

## North Central Region Aging Network Toolkit Development

December 7, 2017

The Family and Consumer Science program leaders within the North Central Region have challenged specialists and educators to begin working together to add breadth and consistency to our programming and evaluation efforts.

**PI:** Erin Yelland, Kansas State University

**Co-PIs:** Suzanne Bartholomae (Iowa State University), James Bates (The Ohio State University), Barbara Beaulieu (Purdue University), Jacquelyn Benson (University of Missouri), Leacey Brown (South Dakota State University), Chelsey Byers Gerstenecker (University of Illinois), Linda Cronk (Michigan State University), Kristin Litzelman (University of Wisconsin), Jane Strommen (North Dakota State University), and Marlene Stum (University of Minnesota)

**Award:** \$24,655

**Project Abstract:** The Family and Consumer Science program leaders within the North Central Region have challenged specialists and educators to begin working together to add breadth and consistency to our programming and evaluation efforts. The North Central Region Aging Network (NCRAN) has responded to that call by bringing together a cohort of gerontologists and aging-related Extension professionals that are interested in enhancing and increasing knowledge on various aging-related topics across the NCR. NCRAN's forefront mission is to prepare our Extension systems to adequately address an aging population. As a means to begin building this capacity, we have identified the need for a website and a toolkit of high quality, aging-related Extension programs to which all twelve states within the region will have access.



# Final Report

## 7/2019

# The North Central Region Aging Network

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## The North Central Region Aging Network

The North Central Region Aging Network (NCRAN) is a cohort of gerontologists and aging-related Extension professionals that are interested in enhancing and increasing knowledge on various aging-related topics. Together we are able to pool our resources and coordinate our efforts to tackle aging-related topics and produce resources for Extension educators across the country. We are enhancing connectivity and learning, developing and implementing outreach and education efforts, and coordinating initiatives with measurable impacts.

The primary goal of the North Central Region Aging Network (NCRAN) is to promote, support, and encourage activities that strengthen and advance evidence-informed practice. Notable initiatives include the

- 1) development and dissemination of a needs assessment to gain an understanding of the aging-related needs within our states and region,
- 2) development of an toolkit to increase access to aging-related program materials and training, and
- 3) utilization of program-specific evaluation tools to assess delivery of cross-regional trainings and initiatives that summate impact.

NCRAN roots our work in a life course perspective that reflects the intersection of social and historical factors with personal biography and development. Additionally, we have identified priorities in a reframed version of Cooperative Extension's National Framework for Health and Wellness (see graphic). Utilizing these lenses, we are committed to improving the aging-related outreach and community-based initiatives that Extension provides across the country.



## **Project Team**

NCRAN currently has representation from 11 of the 12 states within the North Central Region. Members include:

- Suzanne Bartholomae (Iowa State University)
- James Bates (The Ohio State University)
- Barb Beaulieu (Purdue University)
- Jacquelyn J. Benson (University of Missouri)
- Leacey Brown (South Dakota State University)
- Chelsey Byers Gerstenecker (University of Illinois)
- Cheryl Eschbach (Michigan State University)
- Jeong Eun Lee (Iowa State University)
- Kristin Litzelman (University of Wisconsin)
- Jane Strommen (North Dakota State University)
- Marlene Stum (University of Minnesota)
- Erin Yelland (Kansas State University)

## **Project Goal and Objectives**

The overall goal of our work that was funded by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development was to build Extension's capacity to better address aging-related issues through the development of a website and toolkit of high quality, aging-related Extension programs and resources to which all Extension professionals would have access. By having these tools, Extension can achieve broader impacts across all levels, including both Extension professionals and the individuals we serve. In order to accomplish this goal, we identified and ultimately accomplished the following objectives: 1) develop a website for NCRAN that includes a description of NCRAN, its members, and current initiatives; resources for Extension professionals; and a toolkit of aging-related programs, and 2) establish toolkit best practices; prioritize curricula for cross-state training; meet face-to-face to strategize, plan, and accomplish tasks; and disseminate our website and toolkit.

## **Project Accomplishments**

### *Held a Face-to-Face Meeting*

One of our first grant activities was to hold a face-to-face meeting of our members so that we could strategize, plan, and accomplish specific tasks. This 3-day meeting was incredibly productive and laid the groundwork for the development of our Network's mission and vision, development of the website, the programs we would pursue for cross-state training, and how we would accomplish our tasks going forward. NCRAN has been meeting monthly since 2016, and we continue to do so to date, but the value of an uninterrupted, face-to-face meeting was immeasurable to the Network.

### *Developed the NCRAN Website*

Our biggest accomplishment as a part of this grant was completing the NCRAN website – found at [www.ncran.org](http://www.ncran.org). In order to do this, we hired a graphic and website developer to assist with obtaining a domain, developing the NCRAN brand and logos, developing the website itself, and assisting with uploading content. The content, curated by NCRAN, was drafted by subcommittees, and resources and curricula were vetted by the Network. The Network also decided to initiate twice-monthly webinars and a blog and developed subcommittees to set guidelines, organize and curate content, and facilitate continued production. The Network regularly updates the website and ensures that all content is relevant, up-to-date, and research- or evidence-informed.

We continually work to disseminate the website to key stakeholders, including Extension agents, specialists, and administrators. We send out monthly emails/infographics marketing our webinars and website visitors are able to sign up to receive periodic updates. We only recently installed website analytics to track the number of visitors to our site and what they access, so we hope to provide more detailed information on the specific use of the website in the future. However, we have had numerous anecdotal confirmations of the website's use, value, and the need for this type of collaborative work in other areas of Extension across the country. The website has garnered attention from the Division of Family and Consumer Sciences at USDA NIFA, been actively promoted by numerous Extension systems via emails and newsletters, and is being used across the country as evidenced by the personal contacts that many of our members regularly receive.

#### *Identified Website Best Practices*

As part of these endeavors, we also developed best practices and guidelines for a variety of our initiatives – including what content would be housed on our website, the webinars and blogs that we deliver, and how/what resources we share across the nation. These are a continual work-in-progress as our team develops and learns, but all of our best practices are rooted in the fact that the Network wants to provide relevant, up-to-date, accessible, and research- or evidence-informed resources and content. These internal documents guide and inform our work and help to regularly ensure that we are accomplishing our Network's vision and mission.

#### *Initiated Program-Specific Webinar Trainings*

One of the final objectives within our grant was to identify one to two programs on which to provide training for Extension professionals within the North Central Region and beyond. In the end, we offered three programmatic trainings – Alzheimer's 101, Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate, and Brain Health...It's No Brainer – via webinar to Extension professionals across the country. Across the three trainings, we reached over 300 participants. Some of the most notable impacts of this effort is that we are continuing to enhance the aging-related work that is being done across the country via Extension by utilizing consistent curricula and evaluation metrics. Each originating institution for each of these programs continues to collect data on the programs and their effectiveness.

#### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

Across this grant we have continued to learn that the best laid plans do not always work as intended, and sometimes things work out for the better. For instance, our website developed into a much larger and better product than what we ever imagined at the beginning of the grant. Instead of only housing

information on programs and resources, we now host twice-monthly webinars and consistently write a blog. Instead of training Extension professionals on one or two programs, we chose three and have continued to introduce and train on program-specific content in our twice-monthly webinars. On the other hand, we have learned to be nimble and adaptive as we had to concede to some aspects of what we set out to accomplish – most notably changing our website designer and then installing website analytics upon realizing that clicks were not being tracked as we had hoped.

One lesson learned, or further realized, however, was that we have excellent models of collaborative work across Extension, and we don't need to look too far for inspiration and guidance. Though their members are likely not even aware, the North Central Region Water Network served as major inspiration for our website and our work moving forward (you can see their site at [northcentralwater.org](http://northcentralwater.org)).

### **Moving Forward**

The work of NCRAN is far from over, and the way that we have developed our Network allows for continual advancement in the field and future development of materials and resources that will help enhance the work of Extension. The Network continues to meet monthly, produces new website content at least twice a month, and is dedicated to continuing to enhance the aging-related resources and outreach that we are able to provide through our Land Grant Universities across the United States. We encourage you to follow us on our website – [www.ncran.org](http://www.ncran.org) –, spread the word, attend our webinars (we offer professional development for *all* Extension professionals, regardless of content area) and keep us informed of what is going on in your areas or what needs you are seeing. We continually seek collaborative opportunities – as aging is not just a Family and Consumer Sciences issue.

Thank you to the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development for the funds we were able to use to advance the work of NCRAN. We hope to continue to be a valuable asset for Extension professionals for decades to come.

## Diversifying with Lavender: Resources, Training, Networks for Commercial Lavender Producers

December 7, 2017

The process of agricultural restructuring in the United States has been strongly influenced both by demographic trends (U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2014) and market liberalization (Bowler et al, 1996).

**PI:** Wynne Wright (Michigan State University)

**Co-PIs:** Megan Kennelly (Kansas State University); Dennis Hamilton (US Lavender Growers Assoc); Joy Landis and Erin Lizotte (Michigan State University)

**Award:** \$21,686

**Project Abstract:** The process of agricultural restructuring in the United States has been strongly influenced both by demographic trends (U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2014) and market liberalization (Bowler et al, 1996). A host of beginning farmers are searching for new farming practices, while existing farmers are searching for innovative entrepreneurial pathways to increase farm profitability (Anosike and Coughenour, 1990; Barbieri and Mahoney, 2009; Evans and Ilbery, 1993; Gasson, 1998; Marsden et al., 1992; McElwee, 2006; Vogel, 2012). Currently, over 20% of all U.S. farms are operated by beginning farmers (under 10 years in farming) (Ahearn, 2016) – a population who are likely to come from non-farm backgrounds (Shute, 2011). Both experienced producers and beginning farmers encounter high transaction costs in their pursuit of diversification (Delgado and Siamwalla, 1997). The consequences emerging from this change present opportunities for farm diversification that lends itself to broader structural shifts in agriculture while at the same time serving new consumers looking for new markets and innovative forms of recreation/leisure (Atkins and Bowler, 2016; Wright and Annes, 2014). The primary goal of this project is to facilitate farm diversification and build opportunities for beginning and entrepreneurial farmers by establishing an instructional curriculum in commercial lavender production.



# Final Report

## 6/2019

# Diversifying with Lavender: Resources, Training, Networks for Commercial Lavender Producers

Wynne Wright, Community, Food & Agriculture: Sociology  
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Kansas State University

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US Lavender Growers Association, New Castle, IN

Joy Landis, Senior Outreach Specialist  
Michigan State University

Erin Zizotte, Extension Educator  
Michigan State University

**North Central Regional Center for Rural Development  
FY 2017-2018 Small Grants Program**

**Diversifying with Lavender: Resources, Training,  
Networks for Commercial Lavender Producers  
FINAL REPORT**

**June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

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The primary goal for this project was to facilitate farm diversification and build opportunities for beginning and entrepreneurial farmers by establishing an instructional on-line curriculum in commercial lavender production. Our curriculum, Growing Lavender: A Curriculum for Growers, has been developed to meet these goals. This is a self-paced (independent) lavender farming curriculum leading to a certificate of completion (awarded by the three partnering institutions - Michigan State University, Kansas State University, and the U.S. Lavender Growers Association collectively). The funding for this project allowed us to reach this goal.

To accomplish this goal, we created a lavender curriculum advisory board to help plan the new on-line curriculum and provide a variety of perspectives on its formation. This advisory board included the PI, co-PIs, and experienced commercial lavender farmers who have a solid understanding of farming practices and could contribute real-world views. Farmer members of this board were selected based on years of lavender farming experience. We used web-conferencing to conceptualize the curriculum with the Advisory Board. The board worked together to identify critical content areas for the curriculum. The Advisory Board consisted of:

- Martha Wilczynski, Grower, Michigan
- Paola Legarre, Grower, Colorado
- Dennis, Hamilton, Grower, Indiana
- Marilyn Kosel, Grower, Oregon
- Sandra Shuff, Grower, Washington
- Erin Taylor, science/Tech, MSU Extension
- Joy Landis, Science/Tech, MSU
- Mallory Fournier, Science/Tech, MSU
- Dr. Megan Kennelly, Science/Tech, KSU
- Seven Mattes, Project Manager, MSU
- Dr. Wynne Wright. Science/Tech, MSU

As a result of this representation, the Growing Lavender curriculum supports an increasingly diverse group of lavender growers, including many who are new to agriculture altogether. The curriculum was aimed at reflecting and supporting this diversity in our development process, the community involved, and the purview of the course. To this end, the curriculum combines the strengths of university researchers and experienced growers to not only produce a quality product to aid in the future of lavender farming, but construct community links and mentors on which new and old growers can draw.

## **Growing Lavender Curriculum: Development & Process**

The curriculum contains seven modules, each of which covers a key aspect of lavender production. Each module was co-developed by a writing team made up of a university researcher and lavender grower to ensure rigor as well as balance in academic and applied expertise. The seven module topics are as follows:

- Module 1 - Why and How to Grow Lavender, introduces students to the business and production of lavender; (primary authors:
- Module 2 - Establishing Lavender, instructs new growers on how to get started -- from site selection through planting; (primary authors:
- Module 3 - Selecting Lavender Varieties, provides a comprehensive overview to the variety of lavender cultivars and the obstacles to avoid; (primary authors:
- Module 4 - Managing your Lavender Crop, explores the cultural requirements for crop management and the tools available; (primary authors:
- Module 5 - Harvesting and Caring for your Harvested Lavender instructs new growers how to harvest lavender for intended use; (primary authors:
- Module 6 - Developing your Lavender Farm's Business Plan allows students to become familiar with the business aspects of starting a lavender farm; (primary authors)
- Module 7 - Marketing your Lavender and Farm, delineates the key aspects of marketing all aspects of lavender production, from agritourism to direct marketing techniques (primary authors:

Each module includes the following pedagogical content/practices: 1) vision; 2) objectives; 3) meet the experts (bio of module authors); 4) learning materials (e.g., video, resources, activity); 5) knowledge assessment; and, 6) summative evaluation.

Before launching the curriculum, modules were subjected to peer review. Peer review is an opportunity to help module development teams think about content, identify their design and organizational strengths and improve their approach and substance. This consisted of having area-appropriate scientists from KSU or MSU and experienced lavender growers review the content. Each peer reviewer was provided a peer review form to guide the observation and evaluation to focus on agreed upon pedagogical content/practices. Once peer-review processes were completed, writing teams refined modules based on this input. The module developers/writers and peer reviewers were:

### **Module 1:**

Grower: Martha Wilczynski, Lavender Hill Farm, Michigan

Technical Expert: Charles Martin, Emeritus New Mexico State University

### **Module 2:**

Grower Paola Lagarre, Sage Creek Creations Organic Farm, Colorado

Technical Expert: Charles Martin, Emeritus New Mexico State University

**Module 3:**

Grower: Andy Van Hevelingen, Van Hevelingen Herb Nursery, Oregon

Technical Expert: Dr. Sean Westerveld, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

**Module 4:**

Grower: Carol Tannenbaum, Mackenzie River Lavender, Oregon

Grower: Bill Jabs, Eagle Creek Lavender, Washington

Technical Expert: Dr. Lily Calderwood, Cornell University

**Module 5:**

Grower: Mary Hamer, Loess Hills Lavender, Indiana

Grower: Sarah Richards, Lavender Wind Farm, Washington

Technical Expert: Dr. Mary O'Connell, New Mexico State University

**Module 6:**

Grower: Dennis Hamilton, Millstone Farms & Gardens, Indiana

Grower: Sandra Shuff, Evening Light Lavender, Washington

Technical Expert: Brad Bergefurd, Ohio State University

**Module 7:**

Grower: Kehaulani Jones, Rowley Creek Lavender Farm, Wisconsin

Technical Expert: Dr. Bridget Behe, Michigan State University

**Peer Reviewers**

- Anita Buenher, Ontario Lavender Assoc. Bonnieheath Lavender & Winery, Ontario
- Dr. Jeanine Davis, North Carolina State University, North Carolina
- Jan Meier, Sharps Crossing Lavender, Illinois
- Patricia Uptain, Blackthorn Estates Nursery, West Virginia
- Mike Neustrom, Prairie Lavender Farm, Kansas
- Jan Schooley, Apple Hill Farm, Ontario Lavender Association, Ontario
- Dr. Megan Kennelly, Kansas State University, Kansas
- Susan Harrington, Labyrinth Hill, Washington
- Paola Legarre, Sage Creations Organic Farm, Colorado
- Karen Wheeler-Lockwood, Lockwood Lavender Farm, New York
- Cynthia Rinek, Blooming Hill, Virginia
- Ginna Gemmell, Lavender Green, Pennsylvania
- Dr. Sean Westerveld, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Chris Mulder, Barn Owl Nursery, Oregon
- Anne Davidson, Deep Creek Lavender, Maryland
- Tina Misko, Red Oak *Lavender*, Georgia
- Julie Haushalter While Oak Lavender, Virginia
- Marilyn Kosel, All About Lavender, Oregon

Completed modules were then uploaded to a web-based platform hosted by Michigan State University Extension. MSUE's website draws over 5 million views annually ([msue.msu.edu](http://msue.msu.edu)) and hosts pages that promote and link to the curriculum and offer additional resources. Co-PI Landis oversees the editing of the plant agriculture section of the MSUE website that will include the lavender resources. All web services are technically maintained as a core service of MSUE.

