

## Positive Youth Development

Rachel Hart-Brinson | 4-H Program Educator

Planning and developing the registration process for a "Sample 4-H" program in partnership with the Eau Claire Area School District where young people will explore a variety of Project Areas in a 4-day experience to explore "sparks" and learn life skills.

## Horticulture

Margaret Murphy | Horticulture Educator

Planning for a statewide webinar series for consumer horticulture audiences where participants will learn about pollinator decline, climate change and environmental contamination and pollution. The goal of this effort is to increase adoption of horticultural practices addressing identified environmental issues in Wisconsin.

A 6-week garden program for youth at the Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Chippewa Valley Chippewa Falls Center where they learn best practices in the garden through hands-on activities. The goals of this program are to teach kids how to food garden, connect them to the natural world and promote life-long healthy eating habits.

A 6-week garden program for youth at the Boys and Girls Club of the Greater Chippewa Valley Menomonie Center where they learn best practices in the garden through hands-on activities. The goals of this program are to teach kids how to food garden, connect them to the natural world and promote life-long healthy eating habits.

## Agriculture

Lyssa Seefeldt | Agriculture Educator

Planning and revising an online course for consumer audiences (home gardeners) where participants learned fundamental knowledge of Wisconsin horticulture with an emphasis in Integrated Pest Management. The goal is to increase decision-making and problem-solving skills, improve the productivity / health of gardens and landscapes, and to implement gardening practices that have a positive impact on the environment.

A training for emergency response personnel in the Planning for Emergency Livestock Transportation Response (PELTR) course where they learned how to respond to incidents involving livestock trailers. The

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*purpose of this program is to increase the effectiveness of emergency planning and the preparedness of local emergency response agencies.*

*A newsletter for farmers, ag professionals, and local media where they're provided timely articles and information on Extension resources to improve their farm business practices.*

*Planning for the Agriculture Education area at 2022 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days, an outdoor trade show for farmers and rural communities to increase knowledge of Extension Agriculture programs in crops and soils, dairy, farm management, livestock, and horticulture.*

*Planning the 2022 Spring Emergency Livestock Transport Response (PELTR) hybrid course to increase economic sustainability of a local area's emergency plan for roadside incidents involving livestock trailers.*

## Health & Well-Being

*Sandy Tarter | FoodWise Coordinator*

*Joy Weisner | FoodWise Educator*

*Jael Wolf | FoodWise Educator*

*Collaboration with Lakeshore Elementary and Master Gardeners in providing a summer garden nutrition education series. This effort will introduce youth to gardening, promote fresh produce, and provide opportunity for youth to increase produce consumption.*

*Collaboration with Boys and Girls Clubs of the Chippewa Valley-Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, and Menomonie in providing a summer garden nutrition education series. This effort will introduce youth to gardening, promote fresh produce, and provide opportunity for youth to increase produce consumption.*

*Monthly meetings with the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Eau Claire Healthy Communities, Health Dunn Right, and Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions. This effort helps guide the action teams in providing community awareness and activities concerning healthy food access, food security, and increased physical activity for local families.*

*A 5-week nutrition education series with Western Dairyland Fresh Start program for at-risk teens and young adults where they learn about nutrition, food preparation/cooking, food safety, and mindfulness. The goal of this effort is to empower teens/young adults to adopt healthier lifestyles by the teaching them the knowledge and skills needed to prepare nutritious snacks and meals at home.*

*A 6-week mental health wellness series (WeCOPE) in St. Croix County for adults where participants learn different strategies that support awareness of mind-body connection. The goal of this effort is to offer skills to decrease stress and increase positive emotions of participants.*

## Human Development & Relationships

*Yia Lor | Human Development & Relationships Educator*

*A series of workshops (Food, Fun, and Finance) where adult participants learned about and developed personal spending plans. The purpose of this workshop was to increase participants' confidence associated with personal finance skills, norms, and habits.*

*Planning and development of parenting and early literacy programming to expand into laundromats serving small and rural communities. This effort is designed to support family stability, resiliency, and build community capacity.*

*Planning for literacy resources for HMoob-speaking individuals where educator will develop posters/informational flyers around early literacy strategies for families. This effort is designed to support family stability and resiliency.*

*A coaching program for families and individuals, where participants learn how to create financial goals and gain money management skills. The goal of this program is to enable participants to prepare for and take charge of household financial situations that occur due to changes in income or unforeseen hardships.*

