



## **Central Region Updates**

*Vanessa Hoines (ND), Central Regional Director*

It is no surprise that the states in the Central Region have risen to the challenge of the past few months. Read on to learn about innovative programs, social media campaigns and fresh ideas to connect with citizens, that are happening in these states.

### **Lindsey Stevenson – Missouri**

1. Programs that went virtual due to COVID:

- Taking Care of You- stress-management and self-care
- Stay Strong, Stay Healthy- low-impact strength training
- Chronic Disease Self-Management

2. New Program:

-Reducing Food Waste

-A collaboration between human development and family specialists with workforce and labor development, finance, and housing to provide a 3-part webinar series on cleaning, stress, emergency situations and decision making

3. Reaching an audience in new ways:

-Partnership with Missouri 4-H to offer daily cooking with kids videos and exercise Fridays, streamed on Facebook and uploaded to YouTube.

-Daily, intentional Facebook posts on the topics of food safety, physical activity at home, cooking with kids, healthy eating on a budget, and boosting the immune system. All specialists across the state joined one of the 5 categories to research sources and information to share on the state nutrition and health Facebook page.

-Home food preservation virtual Q&A

4. Fundraising idea:

-We held two virtual trivia nights that we opened to our state. It was a blast! We charged \$10 per team of up to 5 people and we made \$270 so far. The prize offered to winners was half the pot of all the registration money, but the winning teams always donated it back to the organization. We have a virtual scavenger hunt and virtual escape room planned for August or after. We took a break during the summer months because vacations seemed to be affecting availability to attend.

### **Katherine Brandt - Minnesota**

NEAFCS-MN Affiliate has our Professional Development Day coming up on July 28 via ZOOM. This active committee had begun planning for an in-person meeting when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and, needless to say, plans for the day changed. NEAFCS-MN Professional Development Day will include information about vaping with a presentation from Liz Heimer, American Lung Association, as well as a presentation on substance use disorders by Laura Palombi, University of MN Associate Professor. Laura is one of our partners at the Department of Pharmacy Practice and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Fun online activities will provide for interaction and Minnesota affiliate award winners will also be honored.

### **Sara Richie - Wisconsin**

As for programmatic updates, we've been working to meet the needs of our communities in [response to COVID-19](#). Our Financial Security program has put together a [website](#) that is updated regularly with information for folks regarding the CARES Act, state benefits, budgeting and other resources. [Stay at Home Tips](#) were created for families and individuals on a number of topics including, food safety, cooking, social isolation, family caregiving and more. Our Life Span program has created a resource guide for educators to share with partners that can be customized to include local and state resources to combat the effects of social isolation and loneliness on older adults. Many of our parenting, caregiver support and financial programs have transition to an online delivery to continue to engage with folks when they need it most.

This is only a snapshot of what our amazing educators have done over the last 3-4 months. We have some very dedicated individuals that have gone above and beyond to support their communities and partners during this time.

### **Cindy Klapperich – North Dakota**

NEWS from North Dakota: We are ZOOMING educational programs - everything from camps to contests! We developed mini messages about health, finances, nutrition, families, food preservation, and more, from all the sectors of FCS and are posting them as mini-messages on social media. Each mini-message has a fresh, trendy, well-branded look to it. "Social Eats" is an example of a new series.

### **Sarah Roberts – Nebraska**

The Learning Child team at Nebraska Extension has offered over 22 professional development classes (1 to 2 hours in length) online from April – June. We have awarded 1,800+ certificates to early childhood educators during this time. These educators serve over 20,000 children and families. We have also reached participants in Ohio, Texas, Iowa and Kansas. We have absolutely loved teaching online, and plan to continue teaching online throughout the 2020-2021 school year. We successfully engaged participants through the use of chats, polls and breakout rooms. The Zoom format we utilized actually allows us to get more feedback from participants than we do in-person! Participants have been very pleased with the classes and that they have been offered online. Here are just a few of the comments we have received:

- Such a helpful class with soooo many great ideas! Thank you so much!
- Thank you for offering free classes as our preschool budget took a big hit as we had to close!
- Thanks again for your time and offering these free classes to all of us during this time! You guys are great! Much appreciated!
- Great training thank you, hope you will host more trainings in the future.

We have created on-demand classes, taught a large amount of online hours, developed social media campaigns, and collaborated with our colleagues in other disciplines such

as 4-H and Food & Nutrition. We are continuing with this work and gaining more and more momentum each day. Nebraska Extension is open and available to all!