Developed via a partnership between university researchers and experienced lavender growers, the curriculum covers all bases and ensures a holistic, grounded perspective throughout the curriculum topics. This collaboration not only ensured a comprehensive coverage of the topics at hand but served to unite and connect members within the lavender growing community.

### **Practical Engagement: Grower Mentorship**

Beyond an initial on-line curriculum, completion of this curriculum will be accompanied by a mentoring program. This program will allow new producers to turn to seasoned farmers for ongoing support. As a key feature of this training initiative is to provide high quality science-based resources to those with no or little experience in commercial lavender production, this mentorship aims to move beyond the limits of the Desire to Learn platform and consult regional knowledges. We expect this will not only prevent mishaps, beginner obstacles, and plant pathologies, but build connections in the swiftly growing lavender grower community.

This mentorship relies on experienced growers who volunteer their time to answer questions from beginner lavender growers. These volunteers come from across the United States, representing a wide variety of growth zones, years in lavender production, and variety of plants. Many of these growers also served as module developers and peer reviewers in the development of the curriculum modules.

### **Promotion**

Our curriculum was widely promoted in a variety of mediums, generating much interest among new and experienced growers. Promotional materials were constructed to advertise and involve growers at the USLGA Meeting in Charlotte, NC in January 2019 and at the Great Lakes Lavender Growers Annual Meeting in East Lansing, MI in March 2019. These materials included business cards, rack cards, banners, badges, and sign-up sheets for our mailing list and mentor program. Additionally, we completed raffles at each conference -giving away entry into the curriculum to two guests per conference. These displays were well-trafficked and resulted in a robust mailing list awaiting news of the curriculum launch.

In addition to promotional materials, we constructed social media presence. We have a Facebook page and website, which provides biweekly posts on individuals/farms who helped develop the curriculum. These sites serve as focus spaces for interested parties to ask questions and share information about the curriculum but most importantly to notify interested followers when it will be launched.

With the help of NCRCRD, a webinar on the upcoming curriculum was constructed and delivered in January 2019 to Extensional professionals around the country. This webinar provided an overview of the curriculum and the context in which it was produced. This webinar

had over forty viewers during the live stream, and many more have watched the webinar since it was archived on the NCRCRD site.

Lastly, one publication is in the process of being developed about this curriculum. Titled, “Diversifying Lavender: From Field to Curriculum”, this paper discusses the strengths and weaknesses in constructing a curriculum via the combination of university researchers and experienced growers, following a survey of the parties involved.

### **Financial Activities and Lessons Learned**

The development of this curriculum oversaw a few changes in the budget. The following changes were necessary: 1) Co-PI Joy Landis’ allotted \$1,200 for travel to KSU was deemed unnecessary allowing us to move funds; 2) PI Wynne Wright’s original \$900 was insufficient to cover travel to the USLGA conference, so we adjusted the total for this travel to \$1500; 3) Only \$99 of the \$350 allocated for Materials and Supplies was necessary; 4) An additional \$50 was provided to Bridget Behe, a module developer, to cover the taxes involved in paying her \$450 honorarium via the MSU services system; lastly, 5) We only used \$560 of the \$750 planned for promotional materials due to our ability to access discounts. As a result of these changes, we had a \$1026 surplus in our budget, using only \$20,658 of the allotted \$21,686.

Furthermore, the original timeframe for the development and launch of this curriculum was not sufficient for the realities of working with a large, diverse group of busy growers and university researchers. Locating the team of developers and advisory board members took more time than expected. After constructing the development teams for each module, given the growing season, grant season, and other key aspects of developers’ lives, we often had teams of module developers and peer reviewers out of contact for weeks at a time. Finally, the time we predicted as necessary for preparing the web platform for use was insufficient, and thus our launch date has been pushed back further than originally anticipated.

### **Future Plans & Sustainability**

The Growing Lavender curriculum and accompanying mentorship program will be launched in late June. Our growing Facebook membership is anxiously awaiting the announcement – a combination of new growers and experienced growers excited to point potential new growers in our direction.

Our sustainability plan for this proposal includes two components: 1) impact profile; 2) fee-based program. We will be able to show the reach and impact this curriculum has had over the years by collecting information from each user on how and why they are interested in growing lavender, how helpful this curriculum has been, and their needs for future instruction. Obtaining evaluation data from each user will help us modify the content of the curriculum, stay up-to-date on the needs of users, and write advanced modules.

To ensure the curriculum remains up to date on these points, we have planned regular updates based on user feedback. After the completion of the module, the student will be asked to take a short evaluation survey that will help us improve the curriculum overtime. When these updates occur, we will also update the mentorship list, as experienced lavender growers will be added and subtracted from the list as years go by.

In addition, we will also be able to learn more about the demographic profiles of this population. This will help contribute to the profile of U.S. lavender growers and can be used to obtain other funding in the future that will better reflect the nature of this population and grow this industry. The second part of our end-of-curriculum evaluation survey collects demographic data.

Users/students of the program will be charged a modest fee of \$30 that will be held in an account to be used for supporting the up-dating of services and future curriculum development modules. This may include minor up-dates or editing of the curriculum should links break or other malfunctions occur, but it may also cover the payment for altogether new modules or resources. This fee-based mechanism is not meant to create profit and the funds generated will not be used for any activity beyond up-dating/modifying the curriculum so it can stand alone and will not need further grant support. We know there is a willingness to pay for such instructional programs based on USLGA experience. Our commitment as public universities and the USLGA is to support this community of producers by providing excellent training to all without financial discrimination.

The website, mailing list, and social media presence for the Growing Lavender curriculum will remain active as spaces for questions and promotion of the curriculum. We expect interest in the curriculum to continue primarily via word of mouth in the small, but growing, lavender community.

### **Feedback and Results**

The response to this project from the greater lavender community has been positive. A short survey distributed to participants in the creation of the curriculum found that the Diversifying Lavender project accomplished two overlapping goals: providing necessary comprehensive education, and strengthening the lavender community overall.

The need for science-based education for lavender growers was noted from the beginning of this project. This need was echoed by the developers, the peer reviewers, and by the initial response from lavender growers who are awaiting the launch of the curriculum. As a founder of USLGA noted, “It is important new and current growers have accurate information to work with for their success.”

Other developers found that they were already doing the labor of education and mentorship as the wave of beginner growers continues to emerge. Part of the rationale for helping with this project was to have a curriculum to recommend.

“As a grower I get several calls each month from lavender lovers who want to grow lavender as a product. Quite frankly I get tired of spending several hours of my time which is bursting with other projects that need to get done. It would be great to direct them to a class that is actually developed by growers who truly know lavender.”

“I have had so many requests from new lavender growers or wannabe growers that it takes a lot of time from my busy schedule. It will be great to direct them to this class.”

Others referred to the need for regionally-focused education. As this curriculum aims for regional diversity, recognizing that recommendations for one zone might be quite different for another.

“I have been growing many different kinds of lavenders in my own field for over 20 years and many are test varieties as well. I think not enough attention is paid to the mid-Atlantic states where our climate is conducive to growing lavender, but our rich and dense clay soil is a challenge.”

“People that take this course will have the valuable opportunity to learn from other lavender farmers and growers. They will be exposed to regional differences and have the opportunity to learn from experienced farmers' mistakes and successes.”

The theme of community-building arose primarily as the drive for participating in the development of the curriculum. These comments ranged from a discussion on the need for collaboration and connection to the connections made during the development process.

“As a former member of the USLGA's Education and Research Committee, I knew that this was a much-needed project. The current interest from people interested in commercially growing lavender is at an all-time high.”

“I feel we learn and grow from collaboration.”

“I believe in an all-inclusive cooperative approach to the Lavender Industry. Together we make a better program for everyone.”

Participants in this program further reflected on how this curriculum might strengthen the lavender curriculum overall. The introduction of a comprehensive science-based and regionally diverse curriculum could prevent many mistakes that the growers themselves would have liked to avoid.

“My hope is that we are advancing the lavender industry as a whole if we assist those at the beginning level. The more successful lavender growers we have, the more likely we are to build a sustainable lavender industry in the United States.”

“It could help those that think it sounds like a great idea, get a good feel for what it really involves. That would make stronger and better equipped lavender growers which helps our industry grow. “

Overall, the Growing Lavender Curriculum has delivered a product that fills a necessary gap in the lavender community. The curriculum provides an official service that growers can point to when contacted by beginner growers, ensuring newcomers enter into the field with key foundational knowledge.

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Submitted by: Wynne Wright , June 13, 2019

## Quality, affordable child care as economic development in rural communities

December 7, 2017

This collaborative effort between KSU and UNL reflects the commitment to explore the availability of quality, affordable child care as a rural community economic and human development strategy.

**PI:** Bradford Wiles (Kansas State University)

**Co-PIs:** Holly Hatton-Bowers (University of Nebraska-Lincoln); Erin Tynon (Kansas State University)

**Award:** \$25,000

**Project Abstract:** This collaborative effort between Kansas State University (KSU) and the University of Nebraska, Lincoln (UNL) reflects the commitment to explore the availability of quality, affordable child care as a rural community economic and human development strategy.

## Current Thinking in Rural Economic Growth and Development

December 7, 2017

**PI:** Steven C. Deller (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

**Co-PIs:** Rebekka Martin Dudensing (Texas A&M University), Becca B.R. Jablonski (Colorado State University), Mike Woods (Oklahoma State University-Stillwater), David Chicoine, (South Dakota State University)

**Award:** \$20,000

**Project Abstract:** The Great Recession hit rural America particularly hard and many rural communities have yet to fully recovery. The policy options at the federal, state and local are complex and require serious reconsideration. This project aims to bring together a team of rural development scholars to identify and summarize the current state of the rural economy, and provide a range of potential strategies. Rural America continues to lag behind urban America across several key economic metrics.

Too often our public policy discussions present overly broad and simplistic ideas, such as reducing taxes to attract better jobs. Given the perceived 'failure' of rural development policy across the U.S., the time is ripe for a fresh look and new ideas to support rural America. This effort, tracking a wide range of rural development issues, is an attempt to uncover strategies across a range of topic areas that will improve rural communities and economies.

## Starting and Managing Community Supported Enterprises

December 7, 2017

**PI:** David Ivan (Michigan State University)

**Co-PI:** Norman Walzer (Northern Illinois University)

**Award:** \$25,000

**Project Abstract:** Community Supported Enterprises (CSE) are used increasingly in communities interested in retaining or expanding local businesses. With the increased use of Crowdfunding, the CSE approach is an important tool but economic development groups often do not have the insights or expertise to effectively start or sustain a CSE. This project builds on previous research describing and documenting CSEs and will research other CSEs in different scenarios to identify key elements in successes.



# Final Report

## 1/2019

# Guidebook on Implementation Approaches for Community Supported Enterprises (CSE's)

Normal Walzer  
Senior Research Scholar  
Northern Illinois University  
Center for Governmental Studies

Jacob Smith  
Graduate Student at  
Northern Illinois University

David Ivan  
Community, Food & Environment Institute Director  
Michigan State University

## **Final Project Report for NCRCRD Grant**

### **Guidebook on Implementation Approaches for Community Supported Enterprises (CSE's)**

Submitted by Norman Walzer  
Senior Research Scholar, NIU Center for Governmental Studies

January 29, 2019

#### **Background and Purpose of Project**

In 2016, the NCRCRD published a report prepared by Norman Walzer and Jessica Sandoval examining the potential of Community Supported Enterprises in reopening small businesses in areas with declining populations. (<https://www.cgs.niu.edu/Reports/Emergence-and-Growth-of-Community-Supported-Enterprises.pdf>) Presentations were made to several academic and professional conferences with positive interest expressed. Subsequent requests for presentation were received based on webinar presentations with interest expressed by community leaders and local officials.

Thus, in 2018, NCRCRD funded efforts to convert the initial report into a guidebook with additional CSE examples that could be distributed to development practitioners and other groups to help them work with interested audiences. That work proceeded during 2018 and a final copy of the guidebook is available at: **CGS URL**

Norman Walzer collaborated with Jake Smith (NIU, graduate MPA student) to prepare additional in-depth analyses of current community supported enterprises as well as identify other examples using Cooperative and LLC models. They researched and added nearly 20 examples of various types of CSEs. This work built on the previous NCRCRD report that had examined the types of activities provided by CSEs in Vermont, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and other states. The difference in research for the guidebook, however, was to try to understand more about the processes of starting the local business such as initial goals or targets, strategies for raising funds, non-financial objectives such as environmental concerns or social goals.

The guidebook is also organized differently from the initial research report by focusing on the essential or critical elements in launching a CSE as well as various strategies for eliciting participation from community members. Likewise, alternative methods of financing are discussed along with additional treatment of business organization models available.

The results of this project will help local development leaders work with community leaders to identify suitable opportunities for CSEs and encourage them to create suitable investment opportunities. The research builds on a growing literature designed to encourage small communities especially those in rural areas to find way retain and start small businesses providing essential services that may be threatened by retirements of business owners.

Efforts are underway to schedule additional presentations per the proposal. A presentation was made in June 2018 to the International Association of Community Developers in Maynooth, Ireland. The presentation was well-received with inquiries as to the relevance of the material in other countries. There have been follow-up communications with several participants.

A proposal to present guidebook materials to the IACP conference scheduled for Dundee, Scotland has been accepted and arrangements are underway to schedule this presentation. In addition, we proposed to make a similar presentation to the 2019 NACDEP meetings in Asheville. No word has been received yet on whether this session will be accepted. If it is, then the presentation will be made. In addition, a presentation was made to the 2018 Community Development Society meetings.

Additional information on completed, and pending, tasks is provided in this final report. Ongoing work will continue as opportunities arise, including compiling abstracts for an edited book international experiences with CSEs. Several abstracts have been received and the information will be compiled into a book proposal if enough material is available. That project is not complete and, depending on responses, may not come to fruition due to insufficient funds.

### **Work Stated in Project Narrative**

1. *Identify and document additional successful CSE efforts that also add to quality of life and social capital in the community. Special attention will be paid to examples in Midwestern states which are behind efforts in Vermont and other areas. Information will be collected on as many as 10 CSEs through phone and/or personal interviews. These businesses will supplement current materials by examining CSEs in other business sectors.*

#### Work Completed

This research has involved visits and phone interviews CSE principals and others in 20 CSEs to determine successes, difficulties, and important factors that must be considered in organizing these ventures. Phone interviews were conducted with CSEs using the

*Cooperative* model in Colorado, Maine, California, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, North Carolina, Vermont, and Indiana. In addition, interviews with CSEs using the *nonprofit* model in Texas, Illinois, Ohio, South Dakota, and Montana were conducted and documented. Hybrid approaches used in Vermont and South Carolina were also documented to determine how the results may vary regarding organizational approach. In addition, the CSEs documented in the earlier report were verified that they are still in business or changes that have occurred. These updates were obtained through phone interviews as well as checking web sites for changes that may have occurred.

Work is underway to see how other countries provide local public services using a CSE type of approach. This research is being pursued by proposing an edited book on CSEs internationally. Responses from Italy, Germany, Uganda, Canada, and Taiwan as well as several states in the U. S. were received describing work underway. It is not clear yet whether there will be a sufficient number of authors willing to submit chapters to make the book happen since no honorarium is provided. We are pursuing additional funds to support preparation of more chapters.

The completed and updated case studies are contained in the guidebook referenced above and the current version of the report is complete but will be added to as new case studies are added. Current work in collaboration with the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs which has been using material in its outreach efforts with several communities will be added when it becomes available.

2. *Work with NC Program Leaders to inform a group of Extension Educators, by state, who will evaluate materials created, comment on their potential effectiveness, and work with community leaders to explore CSEs as an option to start business ventures or social agencies.*

#### Work Completed

This aspect of the project could not begin until the guidebook was completed which is now the case. The copy has been sent to David Ivan to send to the Extension leaders who work with the NCRCD on a regular basis. Their review of the copy and materials will then be incorporated into the next versions as they are produced. The NCRCD webinar in the planning stages should include this group so we will have feedback with comments in the next few months. The changes will be incorporated by Walzer and NIU-CGS staff at no additional cost to the project. David Ivan will take the lead on this section of the project. The project was delayed due to the late start because of lack of funding.

However, the guidebook will be provided electronically so additional CSEs and other materials can be added by CGS or Extension staff as they become available. We will stay in touch with interested Extension Leaders and work with them to local efforts on CSE startups.

