

Attachment A

ENTRY FORM

You may type this information on a separate sheet and submit as Page I of your entry:

ISSUE AREA CATEGORY:

- ☐ Administration of Justice & Public Safety
☐ Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources
☐ Government Finance, Administration & Technology
☒ Health & Human Services
☐ Housing, Land Use & Infrastructure

POPULATION CATEGORY:

- ☐ Rural County
☒ Suburban County
☐ Urban County



CALIFORNIA
Counties

San Luis Obispo (In partnership with Santa Barbara County)

County Name

Katherine Soule, Director of UC Cooperative Extension Dept.

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TITLE OF THIS ENTRY

(to be used on award – seven words maximum)

Co-Creating Youth Advocacy for Healthy Communities

REMEMBER TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING FOR EACH ENTRY:

- Completed entry form; remember to check the appropriate issue area and population categories.
- 2-Page executive summary.
- Copy of endorsement letter authorizing entry. One letter may be used for multiple entries, but please include a copy for each entry.
- Enclose payment of \$75.00 for each entry. One check may be used for multiple entries.

CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE

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2017 CSAC CHALLENGE & MERIT AWARD RECIPIENTS

CHALLENGE AWARDS

Administration of Justice

Rural: Humboldt County – Re-Programming Corrections
Suburban: Yolo County – Yolo County Construction Program
Urban: Santa Clara County – Advancing Innovative Pretrial Justice Reform for All

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources

Rural: Humboldt County – Medical Cannabis Trace and Trace Pilot Project
Suburban: Monterey County – Farmworker Advisory Committee
Urban: Los Angeles County – The Growing Experience Environmental Resource Center

Government Finance, Administration & Technology

Rural: Humboldt County – Budget Road Show
Suburban: Tulare County – Project Foxtrot Fire APP
Urban: Los Angeles County – DCFC Student Info Tracking System

Health & Human Services

Rural: Sutter/Yuba Counties – Embedding Behavioral Health Crisis Staff in ERs
Suburban: Marin County – Rx Safe Marin: Prescription Drug Misuse/Abuse Initiative
Urban: San Bernardino County – Housing Support Program Collaborative
Ventura County – Health Insurance Eligibility APP

Housing, Land Use & Infrastructure

Rural: Nevada County – Over-the-Counter Plan Review Program
Suburban: Sonoma County – Creating More Housing with 100% Rental Density Bonus
Urban: Los Angeles County – Spanish Planning Program

MERIT AWARDS

Administration of Justice

Rural: None Given
Suburban: Imperial County – Imperial County Adult Re-Entry Summit
Napa County – Dosage Probation
Shasta County – SB 1143 Early Implementation Best Practice Solutions
Urban: Riverside County – Intensive Re-Integration Services (IRIS) Unit
Santa Clara County – Santa Clara Probation – Family of Friends

Agriculture, Environment & Natural Resources

Rural: Mariposa County – Mariposa Clean Sweep
Mono County – Thermal Biomass Boiler Project
Suburban: Kern County – Electronic-Based Permit System for Energy Permits
Marin County – Parks Prescriptions Partnership Improves Community Health Outcomes
Urban: Alameda County – Train Next Generation of Climate Protection Leaders
San Diego County – CIVICS Program

Government Finance, Administration & Technology

Rural: Humboldt County – All Hands Training Day
Humboldt County – Tsunami Zone APP
Mendocino County – Comprehensive New Employee Orientation
Suburban: Sonoma County – Marriage License Signature Project
Urban: Alameda County – Automated Employee Onboarding System
Contra Costa County – Rain Map APP
Los Angeles County – Library Offers Life Skills Training for Teens
Riverside County – Riverside County Transformation
Riverside County – Unity: Medical, Health & Traditional Emergency Management
San Bernardino County – Virtual Receptionist

