

Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska

ABSTRACT

Communities involved in "Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska" receive support to train a core team of youth and adults, conduct community meetings to identify issues, develop action plans, and implement activities that produce results. This project targets rural youth and youth at risk, developing leadership and life skills, teaching about culture and governance, and helping youth to work in partnership with adults to improve their own lives and the communities in which they live. The project has served 15 Tribal, Hispanic and other rural Nebraska communities. Project outcomes activities include: 1) a "Register, Get Out and Vote" project targeting Hispanic community members; 2) activities targeting youth suicide prevention in Tribal communities; 3) community beautification project targeting the elimination of graffiti in a Hispanic community; 4) a "Leaf Your Litter Here" campaign targeting community beautification and litter prevention; and 5) identification of safety as an issue and the improvement of a walking trail for school children.

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Program of Distinction Category

Youth in Governance Categories - National Program Foundations

- Youth & Adult Partnerships
- Youth Decision-Making

Leadership, Citizenship and Life-Skills Categories - State Program Emphasis

- Leadership Development
- Diversity & Inclusive Environments

Healthy Lifestyles Categories - Local Program Emphasis

- Healthy Relationships, Good Decisions

Sources of Funding that Support this Program

- USDA/CSREES Rural Youth Development, National 4-H Council Engaging Youth Serving Communities (EYSC)/Youth-In-Governance are primary funding sources for this program.
- Some UNL Extension District program Funds have been provided for some local sites.
- Occasionally, some local sites may leverage other small one-time funding amounts to supplement program activities.

Program Content

Knowledge and Research Base

a. Issues Facing Rural Youth

Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska is based on issues facing rural youth and youth at risk that are being addressed by teams of youth and adults. Beginning in 2003, the project gained support from USDA Rural Youth Development (RYD) to address issues facing rural youth in Nebraska. Research studies and public opinion polls indicate there are several important issues facing rural youth. These issues can specifically be addressed through the national program design of *Engaging Youth, Serving Community* (EYSC). The literature supporting EYSC and Issues Facing Rural Youth (Perkins, 2002; Valentine, Kahler and Cippoletti, 2008) reveals that rural youth:

- Are impacted by diverse populations, especially Hispanic, moving into rural communities;
- Experience geographic isolation due to distance between towns, and lack public transportation;
- Have fewer physical locations in which to interact with peers and adults;
- Have limited programs and opportunities;
- Live in cultures characterized by prejudice, ethnocentricity and intolerance to nonconforming ideas that could lead to violence;
- Experiment with negative behaviors such as alcohol, tobacco and/or sex;
- Tend not to return to communities due to a lack of a sense of belonging & community connection.

b. Youth Development Programs

This program is part of Nebraska 4-H Youth Development programs coordinated through University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Extension. The broad goals for this and other RYD programs supported by research (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002; Kress, 2008), are to provide access to and opportunities for youth development programs in rural areas that:

- Provide constructive and encouraging relationships among youth and adults and youth and peers;
- Provide access to multiple opportunities for youth to develop assets in the physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and/or social domains;
- Engage youth as partners in their own development and the development of their communities;
- Promote positive development so youth will be engaged in their communities and more likely to promote the well-being of their peers and other young people;

c. Youth-Adult Partnerships

This program utilizes *Creating Youth-Adult Partnerships: Training Curricula for Youth, Adults and Youth-Adult Teams* (Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development, 1996) as a training tool for development of Youth-Adult Core Teams that are the core group of participants for this program. Even though there is no formal research, and since the indigenous tribal cultures pass much on

through the oral tradition, the Umo^oho^o (Omaha) people have told us that Youth-Adult Partnerships is best translate as “Wa’gon’xe”, meaning the education that takes place between a child and an elder. The research base from The Innovation Center and several other resources have provided guidance for the development of this program (Hart, 2004; Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005). These and other resources and research indicate that:

- Developing a trusting relationship is a first step in forming youth-adult partnerships with diverse audiences. When relationships are formed, youth begin to see that adult care about them. Research (Pittman & Cahill, 1992) tells us that caring is a “protective factor” and helps develop social competence, confidence and a sense of purpose and future.
- Young people benefit from having adults listen to and react to their views of benefits and challenges of youth and adults working together.
- The contributions of young people are welcomed and valued. Adults respect young people as having something significant to offer now and youth are encouraged to become involved.
- Education and training are important components for youth-adult partnerships. Like adults, youth who gain basic knowledge and skills to be effective to be effective partners, also gain experiences that allow them to advance to higher levels of responsibility in organizational and community work (Yates & Youniss, 1999).
- When youth people are involved in positive social relationships with peers and a variety of adults, they are more likely to have good self-esteem, think and act in socially responsible ways, and have good problem-solving skills (Lerner, 1995).
- The underlying concept of youth-adult partnerships is that young people need to be full partners in improving communities. Communities are strengthened when all members, youth included, are actively involved.
- The approach of youth-adult partnerships, where both youth and adults take the role of “partner” is one of the core principles of the Building Community model.

