

USU Extension Partnership Builds Healthy Communities

Shelby Ruud

09/22/2017



Utah State

University Extension was recently chosen as one of five Extension programs to lead the rest of the country in a new community health initiative.

The National 4-H Council partnered with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation with a goal to improve the health of 1,000 communities across the nation over the next 10 years. They plan to accomplish this goal by helping local health councils implement action plans that ensure community members can be healthier at every stage of life. The 10-year partnership will begin with the five selected universities and will continue to grow over the next several years.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded the National 4-H Council a \$4.6 million grant for the community health initiative.

According to the National 4-H Council, USU Extension was selected based on the program's preparedness to drive innovation for other communities.

"Being selected for this incredible initiative is a testament to the many Extension and 4-H faculty and staff who have done so much great work in the area of health already," said Sandra Sulzer, USU Extension assistant professor of health and wellness. "Everyone in the state of Utah has a body and a mind. Mental and physical health matter to each of us. That is why we are working so hard in Extension and 4-H to bring support, knowledge and programming to this area."

The partnership will focus on designing a sustainable network structure to promote health and well-being in communities across the nation, as well as creating tools for healthier communities and launching a training curriculum for local community advocates.

Using the 4-H program's youth leadership model, youth will work alongside community members, local public health organizations, businesses, government entities and non-profit agencies to address top public health priorities, such as individual and community well-being, prevention and treatment of chronic disease, and reductions in health care costs.

"For more than 100 years, 4-H has engaged youth as catalysts and game-changers to drive positive outcomes in their local communities," said Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO of the National 4-H Council. "Given all that we know about the power of youth innovation and leadership, we could not be more excited to partner with RWJF in this effort to activate today's youth to help solve the critical health challenges facing today's families."

For more information about USU Extension programs, visit extension.usu.edu.

Writer: Shelby Ruud, shelby.ruud@usu.edu

Contact: Sandra Sulzer, sandra.sulzer@usu.edu What Next? Get useful tips like this as soon as we release them. Sign up [here](#).