Health & Human Services

Rural: Humboldt County – Child Support Collections for Multiple Small Counties
Nevada County – Nevada County CalWORKS Connection Program
Nevada County – What's Up? Wellness Checkups in Nevada County
Suburban: Napa County – Homeless and Housing System Change in Napa
Urban: Alameda County – One Touch: Customer Centric Distributed Work Model
Contra Costa County – Inter-County Business Intelligence Partnership
Contra Costa County – Parent Partner Program of Contra Costa County
San Bernardino County – Mutual Aid for a Public Health Emergency
San Mateo County – Ending Homelessness in San Mateo County
Ventura County – Safe Alprazolam Prescribing and Benzodiazepine Monitoring Program

Housing, Land Use & Infrastructure

Rural: None Given
Suburban: None Given
Urban: Los Angeles County – Buyers Beware: Property Buying Education Program

Overview: Integration of SNAP-Ed (nutrition education) and 4-H Youth Development Programming increased health and wellness in low-income communities while creating more equitable access to government resources. **Challenge:** Eating healthily and being physically active are two of the most important health behaviors for preventing obesity and related chronic diseases. In California, over 40 percent of 5th graders are overweight or obese and California spends over \$52 billion annually in healthcare costs associated with obesity. Youth in low-income and minority communities face greater barriers to achieving a healthy diet and regular physical activity. In addition, while there is strong evidence that participation in high-quality positive youth development programming decreases the incidence of risk behaviors, improves school achievement, and increases their sense of personal efficacy and empathy; historically, youth of color have been less likely to participate in positive youth development programming like 4-H. **Innovative Solution:** The UC Cooperative Extension Department in San Luis Obispo County and through the Agriculture/Weights & Measures Department in Santa Barbara County have developed two innovative school-based programming models to address these challenges. These program models include 4-H SNAC (Student Nutrition Advisory Council) Clubs and UC Garden Nutrition Extender Program (UC GNE). Collectively, the goals of this integrated programming are to facilitate changes in school policies, systems and/or physical environments in support of improved nutrition and physical activity behaviors and overall wellness among students and parents in underserved communities. The goal of 4-H SNAC Clubs is to create innovative, efficient, and effective 4-H and SNAP-Ed UC CalFresh Nutrition Education (UC CalFresh) programming that integrates nutrition education and youth development efforts in historically underserved low-income and Latino communities. 4-H SNAC Clubs combine the positive youth development expertise from 4-H staff and programs with the existing partnerships and community health expertise of the UC CalFresh program. The goal of the UC GNE program is to develop a community-based network of trained school garden nutrition education advocates, experts and leaders in order to support, enhance and maintain gardens in schools in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. The UC GNE program depends on the expertise of the UC Master Gardeners, Master Food Preservers, 4-H and UC CalFresh Nutrition Education staff to provide annual training and continuing education to trained volunteers. Local schools are invaluable partners in these efforts. **Originality:** Our Departments developed and piloted an integrated programming model that would become SNAC Clubs and, later the UC GNE program. This integrated programming has more flexibility to respond to the needs and interests of the communities served including expanding youth engagement into STEM projects, career pathways, food preservation, and earth science. This programming is now recognized as a model for Cooperative Extension in counties across California, as well as being evaluated for national implementation. **Cost**

Effectiveness: The integrated nature of the programming allowed our departments to leverage existing financial resources and partnerships to expand access to and participation in programming without increasing our department budgets. Beyond our county department budgets, UC Cooperative Extension is supported through federal, state, and private resources. **Results:** Programming is currently operating in 5 schools across both counties serving a total of 4,100 elementary age youth. Across all sites, 71 youth leaders collectively engage in 600+ hours of leadership activities annually, including leading garden, nutrition, and physical activity lessons for their peers and families. Matched pre and post surveys (n = 30) from academic year 2016/17 showed that after participating in 4-H SNAC Clubs for an entire school year, youth leaders found it easier to engage in healthy behaviors. At the end of the 16/17 program year, 56% of SNAC Club youth leaders indicated that they felt it was “not at all hard” to eat smaller servings of high fat foods like French fries, chips, and snacks (compared to 49% of 4-H youth statewide). After program participation, a higher percentage of youth (96%) indicated that they engage their families in healthy behaviors, including encouraging their families to eat meals together, asking their families to buy fruits and vegetables, and to keep fruits and vegetables in easy to reach places (versus 83% statewide). These integrated efforts have increased access to 4-H Youth Development programming in underserved communities. Since beginning these efforts in 2013, our counties have significantly increased program participation:

- In San Luis Obispo County overall 4-H enrollment more than doubled with 1,675 youth participating at the end of the 12/13 program year and 3,464 youth participating at the end of the 16/17 program year.
- In Santa Barbara County overall youth enrollment in 4-H increased from 5,449 youth participating in 12/13 to 12,940 youth participating in 16/17.
- In San Luis Obispo County, Latino youth enrollment in 4-H increased from 15.64% in 12/13 to 48.38% in 16/17.
- In Santa Barbara County, Latino youth enrollment in 4-H increased from 46.34% in 12/13 to 88.14% in 16/17.
- Combined, our counties, served 30.31% of all Latino youth participating in 4-H in the state of California (n=45,528 Latino youth in California).

This represents significant systems and organizational change that may have implication across the state and nation. Broader and more long-term impacts that we are not able to assess within the scope of this project include the effects of increasing equitable access in under-represented communities to positive youth-adult partnerships;; cultivating leadership and advocacy skills for the promotion of community health; and providing access to 4-H youth development opportunities to youth that have not traditionally been involved in 4-H. **Contact:** Katherine E. Soule, Director, UC Cooperative Extension Department, San

2018 CSAC Challenge Award Executive Summary: Co-Creating Youth Advocacy for Healthy Communities

Luis Obispo County. 2156Sierra Way, Suite C., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401; 805-781-5940; ksoule@co.slo.ca.us **Optional**

Submission: Please see enclosed materials.



4-H BUILDING HEALTH ADVOCACY SKILLS



Building youth advocacy and leadership around health allows youth to have a voice in creating meaningful and sustainable change in their communities. This project requires that youth have a foundational understanding of basic nutrition and physical activity. In conjunction with UCCE health and nutrition programs, this project encourages youth to build on their knowledge to become teachers, public speakers and advocates for healthy living in their communities. Youth use these skills to become agents of positive change and engaged citizens in their communities by:

- Exploring the role of individual behaviors, social, and environmental influences on food choice and physical activity.
- Engaging in citizen science data collection, analysis and problem-solving.
- Educating decision-makers on issues that impact their community.

Starting Out <i>Beginner</i>	Learning More <i>Intermediate</i>	Exploring Depth <i>Advanced</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track nutrition and logging physical activity minutes for one week. • Ask your friends about their favorite foods, see if you can come up with healthier versions that use less added fat, sugar and sodium. • Learn about behavioral economics and choice architecture in school cafeterias (see Smarter Lunchrooms Movement). • Go on a walking fieldtrip. List things you encountered that make it easy to be healthy or difficult to be healthy. • Write a letter to your mayor or city council members about what you found on your walk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research community advocacy or a famous community advocate. • Develop a survey to get feedback from other youth about a specific health or wellness issue (drinking water access, safe routes to school, time for physical activity, school menu, etc.). • Take pictures of places in your school/community where you don't feel healthy or valued. • Ask the Principal how to join your school or district wellness committee. • Explore the survey data and photo documentation with the wellness committee and brainstorm potential solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify something in your community you want to change to make healthy choices easier (lighting in a local park, signs in the cafeteria, etc.). • Decide what data you need to collect to make your case for the change (opinion surveys, assessments, photos, etc.), collect and analyze your data. • Develop a presentation about what you want and why you think it is important. • Present research to decision-makers that have the power to create the change you seek (Principal, School Board, City Council, etc.). • Write a letter to the editor for your local newspaper advocating for the change.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

4-H THRIVE

Help youth:

Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find how this project excites them.

Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

Goal Selection: Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.

Pursue Strategies: Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.

Shift Gears: Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for this project to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character or establish connections.



Expand Your Experiences!