d. Culture and Community

A priority of Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska is to work with Tribal and Hispanic Communities in Nebraska. Developing relationships with people in these communities has been essential to the success of this program. Developing programs in these targeted communities is based on research recommendations from *Exploring Tribal Leadership: Understanding and Working with Tribal People* (Hart, 2004). This research showed that shared learning and shared leadership is important, and one should expect to spend at least as much time listening and learning as one does talking and teaching. These recommendations have been very important guidelines for the development of youth-adult partnership teams. The Hispanic communities we work with have a either a Hispanic coordinator or volunteer assistant, and they know their community best. What the Hispanic people tell us is that many communities are different - there are people from Mexico, Guatemala, Salvador, Ecuador, Chile, etc. Some communities have several different Hispanic ethnicities, and the Spanish

language often varies depending on the country of origin. Our projects learn best from the local Hispanic people at each site location. It is the same with our tribal communities - some are Umoⁿhoⁿ, some are Isanti Sioux, and some are Winnebago Hochunk. These are separate, sovereign nations, like France, Germany and the USA.

Needs Assessment

a. Assessment for Development and Planning

A description, from the original project application, of the overall need for this project is as follows: "In a democracy, the need for a body of informed, responsible citizens capable of debating and ultimately, deciding issues of public policy cannot be overstated. Given the importance of civic engagement in a democratic government, the decline of civic engagement among today's young people is cause for concern. Lack of political participation can result in societal inequalities, eventually weakening and undermining democracy. Youth today must be ready to capitalize on the opportunity to serve their state as adults in the future. With this in mind, it is imperative that youth have a greater understanding of civic engagement as opportunities to serve our state increases in the future. There is also a great need for cultural considerations when developing and implementing youth-adult partnerships in governance on tribal reservations, where programs will be formed focusing a different form of governance."

b. Data Collection - What and From Whom

Community forum assessment data revealed that there are a variety of community issues that can have an effect on youth, positive and negative. Data also revealed a lack of appropriate positive development activities to address these community issues, and there is often a lack of capacity at the local level to implement suggested or recommended activities. Educational awareness, training and communication are the first steps of a planned effort to address identified issues.

Program Goals and Objectives

a. Project Goal:

Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska develop leadership and life skills in Nebraska youth so they can work in partnership with adults to improve their own lives and the communities in which they live.

b. Process Objectives:

- Each rural community site will form a core group of 8-12 Youth and 5-10 adults who will work together as partners to facilitate 1-3 community forums, meetings and educational opportunities in order to implement annual action plans that will provide positive growth and development opportunities for all youth and families in their community.
- These core groups of youth and adults will collaborate with other diverse community members to understand and appreciate differences. Using these differences as strengths, the core group will facilitate forums/discussions with

25-50 diverse community members to identify at least 3-5 local issues and implement annual strategies for rural community improvement.

- At least 15-25 core group participants will utilize resources, tools, and participate in at least 2 educational training sessions each year, working together as partners, making decisions to increase positive development opportunities and improved quality of life in their rural communities.
- A core group of 15-25 Youth and adults will learn about the culture and governance of Tribal, Hispanic and other rural community organizations. They will share their experiences at least 4 times annually with each other, their community, and youth and adults from other Tribal, Hispanic and diverse rural communities through at least 3 marketing strategies including program brochures, websites, community poster and fliers.

c. Annual Outcome Objectives

- Develop a sustainable program in at least 5 rural Nebraska communities for at least 20-25 youth and 5-10 adults to gain greater understanding of the strengths that youth/adult partnerships contribute to a community's leadership, culture and governance.
- Each local site will recruit and retain at least 8-12 youth and 5-10 adults who are actively involved on a local core group at each project site.
- At least 3 local organizations will involve at least 6 youth in community decision-making and leadership roles at each project site.
- At least 5 local site projects will involve at least 75 additional youth and adults in local community activities planned and implemented by local core group teams.

Target Audience

Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska program includes rural Nebraska communities with a population of 10,000 or less. The target audience for this project is youth, ages 12 to 18, in at least 5 rural communities in rural Nebraska. Particular focus is on reaching youth from Native American communities, Hispanic youth, and youth from emerging diverse populations. Communities are also targeted where youth at risk lack opportunities for involvement and have a lack of access to positive youth development programming.

Beginning in 2003, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) State Level 4-H Specialists solicited rural communities that might be interested in participating in year one of the RYD funded project, Engaging Youth Serving Community (EYSC). Three rural geographic areas of the state responded and were selected to participate. Nebraska also secured funding to support 4 Nebraska federally recognized tribal communities through a local partnership with Nebraska Indian Community College (NICC), currently serving as a 1994 land grant institution partner with UNL Extension. NICC serves a majority of Native American participants and several high risk youth. Three project communities currently serve a majority of Hispanic participants in western, central and northeastern rural locations in Nebraska. Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska also serves three other rural communities in southeastern and northeastern Nebraska with emerging diverse populations. Specific numbers of audience participants are given in Section 14, Program Evaluation.

Type of Program

Youth & Adult Partnerships - The primary type of programming for Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska is Youth & Adult Partnerships as defined in the program objectives. Other program emphasis includes the programming areas of Leadership Development, Youth Decision-making and Creating a Diverse and Inclusive Environment for youth involvement. Healthy Lifestyles is also a program area that is emphasized, particularly in the Tribal and Hispanic communities due to the holistic and cultural approach to programming.

