdue Extension – Wayne County.

<https://youtu.be/tlF7lABclj0>

Rural Health and Well-Being (11/8/23)

Part 1: Improving Rural Health by Focusing on Social Well-Being

Presenter: Carrie Henning-Smith, Associate Professor, School of Public Health, Division of Health Policy and Management, University of Minnesota

Part 2: Participatory Research to Promote Shared Leadership Toward Rural Maternal and Child Health and Emotional Well-Being: Lessons Learned and Future Directions to Promote Health Equity

Presenter: Sarah E. (Betsy) Bledsoe, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

<https://youtu.be/GNje3sZ50Eg>



**NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL CENTER
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT**



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