Healthy Living

- Work with your cafeteria manager at school to develop creative names for menu items (i.e. x-ray vision carrots, California fresh burrito, etc.)
- Teach your parents about behavioral economics and show them examples at the grocery store

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Create a map that shows a 1-mile radius around your school, plot all of the fast-food outlets and places to buy fresh fruit or vegetables
- Survey your friends to find their favorite sugary drinks. Calculate how much sugar is in each drink and how long they would need to exercise to burn off those excess calories.
- Work with an adult to conduct a plate-waste study in your cafeteria to calculate how much food is being thrown out

Citizenship

- Organize a healthy canned food drive at your school, donate the food to the local food pantry
- Organize a school garden work day to start or reinvigorate your school garden
- Send photos and a story to a local newspaper about barriers to health and wellness in your community and/or things that youth are doing to create healthier spaces

Leadership

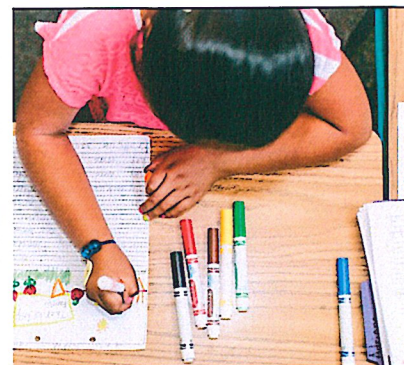
- Display your map, photos or presentation at Presentation Day, Food & Arts Celebration, club meetings or other approved public speaking spaces
- Talk to your cafeteria manager about becoming a salad bar ambassador and teaching students how to use the salad bar to create delicious food
- Teach others in your 4-H club about community advocacy and any successful changes you have made
- Create a list of local decision-makers from your cafeteria manager to your Mayor

Resources

- **Walkability & Bikeability Checklists:** www.walkbiketoschool.org/get-set/event-ideas/walkability-bikeability-checklists#download
- **Safe Routes to School:** www.saferoutesinfo.org
- **National Nutrition Month Resources:** www.eatright.org/resources/national-nutrition-month
- **Playing the Policy Game:** Preparing Teen Leaders to Take Action (nutrition info is dated, advocacy steps are still good) www.californiaprojectlean.org/docuserfiles/Playing%20the%20Policy%20Game%20Entire%20Manual.pdf
- **UC Davis CRC Putting Youth on the Map:** <http://interact.regionalchange.ucdavis.edu/youth/resources.html#tools>
- **Find your elected officials:** http://act.commoncause.org/site/PageServer?pagename=sunlight_advocacy_list_page
- <http://hq.salsa.wiredforchange.com/o/5950/getLocal.jsp>
- **What is a School Board and what do they do?** www.nsba.org/about-us/frequently-asked-questions

Connections & Events	Curriculum	4-H Record Book
<p>Presentation Day: Teach others about community advocacy by sharing how you identified a problem, collected data, and developed a solution.</p> <p>National Nutrition Month (March): Contact your local Public Health Department to see if there are events being planned for Nutrition Month and how you can help.</p> <p>Parent Nights at school: Display your photos or presentation at Open House night to educate parents and families about health and wellness advocacy.</p> <p>Contact your county 4-H office to determine additional opportunities available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smarter Lunchrooms Movement: http://smarterlunchrooms.org/ • YA4-HI: http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/projects/ya4-h/curriculum • Photovoice – Snapshots & Stories: http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Documents/PP_PhotoVoice_Final(low%20res).pdf • Mapping: http://interact.regionalchange.ucdavis.edu/youth/resources.html 	<p>4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their experiences, learning and development.</p> <p>4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.</p> <p>To access the 4-H Record Book online, visit http://ucanr.edu/orb/</p>

The UC 4-H Youth Development Program does not endorse, warrant, or otherwise take responsibility for the contents of unofficial sites.



University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

Light Your Spark

Flex Your Brain

Reach Your Goals

Light Your Spark

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Reach Your Goals

FOOD BLOG

Food news from the UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources



School gardens get new life from UC Cooperative Extension volunteers



Author: Jeannette E. Warnert

Published on: July 13, 2017

When children grow their own fresh fruits and vegetables, they are much more likely to eat healthy food, so for decades California politicians, teachers and nutrition educators have advocated for a garden in every school. However, UC Cooperative Extension experts in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties found that garden care can dwindle over time.