Delivery Methods

a. Program Delivery

All local sites have local coordinator leadership. This local coordinator might be a UNL Extension and/or 4-H program leader, or they could be a local community Hispanic or Tribal youth program leader. These EYSC local coordinators choose to be involved and are responsible for coordination of local activities, provide guidance for local core teams, and compile local reporting to be used at the state and national levels. Administrative oversight for Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska is provided by a state project director at the state level of UNL Extension and the Nebraska State 4-H Office. The project director is a faculty educator with an educational doctorate degree in human sciences and leadership. The project director has extensive experience and research in working with diverse audiences (Hart, 2004; Hart 2008).

b. Program Appropriateness for Target Audience

Training is provided and coordinated by the state level UNL Extension EYSC project director with assistance from local level coordinators. Training is provided for all core group youth and adult program participants. Training content is appropriate for the target audience because it utilized research-based curriculum (Innovation Center, 1996) as recommended by National 4-H Council and National 4-H Headquarters (National 4-H Council, 2006; National 4-H Headquarters, 2008).

c. Delivery Methods for Achieving Project Goal and Objectives

Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska emphasizes the following activities:

- Youth-adult partnership training is provided by a trained team of state level extension professionals and local coordinators. The training is provided for a "core group" of local youth and adults. These core team members are volunteers and they most often recruit other participants. Core group teams consist of 8-12 youth and 5-10 adults.
- Assessment of community needs, action planning to address identified needs, and implementation of project activities are the responsibilities of the local youth-adult core team.
- This core group works with community members to identify issues that affect youth. This identification is most often done through community meetings/forums. These local community forums are often a starting point for identifying local community issues. Local sites conduct needs

assessments by holding community forums, planned and facilitated by local youth-adult core teams. They record conversations involving community participants who discuss issues having an effect on youth and families in the community. To date, at least 14 different community forums have been held involving at least 253 youth and adults in 10 different communities. Some implemented project activities were a direct result of specific needs identified from the community meetings/forums. Other implemented project activities were related to initial identified needs, e.g., voter registration was the result of the identified need for Hispanic involvement in community decision-making.

- While each community identifies their own needs, all communities follow a similar process that involved the following activities: 1) forming of a youth/adult core team, 2) holding regular core team meetings, 3) facilitating community forums to gather input from community members on community needs, 4) compiling and prioritizing identified needs from community forums, 5) developing action plans to address priority needs, and 6) implementing activities in order to create some hopeful results and outcomes.
- During all activities, there is an emphasis on educational learning and role modeling of the following development skills: 1) leadership, 2) communication, 3) decision-making, and 4) teamwork.
- All community youth and families are invited to participate in project activities planned by the core group.
- The core group continues to develop and evaluate activities related to community involvement and outcomes that happen as result of the activities.
- The core group presents reports of their project activities to a local governance group such as a city council, a county board, a Tribal Council, a school board and/or other local key decision-making organizations.

Curricula and Educational Materials

a. Curricula Used by the Program

UNL Extension and 4-H Youth Development strive to provide programming that is research-based. Program training content being utilized is research-based curriculum (Innovation Center, 1996) as recommended by National 4-H Council and National 4-H Headquarters (National 4-H Council, 2006; Kress, 2008). The following are the primary curricula used for the program:

- *Creating Youth-Adult Partnerships: Training Curricula for Youth, Adults and Youth-Adult Teams* (Innovation Center, 1996);
- *Engaging Youth Serving Community: Year 4 Resource Guide* (National 4-H Council, 2006);
- *Reflect and Improve: A Tool Kit for Engaging Youth and Adults as Partners in Program Evaluation* (Innovation Center, 2005).

The Year 4 Resource Guide is used for training of local core teams in the areas of meeting facilitation, issues discovery, convening community forums and framing identified issues. The effectiveness of core groups using these training materials has been demonstrated by local core groups who have planned and facilitated local community forums and have documented identified youth and family issues of concern in the community.

b. Curricula and Media Developed/Adapted by the Program

The program has developed some training guidelines for use of curricula when providing training for Nebraska core youth-adult teams. A sample of these "Lesson Plans/Notes for Trainers/Presenter" as attached as Appendix A: Training Curricula Example. The project has also developed a project brochure and website, used as marketing media and reflecting some of the training curricula content integrated as part of the overall program.

Teamwork and Collaboration

a. National Level and State Level Collaboration

National 4-H Council administers USDA Rural Youth Development (RYD) funds that provide state and local support for the program. Technical, reporting and programming support are provided by national program leaders from National 4-H Council and USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Services (CSREES). UNL Extension/4-H Youth Development provides administrative support for the program and serves as the connecting partner between local and national partners. The state level project director serves as the primary coordinator for all aspects of the project and as the primary point of contact for all national, state and local level partners. Other non-UNL Extension state level partners have included the Nebraska Mexican American Commission and the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs, acting as cultural resources for Hispanic and Tribal communities. Other state level partners have included Nebraska State Arboretum, UNL Big Red Camps for youth, UNL Admissions for student recruitment, Nebraska 4-H Unicameral Youth Conference, and career development campus tours at UNL child development and food processing departments.

b. Local Level Collaboration

County Extension offices are local level partners who often provide activity and office space for participants and local program coordinators. Nebraska Indian Community College provides facilities for activities, staff as adult core group participants, and assistance in building relationships and trust with Tribal community participants. Other local partners include local schools, county extension faculty and staff, city and county governmental boards, local youth organizations and churches. Local businesses have been involved providing meeting space, representatives as adult core group members, and some opportunities for youth entrepreneurship adventures.