3. *Examine factors and motivations* involved in the CSEs studied to isolate important considerations for community leaders to understand prior to launching these types of

financing activities. What desirable aspect should the potential business have? Who are likely investors and how are they approached? What investment levels will attract investors? How was the organizational form (LLC, nonprofit, Cooperative) selected and what are the advantages of each? Who organized and led the efforts to start the CSE effort? These types of information can guide community leaders in other areas design future efforts.

#### Work Completed

Initial plans were to conduct a statistical analysis of characteristics of investors and other elements of CSEs studied. However, in discussing the availability of data with CSE organizers, it was not feasible within the resources of this project to collect sufficient reliable data to conduct such an analysis. It also was not feasible to survey investors in the CSEs to gain their insights.

Thus, phone interviews and visits with CSEs were used to compile relevant information and it is included in the write-ups in the Guidebook. While the main components or elements in successful CSEs are fairly clear, no detailed objective analysis showing the importance of each is available. This work will continue after the end of the project as resources allow and will be added to the electronic copy of the guidebook or in the edited volume, if it materializes.

Nevertheless, several key ingredients were identified in the interview and discussions. Appropriate sections in the report on this topic follow next.

#### **Action Steps and Key Roles in Starting a CSE (Section taken from guidebook)**

Previous discussions outlined various options for starting a CSE, and this section works through basic steps that can be taken during the process and illustrates how others have approached the issues. Other resources are identified at various steps. This is an on-going effort, and new materials will be added as they become available. No one approach works in all communities, so these are only guides and users can adapt them to meet local conditions.

#### *Identify Area Needs*

Prior to starting a business venture, it is imperative to systematically examine community needs and how a proposed CSE will fit in and build on community strengths. Effects on other businesses and the effective demand for the proposed services must both be considered. In the case of Walsh Community Grocery Store in Walsh, CO, organizers recognized that many residents in the region had to drive 20 miles or farther to obtain basic groceries. The need for closer access sparked the creation of a grocery store that also carries related items. (Booth, 2009) In the case of grocery stores, proximity to nearest establishment, lack of healthy food options

nearby, and community interest in new and alternative goods are usually strong justifications for starting a CSE. Thus, the potential spending on groceries as well as the nearest competition are important considerations.

At the same time, however, selling a limited number of basic groceries may not represent a sufficient market to keep the business profitable. When this is the case, organizers can consider a lunch counter, fresh meats, cheeses, and vegetables, delivery services to elderly residents, or other items identified in a survey of residents as missing in the community that they travel elsewhere to buy.

Lack of this merchandise does not necessarily mean a sufficient market exists to sustain a profitable business. In selecting the merchandise to stock and sell, organizers must determine potential profit margins and threshold sizes needed for profitability. Industry standards are available for managing the operations. The Small Business Administration or the state Department of Commerce may have guides for starting specific local businesses. Pierce's Store illustrates this approach by contacting a local small business development center (SBDC) to help identify potential demand and is an example of how applying industry standards to evaluate current operations can help make the operation financially stable.

In other cases, a previous business about to close or already closed provides an opportunity for local groups to consider starting a new enterprise. An important consideration in this case is to determine reasons for closure, which can be partly determined from an examination of the finances in recent years. Also to be considered is the extent to which the business inventory has been kept current with new product lines and how they meet the changing characteristics of the local population. A new or reopened business may have to carry different types of merchandise, change hours of operation, or market the products in new ways such as over social media to catch the attention of younger residents or providing delivery services to meet the needs of elderly residents. The specific stimulus for starting the business venture may differ among communities, but what is especially important is that the effort motivates residents to become involved and invest in the project.

#### *Select an appropriate business model*

Once a potential venture has been identified and the lines of goods or services is determined, it is important to select a business model around which to organize the venture. The specific approach will depend on the group involved as well as past experiences. For instance,

many rural areas have had experience with cooperatives in the past, so they are comfortable with this approach. Some investors may be retired and willing to be part of an effort to maintain the community for their children or grandchildren. This group may gain more from investing in a nonprofit to provide the desired services. Therefore, CSE organizers must weigh the pros and cons of alternative business models in deciding how to proceed.

The main attractions of a cooperative are a sense of ownership by investors as well as the incentive that additional purchases provide in discounts and dividends. The cooperative must be attractive to a large segment of the public in order to reach a threshold level of activity. In order to maximize continued participation by members, it must provide specific benefits based on purchasing activity.

A nonprofit approach may offer tax incentives up front for investors not especially interested in continuing to patronize the store. But they can remain involved in the community effort by volunteering time and funds as needed. Plus, they benefit from the ability to purchase basic items locally but not engage in daily management decisions. The growing number of residents 65 years and older, some of whom are financially secure, makes a CSE type of approach attractive especially since the retired may be interested in giving back to an area where they have spent a large part of their life. Thus, a nonprofit may appeal to wealthier residents interested in helping to make sure the community continues to remain attractive to future residents as well as obtain some tax benefits.

The LLC approach may appeal to small groups of residents interested in investing larger amounts of funds especially because starting a LLC is relatively straightforward and simple. LLCs are typically registered by a state agency and in some cases, can be started on-line. Profits are taxed at regular rates, but the venture may provide substantial depreciation and other expenses to offset profits. The main purpose of the venture is to provide a needed local service so profits, while needed over the long run, are secondary. Management of the venture is controlled by relatively few individuals, but the business operations can be relatively simple when an experienced manager is hired or contracted to operate the venture. Funds can be raised using crowdfunding or other alternatives.

### *Identify and Build Leadership*

Strong and effective leadership is key in promoting community projects, especially when a relatively unfamiliar approach such as a CSE is proposed. Someone with business experience and an entrepreneurial spirit can become a spokesperson and a rallying point to motivate others to support the new venture. This person(s) becomes a central contact early on and helps facilitate the start-up process. The spokesperson need not be from a specific sector in the community and may not have played leadership roles in previous projects. There is some risk involved for a person to assume this role, even when enthusiastic, because their credibility will be damaged if the project does not succeed. Thus, it is important that the local champion have backup support from other groups. The main characteristics are that the person(s) is interested in the project and can make a time commitment to make it happen. Finding a spokesperson also provides an opportunity for the community to identify and support new leadership.

Examples in this guidebook illustrate how local leaders surfaced within the organizing group, which is the most likely place to start since they are familiar with project specifics and have already shown a commitment to the effort. Rallying around one or several individuals who can lead other key players not only provides structure but can generate enthusiasm for the project. While in many instances, local leaders surface in early project discussions, identifying the most suited persons may not be as obvious. Hosting informational meetings in the community may identify others. A review of past projects may identify people who have shown success with similar experiences as well as those who played leadership roles. In any event, potential leaders must be encouraged and provided with back-up support and materials to help market the project to the community. Time spent selecting and supporting the leadership team is crucial to the success of the venture.

#### *Analyze Local Economic Climate*

As noted earlier, the state of the local economy is crucial to the success of a CSE, and several cases documented in the examples section show that when the economy deteriorated, the CSE was not able to survive. These examples do not show that community leaders made mistakes in organizing the effort; rather, the economic environment several years later simply did not support the business venture. The same experience would probably have happened to a private business. Thus, it is important to not only recognize past trends and future expectations but also to understand where residents work and the likely competition from stores in those

locations. Because a CSE is a small business, all of the management practices applying to these businesses pertain here.

Especially important is to understand the types of inventory that are likely to sell locally and the margins needed for profitability and sustainability. Industry standards are often available to determine threshold sizes needed for profitable operations. It is true that a CSE approach to financing that includes volunteer labor can reduce operating costs, but the costs of merchandise in small operations are likely to exceed those of larger stores in nearby communities where residents work or visit regularly. Allowing residents to invest in the business by donating time in operating the venture is attractive in several ways since it not only reduces operating costs but also vests more residents in the success of the operation.

Merchandise is usually priced according to customers, competition, or costs (Chase, 2008). Customer-based pricing entails selling goods based on willingness to pay for the perceived benefits. Competition-based pricing involves determining prices relative to similar businesses in the area, typically by matching the prices of other retailers. Cost-based pricing means setting prices to cover all costs required to deliver the good to customers and generate a desired profit margin. At minimum, prices should be set to at least break even. Then, they can be increased to provide the targeted profit margin, given current competition and customers' willingness to pay. In some cases, a locally desired product can be used as a loss leader to bring customers to the store, and while there, customers will likely purchase other items with a higher mark-up. Because sales depend on competition in the area and customer willingness to pay, there is not a standard profit margin to set above the break-even price.

Profit margins also vary by industry, with some sectors such as real estate and information services typically running higher margins than retail sectors (Wood, 2018). For reference, a New York University researcher compiled information on profit margins by industry based on reports from publicly traded companies. The data is available at: [http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~adamodar/New\\_Home\\_Page/datafile/margin.html](http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~adamodar/New_Home_Page/datafile/margin.html). This information is descriptive rather than prescriptive and differs from unique experiences in CSEs but can provide general insight in determining prices.

CSEs, especially those in small markets, have to broaden their merchandise lines to provide multiple profit centers, some of which are directly linked to residents. The Vermont

general store concept with a diversity of merchandise can be applied to other CSEs across the country to offset some of the price competition from stores in surrounding larger centers. Pierce's Store (VT) is a prime example where groceries, locally-produced merchandise, and community dinners are combined to make the general store a community center as well as a grocery store.

Cow and Quince (New Glarus) has a special niche with locally-produced and organic foods. This operation is a combined grocery store and restaurant. They host regular dinners featuring special menus for members. The intent is to stock unique items that draw customers from the region rather than competing with local establishments. Because of the unique local merchandise, the store also attracts tourists to the area, further supporting the economy.

In designing and planning a potential CSE, organizers are advised to work with groups such as SBDC staff to examine several local conditions. First, examining population characteristics by age within a certain commuting area can suggest retail opportunities. Second, income levels of residents and possibly tourists should be considered in evaluating markets. Third, surveys of buyers in existing businesses (counter surveys) can help identify the types of products not currently available that potential customers would like to purchase locally. Fourth, a review of stores in surrounding communities can identify potential competition as well as business opportunities and potential markets.

The information gathered can be compiled and used to evaluate the potential for stores or businesses that offer lines of merchandise and services currently either not in the area or underrepresented. The more that organizers engage residents in planning and financing the operation of the store, the more likely the success will be. Careful planning using solid data rather than impressions is key to success in the long run. It is especially important to examine potential markets to make sure that the threshold size for operations can be met.

Replacing a lost local source for groceries is a popular stimulus that generates much interest in rural communities. So in working with grocery stores, organizers can analyze median household income (MHI) and consumption expenditures from the Consumer Expenditure Survey with spending data by region (<https://www.bls.gov/cex>). The expenditure data can be adjusted for local conditions and provide estimates for local purchases.

Several proprietary datasets also provide estimates of local retail sales by sector. Three vendors discussed below include Esri, EASI Analytics, Inc., and Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. All three sources offer one-time electronic reports by industry or sector for a target region at a reasonable price. Some universities have outreach or extension services that subscribe to these data sources and may share data as part of their economic development mission. They may also provide technical support for business related issues.

Esri, developer of the widely used ArcGIS software package for mapping and spatial analyses, offers Retail Marketplace Profile reports. These reports provide information on retail sales by detailed sector (e.g., lawn & garden stores, florists, etc.) for standardized or custom geographies. Esri data are available for cities, counties, states, and more specialized selections such as drive time regions (e.g., all retailers within a 30-minute drive from downtown). Esri also provides more specialized reports on consumer expenditures by category. For example, the Recreation Expenditures Profile provides estimates on spending for specific types of sporting goods and dissects entertainment expenditures into admissions for different types of events. Esri reports are currently available for \$50 each at <https://www.esri.com/en-us/arcgis/products/buy-reports/overview>. Figure 1 shows an example of the information available in a Retail Marketplace Profile.

Another information source is Easi Analytic Software Inc. (EASI), which provides retail sales estimates by broad store categories with five-year projections. These data are available for municipalities, counties, census blocks, and custom rings such as a 10-mile radius around a city. Below is an example retail sales report from EASI. They offer custom reports on request, and prices for their standardized reports typically range from \$20 to \$80 depending on level of detail requested (<https://www.easidemographicsondemand.com/>).

Figure 1. Example Retail Marketplace Profile



### Retail MarketPlace Profile

Proposed Location

Sample Report  
Latitude: 41.87998  
Longitude: -87.83702

Ring: 1 mile radius

Summary Demographics						
2018 Population						66,358
2018 Households						38,440
2018 Median Disposable Income						\$76,752
2018 Per Capita Income						\$83,685
2017 Industry Summary						
	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$2,221,516,882	\$4,290,828,420	-\$2,069,311,538	-31.8	2,443
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$1,978,547,729	\$3,168,175,130	-\$1,189,627,401	-23.1	1,288
Total Food & Drink	722	\$242,969,153	\$1,122,653,290	-\$879,684,137	-64.4	1,155
2017 Industry Group						
	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$405,950,654	\$72,255,592	\$333,695,062	69.8	26
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$339,050,001	\$48,590,576	\$290,459,425	74.9	9
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$30,955,986	\$16,044,263	\$14,911,723	31.7	8
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$35,944,667	\$7,620,752	\$28,323,915	65.0	8
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$65,734,248	\$119,666,311	-\$53,932,063	-29.1	101
Furniture Stores	4421	\$41,114,634	\$72,239,548	-\$31,124,914	-27.5	62
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$24,619,614	\$47,426,763	-\$22,807,149	-31.7	39
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$75,788,393	\$174,461,806	-\$98,673,413	-39.4	81
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$108,735,377	\$74,383,346	\$34,352,031	18.8	64
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$98,062,150	\$74,122,884	\$23,939,266	13.9	64
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$10,673,226	\$0	\$10,673,226	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$340,608,350	\$338,285,819	\$4,322,531	0.6	146
Grocery Stores	4451	\$297,862,654	\$293,605,693	\$4,256,961	3.2	83
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$17,672,009	\$30,680,781	-\$13,007,872	-26.9	46
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$25,073,388	\$25,998,945	-\$925,557	-1.8	16
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$122,555,603	\$227,598,339	-\$105,042,736	-30.0	100
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$208,246,499	\$32,324,470	\$176,222,029	73.2	10
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$17,339,146	\$354,169,091	-\$236,609,945	-50.2	336
Clothing Stores	4481	\$7,910,866	\$200,376,274	-\$121,466,108	-43.5	131
Shoe Stores	4482	\$96,628,707	\$28,724,951	\$122,046,244	-26.5	23
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$21,970,274	\$125,067,866	-\$103,097,592	-70.1	182
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$94,304,498	\$148,777,624	-\$94,473,126	-46.5	102
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$44,004,656	\$54,823,428	-\$10,818,772	-10.9	52
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$10,299,842	\$93,954,196	-\$83,654,354	-80.2	50
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$355,382,628	\$583,390,955	-\$228,008,327	-24.3	64
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts	4521	\$254,661,645	\$448,855,258	-\$194,193,613	-27.6	21
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$100,720,984	\$134,535,697	-\$33,814,713	-14.4	43
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$71,345,903	\$760,040,140	-\$688,694,237	-82.8	218
Florists	4531	\$3,953,897	\$4,308,316	-\$354,419	-4.3	23
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$13,086,509	\$50,242,236	-\$37,155,727	-58.7	57
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$7,712,831	\$8,257,439	-\$544,608	-3.4	16
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$46,592,666	\$697,232,149	-\$650,639,483	-87.5	121
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$52,036,430	\$284,822,035	-\$232,785,605	-69.1	41
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$42,102,601	\$271,317,699	-\$229,215,098	-73.1	31
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$1,607,312	\$0	\$1,607,312	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$8,326,517	\$13,504,336	-\$5,177,819	-23.7	10
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$242,969,153	\$1,122,653,290	-\$879,684,137	-64.4	1,155
Special Food Services	7223	\$5,499,770	\$17,445,318	-\$11,945,548	-52.1	14
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$8,785,842	\$67,696,589	-\$58,910,747	-77.0	70
Restaurants/Other Eating Places	7225	\$228,683,540	\$1,037,511,383	-\$808,827,843	-63.9	1,071

Figure 2. Sample EASI Report on Retail Sales & Projections

Description	2013	2016	2021
<b>Demographic Profiles</b>			
Dominant Profile: Wealthiest Households			
<b>Retail Sales and Store Groups</b>			
Total Retail Sales (including Food Services) (\$000):	19,957	18,130	22,971
Motor Vehicles Store Sales (\$000):	1,218	1,467	2,048
Furniture and Home Furnishings Store Sales (\$000):	0	0	0
Electrical and Appliances Store Sales (\$000):	571	544	530
Building Materials and Garden Store Sales (\$000):	0	0	0
Food and Beverage Store Sales (\$000):	559	580	661
Health and Personal Care Store Sales (\$000):	0	0	0
Gasoline Stations Store Sales (\$000):	11,400	8,384	10,240
Clothing and Accessories Store Sales (\$000):	0	0	0
Sporting Goods Store Sales (\$000):	0	0	0
General Merchandise Store Sales (\$000):	0	0	0
Miscellaneous Store Sales (\$000):	2,594	3,020	3,964
Nonstore Purchases Sales(\$000):	0	0	0
Food Services (\$000):	3,615	4,135	5,528

A third data source is Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. (W&P), which offers retail sales information by broad industry sectors with 10-year projections, although information is unavailable at smaller than county level. An advantage of W&P data over the other sources is that their reports include long-term projections. W&P sells complete economic and demographic data files for individual counties or core-based statistical areas at <https://www.woodsandpoole.com/our-databases/counties-metro-areas/>. Figure 3 shows an example of the data provided in W&P files.

