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THE CHALLENGES OF CHARACTER IN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

Julie Adamcin*

ABSTRACT:

The 4-H Mission "to develop...capable, contributing members of a global society" has never been more of a challenge than to begin to infuse character education into ongoing international exchange programs. The Arizona 4-H Program has been involved with the UTREK Japanese Exchange Program for nearly 30 years. As the 4-H Program has moved to make its character education program a more proactive and conscience it has looked at character in each of its programs, projects and activities, from livestock to cooking. The Arizona/Japanese 4-H Youth Exchange has been no different. During the summer of 2002, Dr. Bill Peterson, Assistant Director for 4-H and Dr. Julie Adamcin, Extension Agent were invited to come to Japan and present information about Character Education Programs, including CHARACTER COUNTS! to public and private schools in Japan (Tokyo and Nara). The results of their trip will be translated into programs for Arizona hosting families and their guests...including bi-cultural community service projects, camp activities to discuss character in both cultures and ways to look at character through the eyes of another culture. Activities included; sharing traditional character education stories and resources in both cultures, ideas for implementing cross-cultural community service projects, training for families planning to host, youth-led games and activities used in Arizona UTREK Camp.

*Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development, University of Arizona, Pima County
Cooperative Extension, Tucson, AZ
Email: adamcin@ag.arizona.edu

THE LAO TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN A CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXT

Christy Hicks* and Thomas Schneider

ABSTRACT:

In January of 2003, 66 rural primary school teachers from the eastern border of Laos (near Vietnam) took part in a five-day Experiential Learning Workshop facilitated by MSU Extension 4-H Youth Programs Staff, in partnership with the Lao Ministry of Education. Key components of the workshop included Activity-Based Lessons, Reflective questions, Applying Content to Everyday Life, Utilizing Natural and Recycled Materials in the Classroom, and Multi-sensory Activities. The workshop concluded with a small group experience in which the teachers planned and facilitated Experiential Educational Activities with local children. For Extension Educators who work with Southeast Asian populations in the United States, the cross-cultural exchange demonstrated a number of significant concepts. A workshop session on the "ages and stages of youth development" revealed that the physical, emotional and cognitive development of Lao primary school students is very similar to that of their counterparts in the United States. At first, the Lao teachers had some difficulty making the transition from the role of "lecturer" to that of "facilitator"; however, the key concepts of Experiential Learning "translated" well across cultural and linguistic boundaries, aided by visual materials and multiple examples for reinforcement.

*Youth & Community Development Agent, MSU Extension Oakland County, Pontiac, MI

Email: hicksc@msue.msu.edu

EXTENSION PROGRAMS ACROSS THE NATION: RECOGNIZING DIVERSITY

Ruth Jackson*, Virginia K. Hopp and Grenell T. Rogers

ABSTRACT:

Extension Programs Across the Nation: Recognizing diversity. NEAFCS Diversity Task Force will present a seminar showcasing their universities' diversity programs across the country. This seminar will demonstrate the many ways diversity is respected and appreciated in the universities represented within NEAFCS. The seminar will show exactly how multiplicity is promoted on university campuses and within the work force by highlighting specific points that demonstrate the types of diversity. Other highlights will include various agents that will present their programs along with awards that have been received due to promoting such diversity programs.

*Extension Agent Family & Consumer Sciences/ EFNEP, University of Arizona
Cooperative Extension Maricopa County, Phoenix, AZ
Email: rjackson@ag.arizona.edu

GROWING THE GARDEN OF DIVERSITY

Pamala V. Morris Ph.D.* and Kimber J. Nicoletti

ABSTRACT:

Educators frequently plan projects hoping they will flourish into a garden of multicultural participants but may be looking for tools that will help them recruit a more diverse group. Attracting and retaining diverse participants requires sensitivity and understanding about cultural differences. As our communities continue to evolve into an increasing multicultural garden, leaders need to understand their responsibility for creating an environment of inclusion and diversity. In this workshop, participants will have the opportunity to explore their own cultural stories, increase their cultural competence and self-awareness and develop new skills for relating to others who are culturally/ethnically different. Participants will also learn about dynamics or behaviors that are barriers and bridges to a strong multicultural community.