These local partners provide opportunities, at their regular and sometimes special meetings, for core group teams to present their plans and accomplishments, giving core teams more opportunities to work in partnership with local governance groups to address community issues. More important, these presentation opportunities allow local partners to give input and suggestions regarding priority community issues, program design and feedback for program improvement and enhancement.

Program Evaluation

Methods

Program evaluation is comprehensive and includes data collected at the local level and compiled at the state and national levels. Collected data is quantitative and qualitative and includes: 1) demographic involvement, 2) activities & challenges summaries, 3) identification of barriers and limitations, 4) participant quotes, 5) success stories, 6) improvement in leadership skills, 7) outreach to diverse and underserved populations, and 8) development of partnerships.

National Level Evaluation

All local sites follow a funding requirement to collect and report information on program activities, outputs, objectives and outcomes. Data collection/reporting are done through both the national Extension CARES Initiative (ECI) reporting system (<http://eci.ext.msstate.edu/>) and National 4-H Council. More information of the ECI evaluation is attached in Appendix C: National Level Program Evaluation. Site visits by national program leaders from National 4-H Council were made in 2006 assessing progress towards national objectives and outcomes, and for monitoring administrative activities.

A cumulative Final Narrative Report and a cumulative Final Output Measures Report are submitted annually to National 4-H Council. These reports are used to develop Council's aggregate report to the USDA for the RYD program. More information regarding these reports is located in Appendix C: National Level Program Evaluation.

State and Local Level Evaluation

Youth and adult participation in evaluation/reporting is required at each local site. Youth, parents of youth, adult volunteers, and community stake holders provide triangulation of evaluation/reporting inputs. The program is considered successful when results over time indicate the authentic and meaningful engagement of young people in programs, organizations and communities where they have or share voice, influence and decision-making authority in order to expand the human, social, cultural and political capital of their communities. Some examples of successful outcome results that have made a difference at the local level include the following:

- The Nuestro Futuro (Our Future) group in Lexington was the first youth group with this project to have youth leaders attend national level conferences and training, and they actually "provide leadership for adults."
- The People Restoring Involvement, Dignity and Excellence (PRIDE) local youth leaders wrote and secured Nebraska Arboretum grant funds to support their community beautification project.
- Omaha Nation Community Response Team (ONCRT) youth members identified youth suicide as a critical issue in their community and helped to develop education activities for develop cultural identity and a celebration of life festival for youth and families.
- Youth and Adults in Action (YAA) provided opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills that resulted in youth planning and directing a Leaf Your Litter Here community clean up campaign. One youth leader developed her

leadership skills enough to be chosen and attend National 4-H Youth Conference representing Nebraska.

Each site completes quarterly reports compiled and sent to National 4-H Council. Local sites also complete an annual Community Action Plan Report that is forwarded to USDA. More information about these evaluation reports is located in Appendix D: State and Local Level Program Evaluation.

Process Evaluation

All local sites have completed the following components as part of the evaluation process.

- Eighty-three core group youth and adult participants completed quantitative Leadership Skills Post-then-Pre surveys as part of the EYSC National Extension Cares Initiative (ECI - <http://eci.ext.msstate.edu/>);
- Youth and adults participated in discussions at 8 local core group meetings to evaluate project goals, objectives and planned activities;
- Quarterly data was collected from all 8 Nebraska sites to document youth and adult participant involvement, and this data is on file with National 4-H Council for RYD programs;
- The 8 local sites recorded minutes were recorded at core group meetings for documentation of project needs and accomplishments; and
- Information and data from community forums, needs identification processes, core group action planning sessions and project activities were collected and recorded by each of the 8 local sites as required for reporting purposes.

Opportunities for improving, enhancing or changing direction for the program were addressed by local teams identifying barriers to participation, program limitations and challenges, and the degree of success with program activities. These program corrections and enhancements naturally varied among the 8 different sites. One of the greatest challenges to overcome was that of having to secure a new local coordinator position after a local coordinator left for a variety of reasons. Consistency of continuous participants is one of the programs greatest challenges.

Outcome Evaluation

Project outcomes have been reported from each year of this program since 2003. Annual project outcomes are listed as a table in Appendix E: Local Site Project Outcomes Logic Model.

Some examples of project outcome data reporting from 2007 include the following:

- Leadership Skills surveys for national ECI reporting were completed by 83 core group youth and adults.
- Twenty-nine Youth & Adult Outcome Evaluations for ECI were completed by local youth and adults.

(The website for the EYSC National Extension Cares Initiative (ECI) is <http://eci.ext.msstate.edu/> . For more information on accessing the compiled reports from this site, contact National 4-H Council.)

- All 8 local community sites completed the following annual reports: 1) Final Reports of Community Action, 2) Final Accomplishment Report of Output Measures, and 3) Final Narrative Reports.