*Figure 3. Woods & Poole Data Sample*

	2010	2018	2028
TOTAL RETAIL SALES, INCLUDING EATING and DRINKING PLACES SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	3819.032	4218.138	4627.01
MOTOR VEHICLES and PARTS DEALERS RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	537.833	715.416	760.742
FURNITURE and HOME FURNISHING STORES RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	75.979	96.247	113.625
ELECTRONICS and APPLIANCE STORES RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	79.067	101.865	112.722
BUILDING MATERIALS and GARDEN EQUIPMENT and SUPPLIES DEALERS RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	282.078	347.441	375.45
FOOD and BEVERAGE STORES RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	510.5	553.85	563.044
HEALTH and PERSONAL CARE RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	292.453	301.875	342.767
GASOLINE STATIONS RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	581.087	462.945	510.991
CLOTHING and CLOTHING ACCESSORIES STORES RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	132.713	147.796	158.071
SPORTING GOODS, HOBBY, BOOK, and MUSIC STORES RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	67.788	84.493	85.418
GENERAL MERCHANDISE STORES RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	719.05	729.764	842.448
MISCELLANEOUS STORE RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	84.506	100.984	110.77
NONSTORE RETAILERS RETAIL SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	63.002	72.911	87.214
EATING and DRINKING PLACES SALES (in millions of 2009 dollars)	392.976	502.551	563.748

The wide array of data available can bewilder potential users not readily acquainted with this information. Thus, Figure 4 summarizes differences in information available from vendors of retail market data. Current prices listed are for individual reports, and they do not include potential cost savings by partnering with other agencies that already subscribe to the complete datasets. Likewise, the prices change over time, so it is important to contact a vendor. Esri offers the most detailed information, but all information is for the current year. The price per report is comparable to EASI, which offers less detail but also includes projections. W&P is the most expensive option, but it offers projections over a longer time horizon than EASI. The most useful data source depends on local issues and the planning horizon. Not to be overlooked, however, is the availability of these data and others from groups such as Extension or community college agencies.

Figure 4. Summary of Retail Market Data Vendors

<b>Data Provider</b>	<b>Level of detail</b>	<b>Data year</b>	<b>Projections available?</b>	<b>Price</b>
<b>Esri</b>	Retail subsectors (e.g., health & personal care stores, furniture stores) down to individual products/services (e.g., movie tickets, bicycles).	2018	No	\$50 per report.
<b>EASI Analytics</b>	Retail subsectors	2016	To 2021	Contact EASI for custom reports. Prices typically range from \$20-80 for their standardized reports for a single region, depending on level of detail requested.
<b>Woods &amp; Poole Economics, Inc.</b>	All broad industry sectors.	2018	To 2030	\$195 for complete data file for one region.

These figures can help organizers decide whether to start a general store with a broad range of merchandise or one limited to groceries or even focusing on organics. Local markets and consumer interests determine viability of the enterprise.

Observing local expenditure trends help the planning process and in making inventory adjustments, as discussed above. Local conditions will determine the viability of the CSE, so understanding economic conditions and trends is important to prevent later issues. Including people with backgrounds in business analysis or those familiar with local business conditions always helps the planning process because these groups take a more objective approach to decisions and do not become caught up in the excitement and enthusiasm about the new venture.

#### *Find Suitable Funding Sources*

Suitable and stable funding sources are essential to success with CSEs. Past experiences suggest that direct contributions (investments) by residents are the starting point, but most ventures require more than this source. Each CSE is unique in funding sources. Perhaps most common is to start with the initial investment by residents, which is then leveraged with a loan from a financial institution(s) in the usual ways. The initial investment can be raised in a variety of ways including crowdfunding sources such as the Local Crowd, a national program launched

with funding from the USDA, RD (<https://thelocalcrowd.com>). Other states such as Washington, Vermont, and Oregon have programs underway, so it is important for those interested in launching a CSE to examine these options.

Financing a CSE can be especially challenging due to the need to organize many small part-time investors caught up in the excitement of a potential community initiative. After the initial enthusiasm stops, organizers must sustain a level of interest that requires continued communication with investors and residents. Even then, large unexpected costs can be more than the initial investors are willing to pay. These conditions make accurate business planning upfront even more imperative.

Anticipating costs to repair equipment, pay an experienced manager, and designing an effective marketing plan to maintain customer loyalty are all items that may be underestimated in launching the effort. Professional guidance from a local SBDC or similar organization or from a retired business manager in the community can help in early decisions. They can be key to later successes but must be included when the venture is launched. Retired residents with both a wealth of practical experience and relatively flexible schedules sometimes are overlooked in designing community-based processes. Bringing these residents into the planning process early can gain a long lasting commitment, especially when they have longevity in the community.

Typically, CSEs will require more funds than generated in an initial fund-raising effort. The most logical source is to borrow capital from a financial institution. In some cases, the bank or lending agency can make a loan on favorable terms to meet a Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) requirement. This can mean lower interest rates and a longer payback period (patient capital), which can be important to a fledgling business. This is also a situation where CSE organizers may wish to consider a cooperative business model with members paying dues. Several examples are provided where the CSEs operated at a loss during certain periods but were able to move ahead knowing that the dues paid by members would carry the operations at least temporarily.

An alternative approach is to pre-sell products such as in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) ventures, which provide upfront start-up funds but also maintain a steady clientele during the early years until the venture can gain stability and become profitable. This approach, for instance, was used in the Hinesburg Public House project in Vermont, and the Mulefoot Gastropub project in Imlay City, MI. As noted previously, the business venture must

generate a revenue stream that covers operating costs and other expenses. Not fully estimating these potential costs is a major factor contributing to business closings.

Partnering agencies can strengthen the startup and early years of a CSE. In the case of Lake Grocery in Willow Lake, SD, the partnership with Willow Lake Area Advancement (WLAA) provided guidance in recognizing and organizing donors. As an added benefit, the WLAA purchased the building so that Lake Grocery could rent space rather than purchase the building outright in the early phases of the project (Willow Lake, 2018). Partners in other situations can provide initial investments needed to launch the project, rather than provide operating support.

While not always considered a funding issue, controlling operating costs is a major factor in successful CSEs. Volunteered time has helped CSEs such as Pierce's Store remain competitive in meeting competitors' prices. Thus, subsidized rents on operating space, donations of land, and similar support are options to consider when planning a CSE. Many small towns have vacant or underutilized buildings in the downtowns, and some still meet building codes. Providing rent-free space can help launch the CSE as well as improve the appearance of the downtown space. Depending on organization type used, such as a nonprofit, these contributions or donations may qualify for tax benefits. It behooves CSE organizers to examine these options in communicating with potential contributors.

In any event, the funding issue has many aspects, and organizers of a CSE will benefit from exploring unique local opportunities in their planning efforts. Of utmost importance, however, is that they keep long-term sustainability of the enterprise as the main target. The business must be self-supporting, or nearly so, in order to not have to ask investors for additional funds, which may weaken confidence in its long-term sustainability and deter future investment as well as discourage continued patronage.

Some organizational issues can be avoided by having a governing board that includes members with business backgrounds or management experience on similar issues. Local expertise in the community can be low-cost and avoid expensive mistakes later if the CSE encounters financial problems. A common mistake leading to start-up failures among small businesses involves not raising or having access to sufficient capital to successfully operate the business. Also important is to recognize when a venture is not financially suited to the area.

Enthusiasm for the project has to be balanced with a serious recognition of its long-term viability.

### *Market the Project Effectively*

After a business opens, effective marketing is crucial to long-term success. Marketing is especially important in sparsely populated areas that require greater patronage by a smaller population. Several approaches including social media as well as traditional print and electronic venues may be required. The more residents hear about the CSE and what it offers, the more likely they are to patronize the store and possibly become regular customers who will then become another source of advertising.

Reaching and engaging customers is key to success. This aspect places an additional burden on organizers to make sure that the CSE is a sound venture and financially profitable during a designated period of time. Reasons for closing a previous business should be examined carefully. In some instances, a private business managed by one person for a long period may have slowly lost market appeal. Customers may have allegiance to the previous operator but after retirement do not transfer that loyalty to new operators, which adds another marketing dimension. This condition is especially important when a business has been closed for a long period of time. Customers form new patterns of shopping and now have other sources for the products.

Likewise, consumer preferences continually change as do opportunities or places to purchase merchandise. Especially troublesome is the major invasion of internet shopping with quick delivery. Rural residents, even those with limited mobility, now have relatively quick access to merchandise purchased locally in the past. Thus, in deciding about the lines of merchandise to offer through a CSE, it is important to be sure the previous store did not close mainly due to market conditions that perhaps were not recognized or understood. Even if the store was profitable, it still may need a broader base of merchandise to satisfy the interests of a changing population. Perhaps locally-produced relatively unique items hard to find on the internet or in other stores can make the local CSE more attractive to residents. Convenience and uniqueness of merchandise have been important in successful CSEs, especially when they faced price competition from stores in nearby larger cities.

Multiple profit centers within the CSE are equally important. Successful CSEs such as Barnard General Store in Vermont, for example, have the Vermont general store model with

basic food items carried along with local crafts or unique items, meats and cheeses, fresh produce, and a lunch counter. They also sell gas. While the store was closed, organizers regularly stocked basic items and held events to maintain a presence in the community as a social gathering location. This approach builds a broader clientele and bolsters profitability during down times.

Inventory selections based on surveys of residents or expressed preferences have also been a useful strategy. This is true with Walsh Community Grocery Store, where store personnel explained that stocked items and quantities change often due to demand and efforts to meet customers' specific desires in an attempt to compete with larger stores (Booth, 2014). Thus, staying in contact with customers regularly helps identify possible new merchandise or ways to market to other groups. In other words, satisfied and dedicated customers are effective marketers for the CSE.

Local interest in starting or reopening a business using a CSE approach may indicate that the private market did not accept a previous business. Several grocery store examples discussed later reveal that previous owners decided to sell the business partly because profit goals were not met. The motivation of residents was to help retain the business, but the market conditions did not change, making successful operation difficult even at lower profit goals and reduced operating costs. Thus, tight management practices or a different business model are needed to keep the venture viable.

Reopening a store as a CSE when it closed for strictly market reasons will probably not work. While a CSE can sometimes operate at lower costs, it still must pass a market test to attract capital and remain viable. The fact that CSEs are driven partly by social goals does not absolve them from meeting market conditions, which emphasizes the importance of customer surveys and other approaches to test the market prior to launching the venture. These activities also raise community interest and awareness in the project, which generates local enthusiasm for the effort and perhaps higher patronage when the store opens.

Marketing must build on basic principles such as credibility, work flow, and brand awareness (AMA, 2018). CSEs have an advantage because of the engagement by residents who see the activity as needed in the community and are willing to be involved. Marketing in a rural environment follows these basic principles but has additional challenges. Comcowich (2018) claims that rural businesses should start with general marketing trends, recognizing that not all

will apply to the local area. Loyalty is a focal trait of rural marketing, so it is important early in the process to have residents see themselves as having built the process. Thus, it is important to recognize national and state trends regarding preferences for products but equally important to supplement them with research on local buying practices. Many communities with CSEs are small, so often, local market research can be conducted relatively quickly and inexpensively. The fact that customers or potential buyers are asked for their preference may also build more support for the operations.

Building a strong local identity for the CSE, perhaps with a well-written mission statement and values, can be an asset since residents in small communities take more pride in purchasing locally because they are or know community investors. Staying connected and building a local bond with residents can be a significant attribute for success since 87 percent of rural Americans reported they would rather support a local business than a larger brand, and 96 percent said that small-town innovation deserves more recognition (Comcowich, 2018). Building a local identity can also assist in gaining momentum and establishing the CSE as a fixture of a comprehensive community development initiative in which they want to be engaged.

Maintaining a long-term commitment even during disappointing financial times is crucial to success. Customers must be willing to patronize the store in sufficient quantities to keep it viable, and investors must be willing to stay the course after the initial enthusiasm has dwindled. Township Stores in Bonaparte, IA, illustrates a case where after 30 or more years, the store continues even after virtually all of the initial investors have left. The town has shrunk in population size and has experienced many store closings, but the CSE remains. This situation stresses the need to bring in new members or participants even if additional funding is not requested in order to replace previous customers who have left the community or have moved to other jobs.

A well-organized and managed CSE can achieve cost advantages from volunteer labor and possible collaborations with stores in neighboring communities. Small stores, however financed, often cannot purchase in large quantities to obtain quantity discounts on merchandise, so they have difficulties competing with larger stores. Sometimes, joint purchases with another small store in a neighboring area can reduce merchandise costs and benefit both stores. However, even in the best of cases, head-to-head competition with larger stores is probably not the best

strategy for a CSE with a social purpose, so proprietors must find other ways to proceed such as selling unique local products or services.

CSEs, depending on organizational type, can offer several cost-advantages. First, when investors do not expect a financial return or even to receive their initial investment, a CSE can survive on a lower rate of return to capital. Usually, a loan to a financial institution must be repaid, but patient capital allows a longer payback period at a lower interest rate and requires less cash from operations.

Second, investors may be willing to invest time and effort to help manage the store, at least part-time. This approach reduces personnel costs, and the CSE can operate with a lower markup on merchandise. Some successful CSEs in Vermont employ an experienced part-time manager supported by a group of local volunteers with basic training in store operations, which brings business management skills at an affordable cost plus lowers operating costs. Retired residents in the community may have the time and be willing to assist in these efforts partly for the comradery as much as to be engaged in a community event. Therefore, it is important to involve them when possible.

Third, stocking unique locally made items not sold elsewhere in the area can make the store more unique plus build local support and staying power. While the profit margin on these items may be less, the inventory costs are also lower when the merchandise can be delivered on an as needed basis from a local supplier who now has a vested interest in the success of the venture. These specialty items may also appeal to tourists and visitors to the area, which further markets the store.

Along the same lines, a CSE can play other roles in community enhancement. For instance, if it sells locally-made products, there may be opportunities to provide classes in various crafts and then market the products through the store. There also may be opportunities to serve specific local groups such as the elderly by offering delivery services. Some CSEs host monthly or regularly scheduled events to build social capital, provide another profit center, and strengthen loyalty among customers.

### *Communicate to Maintain Momentum*

Remaining transparent with the community throughout the entire opening process—and after opening—is an important element in the successes of CSEs. With open communication, residents can not only see the final goal and future plans but they can also buy into the process

by providing suggestions as well as investing time and money. CSEs do this through regular monthly meetings or newsletters. Some started a newsletter before opening to keep local investors informed and to simultaneously bring new community members into the project. Communication can be maintained relatively easily with effective results and for that reason should not be ignored during the hectic days of starting a new venture.

4. *Describe recent developments in Crowdfunding activities that can broaden and facilitate local efforts. Groups such as The Local Crowd (Wyoming), Community Sourced Capital (California), Milk Money (Vermont), and Oregon Hatch (Oregon) are statewide initiatives that support local development agencies in rural areas. Similar efforts are underway in other states and will be documented in phone interviews. The information will be included in instructional and implementation materials.*

#### Work Completed

Follow-up interviews with crowdfunding groups were incorporated into the work plan. Project resources did not permit as detailed an investigation of specific fundraising platforms as was planned. This literature is somewhat confusing because of multiple innovative approaches used by crowdfunding groups. The question we raised was whether CSE funding approaches specifically use crowdfunding, rather than the overall use and impact of crowdfunding which has been a major activity with major growth. Since the main focus of this project was how CSES are organized and outcomes, there was not sufficient time to delve into the specific approaches used in raising the funds. However, several CSEs that had used recognized crowdfunding approaches are documented and discussed in the guidebook. Further investigation of funding approaches is still warranted but will require a detailed survey and discussions with local leaders and resources in this project did not permit this level of investigation. Work on this topic will continue as resource permit and the electronic guidebook will be revised when possible.

5. *Pilot draft materials with local groups to identify improvements that will enhance their usefulness in application efforts. The Extension Educators participating in the project will be key leaders in this phase of the project. Several small rural communities in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin have expressed interest in working with CSEs as have Extension personnel in Wisconsin. Local groups in two communities will be invited to participate as “pilot communities” in enhancing the usefulness of the materials.*

#### Work Completed

We provided draft materials in the guidebook to two Illinois communities exploring options for CSEs. In addition, the draft guidebooks have been provided to the Illinois Institute for

Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University for its work with small towns trying to reopen businesses. In turn, the IIRA staff prepared a synopsis of a community with which they have been working for several years using some CSE approaches. That copy is included in the guidebook. Also, materials were provided to leaders in Toulon, IL which started a CSE grocery store but after two years and high replacement costs for equipment the manager closed it. Local leaders are currently exploring other approaches described in the guidebook to evaluate their options. A final selection of options is pending at this time.