"Students and their parents 'age out' of their elementary schools," said [Shannon Klisch](#), UC CalFresh community education supervisor in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. "The turnover in expertise and level of commitment can vary widely, leaving some schools with either weedy, abandoned vegetable patches, or no garden support at all."



Volunteers gather in the garden before the first outdoor lesson. The course is taught by Lisa Paniagua, standing on the left, school garden sustainability coordinator for UC CalFresh in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.

UCCE offers [UC CalFresh](#), federally funded nutrition education for CalFresh recipients (formerly called Food Stamps). UC CalFresh nutrition educators in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties saw a need to mobilize highly trained community members who could develop, support, sustain and teach from school gardens. UC CalFresh joined with UC's 4-H Youth Development, Master Food Preserver, and Master Gardener programs to launch a pilot project called "UC Garden Nutrition Extenders."

"We don't have enough staff to work the gardens in every school, so we've started recruiting and training volunteers," said [Lisa Paniagua](#), school garden sustainability coordinator for the UC Garden Nutrition Extender program in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.



The Sunshine Garden is a section of the UC Master Gardener demonstration garden adjacent to the UC Cooperative Extension parking lot in San Luis Obispo. It is a model garden that can be replicated at local schools and is used for training the Garden Nutrition Extender volunteers.

"By enlisting passionate volunteers, nutrition educators could significantly multiply the number of students who had access to school gardens, nutrition education, and training in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) in the garden," said Katherine Soule, Ph.D., youth, families, and communities advisor in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.

Klisch said UC Garden Nutrition Extenders are local members of their school communities.

"They are often parents, neighbors or staff and they have a personal investment in seeing the youth and the school environment flourish, which makes for a much more sustainable intervention and increases community capacity to sustain a garden program," she said.

Paniagua, Klisch, and Soule created a hybrid training program integrating volunteers and educators from UC CalFresh, UC Master Food Preservers, UC Master Gardeners and 4-H. They selected a 4-H gardening and nutrition curriculum written by researchers at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, which includes engaging, student-centered, experiential learning while dividing time between the garden and the classroom. The curriculum reinforces goals in Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, policies that guide public school teaching.

"Teachers will want to know we are familiar with curriculum standards. Applying them adds value to these classes," Paniagua said.



Trainees set out to collect garden items in a scavenger hunt.

In July, the third cohort of future UC Garden Nutrition Extender volunteers gathered at UC Cooperative Extension in San Luis Obispo to learn how they can help schools transform their gardens into fruitful learning activity centers for the students.

One member of the new cohort is Jill Marie, a certified Master Gardener in San Luis Obispo County.

"I live by a school and they have garden beds that are not kept up. I want to get involved and get to know the kids," she said.

The volunteer teachers learn by conducting the indoor and outdoor curriculum activities and food demonstrations over a four-week period. Their first foray into the UCCE Sunshine School Demonstration Garden began with a mindfulness practice.

"Close your eyes, and just listen," Paniagua instructed. A moment later she asked, "What did you hear?"



Christina Lawson, director of nutrition at Coast Unified School District, finds 'something round' in the garden.

To encourage students to take a closer look at the garden, the class was sent out with egg cartons labeled for a 12-item scavenger hunt, and later asked to select one item to discuss. Reporting on topics are part of Common Core standards for students in third- through fifth-grades and creates discussion learning topics around science, math, engineering, art, and even poetry.



The practice involved finding something yellow, red, green, brown, round and rectangle shaped. They collected leaves, twigs, flowers, seeds, weeds and edible items.

Back in the classroom, the trainees began work in pairs on the next lesson, "Know & Show Sombrero." With paper, tape and a bag of craft supplies – balloons, ribbons, foam sticks and construction paper – the extenders made hats that represent everything a plant needs. One group used a yellow balloon to symbolize the sun, another had water drops raining down from the brim. A third group sprinkled glitter to represent the nutrients in the soil.

"Why are we putting these on a hat?" Paniagua asked the class. "The exercise is useful for kinesthetic learners. It reinforces what they learn. At the end, we talk about it and develop conversation skills."