During 2007, project participants' data included the following:

- Local core group members are defined as "intensively involved participants" and have included 94 youth contributing at least 1800 hours to the project.
- "Less intensively involved participants" are non-core group members who participated in project activities. This group included 637 youth involved for a combined total of at least 2000 hours.
- The total number of hours of participation by all youth was reported as 3805 hours.
- Adult program participants included 275 adults contributing a reported total of 2,276 hours to the project.
- Total program participants included 731 youth and 275 adults from 8 different geographic rural communities, contributing and/or participating for a total 6942 reported project hours.
- A select number of 29 youth and adult participants completed written qualitative Outcome Evaluations, which is also part of the ECI data collected for USDA Rural Youth Development (RYD) projects;
- This program has also developed two marketing Resources as follows:
- Project brochures have been developed for "UNL Extension Engaging Youth Serving Communities." The text of a sample brochure is attached as Appendix B: Sample Project Brochure.
- A "Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships In Nebraska" project website is still under development and can be found at:
<http://youthadultpartnerships.unl.edu>.

Examples of improvement shown through project evaluation are given in Appendix D, State and Local Program Evaluation. This appendix also provides some outcome examples of youth and adult quotes and a program success story.

Communication to stakeholders

Marketing and reporting to stakeholders continues to improve with this program. Most communities have made presentations about their group and accomplishments to community level boards and organizations. For example, core group youth from two Hispanic communities have made such presentations to their local school board, library board, city council and community college. One community hosted and gave a presentation to the Nebraska Mexican-American Commission. The Hispanic communities of Gering and Lexington have their local newspapers as project partners and receive regular coverage of project activities. The Nebraska City site local News Press provides media coverage for their meetings, annual forums and special community activities and events.

In November 2007, six local site representatives gathered at the University of Nebraska- Lincoln campus. Each program site gave a brief presentation of their activities and accomplishments to state level UNL Extension specialists and the State 4-H Program Leader/Associate Dean of UNL Extension.

This program has developed two marketing Resources as follows:

- Project brochures for “UNL Extension Engaging Youth Serving Communities.” The text of a sample brochure is attached as Appendix B: Sample Project Brochure.
- A “Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships In Rural Nebraska” project website is still under development and can be found at: <http://youthadultpartnerships.unl.edu> .

Communication to national level stakeholders is provided through all the reports addressed in the Methods section above. These national stakeholders include National 4-H Council, the national Extension Cares Initiative, and USDA/CSREES. This Nebraska program has been featured in some national publications released by National 4-H Council, including “4-H, The Power of YOUth.”

Evidence of Sustainability

This program has received funding support from the USDA-RYD national program, Engaging Youth Serving Community, for 6 years. These funds are administered by National 4-H Council and are expected to continue through 2009. The state level project director is a Faculty Educator with UNL Extension and has had extensive grant writing experience at the state and national levels, securing small grant funds totaling more than \$1,500,000 during the past 8 years, directly and or in partnership for various grass roots level youth, family and community development projects. Local and state level EYSC projects have leveraged at least \$171,753 during the past 5 years. Hispanic and Tribal communities are very supportive and willing to contribute or combine resources whenever possible. A formal partnership with a state 1994 Tribal land grant institution has continued for the past 6 years and current partnership funds have been approved through 2010. State and district level UNL Extension and UNL 4-H Youth Development administration are very supportive of the program and are willing to provide training, professional staff and programming resources whenever possible.

Finally, most local projects are not stand alone projects in their communities, but are integrated with other youth development programs and continue to be supported by local community groups and organizations. Local coordination from at least 6 current project sites have committed to continuing at the local level indefinitely, securing whatever resources are needed to sustain the program.

Replicability

This program has the potential of being easily replicated, depending on the experience and dedication of state and local program coordinators. This project mostly follows the national program guidelines for Engaging Youth Serving Community as provided by National 4-H Council. Nebraska’s program does have some unique qualities. It began with 4 communities in 2003 and has been replicated in at least 15 different Nebraska communities over a five-year period. The state project director has recommended the following for successful replication of the program.

- Emphasis of 50/50 youth-adult involvement and participation;
- Emphasis of diverse involvement, including at risk youth and ethnic and cultural communities;
- Emphasis of consistent training in line with the goals and objectives of the program;

- Establishment and leadership from a core group team of youth and adults;
- Documentation and reporting of activities, challenges and accomplishments;
- Implementation of curricula designed for the program;
- Marketing and communication at the community level.

It should be noted that experience working with diverse audiences can be a key to replicability of the project. This work requires a fairly high level of expertise and experience working with diverse communities and program participants. The state project director must have extensive experience and research with diverse audiences (Hart, 2004; Hart 2008).

Rationale and Importance of Program

Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska is a true youth development program, emphasizing the following educational experiences and developmental skills for youth:

- A 50/50 working partnership experience with adults;
- Leadership development skills;
- Experience in community level decision-making;
- Diverse awareness and involvement for all community youth and adults;
- Community involvement experiences;
- Non-traditional, innovative 4-H programming combining cultural & generational aspects of community.

Finally, Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska is unique because of its emphasis on Hispanic, Tribal and diverse rural communities. Most local core groups have been developed independently of existing local traditional 4-H clubs. These local core groups of youth and adults provide innovative and new ideas for the make-up of a local 4-H team, emphasizing equal involvement of youth and adult members. This is truly a “diverse youth-adult partnership” and most worthy of recognition as a program of distinction.