A presentation was made to the UW-Extension annual meeting and the draft copy of the guidebook has been shared. It is too early to determine whether, or how much, actions will result using the guidebook.

In addition, as indicated in the proposal, materials have been presented to communities in NW Illinois. The economic director in White and Carroll counties is working with NIU-CGS to organize a one-half day seminar for interested community leaders. That workshop will probably occur in late March and will feature guidebook materials and will bring in two CSEs described in the guidebook—Cow and Quince (Wisconsin) and Supervalu in Toulon. The intent will be to share experiences in organizing a CSE and how to work with local groups. The Toulon case will help because they are undergoing a process to reopen the store. Representatives from the IIRA Cooperative Project (USDA-RD funded) will be invited to participate as well. The intended audience will be small towns in NW Illinois, SW Wisconsin, and NE Iowa. The Whiteside and Carroll county development organization will host the conference and provide financial support for workshop incidentals with the intent that Walzer will continue to work with interested communities. Illinois and Wisconsin Extension staff will be invited to this workshop in an effort to provide them with resources to work with other communities.

As noted previously, Walzer made two presentations regarding this project this year. One was to the Community Development Society International in Detroit, MI in July 2018. The second was to the International Association of Community Developers in Maynooth, Ireland. (copy is attached) The later session was used to identify similar work in other countries and possibly contact scholars and practitioners willing to write chapters for an expanded book. The presentation was received well in both locations and NCRCD received credit.

Work is currently underway examining guidebook formats that have been used in working with local agencies, such as Extension, on other projects. These formats will be evaluated and used in designing a Guidebook on CSEs in project. The intent is to make electronic copies of the Guidebook available on the web.

6. *Finalize educational materials for inclusion on the Web and in print form. These materials will supplement the initial NCRCD report currently on the web to increase its use. Materials envisioned include a type of guidebook for interested practitioners. To our knowledge, no comparable material is currently available.*

#### Work Completed

The guidebook has been prepared and is available for distribution over the web. Plans are

to continue making presentations to professional and academic conferences as well as to expand the research to identify other uses of the CSE financing approach with the aim to publish a refereed article and in other viable practitioner-oriented outlets.

There is still interest in compiling an edited research book describing how CSE financing approaches have been used to provide social services in small towns. An example could be a local group purchasing and renovating a building and then leasing space to a variety of health, education, and counseling services that provide part-time services because the market is too small to support full-time service. Examples of these approaches exist in Europe and the research volume would highlight how they are funded and operate.

*Pursue additional financial support* to make the materials more readily available. Initial discussions with the Economic Development Administration and the USDA-RD office indicated some interest in helping with dissemination and implementation efforts once the materials have been prepared and tested.

#### Completed Tasks

Financial issues within NIU, limited project funding, and the late start of the project prevented CGS from applying to EDA for funding on this project even though initially EDA had expressed interest. The main difficulty was in finding the local match needed to support an adequate grant. Work is currently underway to revive the grant application to support a potential edited book as well as work with local groups interested in pursuing a CSE approach.

#### **Future Tasks**

Several tasks will be pursued after January 31, 2019 but will depend on resources available.

1. Continue to collect and analyze data regarding how local groups organize contributing members of CSEs and strategies used in managing the operations. An electronic CSE guidebook will be maintained on the NIU-CGS web site and additional materials will be inserted as they become available.
2. David Ivan will lead the effort to share the materials with the NCRCRD Council starting with the NCRCRD webinar currently being scheduled. Walzer will be available to work with these Extension leaders to make changes as needed.
3. The workshop in NW Illinois (Whiteside County) should generate interest and NIU-CGS staff will assist in whatever ways possible. Initially, there was interest by UW-Extension personnel and if that continues, Walzer will assist in those efforts as funds permit.

4. The guidebook will be available to IIRA staff working with communities through the IL Cooperative Center grant mentioned previously. Likewise, as needed, Walzer will assist in making presentations or providing technical assistance as needed.

### **Descriptions of Additional CSEs Examined in 2019 Guidebook**

(This list was added to the 20 CSEs described in the previous report.)

#### **Walsh Community Grocery Store—Walsh, Colorado<sup>1</sup>**

The Walsh Community Grocery Store began when community leaders realized that other groceries had disappeared leaving communities without access to a local site to buy basic items. In 2006, the only grocery store in Walsh, Colorado (pop. 512) closed for the first time since 1928. Since opening, the store had operated profitably, but now community leaders had to find a way to reopen the store using local investments. They initially discussed the store closing in a town meeting, to discuss feasibility and all possible options. After several years of driving 20 miles to the nearest store, they decided to go against the feasibility study, despite research saying that maintenance of a grocery store was not possible, and proceed with the project. An especially heavy snowy season motivated the community to support the grocery store even further.



Volunteers worked to start the project, doing much of the physical building preparation, and other pre-opening tasks.

The store opened as a corporation, with more than 300 shareholders investing \$50.00 per share, and many

individuals purchasing more than one share. Led by a small board of five individuals, including businesspeople, a farmer, a banker, and the town mayor, the entire opening process from discussion to official store opening took approximately eight months. Just shy of \$200,000 was

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<sup>1</sup> Current information and store logistics gathered from interviewing Judy Bezona, a founding member, and Donald Rutherford, the current store manager.

brought in from shares, and used along with a \$160,000 loan from the Southeast Colorado Power Association to open the store in 2008.

The store now operates seven days a week with 14 full- and part-time employees. With gross sales over \$1 million in 2008, Walsh Community Grocery Store remains sustainable. Nearly 220 transactions occur daily, with a large variety of customers. Larger orders support the store as well, such as those from the school and nursing home. Donald Rutherford has served as the store manager for the past two years, and explained that the store is aiming for higher profit margins in the future, however the current goal of the store has been to remain open and replace store equipment with more updated physical assets, such as new freezers and LED lighting. Environmental impact is a focus for the store, with small steps making a large impact. In addition to replacing the physical elements of the store to be more energy efficient, Walsh Community Grocery Store also recycles all of their plastics and cardboards after use, and invites all in the community to bring their recyclable goods to the store to be dropped off as well. Local involvement is a huge factor in this success. Residents can interact daily at the store, or in larger events such as the store's customer appreciation day where they served 368 hot dogs. The financial success of the store and widespread support from the community have been important in maintaining its viability.

Another important factor in the store's success is understanding local needs. Store bookkeeper Helen Mills explains, "It's a game every week to know how much everybody wants blueberries or strawberries. We don't normally get turnips in, but if somebody wants some, we'll buy a case and try to sell half a case to the nursing home. If we have leftover peppers and onions in produce, we can chop them up and sell them at the butcher counter for fajita mix. Too many cucumbers left? We can use them in salads." (Booth, 2009) The regular interaction and response

to customers' interests is important for the store to maintain its customer base as well as compete with larger stores. The store will also deliver groceries to those in the town if they live too far or to the elderly.

### **Port Clyde Fresh Catch—Port Clyde, Maine<sup>2</sup>**

On the east coast, fishing villages are a huge part of local culture, community, and capital. Port Clyde, (pop. 341) located between Muscongus Bay and Penobscot Bay, is a fishing community. Constructed in 2007, through a two year process including licensing, training, and securing of a physical space, Port Clyde Fresh Catch opened in 2009. Historically, fishing and related activities in the various seasons dominated the community.



Today, community supported fisheries keep this tradition alive on a smaller scale, but retaining this aspect of their heritage. In Port Clyde Fresh Catch members can buy on a weekly basis whatever is caught that week and in whatever amounts they want. In addition, through their “Fish Drop” program, which skips the shipping process completely through organizing a location in the community to meet and interact with the community, they save time providing more time to increase their productivity. The fish drop program has anywhere between 50 to 100 patrons weekly, with more steady numbers nearer to 100 during the summers. Twelve primary organizers began in the process, with seven remaining and finding long-term success. Port Clyde aimed to create two streams of revenue for the local fishermen, through both the purchasing of caught goods from the fishermen, and the

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<sup>2</sup> Current information and program logistics gathered from interviewing Glenn Libby, President of Port Clyde Fresh Catch.

sales to the community. This dual-stream market was a major step in taking back the market for the small community fishermen, and provided Port Clyde fresh catch with their means to take back the market.

Port Clyde Fresh Catch has led community supported fisheries (CSF), becoming the first in the nation through the Maine Fishermen's Cooperative. Operating as an S-Corp, shares in the CSF allow for Port Clyde to more fund fishermen with more stability. Their organizational shift has provided for a large increase in profit as well, bringing numbers up on gross sales. In their first year, they caught and sold approximately \$10,000 of crab, which is a small start compared to the average of \$500,000 they are bringing in today. This has allowed for Port Clyde to adapt to changes in the market, whether it be the loss of their shrimp season in 2017 or through the addition of Farm Drop, a virtual farmers market that allows for them to expand their range of impact. Analysis is done daily on an internal basis, looking primarily at internal yield and market prices to keep Port Clyde both competitive and profitable.

CSF's have been appearing more rapidly on the coasts in the United States providing other communities with the same shared success as seen in Port Clyde, with Port Clyde as the first Community Supported Fishery in the nation. 2018 was the end of the first formal 5-year action plan, focusing on developing and expanding their market, and A dozen fishing vessels have returned traditional heritage to this small village through expanding practices, and Port Clyde Community Fishery aims to keep this growth going as they move forward.

### **Community FOODS—West Oakland, California**

Much of California is viewed as having a thriving city market and, in many cases, it shows strengths and opportunities. Areas in California do in fact have an alive and growing

community, such as Uptown Oakland (pop. 41,582). Many restaurants and food markets have started and built a community around them. With so much attention paid to these new, developing districts, however, residential districts with less development planned, including on small scale projects necessary for health, such as in West Oakland (pop. 25,000) can be overlooked.

Lack of a full-service grocery in West Oakland seems unlikely since the residents of this area, on average, spend \$58 million on groceries annually. In addition, in West Oakland today, 48 percent of residents have an unhealthy weight in some form. Most residents recognize the issue, and are seeking education and food choices in increasing numbers. There are equally as many in the community trying to support and empower a social setting that adds real value and renovates West Oakland.

Community FOODS Market, previously known as People's Community Market, tries to serve the sometimes overlooked neighborhood of West Oakland. Initially developed by Brahm Ahmadi, the project is aimed to "... make sure this business conveys a message of inclusivity across a broad spectrum of community." (Community Foods, 2018) While others overlooked the West Oakland community for projects in surrounding districts took priority, Community FOODS created a local market to not only help alleviate the food desert but also introduce healthy eating and food education to the neighborhood.

They had success by stocking only the top selling products which offered two specific advantages. First, it allowed the store to cut back on stocking costs with a smaller and more intense clientele focused on fresher foods. Second, customers will find what they like given that the stock is chosen based on their identified choices and past buying habits. This model integrates two major formats to focus on all needs.

### FULL-SERVICE FRESH FOODS FORMAT<sup>3</sup>

- High quality fresh foods including produce, meats and seafood.
- Produce sourced in bins directly from producers to increase savings for customers.
- Full-service integrated meat and seafood counter and full-service prepared foods department.
- Prepared foods department will include a café, deli and Grab & Go section.
- The Front Porch multipurpose social hall will feature an order window to the Café.

### LIMITED ASSORTMENT GROCERY FORMAT<sup>3</sup>

- Community FOODS aims to carry more focused items, selected by working with their customers and key community members. This allows for them to have less varied stock than other supermarkets, cutting down on inventory costs, all while still allowing for them to meet the needs of their community.
- Packaged grocery, personal care and household products will also be limited to the top selling items in any single category that offer the greatest value.
- Pallet floor displays will merchandise products in their casings, reducing fixtures costs and increasing bargaining power with key suppliers.

Despite being housed in a small building, this approach allows them to compete and as a full functioning market. In addition to a business model that provides base services at a level which benefits consumers, Community FOODS Market works with a Community Advisory Council (CAC) including West Oakland residents to gain insights into services that are well received, as well as those that need adjustments. The CAC provides residents with a sense of leadership in the community and direct ownership in the business. (Community Foods, 2018)

The store was supported through “public offerings,” raising \$1.7 million in the first two rounds. Ahmadi describes these funds not as simple donations, but as an investment that directly

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<sup>3</sup> Outlined on <https://communityfoodsmarket.com/learn-more/>

impacts the community. Community FOODS Market also provides for a more concrete investment plan for those who wish to invest a larger financial amount, including a three percent compounded interest rate, plus a one percent store credit based on annual investment totals. A third round of funding to occur in June of 2018 will finalize the funds needed to launch the store. Their goal is to open in October of 2018. (Community Foods, 2018)

Community FOODS Market is using a simple goal, with several methods for success, with overall goal of becoming “More Than a Grocery Store.” Through their educational programs and consumer impact, they find success in their mission and positive reflection on the community. Community FOODS also plans to open a space called Front Porch, serving as a social hall for meetings, events, and other functions to serve the community. (Community Foods, 2018)

### **Neighborhood Co-op—Carbondale, IL**

Since opening in 1985 in Carbondale, Neighborhood Co-op (CNC) has continually worked with and for community interests. From the beginning, the store has focused on organic foods and natural practices. It gained enough support that in 1997 it moved to a larger location next door. This move paved the way for a complete remodel of the store in 2000.

(Neighborhood, 2018)



By 2004, the transition was complete and Neighborhood Co-op Grocery converted to a cooperative corporation recognized by the state of Illinois, and in 2005 did not have sufficient space to meet the community demands. The store then moved to a 12,000 square-foot space in the Murdale Shopping Center. With this move, NGC became a full-service store with a

grocery, café, and educational kitchen to hold cooking classes financed by owners and leveraged capital.

However, total sales from 2016 to 2017 decreased 2.5% city of Carbondale also experienced an overall decrease in sales of approximately 6%. Net income was approximately \$21,000 or 0.4% of sales in 2017 compared to a budgeted net income of approximately \$31,000 or 0.6% of sales for the same year. NCG is currently focusing on customer evaluations to more clearly understand operations and increase sales in 2018 and 2019.

Likewise, attempts are underway to attract more customers from the community. Currently, the customer base is bimodal, mainly students and middle class professionals. The main customer base is middle-age and older with a heavy orientation toward white females between 45 and 65 years of age and are highly educated. The store hopes to bring in, and become a favored location for, more diversity in age, culture, and backgrounds.

Debt from the 2006 relocation project is planned to be retired within the next two years, much of which was helped by the community through interest free loans. The loan from the City of Carbondale will be retired by June 2019. Resident-investors are vital in financially stabilizing the store and helping to pay down loans and debts. Shares are purchased for \$100 each, with Illinois residents allowed to purchase up to 10 shares. These investments keep the store operating and membership is growing with more than 3,000 active local owners.

As noted earlier, Neighborhood Co-op has environmental impact as a founding principle. In 2018, Neighborhood Co-op Grocery became the first store in Southern Illinois to receive a *Silver Level GreenChill* certification from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). This award recognizes businesses that reduce in-store refrigerant usage by more than 65 percent. By

using green refrigeration systems and regular maintenance, the Co-op's refrigeration is more environmentally-friendly, further increasing the attractiveness of the store to customers.

NCG is an example of a cooperative that is creative and resilient in the face of a changing environment while remaining true to having an environmentally conscious impact in business practices. It has faced a serious financial issue, namely the seasonal population in the Carbondale area due to fluctuations in numbers of students enrolled at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. These fluctuations left monthly profit less reliable than planned, and while memberships fees provides some financial stability as a base for revenue, managing finances and sales is still difficult. Similar conditions would exist with other forms of organization and the cooperative structure may offer advantages because owners-members have an incentive to purchase locally and ride out financial setbacks.