*Assistant Professor, 4-H Youth Development Department, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
Email: pmorris@purdue.edu

FROM THE COUNTY TO THE GALAXY, EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS THROUGH GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Ginny Powell*

ABSTRACT:

Today, events taking place in one part of the world no longer happen in a vacuum. It is impossible for us to ignore situations taking place on any part of the globe. We are all citizens of the planet earth. It is our responsibility to help young people and their families understand this interdependence and our role of global citizens. The 4-H Global Citizenship Program model and "And My World" curriculum focus on developing the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will better prepare individuals to more effectively interact in our global, interdependent society. The learning activities in this model and curriculum are designed to help individuals develop relationships and critical knowledge to enhance interactions with family members and peers at the community, state, national, and global levels. Seminar participants will be introduced to this model and curriculum, as well as experience hands-on activities that are designed to help participants learn about cultural similarities and differences, critical issues facing our world, and help prepare them to be better able to work with others to improve the quality of life throughout the world. Specifically, the "And My World" curriculum uses this model to help young people think about worldwide cultural, economic and political issues. The curriculum provides information about the current world challenges and interdependence. It highlights areas such as the environment, economics, hunger, and health. All activities are based on the experiential learning model.

*Interim Chair, Department of 4-H Youth Development, Bridgewater, NJ
Email: gpowell@aesop.rutgers.edu

SOMALI REFUGEES IN AMERICA-MEETING THEIR NEEDS WITH EFNEP

Marilyn Rabe*

ABSTRACT:

Since the early 1990s, over 20,000 Somali refugees have settled in Columbus, Ohio, most in the past two to three years. These families face many challenges when they arrive in their new homes, not the least of which are learning how to prepare healthy meals for their families, handling food safely, and shopping in American grocery stores. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) in Franklin County (Columbus, Ohio) has helped to address the needs of the Somali families by hiring a Somali Nutrition Educator. This Educator uses both English and Somali to teach his students. He has adapted EFNEP lessons to meet the particular needs of the Somali audience.

*Extension Agent, Ohio State University Extension, Columbus, OH
Email: rabe.9@osu.edu

WORKING WITH DIVERSITY IN COMMUNITIES: TOOLS FOR THE EXTENSION PROFESSIONAL

Ann C. Schauber*, Gae Broadwater and Paul Gutierrez

ABSTRACT:

Across the nation, Extension professionals are working diligently to learn how to address the needs of our changing populations. From designing organizational change strategies, developing new hiring practices, defining intercultural competency skills, to developing new educational methodologies, Extension professionals are marching into new territory. Learn how we can learn from our successes and failures together through the launching of the New National Extension Diversity Center, sponsored by ECOP's Extension Diversity Task Force. See the new center, learn about what intercultural competency skills are, and sample a variety of tools available to support Extension professionals in how to work with differences in our communities. These tools include a new handbook on how to work with differences in communities for Extension professionals and volunteers, an online course for professional development in working with diversity, a nationwide database of Spanish-language Extension materials, and examples of "best practices" in meeting the needs of our new populations. Learn how you can contribute your "best practices" to the National Virtual Extension Diversity Center.

*Diversity Leader, Oregon State University Extension, Corvallis, OR
Email: ann.schauber@orst.edu

DIVERSITY--WHO BELONGS HERE?

Theresa Wimann* and Edith Felts-Podoll

ABSTRACT:

Since 1998, Adams County University of Wisconsin-Extension has addressed issues of diversity in a rural county through projects like: diversity book kits, diversity nutrition programs, poverty simulation and diversity gardening. These programs have helped to create an atmosphere where everyone can belong. Educators received a major grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council to create a literacy program in five area libraries that introduced diverse cultures in Wisconsin to families with children in a primarily homogenous county based on the book *Who Belongs Here?*, a book that tells who, how and why people came and continue to come to the United States. The program has received several state and national awards including the Mary K. Wells Memorial Diversity Award, Epsilon Sigma Phi Team Award, and the project was placed on the National Extension Virtual Diversity Center web site for multi-cultural best practices. Continuing the diversity theme in 2002, Adams County Extension received a minor grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council to develop four multicultural programs called *Breaking Bread, Breaking Boundaries* that reflected cultures living in and around Adams County including Asian, Slavic, Ho-Chunk and Latino cultures. Programs were designed in collaboration with members of these cultures who live in the area. With small amounts of advertising, this program drew over 600 individuals "starved for knowledge" about other cultures. This program includes: explanations of programs, implementation, participation, barriers and boundaries, collaborative opportunities, program evaluation and recommendations for duplicating or creating successful diversity programming in your community.

*Adams County Wisconsin, Adams, Wisconsin