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Appendix A: Training Curricula Example

Core Group Training Session 1: EYSC Introduction, Youth Adult Partnerships Lesson Plans/Notes for Trainers/Presenters

I. Introductions and Diversity - 20 min

- Prayer by Elder
- Introductions: sit/stand in a circle, pass the inner tube or hoop as individuals introduce each other telling about their family history and culture/clan. Alternate youth-adult-youth-adult, etc.
- Elder adult speaks briefly about youth-adult relationships and culture.

II. Introduction of EYSC6 Project, Purpose & Timeline - 10 min

- Overview of workshop agenda and EYSC 6 project summary.

III. YAP, Youth-Adult Relationships (Youth Role Play): Point of View - 20 min

Adults Observe and Remain Silent!

(*Youth Leaders explain activity to youth and facilitate/present youth role plays to adults.)

- Youth work in pairs, choose and act out role play situations from handout - act out negative, then positive approaches. Discussion about their perceptions of how/why youth & adults act and say things in these ways.

Materials: Role-plays, from YAP, pg 1-4; choose from role plays beginning on pg 1-7.

Props, if available: phone, backpack, candy wrappers, books, ball, etc. for role-play scenarios.

IV. YAP, Remember When (Adult discussion) - 20 min

Youth Observe and Remain Silent!

- Ask adults to "Remember When" (YAP pg 11-16), what it was like when they were a youth. Group discussion.
- Individuals read "things we say to young people." Adults react and discuss.
- Have youth react to what they have heard. Share their thoughts with the adults.

Materials: Things we say to young people, YAP 11-17.

V. YAP, Benefits & Challenges (Youth & Adults meet separately) - 40 min total

A. Youth: (YAP pg 1-19) - 20 min

(*Youth Leaders facilitate youth activity and discussion.)

- Benefits that adults bring to the table, youth write 1-3 words on large post-its, post on paper. Discussion.
- Challenges of working with adults, youth write 1-3 words on post-its, post on paper. Discussion.

B. Adults: (YAP pg 11-22) - 20 min

- Benefits that youth bring to the table, adults write 1-3 words on large post-its, post on wall. Discussion.

- Challenges of working with young people, adults write 1-3 words on post-its, post on wall. Discussion.

Materials: paper & markers, large post-it paper on wall to put Benefits & Challenges ideas.

4 Wall Post-its:

1. Youth Say, "Adult Benefits Are":

2. Youth Say, "Adult Challenges Are":

3. Adults Say, "Youth Benefits Are":

4. Adults Say, "Youth Challenges Are":

1 and 2 include youth responses about adults. 3 and 4 include adult responses about youth.

C. Solving Challenges Together - 20 min

- Bring youth and adults together. Post the "Benefits and Challenges" lists from youth session and adult session. Youth share their results. Adults share their results. Identify similarities and differences.

BREAK 10 min

VI. YAP, Taking A Stand, Agree/Disagree - 20 min

- Read statements from curriculum (YAP pg III-18, 19 or printed statements) and ask participants to stand by 1 of 5 signs. Ask participants why they "took a stand." Discussion, at least half from youth.

(Hint: ask/state different levels of issues, e.g., level 1 = ice cream flavor, level 2 = youth membership on school board, level 3 = sex education in schools.)

(Youth Leaders: 1) read statements, 2) then ask various individuals why they chose to "take a stand.")

Materials: 5 Signs - S Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree, S Disagree.

VII. YAP, Youth As Partners (Objects/Recipients/Partners) - 15 min

- Approaches for working with Youth (YAP pg II-24,25,26). Ask participants stand by 1 of 3 signs and ask them to define (ask adults first). After they have given their definitions, uncover the definitions. Then ask them to stand by 1 of 3 they feel most comfortable with at this time. Discuss why.

Materials: Signs (YAP pg II-29,30,31) - Youth as

Objects/Recipients/Partners (cover definitions with post-its at first),.

VIII. Project Reporting, Evaluation and Other Information - 10 min

A. IRB Consent Forms - *hand this out to ALL participants.*

B. Youth Leadership, Pre and Post Surveys - *hand out Pre-Survey to all youth.*

Coordinator Packet:

Briefly mention the following, if appropriate and if time allows, OR discuss with local EYSC coordinator:

C. Project Outcomes, End of Project Evaluation, youth and adults

- D. Project Site Reports: Quarterly Reports, End-of Project Community Action Report
- E. 4-H Forms: Youth Enrollment, Adult Volunteer Screening, Liability Insurance, Use of Clover emblem
- F. Other: Media Statements, Core Group Training Evaluations, Budget and Expense forms, EYSC5 Project Summaries

IX. Session 1 Closing Activity

Evaluation and Shared Thoughts - 15-20 min

- Participant Evaluation, complete individually.
 - *Materials: Participant Training Evaluations.*
- Have ALL move chairs in a circle (not behind tables). Individuals share their closing thoughts or comments. Ask someone to begin, then go round the circle. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE THEIR OWN CLOSING THOUGHTS!!!**
- Tomorrow's Agenda
- **Closing by Elder adult.**

Appendix B: Sample Project Brochure (text)

PRIDE

**(People, Restoring, Involvement,
Dignity & Excellence)**

one distinctive

PURPOSE

PRIDE (People Restoring Involvement, Dignity and Excellence) is a group of youth and adults working together to improve the image of southeast Scottsbluff and to restore a sense of pride in this neighborhood.