### **Oneota Community Food Cooperative—Decorah, IA**

Decorah, IA, a community with a population of just under 8,000 people, is home to a cooperative with a long history of local involvement and healthy, sustainable food. The Oneota Community Food Co-op specializes in organic, local, and sustainably produced products since 1974. With 4,995 members in the cooperative as of 2017, they have found a large amount of success in turning profit each year. (Oneota, 2018)

Oneota does not require membership into their cooperative, however includes benefits such as 5% discount coupons to be used once a month, free



advertising through their in-store news bulletin, voting rights on board decisions and election, and direct ordering through their product distributors. Oneota brings a unique set of benefits that

empower others in the community as much as they help themselves, proving their strong, long lasting relationship in the community. The cooperative offers a 4%-8% discount for anyone who is a member of the cooperative who also volunteers their time, allowing the cooperative to receive even further benefit in efficient, creative solutions to regular tasks, such as stocking or at large events. (Oneota, 2018)

Oneota currently is operating with positive earnings each year, however 2017 left them with one of their lowest earnings after income tax in the most recent years. From 2012-2016, the store was operating with annual earnings of over \$60,000 annually. However, as of 2017, they found earnings at only \$316 for the year, barely breaking even.<sup>4</sup>

The cooperative is focused on their positive achievements and propelling further into the future, as they note that many cooperatives are facing a loss of revenue due to whole foods and online retailers. These achievements and additions include the increasing of pay rate by 10% annually for lower paygrades the last two years, with the focus being to bring the entirety of those staffed above the minimum livable wage for the area, and a four point improvement on their Energy Star Business Rating, bringing the store to a 96/100.<sup>5</sup> Their support of local producers is one of their most proud achievements, with \$1.2 million invested into producers within a 100-mile radius. 25% of their total sales in 2017 were of products from local producers. (Oneota, 2018)

Looking to the future, Oneota hopes to revitalize the store and move forward to better focus on the needs of their members and community. This includes updates to the meat/ deli

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<sup>4</sup> According to comparison of previous annual reports

<sup>5</sup> As reported in 2017 annual report

departments, as well as a renovation to the café area. They expect that by 2020 they may be looking towards renovation of the entire store.

### **Stapleton Cooperative Market—Stapleton, Nebraska**

Residents in the small town of Stapleton, Nebraska, (pop. 305 in 2010), brought a grocery store and deli (Cooperative Market and Deli) to the community after a previous store closed in 2015, with the nearest grocery at least 20 miles away. A team of volunteers in the community began the process with a survey of the neighborhood to determine possible interest and patronage due to the sparse population in the surrounding area in Logan County with a population of only 763. (Nicolaus, 2018)

After surveying and determining that a grocery store was feasible, volunteers began the procedure of organizing the business with a cooperative approach by writing by-laws and arranging financing with a goal to raise \$300,000 through \$500 stocks with a month. This approach, however, did not start well and the initial planning effort generated only \$50,000 in approximately two-weeks with persistent efforts. <sup>[1]2</sup>



A 4,800 square foot building was purchased by an anonymous community member, and was made available for use as a grocery store so that Stapleton could begin operations until financial resources were acquired to purchase the building for themselves. This step, along with some other slight modifications in the overall plan including product selection and other shifts, allowed Stapleton Cooperative Market and Deli to reduce its fund-raising goal to \$200,000. This

revised goal and physical presence attracted substantial local interest, prompting 157 shareholders to invest \$210,000, pushing the store past the fundraising objective.

Ten original volunteers form the board of directors for the cooperative and meet bi-weekly. Volunteers were heavily involved in the start-up process to the point where the cooperative left the doors open for individuals to come in and clean, paint, organize, and prepare for the store's opening. (Nicolaus, 2018)

From the start, the cooperative tried to promote partnerships, working with Ewoldt's Grocery in Thedford to have cooperative's groceries delivered to Thedford and then transported to Stapleton. (Nicolaus, 2018) The store continues to struggle with capital repair costs. It budgeted \$400 per month but spends nearly \$1,800 monthly due to issues like coolers freezing over, spikes in electric bills because of older equipment, and general wear-and-tear. The store managers estimated the cost for these repairs and seasonal revenue fluctuations. They now aim for an additional \$83 per day in revenues to reach the monthly goal of \$38,000 to maintain the building for future operations.<sup>13</sup>

### **Renaissance Community Co-op—Greensboro, North Carolina**

Renaissance Community Co-op (RCC) uses the community support model to bring a healthy and local setting to a city of over 200,000, and a population of over 35,000 in



surrounding areas. The CSE brings the community together in creating and funding a grocery store in Greensboro, North Carolina. It now has secured a physical space with more than 10,000 square feet through community ownership. Since 2016, the grocery store's community

owner count has increased from 88 to 728, and has addressed the local food desert issue.

(Renaissance, 2012)

RCC is an example of advancing the mission of healthy eating by residents. The Co-op describes its mission in the following statement: “Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of the founders, co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.”<sup>6</sup> (Renaissance, 2012) Through this approach, they experienced growth, success, and inclusion, helping to not only to draw a community into the business, but also to foster appreciation of experience and positive attitude.

The Co-op has provided a strong community symbol as an entity that many others want to represent and participate. The growth in ownership has given Renaissance considerable local impact by supporting the community when a voice is needed, or through free weekly fitness classes provided through the co-op. With this type of image in Greensboro and the surrounding area, their t-shirt sales provide an additional means of support both financially and recognition. Renaissance Community Co-op, as an organization, has brought the community together with access to fresh food and pride where they live.

### **Mad River Glen Cooperative—Waitsfield, Vermont**

Mad River Glen became known as a major skiing location in 1948 as a simple one-chair lift on General Stark Mountain. As a unique location from the



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<sup>6</sup> As described on their website under “Renaissance Community Co-op, About the RCC”

beginning, Mad River Glen is respected for not looking at skiing as an industry, but as a sport, and working with nature instead of against it.

In 1995, Mad River Glen transitioned towards the future, partnering with the skiers themselves to form the Mad River Glen Cooperative, “... *to forever protect the classic Mad River Glen skiing experience by preserving low skier density, natural terrain and forests, varied trail character, and friendly community atmosphere for the benefit of shareholders, area personnel and patrons.*” (Mad River Glen, 2018) *The cooperative still works towards building the best environment for the skiers today, and does so through skier ownership.*



Mad River Glen Cooperative operates as America’s only skier-owned major mountain through a standard cooperative system. A single share costs \$2000, with options to pay monthly at \$50 per month with a down payment of \$150 and an 8.0% annual percentage rate, totaling \$2150. Owners are expected to fulfill their advanced purchase requirement annually, of \$200, which can be used for any services on the mountain. This model has been successful, as evident through their initial 23 years as a cooperative. Mad River Glen Cooperative has paid off their mortgage, built credibility with management skills, and invested over \$5 million into major projects from modern upkeep implementations to historic restorations, such as with their iconic *single chair lift*. In the next 20 years the cooperative hopes to spend another \$6.5 million on large projects including ski lift renovation and rebuild of the Patrol and Ski School Building. (Mad River Glen, 2018)

## Lost River Market and Deli—Paoli, IN<sup>7</sup>

Lost River Market and Deli (LRMD) is a community grocery store operating in Paoli, Indiana (pop. 3581) operating on the cooperative business model. Opening in 2006, Lost River gain traction with a push from Orange County Homegrown, a community development organization. This push was result of success found in local farmers markets, and proved both want and need for fresh produce and encouragement for healthy eating. (Cite) The cooperative opened in 2007 with 344 member owners at that time. More than 1000 members own the Co-op today, but as with many other cooperatives, the public is welcome to shop. (Cite.) It features natural and organic food, plus local products in season and serves customers mainly in a six-



county area. It also does business with nearly 100 local and regional vendors.

LRMD currently operates at a deficit of approximately \$45,000 a year, fighting an uphill battle to continue serving their community in Indiana. This deficit is covered by members who feel it is important to have access to the store, particularly as a source of healthy food and a place of community. Members of the community can invest in and support the cooperative for as low as \$2 weekly, or \$100 for a flat annual membership. Individuals with a sustaining membership receive additional benefits from the cooperative, including voting rights for the cooperative, coupons and discounts, a monthly 5% discount, quarterly community days during which shoppers receive 10% off of all purchases, and special events such as dinners, wine tastings, and other community events through the year. 68 cents of every dollar spent in Lost River Market and Deli stays in the

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.lostrivermarketanddeli.com/>

community through partnerships with local producers and other local services, which community members' state is a firm motivator to shop at the cooperative.

The LRMD board of directors is entirely elected, which allows for the member owners to build a board focused on the current needs of the community. The cooperative shows strength in its online meeting strategy and voting process, allowing for greater discussion and owner engagement.

A cooperative, or any business for that matter, must understand and serve clients well. Lost River uses a flexible and adaptable cooperative model to maintain support in the community and communicates regularly. The customizable payment amount is beneficial as well, with a low option of \$2 a week, Lost River offers chances to be involved and support the community grocery store to many residents and expands its outreach and impact which may help to insure its success.

### **Jubilee Food Market—Waco, Texas**

Jubilee Food Market, located in Waco, Texas, is a project formed through Mission Waco Mission World. Located near the center of Waco, Jubilee was created in a neighborhood to combat the food desert occupying the immediate area. Ten key players make up the initial organizing team, including locals with



backgrounds in architecture, construction, Christian outreach, and grocery management. This group formed Jubilee Food Market as a nonprofit grocery store, presently operating with goal of breaking even while juggling the repairs and responsibilities of the store.

Jubilee has been operating since November of 2016. Raising \$900,000 to open, the store decided on best use for the fundraising through meetings with the community and their constructed group of leaders. Such building and efforts has led to continued success with Jubilee, moving them closer to their goal. Jubilee Food Market has between 800-1000 sales per month, with many enjoying the social benefit of having a local grocery store. The store has nearly doubled their sales in the last 18 months, with their opening sales in November 2016 totaling at \$27,000, compared to presently seeing close to \$50,000 per month.<sup>8</sup> Jubilee has implemented an Oasis Card system to promote shopping local as well. Those who live within one mile of the store will receive \$5 on every \$25 spent, while those who live outside of this range receive \$3. The store has held large fundraisers through Mission Waco for replacement and other regular expenses, such as refrigeration and other upgrades.

Mission Waco focuses on the idea of Christian Community Development, with all invited to be involved, promoting that many of these aspects are beneficial to a community and members of it regardless of belief. Mission Waco is one half of the larger organization, Mission Waco Mission World, which serves to assist those in both Waco, Texas and internationally. In Waco, the 26 year old nonprofit has developed 36 various youth, retail, and family programs. These programs have a wide range of specific focuses, from legal services to community service, and retail such as Jubilee Food Market.

Looking towards the future, Jubilee Food Market and Mission Waco have created other projects for the aid of both their CSE and the community. Located right next door, an Aquaponics Green House brings fresh produce to the community that is sold in the store.

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<sup>8</sup> As of June 2018.

Furthermore, through Mission Waco, there are plans to create an economic development center. Housed in a location previously a liquor store, this center would contain three stores which could provide both traffic and economic sustainability for the community. Combined with the other efforts and projects of Mission Waco, economic and demographic graduate surveys have been conducted on the surrounding community, providing insight on both the operations of Mission Waco and Jubilee alike.

### **The Kitchen Table—Rochelle, IL**

The Kitchen Table was cultivated from the dream and practice of Carolyn Brown, as she and her husband, Grant Brown, fed members of their community out of their own home. This realization of need led them to begin the process of creating The Kitchen Table, a 501(c)3, with 2013-2016 focusing on the financing and opening process to bring the business to life.



The Kitchen Table is heavily devoted to its mission “to alleviate local hunger by providing healthy meals through reduction of food waste in a family dining setting that builds community.”<sup>9</sup> To meet this goal, their restaurant operates with a pay what you can philosophy, allowing for individuals to give when they can and have an option for food when needed. This mission required a heavy amount of funding at startup, as they knew profits would not necessarily follow the trends of traditionally modeled stores at first due to this open payment option. Members of the community, and in their case often those who cannot pay for the meals on occasion, are volunteering in the kitchen and restaurant to ensure

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.kitchentablerochelle.org/mission.html>

smooth, well-staffed meals. The Kitchen Table also works with multi-tiered sponsors and donors to cover costs and fulfill its mission.

The Kitchen Table has also scaled their dinner services to allow for greatest long-term success through a well-planned schedule. They are open for dinner on Tuesday and Thursday each week and on Sunday mornings for brunch. *(More will be added from interviews)*

### **One Bistro—Miamisburg, OH/Xenia, OH**

One Bistro, a restaurant located in Xenia, OH and Miamisburg, OH, has brought many new opportunities for involvement and community to the populations surrounding the businesses. Operating using a cooperative business model, One Bistro attracts individuals from the community as customers through unique payment methods allowing for those from any income to support the project in some way. In addition to widespread accessibility to dining and participating, One Bistro operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, promoting individuals in the community to give back both monetarily and through their time as volunteers. Through these varied options, as well a firm operations strategy, One Bistro has the opportunity and tools to move into the future for more and more future success.

One Bistro focuses on healthy, affordable meals with a faith-based message. Terming themselves as a “Biznistry,”<sup>10</sup> they aim to provide these meals to all through a multi-payment-option style of business, where individuals can pay what they can for their menu items on a shifting scale. If one can, One Bistro recommends for guests to pay between \$6 and \$9 for their meals, or any amount more if they wish to pay it forward for another guest. Individuals who cannot pay may also volunteer their time to pay for their meal, helping to wrap silverware, set

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<sup>10</sup> <https://onebistro.org/about-us/>

tables, clean, and restock. This allows for many to get involved on their terms, bringing in many individuals while focusing on the core mission to help the hungry find a meal.<sup>1</sup>

Funds for One Bistro primarily come from customers in the restaurant and donations. The restaurant has a history of working well within the community on fundraising and support, and is successful in remaining operational, with minimal bumps in the road. Revenue is scattered currently with 2015 bringing in nearly \$14,000 in revenue after expenses with 2016 seeing their revenue fall \$16,000 under expenses in the year. In 2016, this loss was not product of reduced contributions or revenue, however, as both areas increased, but instead is product of much higher expenses. With these changes in revenue and from positive to negative the Miamisburg location has opted to close temporarily from September 2018 to the end of October 2018, with intent of redevelopment and reorganization for greater effect. Alternatively, Xenia remains open through this time to continue supporting their community.

### **Lake Grocery—Willow Lake, SD**

The Willow Lake community (pop. 263) did not expect involvement in collaborating on the opening of a grocery store, and Willow Lake Area Advancement (WLAA), an organization focused on steps forward for the community, did not expect to be running



it. Their previous grocery had closed in 2008, making the creation of a new grocery store a high priority for the community. Adding to the need for a local grocer was the 45 mile drive to Huron or Watertown, two of the more prominent communities with access to grocery nearby. WLAA was given the store by Dacotah Bank, as there was no interest from buyers in the property and took a leap of faith at the best option moving forward. WLAA took the lead on the project, along with now-current full-time manager.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <http://dakotafire.net/article/lake-grocery-community-owned-success-story/>

The WLAA is a nonprofit organization, and took donations from the community to fund the opening of the store, leading Lake Grocery to operating independently as its own business. This partnership allows for the grocery store to work with the nonprofit to remain afloat through donations and support, while the store pays the WLAA rent for the building, which in turn goes back to the opportunity for greater local business funding.<sup>12</sup> In addition to Holmstrom as the full-time manager, Lake Grocery has two more part-time employees, and works with volunteers for the additional needs of the store.

### **Red Paint Creek Trading Post and Pantry—Lodge Pole, MT**

In a town currently operating with no stores, Red Paint Creek Trading Post is hoping to provide their community with groceries and other services for the first time. Lodge Pole, MT had a population of 265 at the time of the 2010 census, and is located in the norther part of Montana the closest major city is Great Falls, located 200 miles away, with a population of 60,000. This distance led members of the Lodge Pole community to feel that the addition of a grocery store would benefit not only their community, but those around them. Operating as a nonprofit organization based on the cooperative model, the store began the process of opening in 2014 and officially opened in July of 2017.<sup>2</sup>



The store faced problems when opening, however, many stemming from the sparse resources and the rural nature of the area which they were trying to combat. From the beginning, they saw these issues such as when the grant

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.willowlakesouthdakota.com/>



required that they have three quotes on the project from different companies. Many companies were not willing to write a quote as during the time frame for the project, they were



occupied in larger cities and did not want to make the trip themselves. They did manage to work around this, and other similar conflicts, through numerous volunteers.<sup>13</sup>

The trading post now resides in a 5,300-square-foot building, with approximately half of the space being used by the store and half being used by a food pantry and commercial kitchen. The store carries locally grown produce and local meats, as well as dry goods.<sup>2</sup> The Fort Belknap Community Economic Development (FBCEDC) recently received a \$35,000 Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative grant from the First Nations Development Institute of Longmont, Colorado. The grant funded the commercial kitchen equipped with NSF certified equipment, to increase the food capacity for the Red Paint Creek Trading Post and satisfy local needs for healthy food options. The commercial kitchen will allow for locally grown food preparation, preservation techniques and culinary classes. The store will also feature 24-hour gas pumps, which should attract more traffic through the community.