*An article for parents of preschoolers where they learned what toddlers go through developmentally, how to build confidence and love, and stay connected to a rapidly growing and changing child. This effort is designed to support family stability and resiliency.*

## Community Development

*Addison Vang | Community Development Educator*

*Promotion of a tour of a small farm who used grant funds to purchase a high tunnel to support their farm businesses, with a focus on an audience whose first language is HMoob. The goal is to reduce challenges and barriers to underserved farm operations on the use of and awareness of financial resources to purchase a high tunnel.*

*Planning a statewide conference to support a Hmong economic development summit. The goal is to build a network of underrepresented entrepreneurs and business owners to learn and support one another.*

*Monthly meetings with the Chronic Disease Prevention Action Teams under the Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership coalitions. This effort helps guide the action teams in providing community awareness and activities concerning healthy food access and food security.*

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A statewide effort to support Hmong farmers that includes collaboration with partners throughout the state. The goal is to reduce challenges and barriers to support underserved farm operations with access and awareness of resources, finances, and markets.

## Staff Highlights



### **Margaret Murphy | Horticulture Educator**

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Registration is open for the *Growing and Caring for Plants in Wisconsin: Foundations in Gardening* course. This is an approved learning opportunity for individuals interested in the Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program. For more information on the course, its cost and scholarship opportunity, please visit - <https://bit.ly/3ANdrMV>. Like last year, I will again be a lab instructor for the optional labs offered in this course.

I'm excited to be teaching in the North Riverfront Park Youth Garden on August 8 and 9. Using this program as an example, FoodWise educators and myself conduct similar youth garden programs in Chippewa and Dunn Counties. These young gardeners learn best practices in the garden through hands-on activities, connect to nature through learning about pollinators and learn life-long healthy eating habits.

I am doing 'walk and talk' programs at the Chippewa Community Garden with the first one on July 26 (6-7pm) where we will discuss garden pests. I will also be offering these programs at Jeffers Community Garden - please check the Extension Eau Claire County website for the coming details on Jeffers.

Tune into *Gardening in the Valley*, a local Eau Claire radio show that features Master Gardeners who discuss a timely garden topic. The show airs at 7:30 a.m. on 96.3 FM WHYS the first Saturday of each month. You can also listen at [whysradio.org](http://whysradio.org). On August 6, we have Master Gardener, Sue Crisp, talking about pollinators and native plants.

Look for the "Ask the Master Gardener" table at the Eau Claire County Fair from 10am-3pm on Friday, July 29 and Saturday, July 30 in the Blue Ribbon Tent

Horticulture inquiries are also keeping me busy. I fielded approximately 60 yard and garden inquiries in June into July. Questions continue to cover a wide range of topics concerning lawns, fruit, plant ID, invasives, shrubs, flowers, landscaping, vegetables, insects, pruning, emerald ash borer, trees, soil sampling, caterpillars, woodpeckers, and snakes.

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### **Lyssa Seefeldt | Agriculture Educator**

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Much of June was spent connecting with farmers getting out to see local operations and connecting about where Extension programs can help farms to be more efficient and sustainable. Many of the questions that have come into the office were still on grazing and pasture management, not unusual for this time of year.

I helped Chippewa County 4-H, which hosted Area Animal Science Days for youth in the region June 17. We were able to recruit local farms to help provide quality dairy cattle for the youth to practice their judging skills.

Many of my colleagues and I have begun our fall/winter programming planning process in June as well.



### **Yia Lor | Human Development & Relationships**

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Much of June has been spent connecting with partners on upcoming fall and winter projects. I have partnered with the BRAIN Team to apply for funding to expand on the laundromat libraries initiative. We hope to bring this to Altoona and Augusta. For small and rural communities that do not have laundromats, we may consider adding resources to other everyday spaces that families visit, such as grocery stores.

Mental health continues to remain a top priority in our county, and I anticipate there will be more program requests around wellness. I have started to explore the intersection between human health and nature. In just the city of Eau Claire, there are almost 30 miles of recreational trails and 30 parks. These are spaces where community members gather. They are also spaces where we can build conversations around mental health.

I will be off the first couple of weeks in July and then will return to review my new plan of work along with programming for this next school year.



