



# Extension Connection

Monthly Highlights – April 2014

*An initiative, called the Young Dreamers, is a youth development group that seeks to enrich the lives of local youth—especially Hispanic youth.*

- [Young Dreamers Youth Development Initiative](#)
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## **Young Dreamers Youth Development Initiative**

Miguel Gonzales, VISTA, is currently in the process of establishing collaborations with local colleges, and reaching out to community members in order to help sustain the educational and recreational activities of a local youth development initiative supported by Fond du Lac County 4-H and the Holy Family Catholic Community of Fond du Lac (HFCC). This initiative, called the *Young Dreamers*, is a youth development group that seeks to enrich the lives of local youth—especially Hispanic youth—through experiential learning activities. Gonzales aims to establish a series of collaborations with local colleges that will see the time and talent of local college students channeled into the *Young Dreamers* program.

Ultimately, Gonzales' goal is to offer college students an opportunity to meaningfully employ some of the knowledge and skills that they are developing through their college experience, while also diversifying the learning opportunities available to youth members of *Young Dreamers*. To date, the children who form part of the group now called *Young Dreamers* have participated in a diverse array of learning experiences. These learning experiences have covered topics from the impact of specific human activities on the environment (and practices that mitigate environmental damage, such as recycling), to activities emphasizing healthy lifestyle choices related to nutrition and exercise. Through diverse experiences, the Young Dreamers have practiced life skills including: teamwork, responsibility, critical thinking, communication, cooperation, socializing, empathy and sharing.

Gonzales has also reached out to the HFCC congregation through personal and public communications, and has interviewed two potential volunteers. One, an active member of HFCC who is already well acquainted with the families involved in Young Dreamers, and the other an employee of Mercury Marine with a background in engineering who hopes to engage the Young Dreamers in fun activities emphasizing Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM). Both individuals have agreed to visit the Young Dreamers before their last official session on May 12, during which youth members of the group will host a Mother's Day celebration. This celebration will include food prepared by youth members with assistance and supervision from two staff members of Fond du Lac County's programming unit of the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP). Youth members will also practice their public speaking skills by making a brief statement of thanks to their mothers in front of all the people attending the celebration.

## **Dealing with Compromised Cattle**

Animal care begins at the farm level. Although all farmers strive to take excellent care of their animals, there are times when cows are injured or sick and not able to stand on their own.

UW-Extension responded to animal well-being this past winter due to the release of a potential animal abuse case on a northeast Wisconsin dairy farm. Piloted in Fond du Lac County, "**Dealing with Compromised Cattle**" was a five meeting road show developed to address prevention, safety, and management of the down cow. Forty-three individuals attended the pilot meeting with a total of 116 participants across all locations. The "**Assessing Risk-Ensuring Animal Well-Being on the Farm**" presentation developed by UW-Extension Dairy Agents Tina Kohlman & LaVern Georgson for the compromised cow meetings was also presented to 325 individuals at the six CAFO meetings across the state.

With fifteen to twenty percent of US beef sales dairy, producers must be committed to food safety and quality every time a cow is culled from the herd. Managing dairy cattle to avoid quality defects has the combined effect of promoting dairy animal well-being, herd health, performance and profitability. Twenty-nine dairy producers participated in **“Meating our Responsibility” JBS Packerland Tour** to learn how animal husbandry practices impact carcass quality and to improve the value of their cull cows.

The care and well-being of cattle in Wisconsin is important to consumers and farmers alike. Dairy producers, employees and service providers are responsible for the welfare of cattle under their care, and are committed to making sure all animals are treated humanely.

### **Strong Women Strength Training Program**

Forty-two women recently participated in the spring series of Strong Women, an evidence-based strength training program designed by Dr. Miriam Nelson of Tufts University. It was the first educational series offered in collaboration between UW-Extension and UW-Fond du Lac Continuing Education. Of the participants that returned the survey:

- 100% reported being satisfied with the class
- 93% reported their health was better because of the program
- 90% reported feeling physically stronger due to the program
- 93% reported having more energy due to the program
- 55% reported sleeping better due to the program
- 79% reported having less joint pain due to the program
- 83% reported becoming more physically active due to the program
- 97% reported that they will continue doing the exercises after the series has ended

Participants said:

- “I feel stronger and more energetic!”
- “I have a new understanding and feeling for my body. I see how effort and consistency in the exercises could really change me. I have a more positive outlook for my future.”
- “Thank you for this course. It’s what I’ve hoped for – a program that doesn’t require home equipment. Also, the group helps a person be faithful to coming.”
- “The best aspect of the program is the positive reinforcement and social motivation to stay with the weights and strength training.”
- “I am 80 years old and I am so happy that I can do all of these exercises!”
- “I lost weight and increased my strength by attending this program!”

The summer series begins on May 6<sup>th</sup>. In the future, UW-Extension and UW-Fond du Lac will also offer an advanced series for interested returning participants.

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