Engaging Youth Serving Communities

Diverse Youth-Adult

Partnerships in Rural Nebraska

This project is funded in part by a Rural Youth Development Grant supported by the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under Agreement No. 2005-45201-03332; and administered by the National 4-H Council through an EYSC4, Youth In Governance grant project.

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PROGRAM

**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
EXTENSION IN SCOTTSBLUFF COUNTY**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT US ONLINE AT:

<http://youthadultpartnerships/unl.edu>

impact on the

COMMUNITY

The youth identified that the East Overland area in Scottsbluff does not adequately represent the people who live there. After conducting community forums, the group formed three committees to address this issue.

- 1 Beautification Committee;
- 2 Recognition Committee; and
- 3 Mural Committee.

core team

involvement

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

_ BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE: Received funding from the Nebraska Forest Service and Nebraska Statewide Arboretum Community Enhancement Program to renovate East Overland Park for a more social and family oriented atmosphere.

_ RECOGNITION COMMITTEE: Awarded the PRIDE award to recognize local businesses and residents for the exemplary appearance of their property.

_ MURAL COMMITTEE: Held a "Graffiti Paint Over Day" to paint over graffiti in the

southeast Scottsbluff area. Also painted the Guadalupe Center to embellish the exterior appearance of the facility. Plans to paint murals around the southeast Scottsbluff neighborhood on significant buildings with cultural and social images.

_ PRIDE: Assisted in the UNL Admissions Nuestra Familia Nuestra Universidad program held in southeast Scottsbluff at East Overland Park

_ PRIDE: Youth made UNL campus visit.

The PRIDE core group consists of fifteen youth and ten adults. The youth are a mix of male and female students

from freshman to seniors from both Scottsbluff and Gering High Schools.

308.632.1475

Appendix C: National Level Program Evaluation

The following provides a description of three national evaluation methods used for the Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska project.

ECI Evaluation:

The ECI system captures information on the following:

- Degree to which youth and adults gained understanding of concepts and life skills for leadership over the course of the program.
- Extent to which participants applied concepts and life skills for leadership from training to other contexts.
- Perceptions of youth and adults regarding needs, assets, roles, and contributions of young people in rural communities.
- Strategies developed to produce an inclusive environment.
- Extent and success of outreach to diverse and underserved populations.
- How diverse community members were involved in the project.
- Participants' view of effectiveness of inclusion strategies.
- Change in positive youth development opportunities provided through the grant efforts.
- Observations of youth and adult leaders and participants, key community stakeholders.
- Efforts to increase long-term benefit and change.

The ECI website is located at: <http://eci.ext.msstate.edu/> .

Final Narrative Report:

This cumulative report is submitted annually by each university project to National 4-H Council. This report is used to develop Council's aggregate report to the USDA. This report includes:

- A final budget report
- Aggregated summary of all significant activities undertaken towards achieving the outcomes and objectives of the project
- Aggregated target and outcome data
- Success stories
- Publicity Samples
- Photographs with photo releases on file with grantee
- Five (5) copies of all locally-produced educational materials funded by the project.

Final Output Measures Report:

This cumulative report is submitted annually by each university project to National 4-H Council. A copy is provided to USDA. This report gathers:

- Background information on university grantee and local sites
- Racial, ethnic, age and gender information on youth and adult program leaders and participants
- Number and hours youth are involved in programming, emerging as leaders within 4-H, and as leaders in the community outside of 4-H
- Community issues identified, activity(ies) to address issues, status of action plans
- Community collaborations, number participating, types of organizations in collaborations
- Collaboration between 4-H, FFA and/or Girl Scouts
- Details of resources leveraged: kind and value of cash, in-kind and staffing resources
- Curriculum or education resources development
- Number of 4-H Clubs or 4-H ongoing community-based groups formed.

Appendix D: State and Local Level Program Evaluation

The following provides a description of two evaluation methods used for the Diverse Youth-Adult Partnerships in Rural Nebraska project. These reports are provided by local level project coordinators and their core group members.

EYSC Quarterly Site Reports:

Each project site submits a quarter report to the state level. These reports are compiled and sent to the National 4-H Council. Each quarterly report includes the following components:

- A summary of program activities and process relating to the project objectives and outcomes, detailing relevant logistical details; barriers to youth participation alleviated; limitations emerged; changes to key project personnel; and new collaborations established. Agendas may be attached to provide logistical details and subject matter. The reports should also include success stories and copies of any publicity efforts. Publicity and printed materials must include the references to the funding source as specified in the sub-recipient contract.
- Evidence of ongoing participation in the national evaluation through ECI.
- Financial Activity Report which details expenditures on the project as well as compliance with budget line items and an explanation of any variance within budget categories, although approval of variance over 10% per line item is required in advance.