### **Rachel Hart-Brinson | 4-H Educator**

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It's been a busy month! We held camp at Kamp Kenwood in partnership with Clark and Dunn Counties. We had 51 registered campers and 19 counselors from the three counties. We all liked the new camp location and have reserved it again with the expectation that we will again camp with Dunn and Clark. This spreads out the planning burden and the recruitment of volunteers. Camp is an important part of the youth experience, but the biggest impact is the leadership experience for our youth counselors. It is SO amazing to see them develop these skills. And, we had some wonderful time outside, exploring, and doing wonderful

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activities.

I helped to organize and plan a “SPARKS Day” event at the UW-River Falls campus on June 21. This day was imagined as a way for young people to explore specific interests through interactive sessions plus set foot on a campus and see what could be available to them. We had 69 youth participants and 8 youth volunteers from Wisconsin Leadership Council, plus staff and adult volunteers. The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. We heard things from parents like, “My daughter told me she is no longer scared to come to college.” We had 2 young people from Eau Claire attend. This event was part of a series of Sparks Day events. The one in Madison was canceled due to lack of registrants. The one in Milwaukee was held on June 23.

I led a session at SPARKS DAY UW-River Falls, called “Wool and Weaving.” I showed different breeds of sheep wool, discussed how it and other fibers are spun into thread, we tried using a drop spindle, and then we used a hand-held loom to weave a small wall hanging.

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**Sandy Tarter | FoodWise Nutrition Coordinator**

**Joy Weisner | FoodWise Nutrition Educator**

**Jael M. Wolf | FoodWise Nutrition Educator**

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***Joy, Jael, and Sandy: West DairyLand Fresh Start and Graduation/Recognition ceremony***

We taught 6 lessons to young adults from the Chippewa Fresh Start program using the Around the Table curriculum. The last lesson was on June 13, and we were invited to their graduation ceremony on June 16. Around the Table is a trauma-informed curriculum designed to improve cooking skills, food safety, food resource management, and healthy eating, as well as increased awareness surrounding stress, emotional eating, and health values.

***Jael: Blended Adult Mental Health First Aid training***

Jael did the Blended Adult Mental Health First Aid training. This training is designed to recognize signs of mental health or substance use challenges in adults ages 18 and older, offer and provide initial help, and guide a person to receive appropriate care. It teaches a 5-step action plan (ALGEE) for how to help people in both crisis and non-crisis situations.

***Sandy and Jael: Healthy Communities - Chronic Disease Prevention Action Team***

In-person meeting discussion for preparing the 'Kickoff Day of Summer Activity Passport.' Sandy and Jael will be tabling during Sounds of Summer at Phoenix Park on June 30th.

***Joy, Jael, and Sandy: Kids' Garden***

We taught 3 kids' gardens: 1) Boys and Girls Club Eau Claire 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. From Monday to Thursday respectively at North River Fronts Garden. 2) On Tuesdays, Lakeshore elementary school 3rd and 4th grade. 3) On Wednesdays, Boys, and Girls Club Menomonie 3rd and 4th grades at River Heights Elementary School.

Kids' gardens are 6 weeks/lessons from the Growing Healthy Kids curriculum. We worked with Master Gardeners volunteers, staff, and teachers supervised by the schools and summer programs.

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### **Kristi Peterson | Office Coordinator**

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We have submitted our 2023 budget for review. We look forward to the next few months of deliberating.

The fair is coming very soon! Check out their [website](#) or [facebook](#) page for the latest updates! There are so many family friendly events! JULY 25-31, 2022!

The search has ended for our new AED and we look forward to in person final interviews within a month or so.



### **Andy Heren | Administrative Specialist II**

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I have been assisting Rachel with the Sample 4-H class that she offered in conjunction with the ECASD. I handled all the registrations and communications with the families. Then I am present to check them in on the first day. At the end of the week, I report attendance to the Eau Claire Area School District.

I continue to handle print jobs for some educators as well as work on the 4-H Clover Leaves newsletter as information comes into us.



### **Kristen Bruder | Area Extension Director - Polk, Pierce, St. Croix Counties, and Interim Eau Claire County**

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A search for a full time Area Extension Director in area 6 is in progress. Eau Claire County will be covered in the interim by Kristen Bruder who currently serves Area 5, Polk, Pierce and St. Croix Counties.

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