Farmer Carla Rosin, left, and nursery professional Wendy Minarik form a paper hat.

The half-day session ended with a tasting of purple, yellow and orange carrots.

"In your journals, write words to describe the smell, sight, taste and feel of the three colors of carrots," Paniagua said.

One of the volunteers Christina Lawson, director of nutrition for Coast Unified School District, laughed.

"We tried to serve purple carrots. Pfft. Zip," she said. "I'm excited about this. If the kids try them before coming to the cafeteria, it would make my life so much easier."

This project is funded through local grant awards from the National 4-H Council in collaboration with Lockheed Martin, and UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program, which is a joint agreement among the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS), the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) CalFresh branch, and the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE).



Extender trainee Stacy Henderson explains the symbols on her paper hat.



Working in groups of two. In the front are CalPoly master's nutrition student Alyssa Frieber, left, and UC Master Gardener Jill Marie.

Tags: [Katherine Soule](#) (1), [Lisa Paniagua](#) (1), [school gardens](#) (2), [Shannon Klisch](#) (1), [UC CalFresh](#) (19)
Comments: 2

Comments:

by **Patricia logan**

on July 23, 2017 at 8:27 AM

I recently attended the National Children and Youth Garden Symposium. How do I obtain the 4H gardening and nutrition curriculum from Texas A&M Agro-Life extension? I am a Master Gardener and Master Food Preserver and I am the director of school gardens for Modesto Garden Club. I work with 25 schools in the Modesto area.

by **Lisa Paniagua**

on July 24, 2017 at 9:35 AM

Hi Patricia,

Here is the link to the Learn, Grow, Eat and Go! curriculum:

<http://imgkids.us/lgeg/>

Have fun!

Lisa

Leave a Reply:

Katherine E Soule you can leave a message:

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sharing...

Natalie M Price: Well said. Thank you for
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LOUIS G. CUCCIA: As soon as these grapes
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http://santamariatimes.com/news/local/an-afternoon-of-learning-at-liberty-school-in-santa-maria/article_cb24798a-2dd0-5317-994c-f1f4411becd7.html

DEVELOPING YOUNG LEADERS

An afternoon of learning at Liberty School in Santa Maria: 4-H students apply new knowledge of nutrition, gardening, community service

Gina Kim gkim@leecentralcoastnews.com Nov 18, 2017

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Tessa Hawes, left, of the Lucky Clover 4-H Club, shows Sara Casanova, 10, center, and Yoselin Alvarez, both Robert Bruce Elementary School, how to make a blanket. Saturday's session at Liberty Elementary was one

for the local 4-H Club members to help develop their leadership skills.

About three dozen students put their skills to work as they prepared dinner for over 100 guests after hands-on learning that taught them about nutrition, gardening and community service on Saturday.

The 4-H'ers from five low-income schools in the Santa Maria-Bonita School District and Oceano Elementary met at Liberty Elementary for an afternoon filled with STEM (science, tech, engineering and math) classes and learning about public speaking, health and the 4-H Youth Development Program.

The project, called 4-H SNAC (Student Nutrition Advisory Council) Clubs, is a collaboration between two UC Cooperative Extension programs in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties -- UC CalFresh Nutrition Education and UC 4-H Youth Development -- and the the schools.

Students experience activities they may not have time to explore at school -- everything from public speaking, STEM, health, gardening and the like, said Janelle Hansen, 4-H program supervisor. The event marked the third year of youth leadership training.

"There are so many reasons why today is so important," said Shannon Klisch, nutrition education supervisor for the UC Cal Fresh Nutrition Education Program. "Through our teaching in classrooms, we found that it takes more than just knowledge to change, educate people and improve public health.

"So, we wanted to develop young leaders to become advocates for their community and identify ways to make their neighborhoods healthier."

One of the important things the project hopes to emphasize is "parent involvement with their children," added nutrition educator JaNessa Willis.

"All the kids here, with our help, are going to prepare a healthy dinner tonight at 5:30 for mom and dad," she said. "This way, the kids are teaching their parents what they learned, and we hope they can take this home to their families to create that behavioral change."

