

## INTRODUCTION

Utah State University Extension provides research-based programs and resources with the goal of improving the lives of individuals, families and communities throughout Utah. USU Extension operates through a cooperative agreement between the United States Department of Agriculture, Utah State University, and county governments.

Program areas include:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Gardening
- Home, Family, and Food
- 4-H and Youth

The partnership between USU Extension and Sanpete County contributes to the development of quality research-based educational programs that address the needs of Sanpete County individuals and families. With the support of Sanpete County funding, USU faculty and staff have been able to increase programming efforts among youth and adults in 2019.



## 4-H AFTERSCHOOL:

### SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Social and emotional learning is the process through which youth acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to recognize and manage their emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions and handle challenging situations constructively (Durlak, Domitrovich, Weissberg, & Gullotta, 2014).

In an effort to improve communication skills, problem solving skills, emotion regulation, and interpersonal relationships, an evidence-based program called Connecting with Others (CWO) was implemented for low-income, at-risk elementary-aged youth in afterschool program settings at four schools. Ninety youth at four elementary schools participated in daily afterschool activities, including social and emotional lessons that focused on the following skill areas: socialization, problem solving and conflict resolution, communication, sharing, and empathy and caring.

## YOUTH EVALUATION RESULTS

Seventy-one youth participated in the survey yielding the following results:

- 98% of youth strongly agreed/agreed that CWO lessons helped them make friends and feel a sense of belonging.
- 82% of youth strongly agreed/agreed that CWO lessons provided them with the tools to express themselves and communicate effectively with their peers.
- 86% of youth strongly agreed/agreed that CWO lessons provided them with skills to cooperate and work well with others.
- 90% of youth strongly agreed/agreed that CWO lessons gave them opportunities to feel special and important.
- 90% of youth strongly agreed/agreed that CWO lessons gave them the tools to show empathy for others.

## STAFF EVALUATION RESULTS

Ten grant-funded afterschool educators completed surveys yielding the following results:

- 100% of afterschool staff saw an increase in the use of effective communication skills among youth after participating in CWO lessons.
- 99% of afterschool staff strongly agreed/agreed that youth followed social rules, used assertive behavior, and worked/played collaboratively after participating in CWO lessons.
- 100% of afterschool staff felt that youth used positive conflict resolution techniques after participating in CWO lessons.
- 99% of afterschool staff strongly agreed/agreed that youth were able to regulate their emotions in a positive manner after participating in CWO lessons.
- 90% of afterschool staff strongly agreed/agreed that youth used the Stop, Think, Plan, and Check technique to help control their emotions.

- 85% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that the event increased their knowledge about future available careers.
- 62% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that they have a better understanding of which college major/college classes they should focus on for their future career.
- 92% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that they plan to attend a community college, technical college, or 4-year college after participating in the event.
- 85% of participants strongly agreed/agreed that they have the skills to prepare and give a presentation for an interview after participating in the event.

## YOUTH PROGRAM COORDINATOR POSITION CREATED



Through a Utah Legislative funding initiative, Utah State University Extension was able to place full and part-time Youth Program Coordinators in each county in Utah. Sanpete County was among the counties chosen to receive a full-time coordinator. Brandi Reber joined the Sanpete County Extension Office in October 2019, filling the coordinator position. Brandi was involved in the 4-H program in Nevada as a youth and has worked in the 4-H program in Sanpete County as a volunteer since 2005. She and her family live in Axtell. Due to the creation of this position, we have been able to expand the 4-H and youth programs throughout the county. At this time clubs are being formed throughout

## GEAR UP:

### COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS PROGRAM

Another successful program in 2019 was made possible through partnerships with USU Extension, GEAR UP, North and South Sanpete School Districts, and Snow College. GEAR UP is a federally funded program that works to increase the enrollment and success of low-income students in higher education. A two-day program was established in order to provide middle-school aged youth with opportunities to participate in college and career readiness workshops. The first year of the program resulted in 28 youth participating. An IRB approved evaluation was administered to the youth with the following results.



the county in the Small Animal Livestock, 4-H Shooting Sports and Horse and Livestock Bowl project areas. Summer camps are in the works for sewing and S.T.E.M projects. We are excited to see the growth of 4-H program in Sanpete County to be able to reach a broader audience with a diverse 4-H program.

## CENTRAL UTAH GRAZING EXPO

A key part of livestock ranching sustainability in central Utah is access to public land grazing. I was approached by ranchers and public land agencies about public land grazing permits being threatened by outside special interest groups. We responded by developing the Central Utah Grazing Expo with Dr. Eric Thacker designed to bring the federal agencies and livestock producers together to study the art and science of rangeland management. This program consists of two days of classroom discussions and a 1-day tour. This is the first year held in Sanpete and Sevier County. This program was very successful and will be a yearly program that will help livestock production sustainability.

### Major Impacts:

- 100% of attendees obtained new knowledge
- 100% of attendees improved awareness of topics covered
- 96% of attendees gained new skills
- This program will have an estimated additional reach of 1,025



## SUSTAINABLE GARDENING PROGRAMS

There are over 10,000 homes in Sanpete County. These homes have on average  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre of irrigated landscapes surrounding the home. This accounts for close to 2500 acres of lawns and gardens in Sanpete County that are managed by the owner. In assessing the needs of the home owners we discovered many managers of these properties struggle with little education and knowledge about sustainable gardening practices and tend to spend a great amount of time and money with unsuitable lawn and garden management methods. To help the home owners, I developed 8 workshops reaching 161 residents addressing important lawn and garden management issues that will improve gardens and landscapes while saving water resources and reducing pesticide abuse. To reach an even larger audience we developed 22 Garden Shows with CentraCom local channel 10 a central Utah cable company station, reaching over 50,000 viewers. This garden show program became one of the most watched program on this channel.



## INTRODUCING MURIA EVERITT



Our new 4-H Afterschool coordinator, Muria Everitt, has been involved with Utah 4-H for eight years. She started as a volunteer in the Western Horse Program and quickly grew to love and enjoy helping in all aspects of 4-H. It wasn't long before she started working in the afterschool program, eventually moving to the office to help with the teens and the preparation for afterschool. She now plans and organizes the entire afterschool program implementing various STEM and Character Building activities as well as healthy snacks and Fun physical games. Muria is the mother of nine children who are all involved in the 4-H program in some way. She and her family live in Ephraim where they are enjoying all the wonderful things Sanpete county has to offer.

## EXTENSION STAFF INFORMATION

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