## Other Examples

### Lowcountry Street Grocery—Charleston, SC

Lowcountry Street Grocery (LSG) takes a lot of the practical approaches found in crowdfunding, community supported agriculture, and farmer's markets to provide healthy food

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.theshelbyreport.com/2017/06/23/montana-needed-store/>

options to the city as a whole as well as the food deserts in the southern part of Charleston. Charleston, SC, located on the southern portion of the coast in South Carolina has an estimated population of 128,000 as of 2013.<sup>14</sup> Starting in 2016, LSG began serving the Charleston community through their mobile market approach, with mission stating, “[they are focused on] providing isolated "food deserts" with access to healthy, local produce, and nutritional education while concurrently stimulating our local economy.”<sup>15</sup>

Beginning with Kickstarter, a crowdfunding platform, Lowcountry Street Grocery opened their funding period from April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015 to May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Operating with three tiers with backer benefits in their “FundTheBus” campaign, from branded hats to a personally selected location for the bus to stop, LSG raised \$47,002 from 551 backers in their 32 day campaign.<sup>16</sup> One year later in April of 2016 the bus was officially mobile and making sales, selling out of products within the first hour of opening.<sup>17</sup>

Setting up at seven locations throughout Charleston, the LSG operates using a bus to bring a farmer’s market to the people rather than relying on



people coming to the market. The school bus from 1988 is outfitted with produce, butchery, bakery, pantry, and refrigerated dairy sections. With an awning affixed to the exterior of the bus, the mobile market can expand its

<sup>14</sup> <http://worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/charleston-population/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/LSGmobilemarket/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1212557452/lowcountry-street-grocery-mobile-farmers-market/description>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1212557452/lowcountry-street-grocery-mobile-farmers-market/posts/1342430>

produce outdoors and also may offer flowers. Mobile checkouts are used, with a fixed register available indoors as well.<sup>18</sup> To provide a wide variety of products, LSG works with 20 local farms and producers, and allows for the community to suggest other local providers to expand their wares regularly.<sup>19</sup>

Lowcountry Street Grocery is largely based in collaboration and connection, illustrated through their 31 various community partners and their Community Supported Grocery (CSG) program. Through their CSG, they offer bundled fresh products from their local suppliers in three different sizes: single for \$30, double for \$50, or family for \$75.

### **Champlain Housing Trust, One Community Center—Burlington, VT**

Working in northwestern Vermont for 33 years, Champlain Housing Trust has focused on the development of communities through the security of housing and commercial buildings.



Operating as a development corporation, Champlain focuses on a variety of installments, primarily new forms of housing and housing services, neighborhood revitalization, historic preservation, emergency redevelopment, blight removal, pollution mitigation and

community facilities. They operate with the mission of supporting people of Northwest Vermont and strengthening their communities through the development and stewardship of affordable homes.<sup>20</sup> The trust has been a valuable asset to the community in cases such as with Tropical

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.lowcountrystreetgrocery.com/the-bus/>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.lowcountrystreetgrocery.com/the-bus/our-buses/>

<sup>20</sup> file:///C:/Users/z1735371/Downloads/CHT+Strategic+Plan+2017-2019.pdf

Storm Irene in 2011, or the financial crisis of 2008. St Joseph's School, purchased in 2017, is the Trust's next major project with focus on improving living conditions in the community.<sup>21</sup>

St Joseph's School, purchased for \$2.15 million, is intended to provide the community with additional multi-purpose spaces for programming including sports, culture, and arts. Champlain will achieve this through subletting the gymnasium area within the school to the Burlington Parks and Rec department. At the time of purchasing, the school already had different associations and businesses renting the space, including the Association of Africans Living in Vermont, the Robin's Nest Children's Center and the Family Room (previously operated by a nursing association). These tenants are welcome to stay, as they were heavily involved in suggesting the ownership to Champlain Housing Trust, and Champlain stated that rent will be adjusted based on what the tenants can pay for those remaining in the building.<sup>4</sup> Now known as One Community Center, the building focuses on remaining services, with additional focus on a diverse youth center, and features a Hindu church on the second floor.<sup>2223</sup>

### **Key Elements in Successes**

Discussions with local personnel involved in successful CSEs and reviewing the case studies suggests several main components are needed for CSEs to survive. These ingredients will form the basis for Guidebook discussions. They are briefly discussed here.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://digital.vpr.net/post/champlain-housing-trust-buys-former-st-joseph-school-planned-community-center#stream/0>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/story/news/local/2017/08/27/old-north-end-community-center-support-youths-color/606447001/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.vermonthindutemple.org/>

### *Essential Need Recognized in Community*

Common to all of the successful ventures studied is a recognized need in the community that could not be met with strictly private sector approaches. Perhaps the markets are too small or the return on equity was not sufficient or another element did not attract private interest. Thus, a local group had to organize investors to make a financial commitment to stay interested.

### *Business Must Pass Market Test*

Meeting a local need is not sufficient. The business venture must be financially viable with local investors using the CSE approach. The most common factor leading to closures is that the market would not support the type of merchandise offered. So, having a grocery store that did not also stock other merchandise, or have a lunch counter, or a gathering place may not survive when a general store with a broader range of merchandise might. Careful evaluation of the market is needed before investing. Likewise, the business operating model is key to survival. Management practices aimed at meeting industry targets or other criteria will be essential in the survey of a CSE and must be put in place by an experienced or knowledgeable manager.

### *Find Suitable Organizational Model*

CSEs can be organized using various formats, each of which offers advantages to specific groups but not all of them work in every case. Cooperatives are common but also are nonprofits and LLCs. Organizers must research these formats and evaluate their attractiveness for a local situation.

### *Identify and Support Local Champions*

Successful CSEs require local promotion to generate interest in the community beyond the opening of the store. Residents must patronize the store and be willing to participate in activities to make it succeed. Attracting and generating this interest for a long term requires local leaders, who have credibility in the community, to step forward and maintain the momentum.

### *Monitor and Understand the Local Economic Environment*

The local economic environment continually changes and may require decisions by CSE managers. Loss of employers, people moving out of town, a new competitor opening in a neighboring community, and similar events can force the CSE to adjust its merchandise or change its marketing practices. Similar changes have caused several CSEs to close.

Other important elements are discussed more in the Guidebook.

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## Current Thinking in Rural Economic Growth and Development

December 7, 2017

**PI:** Steven C. Deller (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

**Co-PIs:** Rebekka Martin Dudensing (Texas A&M University), Becca B.R. Jablonski (Colorado State University), Mike Woods (Oklahoma State University-Stillwater), David Chicoine, (South Dakota State University)

**Award:** \$20,000

**Project Abstract:** The Great Recession hit rural America particularly hard and many rural communities have yet to fully recovery. The policy options at the federal, state and local are complex and require serious reconsideration. This project aims to bring together a team of rural development scholars to identify and summarize the current state of the rural economy, and provide a range of potential strategies. Rural America continues to lag behind urban America across several key economic metrics.

Too often our public policy discussions present overly broad and simplistic ideas, such as reducing taxes to attract better jobs. Given the perceived 'failure' of rural development policy across the U.S., the time is ripe for a fresh look and new ideas to support rural America. This effort, tracking a wide range of rural development issues, is an attempt to uncover strategies across a range of topic areas that will improve rural communities and economies.

## Rural Mental Health: Understanding Stress and Depression in Farmers and Ranchers

December 7, 2017

**PI:** Andrea Bjornestad (South Dakota State University)

**Co-PIs:** Courtney Cuthbertson and Suzanne Pish (Michigan State University), Karen Funkenbusch (University of Missouri), Charlotte Shoup Olson (Kansas State University), Leacey Brown (South Dakota State University)

**Award:** \$25,000

**Project Abstract:** Farming is a stressful career where finances can be impacted by external factors such as government regulations, weather, natural disasters, and market prices. With the risk of injury and exposure to chemicals combined with family pressures and long hours, farmers and ranchers may have a higher risk of developing mental health illnesses such as depression. The purpose of the proposed project is to develop and distribute a survey to farmers to determine the impact of stress on depression and suicide risk in farmers and ranchers. The results of the study will increase knowledge of mental health risks and behaviors of farmers and ranchers in the North Central region and will help inform future research and program development in the Land Grant University Cooperative Extension System.



# Final Report

## 5/2019

### Rural Mental Health: Understanding Stress and Depression in Farmers and Ranchers

Andrea Bjornestad, South Dakota State University  
Leacey Brown, South Dakota State University  
Courtney Cuthbertson, Michigan State University  
Karen Funkenbusch, Michigan State University  
Charlotte Shoup Olson, Kansas State University

NCRCRD Small Grant Final Report  
Rural Mental Health: Understanding Stress and Depression in Farmers and Ranchers

Project Team:

Principal Investigator: Andrea Bjornestad, South Dakota State University  
Co-Investigators: Courtney Cuthbertson, Michigan State University  
Suzanne Pish, Michigan State University  
Karen Funkenbusch, Michigan State University  
Charlotte Shoup Olson, Kansas State University  
Leacey Brown, South Dakota State University

The purpose of the project was to gather preliminary data on stressors impacting the mental health of farmers and ranchers. We proposed two primary objectives for the project:

Objective #1: Develop and distribute a survey that will increase knowledge of mental health risks and behaviors of farmers and ranchers.

To meet this objective, the team developed a survey that included demographic questions related age, gender, race, number of children, state of residence, level of spirituality, veteran status, education, role on the farm operation, income on/off the farm, number of years ranching, pesticide use, primary commodity, secondary commodity, number of livestock, number of acres, and net income. The following instruments were included on the survey:

1. Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9): depression
2. Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7): anxiety
3. Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS): social support
4. Brief COPE: coping behaviors
5. Suicide Behaviors Questionnaire-Revised (SBQ-R): suicide risk
6. Farm Stress Survey: farm stressors

IRB approval was obtained to conduct the project. Participants were randomly selected from a list that was purchased by US Farm Data. The PI and co-PI's from each state obtained a list of 1,000 farmers and ranchers. In the first round of survey distribution, 400 farmers and ranchers were randomly selected from each state and mailed a survey. A reminder postcard with an electronic link to the survey was also mailed in the first round. With funding remaining, The PI organized a distributed a second round of surveys, and the remaining 600 surveys were mailed in each state. Reminder postcards were not mailed in the second round. All surveys were returned to South Dakota State University where a graduate assistant entered the data.

Objective #2: Identify specific stressors that increase the risk of depression and suicide in farmers and ranchers and determine relationships among levels of stress, depression symptoms, suicide, levels of social support, and coping behaviors.

To meet this objective, preliminary statistical analyses have been initiated.

## Preliminary Results

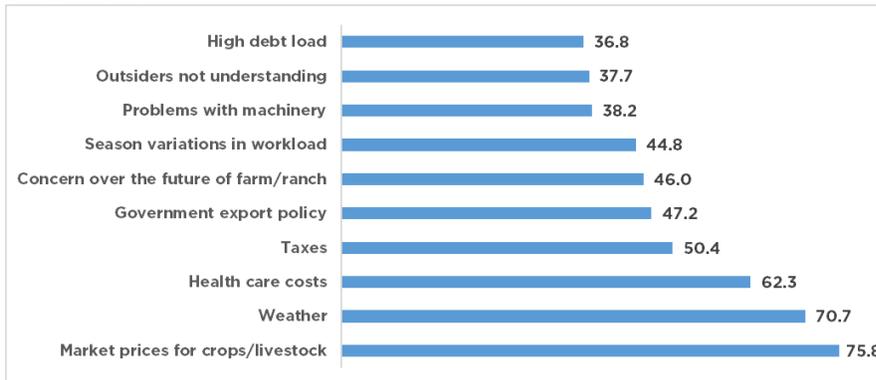
### Demographics

The survey was distributed to 4,000 farmers and ranchers (1,000 per state) in South Dakota, Michigan, Kansas, and Missouri. A total of 568 producers returned the survey resulting in a 14.8% response rate. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 94 with a mean age of 63. Approximately 81.2% of the participants identified as male, and 82.8% reported that they were married. The majority (96.4%) were white, with 50.4% of the sample reported an education of an associate degree or higher. Approximately 18.2% were veterans.

Years of farming varied from less than one year to 80 years with a mean of 42. The average number of livestock was 746 with the average number of acres farmed at 2,326. Approximately 61.2% of the participants identified that they were the principle/primary owner or operator, and 17.6% responded that they maintained an off-farm job. Additionally, 40.3% reported all of their income was from farming. Finally, 87.3% of the producers reported using pesticides.

Additional demographic information showed that 22% were first generation farmers. The primary commodity reported was field crops (67.6%) followed by beef (21.6%). Approximately 34.5% had experienced a natural disaster, and 9% reported a loss in net farm income in the past year.

### Farm Stress



The top stressors reported by farmers and ranchers were market prices for crops/livestock, weather, health care costs, and taxes. Additional analyses will be conducted to determine which stressors are most related to depression symptoms, anxiety symptoms, and suicide risk.

### Depression & Anxiety

PHQ-9	N	%	GAD-7	N	%	SBQ-R	N	%
Minimal or none	381	70.7	minimal	398	73.0	No significant risk	494	92.3
Mild	99	18.4	mild	97	17.8			
Moderate	37	6.9	moderate	27	5.0			
Moderately severe	11	2.0	severe	23	4.2	Significant risk	41	7.7
Severe	11	2.0						

On the PHQ-9, approximately 29.3% of the farmers and ranchers reported mild to severe depression symptoms. A similar rate was observed with anxiety, as roughly 27% of the farmers

and ranchers reported mild to severe anxiety symptoms. Of concern, 7.7% of the producers reported a significant risk for suicide behaviors.

### *Social Support*

MSPSS	GAD		PHQ		SBQ	
	<i>r-squared</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>r-squared</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>r-squared</i>	<i>p-value</i>
Significant other	-0.136	0.002	-0.124	0.005	-0.064	0.145
Family	-0.186	0.000	-0.169	0.000	-0.085	0.053
Friend	-0.257	0.000	-0.253	0.000	-0.215	0.000

Weak, negative associations were observed between social support and mental health outcomes. These results suggest that as social support increases, anxiety, depression, and suicide risk decrease. The strongest associations were observed between friendship support and anxiety, depression, and suicide risk.

### *Barriers*

Several barriers existed with the project. First, two of the co-investigators were about a month slower in distributing the preliminary surveys. Second, one team member retired during the project, another team member left her respective university, and a third team member did not meet deadlines. Due to these changes, additional responsibilities were added to the principal investigator.

### *Accomplishments*

The preliminary results were presented at the National Association for Rural Mental Health conference in New Orleans by Dr. Bjornestad, Dr. Cuthbertson, and Ms. Pish.

Dr. Bjornestad and Dr. Cuthbertson are currently working on data analyses and manuscript writing. They will also be submitting grant applications for future funding to expand upon this work.

## Leading Change in a Global World

December 7, 2017

**PI:** Holli Arp (University of Minnesota)

**Co-PI:** Kari O'Neill (South Dakota State University)

**Award:** \$25,000

**Project Abstract:**

Community Development staffs from University of Minnesota Extension and South Dakota State University Extension will come together over the period of a year to identify and share resources that will generate high quality and research informed programming that supports equity and diversity. Each state will invite and engage at least two partnering organizations from each state that represent rural minority communities. Their involvement will inform, support, critique and co-create elements of the resulting programs.



# Final Report 2018

## Leading Change in a Global World

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**NCRCRD Grant - Leading in a Global World**  
**Final Report**  
**10/31/18**



**Goals of the Grant:**

1. Better understand the leadership needs of immigrant and minority communities
2. Explore an appropriate framework and curriculum for leadership and civic engagement programming that is relevant immigrant and minority communities
3. Build connections and share resources across communities and states that can positively impact community goals

**Key Grant Activities:**

***Summit 1: Grant Kickoff***

The first three months of the grant cycle were spent in multi-state meetings to discuss how we would recruit key partners and which audiences each state would prioritize. A partner recruitment document was created to use as we talked with potential partners.

**MN**

After a number of good discussions, outreach and attendance at community meetings, MN decided to work with the Latino and Latina populations and three key partners were willing to engage in this work with us.

Jose William Castellanos, Region 9 Development Commission  
Julio Zelaya, ACLU  
Bukata Hayes, Greater Mankato Diversity Council

**SD**

South Dakota decided to focus on its newest immigrant community - the Karen population primarily focused in Huron South Dakota. A newly formed Karen Association trying to gain traction in the community became a focus.

People directly involved were a City Planner, three Karen leaders, and a Health Educator.

The first summit was held in Watertown South Dakota on January 23 and 24, 2018. This summit provided time for Extension and our partners to build trust and provided great insight into how the pilot work would be structured in each state and how we would continue to connect with each other.

Monthly calls were set up for the cross state group as well as each state group to build connections, share current learning and discuss next steps.

***Monthly Calls/Community Meetings:***

**MN:** The MN Team held monthly video calls to provide updates on the work and attended community meetings related to: The regional 9 Racial Equity Learning community, The Multicultural Network, La Convivencia, and Uniting Cultures - St. James

These monthly meetings informed some direct work related to the groups identified and informed some broader program pathways that the Leadership and Civic engagement team in MN will pilot in the next year. These partnerships also solidified the need for additional staffing to work with multicultural groups in MN.

**SD:** The SD Team met with the Karen Association during several of their regular meetings to plan and introduce resources. We kept in touch via email and social media as the project developed. The meetings were challenging because of the language barrier. The Karen leader had to provide translation for our interactions.

