

Success Stories - Fulton County

Youth Leadership Academy

Working with volunteer from the Fulton County Leadership Academy, the Purdue Extension Educator formed a youth leadership program. The Educator served as the class moderator. Three school systems were invited to participate. They sent a total of 16 students to the program. The program consisted of Leadership subjects, introduction to community businesses, community political structure and various local programs.

Participants in the program stated the following: "The Leadership Academy Program has helped me see what kind of potential our community has."; "It has helped me realize that there is a need here in Fulton County, but yet our community is a good one."; "It has helped me get more involved, and I now know things about the community that I didn't before."

Extension Interacts With REMC and Local School System Using Electric Circuit Board Activities

Working with the local school system to achieve educational standards for 4th grade. The Purdue Extension Service in Fulton County enhanced the study of electricity with the use of "hands on" activities to reinforce the classroom book learning. Over the past 6 years over 1600 students have participated in a project in which students are taught skills to wire a battery powered electric circuit board. Students receive instructions on:

- Generation of electricity
- Series versus parallel circuits
- How to use and identify wire strippers
- How and why to use solder
- Proper placement of a switch
- The speed and flow of electric current
- The difference between conductors and insulators

Over the period students increased their test scores by over 30%. Teacher's response to this program included the statements "When we took our science tests over electricity and magnetism all of my students passed with most scoring over 80 %. I was very pleased with how it correlates with standards as well as our text.

One additional benefit that was cited by the teachers was that the program brought fathers and grandfathers of students in to help with the program. This allowed more males than normal an opportunity to interact in the classroom.

Master Gardeners

For the past 12 years the Master Gardener has been taught in Fulton County to 120 people. This course teaches the science behind gardening. The class trained in 2007 showed an increase in post test scores over pretest of 42%. Successful class participants become community volunteers. Master gardeners are active in Fulton County. Graduates have taught many programs to youth and adults, created a butterfly garden at a new county park, been involved in over 10 community improvement projects, donated funding to other projects and actively seek advanced education opportunities.

Grazing 102

Fulton County conducted a Statewide two - day Training "On the Farm" Program in Livestock Grazing for 40 producers.

All the participants stated they intend to try some of the techniques discussed. Those things included water handling improvements, extending the grazing season, improving fencing, improving their animal handling techniques and practice better herd health techniques.

Two people commented that it was "One of the best programs I have ever attended."

8th Grade Conservation Day

Working with the teachers in the Rochester School System, Fulton County Purdue Extension Service developed a field day for 137 eighth grade students on environmental topics at the Fulton County Fairgrounds.

Teachers reported the program enhanced their curriculum by promoting active citizenship while enriching the students. The teachers felt the most important thing in the program was how it portrayed our local environment as interesting and part of the global picture.

Students said they plan to do more recycling and will try techniques to reduce pollution. Statements made by the students were, "The environment is more than just a place, it is where we live." "It is our responsibility to save the environment", and "Respect what is around you."

Commercial vegetable growers program

Commercial vegetable growers attended a seminar in Fulton County featuring Purdue Specialists. There were 21 growers in attendance at this program. They noted a variety of things useful about the class including information on pesticide applications and drift, irrigation management and the timely handouts.

When asked if they intend to try any of the techniques discussed, 85% replied yes. Some of the things they plan to try include: use of companion plants to attract insects, pheromone traps for insect control, and switching to different fungicides to reduce resistance problems. They felt as a result of this workshop they would be more consistent in spraying, increase their numbers of field scouting and be better prepared to assess crop damage.

Leadership Academy

Purdue Extension, Fulton County is the lead agency in teaching the Fulton County Leadership Academy. Using Purdue Curriculum Leadership Programming, 72 people have attended this program over the past four years.

General comments on the class were: "WOW! I am so impressed and appreciate this class. It has been an asset to me personally and professionally. This has been an amazing opportunity. I am recommending this class to co-workers."

Other comments included the following: "I hope to incorporate new leadership knowledge, skills, etc. into my daily duties and interactions. I will look for opportunities to become involved instead of waiting for someone else to ask." "I personally plan to be much more active in local programs." "I will be more involved in community. I have a better understanding of leadership styles and how to be more effective in leadership roles."

As a result of this training participants planned to do the following: Join a community organization (29 participants); Take an office within an organization (20 participants); Chair a committee (21 participants); Speak out on an issue (22 participants); Run for public office (8 participants) and Form a task force around a community issue (13 participants).