Annual Community Action Plans:

Local sites must submit an annual Community Action Plan Report. These reports are sent to the state level and all current site Community Action Plans are forwarded to National 4-H Council. Copies are also sent to USDA. This report gathers the following information for each project site:

- Background information on local community(ies) served
- Description of needs assessment process and issue addressed
- Identity of community capitals and description of how the need was addressed
- Number of youth and adults involved in developing, implementing and evaluating the action plan
- Status of action plan activity(ies)/project(s)
- Description of immediate and long-term impact the project had on the community through three youth leader/participant interviews and three interviews with adults aware of but not participants in any phase of the project
- Community collaborations specific to the action plan: single organization or name of collaboration (with name of all organizations in group), purpose of collaboration, specific contribution to action plan, continuing status of collaboration
- Sum total of cash and in-kind resources leveraged specifically for the action plan

Examples of Improvement shown by Evaluations, Quotes and Success Stories:

Participant Leadership Skills showed improvement through the "Youth/Adult Leadership Skills Post-then-Pre Survey" results. These results are available through the EYSC National Extension Cares Initiative (ECI - <http://eci.ext.msstate.edu/>). Eighty-three youth and adult participants completed this survey in 2007 and an increase in 16 different leadership skills was shown from a pre-mean score of 1.62 to a post-mean score of 2.14 on a scale of 1 to 3.

Quotes have been collected from youth and adult participants. Some examples are as follows:

- "The most important things I have learned from LEAP are that youth ideas ARE important and I should not be afraid to give my opinion." - Youth core team participant.
- "Even though it was something as small as lighting a pathway, it feels good to know I'm a part of something that's making a difference." - Youth core team participant.
- "This has been one of the best involvement experiences I have had." - Youth core team participant.
- "You guys are the best kept secret in Nebraska," by an adult member of the Nebraska Mexican American Commission, referring to Nuestro Futuro youth and adults core team.
- "Our core group of youth has had excellent input and involvement as to our community needs and solutions." - Mayor of community.
- "I don't know what we would have done with out the teens, they saved our "buns"! They were such hard workers! They did everything anyone asked and more. They helped carry and tote so much. I just don't know how we could have done the project without them!" - Adult core team member, after solution activity.

Success Stories were also collected from project site on a quarterly and annual basis. One example is as follows:

- Situation: Four Nuestro Futuro members were invited to be part of the planning committee of the 1st Annual Children's Multicultural Fair. These youth worked with other adults (teachers) and younger youth (middle school) students. The purpose of the multicultural fair was to highlight the unique differences and cultures that exist in the community's schools and also to share those differences with children.
- Response: Nuestro Futuro members met at the middle school twice a week for two months with teachers and younger youth to help plan the event. They even helped a group of students from Africa with their dance routine. They were greatly appreciated by both the teachers and the younger youth.
- Results: As the momentum grew, a few more Nuestro Futuro members joined with the organization of the Children's Multicultural Fair. On the day of the event, nine older youth were able to take part in the event. The students from Africa were very grateful for the older youth's assistance.

Appendix E: Local Site Project Outcomes Logic Model
Logic Model for *Engaging Youth, Serving Community (EYSC)* Rural Youth Development Program

<u>Inputs</u>	Activities	<u>Outputs</u> Participation/ Reach	Short Term results seen over first 1 to 2 years of program will be:	<u>Outcomes – Impacts</u> Medium Term results seen over second and third year of program will be:	Long Term results after 5 to 7 years of program implementation will be:		
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money • Trainers • Curriculum Writer • State and local Staff • Volunteers (youth and adults) • Equipment • Supplies • Facilities • Research • Advocates Constraints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community or organization policies • Resistance to shared power and leadership • Time • Distance/Transportation • Lack of skills 	State and Local Training Technical Assistance Community Forums Build Community Collaborations and partnerships Action Planning Implement Action Plans Evaluation	High school youth and adult partners as leaders – grantee has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 youth and 2 adults as core grantee team at national training. • 2 youth and 2 adults as core grantee team trained on evaluation and reporting, and hold bimonthly monitoring calls for 5 local sites • Five local sites of 20-25 youth and 5-10 adults each are involved in state/ local training 	Youth and adults gain understanding of the concepts/skills for leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Conflict management • Decision-making • Facilitation • Planning • Goal setting • Problem Solving • Inclusion and diversity • Self-confidence 	Youth and adults demonstrate leadership skills and competencies.	Human Capital expanded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth have knowledge, skills abilities and behaviors necessary to lead productive lives. • Adults have knowledge, skills abilities and behaviors necessary to assist youth developing into productive community members. Social Capital expanded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust established between youth and adults in order to effect community change. • Increased core capacity of youth and adults to improve quality of life within the community. Cultural Capital expanded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of community is reflected within and engaged as key stakeholders. Civic/ Political Capital expanded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth are community leaders making decisions and taking action on issues of public/ community concern which impact their lives. 		
		Other youth and adult community members; policy makers; decision-making bodies and organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five local sites involve 70-75 participants in each forum, reaching 350-375 youth and adult community members • Develop partnerships and collaborations at 5 local sites • Youth meet 5-8 hrs/ month for 4-6 months to plan and carry out community action plans 	Youth and adults gain understanding of Youth/Adult Partnership	Youth are in authentic decision-making partnerships with adults. Adults are accepting of contributions and role of youth within communities.			
		Youth and adults, and their communities gain understanding of Youth in Governance. Community provides youth with a variety of positive youth development opportunities.	Youth develop a commitment to community. Youth are invited by community leaders to share their voice, influence and making decisions skills to take action on issues of public/community concern which impact their lives.	Adult community stakeholders have committed resources and changed policies in support of the YIG investment.			