***Summit 2:***

The second summit was held September 11, 2018 in Marshall MN. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Share progress in our work together over the past year
- Review/curriculums/resources with an equity lens
- Identify Next steps for this work

### ***Curriculum Review:***

In Minnesota, our community partners have joined a couple of our statewide curriculum review sessions and provided feedback to enhance our ability to connect across cultures.

In South Dakota the interest has been on a programming level. The Karen population is most interested in helping newcomers adapt to the community's rules and norms. There is interest in what could be described as former "Home Economics" type lessons, and ways to encourage people to be good neighbors.

Both states have continued to talk through programmatic needs, offerings and curriculum adaptations as we have met with community members throughout the year. Although this did not result in a "packaged product" there are some key values and practices identified below that we will work to incorporate into our program development process.

#### **Key Values and Practices:**

1. Take time to understand the cultural norms of your audience (This involves us looking deeply at the words we use to invite and engage people as well as the examples we use in our teaching).
2. Be willing to adapt the way in which we deliver programming to meet the needs of the community.
3. Explore curriculum and feedback opportunities with current leadership program participants from immigrant and minority communities.
4. Keep in mind the distinction between a culture who has lived in the region for years and a culture who is fairly new. Basic needs must be met before moving into deeper leadership commitments.

#### ***Curriculum and Program Adaptations:***

Several shifts were seeded and sparked in tandem with the NCRCD grant. While the NCRCD grant may not have been directly responsible for all of the following outcomes, the work done under the grant created momentum across the team. In 2018 MN developed a DEI plan to increase engagement with diverse audiences and to increase intercultural competence among team members. Additional work underway includes:

- **Hybrid Curriculum:** RELC
- **LCE Programming Pathways.** Different pathways were created to offer more intention and flexibility for engagement with diverse audiences. Three pathways include:
  - **My City Academy**-Partnering with City officials and new immigrant community leaders to build communication and understanding of services and opportunities.
  - **Community Boards and Commissions training**-connecting with Nexus Community partners to support their Statewide Boards and Commission training and exploring partnerships with local communities to develop a similar program within a community of place.
  - **Innovation Retreats.** An Innovation Retreat framework is being developed to reach audiences in new ways. Will include opportunities for individual changemakers to dive into social innovation ideas for their communities.
- **Broadening our Diversity and Equity Work Team.**
- **Learning from the Bush Change Network process.**
- **Initiating connections with other areas of Extension such as: 4-H Programming.**
- **Facilitation, Planning and Leadership Development with a cultural lens**

**Significant Learnings throughout the Grant:**

This grant provided the space and accountability to prioritize the work we have been talking about doing.

1. Building Intentional Relationships
  - a. What it takes (Removing barriers):
    - i. Stepping out of your comfort zone
    - ii. Recognition of community wisdom and leadership styles
    - iii. TIME (showing up to be a part of community meetings, asking questions of the group,
    - iv. Openness to think about the work differently (co-creation versus sharing our programs)
    - v. Follow up and follow through
2. "Nothing about us without us" - Putting the principle into practice
  - a. Including diverse voices in program planning from the start
  - b. Understanding cultural practices of the community you are working in

3. Sharing community programming and connections across state lines - Cross state grants a reminder to fully utilize Extension across state lines. This is seen in the resource directory
4. Seed Grant providing funding for relationship building initiatives creates momentum for future larger initiatives
  - a. In MN some of these initiatives emerged in conjunction with the NCRCRD grant (such as the Racial Equity Learning community)
  - b. In other situations - communities are positioned well to write a Bush foundation community Innovation grant. While extension is not likely to be the grant writing lead, there are a variety of opportunities emerging in each state to explore further funding

### **Initial Outcomes:**

#### **MN**

1. Three new programming pathways have been developed that will co-create programming initiatives with new immigrant audiences and audiences of color across our MN Leadership and Civic Engagement Team
2. Partnerships are developed and will continue to create and develop future programming
3. This grant solidified the need to diversify our staff and new positions will be hired in the next year to deepen our work in new immigrant and culturally diverse communities

#### **SD**

1. Improved relationship with the Karen people in Huron. They know more about SDSU Extension and we know more about them.
2. The SD team invited the 4-H Program Director and the local 4-H Program Advisor to help the Karen develop youth activities. For example, the Karen Association Youth Dancers performed on the 4-H Pavilion stage during the 2018 SD State Fair.
3. A connection between Worthington, MN's "Community Connector" program and Huron's Karen Association has been made, and will yield ideas of ways to acclimate newcomers to Huron. Other SD communities have also shown interest in this type of newcomer program.

## **Next Steps:**

### **MN:**

1. The initiatives that began with this grant will continue to move forward. The work emerging from the Uniting Cultures/ Unienedo Culturas group in St. James, MN are:
  - a. How to broaden the group membership of both the Latino and Anglo groups. Need to do Sector Mapping to see who is not present and then invite and communicate with individuals, groups and institutions that are not already engaged.
  - b. Training for students, staff and community on racism, inclusion, equity etc.
  - c. Meeting logistics and project process within a multilingual and multicultural environment
  - d. Latino leadership training
  - e. Community group sustainability
  - f. Strategic processes to come to project implementation in order to meet groups vision, mission and goals
  - g. Continue to meet and gain feedback on existing and future curriculum
  - h. Explore future funding opportunities as the work and community support for initiatives broaden
2. The University of Minnesota Extension is in the process of drafting a job description to hire a position specifically focused on reaching new audiences. This grant laid the foundation for us to bring someone in to keep the momentum going.
3. Implementing, evaluating and adapting each program pathway

### **SD:**

1. Community conversations in Huron will broaden the group from Ralph, Amy and Lah to the broader Huron community and be facilitated by Extension. Extension's programs will be highlighted in order to give the community ideas of further education.
2. More 4-H connections will be made. Youth activities among the Karen may be expanded into a new 4-H club, and encouragement will be given to Karen youth to participate in all 4-H activities.
3. The Community Connector program will be explored further, and relationships built between the Karen Association and the Worthington program. Other SD communities may also adopt this program model
4. Karen leaders will be encouraged to take advantage of future leadership development opportunities such as the Bush Change Network cohorts.



## PARTNERS WANTED

**Contact: Holli Arp (507)-360-1004, arpx001@umn.edu**

### OVERVIEW

Leadership and Civic Engagement Extension programs in Minnesota and South Dakota help communities choose their future by strengthening the knowledge and confidence of local leaders and creating connections that make a difference. With a small grant, Extension staff in MN and SD are working to build and strengthen our partnerships with local, regional and statewide organizations serving immigrant and ethnically diverse communities who are currently underserved by Extension. These organizations can be connectors and champions committed to co-creating Extension leadership programming that better responds to our changing communities.

### GOALS OF THIS INITIATIVE

We seek to work with key partners to:

- Better understand the leadership needs of immigrant and minority communities
- Explore an appropriate framework and curriculum for leadership and civic engagement programming that works in immigrant and minority communities
- Build connections and share resources across communities and states that can positively impact community goals

### WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS?

We expect that partnering organizations will:

- See opportunities to work with Extension to strengthen their community - now and into the future

- Help create an open and trusting environment where we learn and develop culturally appropriate programming that meets community needs
- Recommend and invite others to support and champion this effort
- Attend monthly phone or video calls from approximately February -August 2018
- Attend two in-person sessions: One day-long and one two-day (location to be determined) with partners from both Minnesota and South Dakota

### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM US?

We are committed to:

- Learn and co-create with you and your community
- Build on this effort to inform future partnerships and programs
- Design and facilitate teleconference calls and face-to-face meetings
- Reimburse you or your organization for expenses, and provide a small stipend for your time at in person summits

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THIS EFFORT IS COMPLETE?

It is Extension's intention to build and strengthen this partnership so that together we can create appropriate and engaging opportunities that meet the needs of communities and could be supported by potential funders.

**Leading Change in a Global World Partnership Meeting****Meeting Dates/times:** January 23<sup>rd</sup> (10:00 AM)-January 24<sup>th</sup> (3:00 PM)**Location:** SDSU Regional Extension Center (1910 W. Kemp Ave., Watertown, SD 57201)**Objectives:**

- Outline expectations and goals of the Grant
- Build trust among participants and the entities involved in the project.
- Consider and assess terms/curriculums/tools in place with the purpose of creating a framework useful in delivering leadership-type education to Latino and Karen cultures.
- Begin planning shared goals and a timeline for statewide work (MN, SD) in 2018.

**Things to bring:**

- An object to share that has cultural significance to you
- Completed Cultural Self-study

**Day 1:**

10:00 am	Welcome, Introductions and Learning about Each Other's Cultures <b><i>Bring an object that has cultural significance to you and be ready to share the object and its significance.</i></b>
11:00 am	<b>Guiding Principles</b> Discussion about the goals and expectations of this grant and our partnerships
12:00 pm	<b>LUNCH and networking</b> Discussion about the Cultural Self-Study Homework
1:30 pm	<b>Understanding multiple views of leadership</b> Values Continuum Activity How does this transcend in working across cultures? How is this reflected in the way leadership happens? Characteristics of a leader you admire? Who are or were great leaders of your culture or in your life? What were/are their characteristics?
2:30 pm	<b>BREAK</b>

3:00 pm **Identify components necessary in each culture to build leadership skills**  
(state discussions)  
How does leadership development happen naturally in your culture?  
What are the tensions or shifts from how leadership traditionally happened and how leadership happens in the US context?  
How would leadership development happen programmatically?  
Who would be in the room?  
What are the topics that would bring people together?  
Where would the program be held?  
When: time of day, time of year, length  
How: Types of experiences that would be comfortable and realistic?  
Priority areas: What should we explore first?

5:00 pm **Report Learning from MN and SD discussions to the full group**

6:00 pm **Group Dinner/Supper**

**Day 2:**

8:30 am **Case Study/Video of cultural leadership experience**

9:30 am **Overview of current leadership development work within our University programs**  
When we say leadership development, what do we mean?  
What are our objectives?  
What are the frameworks we currently use?

10:30 am **Uncovering assumptions about key concepts important to this work**

11:30 am **Overview of curriculum/content within our university programs**

12 pm **LUNCH**

1:00 pm **"Being the Other" story and activity**

1:20 pm **Brainstorm additional resources and connections by state**  
Name ideas for connections that could help with this work (collaborations, key individuals and resources)

1:50 pm **Report to full group**

2 pm **MN and SD planning** (Meet in State groups to discuss next steps)

2:45 pm **Report back, wrap-up and conclusion**

3:00 pm **Adjourn** (safe travels home)

**Leading Change in a Global World Partnership Meeting****Meeting Date/time:** September 11, 9:30AM-3:00PM**Location:** Marshall Area YMCA (200 South A St. Marshall, MN 56258)

## Objectives:

- Briefly review expectations and goals of the Grant
- Share progress in our work together over the past year
- Review/curriculums/resources with an equity lens
- Identify Next steps for this work

9:30 am	Refreshment available
10:00 am	Welcome and introductions (Name, Role, State, One learning or highlight from this work over the past year)
10:15	Discuss and review key learnings and initial outcomes
10:30 am	Statewide review of curriculum and resources
11:30 pm	LUNCH and continued conversation: <i>(Given the issues faced by communities from diverse cultural backgrounds, what is the need for Extension Education? (What is the work we can be doing with and along side communities that is both practical and connected to the University)</i>
12:30 pm	Continued Curriculum and resource discussions
2:00 PM	Highlights and key take always from each state
2:30 pm	Closing thoughts, Next steps
3:00 pm	Adjourn (safe travels home)

## LEADING in a Global World: Resource List

### Key Organizational connections and Potential Collaborators (Leadership Content oriented)

Geography	Organization Name	Key Contact(s)	Primary Audiences served	Bulletpoint description/functions /key curricula	Additional Notes
MIN	<a href="#">Cultural Wellness Center</a>	Jean Coleman Curriculum Design Specialist jean@culturalwellnesscenter.org	Urban Area - Underserved and represented populations		<a href="http://www.culturalwellnesscenter.org">http://www.culturalwellnesscenter.org</a>
MIN	<a href="#">Nexus Community Partners</a>	Terri Thao tthao@nexuscp.org (651) 379-0505	Urban Area - Underserved and represented populations		<a href="http://www.nexuscp.org/about/mission-vision-values/">http://www.nexuscp.org/about/mission-vision-values/</a>
	<a href="#">Marnita's Table</a>		Urban Area - Underserved and represented populations		<a href="https://www.marnitastable.org/">https://www.marnitastable.org/</a>
Global - MN office	<a href="#">ChangeX</a>	Jen Aspengren jen@changex.org	General community members	Tangible action projects	<a href="https://www.changex.org/us/">https://www.changex.org/us/</a>
MIN	<a href="#">CLUES</a>		Urban Area -		<a href="http://www.clues.org/">http://www.clues.org/</a>

			Latinx residents					<a href="#">wp_english/</a>
Global	Leadership Learning Community	Deborah Meehan	multicultural				Webinars and Creating Space Conf	<a href="#">www.leadershiplearning.org</a>
MN	Region 9 Development Commission	Jessica O'Brien 507-389-8870 jessica@rndc.org	Nine counties in south central MN				Economic Development Rural Equity and Learning Community	<a href="https://www.rndc.org/">https://www.rndc.org/</a>
National/ MN	<a href="#">GARE</a>							<a href="https://www.racialequityalliance.org/">https://www.racialequityalliance.org/</a>
MN	Greater Mankato Diversity Council	Bukata Hayes bhayes@mankatodiversity.org	Businesses, schools and non-profits				Diversity, Inclusion, Race Relations, Equity, etc.	<a href="https://www.mankatodiversity.org/">https://www.mankatodiversity.org/</a>
MN	American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota	Julio Zelaya 507-380-9838 jzelaya@aclu-mn.org	Minority individuals and groups				Racial Justice Projects	<a href="http://www.aclu-mn.org">www.aclu-mn.org</a>
National	eXtension DEI community							<a href="https://dei.extension.org/">https://dei.extension.org/</a>
SD	Change Network	National Arts Strategies (NAS) Gail Crider	Emerging leader's cohort process funded by Bush Foundation				Individual project information content around diversity, inclusion & equity	<a href="http://www.artstrategies.org/programs/change-network-south-dakota/">http://www.artstrategies.org/programs/change-network-south-dakota/</a>
SD	<a href="#">Multi-Cultural Center</a>	Christy Nicolaisen, Sioux Falls	Multicultural youth and adults in Sioux Falls and region					<a href="https://www.sfmcc.org/Default.asp">https://www.sfmcc.org/Default.asp</a>

Existing Curricula (Internal and External)

Geography	Name of Curriculum	Key contact	Primary Audience	Potential use	Notes
Global	Leadership Plenty		Emerging leaders	Cross-state collaboration	Must use as a full curriculum
Global	<a href="#">Everyday Democracy</a>	Val Ramos, Hartford, CT	communities	Study Circle guides and processes	
MN	<a href="#">Farmer to Farmer Project - Morocco</a>	U of MN Extension, LCE	Emerging	In other countries; Could be a start for a train-the-trainer	Using in Kenya in 2018-2019
National	ACES training	<a href="https://www.acesconnection.com/g/aces-in-education/blog/trauma-training-for-educators-free">https://www.acesconnection.com/g/aces-in-education/blog/trauma-training-for-educators-free</a>	Indigenous Populations or groups with high levels of trauma		
Global	<a href="#">Transforming White Privilege</a>	Racial Equity Tools	“Deeper dive” groups; good to look at systems and organizations	Great history pieces, framing ideas, can integrate into other leadership modules	MN has purchased this. Can use in whole (2 8-hour days) or as modules.
Global	<a href="#">Racial Equity Tools</a>	-	Could be integrated into our other power and interest, framing, and decision making modules to be included with all	Great videos; <a href="#">White Culture</a> handout; <a href="#">systems of inequity</a> handout; <a href="#">Immigration</a> , <a href="#">Boundaries</a> , and	Free and online

			audiences.		<a href="#">Borders; Power Analysis; Framing</a>	
Global	Art of Hosting		Anyone who facilitates conversations		U of MN has a creative commons book that can be printed	The community of practice is worldwide. What methods are differing cultures using?
Global	Navigating Difference	Washington State University Extension	emerging			Requires training to deliver

Potential Funding Partners

State	Name	Organization/Affiliation	Needs/opportunities explored	Additional notes:
National	Knight Foundation	<a href="https://knightfoundation.org/articles/seats-at-the-table-how-community-conversations-built-around-a-shared-meal-can-create-solutions-to-common-problems">https://knightfoundation.org/articles/seats-at-the-table-how-community-conversations-built-around-a-shared-meal-can-create-solutions-to-common-problems</a>		Community event model
US	eXtension Impact Collaborative	eXtension	Potential for digging into an idea with a group; may include funding opportunities	Next one: April 2019
Multi-state	<a href="#">Bush Foundation</a>	Nonprofit around leadership and creating positive change	Serves MN, SD, ND	