The menu included mango enchiladas, brown rice and a spinach salad with bean, corn, onions and bell peppers.

"We're also doing the Linus project, where they can make blankets for kids who are hospitalized and are in need of something soft and comfortable," Hansen added. "We hope today lets them experience everything 4-H has to offer for the community, and it lets them foster their leadership skills so they can take what they learned today and teach back at their schools."

The project is aimed at students who attend schools in areas that qualify for free and low-cost meal programs. Between 80 and 90 percent of those who attend the Santa Maria-Bonita district schools qualify.

"That means, a lot of families may have huge barriers to finding and paying for healthy foods in their neighborhoods, and a lot of students get the majority of their meals on campus," Klisch said.

District Superintendent Luke Ontiveros stopped by Liberty Elementary to take a quick peek at the group of 13 children -- led by UC Cal Fresh Community Education Specialist Lisa Paniagua -- digging through soil for earthworms and separating recyclables, trash and leftover food into three separate bins.

"Having this kind of education absolutely builds relevance to what they can do in the future," Ontiveros said. "Today's activities take things beyond classrooms, textbooks and brings them to life through hands-on learning. There's no better way to learn and continue progressing their education."

Paniagua and her partner Leonel Palomarez, a UC Cal Fresh garden nutrition extender and compost expert, taught the kids about the process of garden composting using a combination of nitrogen and carbon sources.

"They learned about recycling materials that would otherwise be going to a landfill," Palomarez said. "We also did some worm composting, which takes leftover food scraps, putting them into the soil, letting them decompose which the worms later can eat.

"We tell the kids: We feed the worms our food that feeds them, and in turn, their

compost feeds the soil which later feeds our food that feeds us. It's a full circle."

Bruce Elementary fifth-grader Sara Casanova said she's no stranger to soil, plants and earthworms. In fact, she often helps out in her school's garden.

"I was so excited to work with worms," Sara said. "I already knew they were good for the earth."

Her favorite activity Saturday was dividing up the garbage into recyclables and compost.

"I'm going to teach my parents something new today," she added. "I'm also excited to make enchiladas for them because my mom makes them on Sundays. But this time, I'm going to make them for her."

Paniagua's gardening class also included a "mini waste audit." The kids took all the trash, sorted through it and placed it into three different bins -- one for garbage, recycling and compost.

She held up a paper plate that was thrown into the trash.

"The reason why this can't be recycled is because this has a shiny, glossy lining on it around the edge," Paniagua explained. "So many people don't know this. Just buy the cheap ones with no gloss and double up."

"Every year this gets more fun," she added. "The kids learned quickly what goes where immediately. I just said, 'On your mark, get set, go!' and they just sorted through everything."

"I never saw so many kids excited to dig through trash before," she joked.

Gina Kim covers crime and courts for Santa Maria Times. Follow her on Twitter @gina_k210

Gina Kim

Courts/Public Safety Reporter

Santa Maria Sun / School Scene

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Santa Maria's 4-H SNAC clubs provide nutritional education to low-income families

BY KASEY BUBNASH

It can be especially difficult for low-income families to find healthy foods and to make time for beneficial physical activity. In a 2016 health assessment of Santa Barbara County, 28 percent of surveyed adults said they were obese, and 24 percent rated their health as being fair to very poor.

The 4-H Student Nutrition Advisory Council (SNAC) clubs are providing local students with healthy food tastings, nutritional presentations, and gardening lessons so those kids can in turn teach their classmates and families about healthy choices.

The 4-H SNAC clubs, available in four of Santa Maria's elementary schools, teach fifth and sixth graders in low-income communities simple ways to live healthier lives, according to the University of California (UC) Agriculture and Natural Resources. SNAC club kids are then trained to advocate for healthy changes in their communities and schools.

Students involved in SNAC and their families are invited to a Youth Leadership Training summit at Liberty Elementary on Nov. 18. Attendees will be able to sign up for different hands-on sessions where they'll learn STEM, public speaking, gardening, and community service skills from 1 to 6 p.m. At the end of the day, kids will learn various culinary skills while cooking dinner for family members in attendance.

