

MEMO

DATE: September 12, 2017

TO: Dane County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Carrie Edgar, Dept. Head

RE: 2018 Equity Initiatives



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Dane County UW-Extension continuously strives to be inclusive and equitable both within the Department and in the programming and services we provide to the residents of Dane County.

As part of UW Cooperative Extension, we are required to complete a civil rights action plan on our outreach efforts. We have expanded on that plan to complete our Equity and Inclusion Plan which has been submitted for your review. All staff in the department were involved in the development of the plan and we believe it reflects UW-Extension's values of community, discovery, respect, relationships and inclusiveness as well as Dane County's commitment to racial equity and social justice. We welcome your review and appreciate any feedback you may have to help improve the plan.

Our successes in advancing the plan include:

- The strides we have made in hiring colleagues who's race and ethnicity match the county's population. In addition, a third of our staff are bilingual including Spanish, Hmong, and Hindi speakers serving in both educator and support staff roles to better serve the community.
- All Extension colleagues have completed training on inclusiveness, racial equity and cultural competency through our internal workshops, local and national trainings and UW Extension professional development offerings. We also include opportunities for sharing and learning during all staff meetings.
- The Dane County UW-Extension department successfully completed both a State Civil Rights review and a Federal Civil Rights review during the past year.

Our greatest challenge in advancing the plan is access to curricula and educational materials translated into Spanish and other languages as needed. UW Cooperative Extension has recently added a Language Access Coordinator & Bilingual Editor that should help immensely with this need in the future.

Just a couple of the initiatives planned for 2018 to promote an equitable and just county are listed below. Grant funds have been secured to cover both of these projects in 2018.

- The new Youth Leadership Scholarship program offers scholarships for youth involvement in leadership development, agriculture and food system summer programs. Our aim is to facilitate greater involvement of diverse youth in the food and agriculture sector.
- In the Youth Advocates for Community Health program youth are learning about policy, systems, and environmental changes and developing skills necessary for making a difference in their communities. This summer, students from the Brentwood Neighborhood in Madison engaged in a project to identify and address a health issue in their neighborhood. The program uses the evidence-based approach of youth participatory action research as an entry for young people into the decision-making processes that affect their lives.