The 4-H SNAC program is a collaborative effort between UC CalFresh Nutrition Education, UC 4-H Youth Development, and the Santa Maria-Bonita School District. The CalFresh program, according to CalFresh Nutrition Education Manager Shannon Klisch, is part of a nationwide effort funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to improve nutrition education and healthy living in low-income communities.

"For nutrition education, reaching low-income populations is critical and crucial," Klisch said. "We know a lot of low-income communities don't have the same access to healthy foods or places to get active."

For example, Klisch said, while kids who live in wealthier communities often walk to school, safety concerns can prevent kids in low-income communities from walking. Although it may seem small, simple healthy habits are important.

Since SNAC started in Santa Barbara County in February 2015, clubs have been implemented in Liberty, Bruce, Adam, and Rice elementary schools, where at least 50 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced meals. About 70 kids are currently involved, Klisch said.

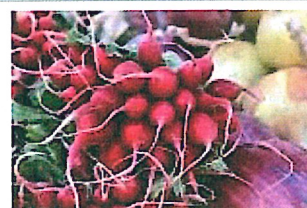
SNAC holds lunch and afterschool meetings, and students involved get to focus on their interests. Klisch said a lot of students are interested in healthy cooking and physical activity, so they'll work on projects centered on those ideas. Those interested in cooking can learn healthy recipes and then provide tastings to their peers during lunch.

During family nights, Klisch said students develop booths where they can teach parents about nutrition.

"They love to do that," Klisch said.

A recent student project focused on healthy hearts, so students made smoothies with a bicycle-powered blender. Parents' bike pedaling turned the blender's blades.

Gardening is another major focus, because Klisch said kids are more likely to try food they've worked to grow.



YOUNG LEADERS

The 4-H SNAC Youth Leadership Training event will include various sessions, like making blankets for people in need or teaching parents how to prepare healthy smoothies with fresh ingredients.

PHOTO BY KASEY BUBNASH

In her experience, Community Education Specialist Lisa Paniagua said kids are most interested in learning new ways to eat vegetables that actually taste good. She does tastings with the clubs once a week, and said kids are always shocked at how good fruits and veggies can taste.

"They just love it," Paniagua said. "It's like every week they say, 'This is the best thing I've ever had.'"

Simple changes, like using low-fat Greek yogurt in smoothies rather than other sugary kinds, are simple ways for kids to eat better, Paniagua said. One of her students started making spinach salads for his family, which they all seem to love.

"That's a huge deal to them," Paniagua said. "The good news is they take this home to their parents, which is awesome."

That's one of the major goals of SNAC, according to Liberty Elementary Principal Cindy Duncan, who said a lot of parents simply don't know that healthy meals can be easy to make. The program, she said, is free for the schools and allows kids to voluntarily learn more about nutrition and pass that knowledge to their families. The Liberty SNAC club usually does lunch tastings—Duncan said they recently made pumpkin custard—and they're currently building a garden.

"You always see kids running around with their chip bags," Duncan said, "but we have all these parents who are very, very busy. And it's easy to grab something unhealthy in a pinch."

Staff Writer Kasey Bubnash wrote this week's School Scene. Information can be sent to the Sun via mail, fax, or email at mail@santamariasun.com.

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Co-creating Youth Advocacy for Healthy Communities – Nutrition Education & Youth Development

Federal Fiscal Year 2017 Program Report

Invests time and resources to promote healthy people and communities.



1107

staff hours spent teaching youth



\$640K

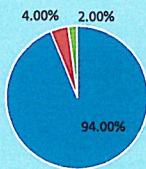
Value of UC programming



87

% increase in 4-H Latino youth enrollment in SLO & SB Counties in the last 5 years

School Districts with Integrated Nutrition Education & Youth Development programming: Santa Maria-Bonita, Lucia Mar Unified



Student population served by UCCE integrated programming

■ Hispanic/Latino ■ Caucasian ■ Other

California spends over \$53 billion annually in healthcare costs associated with obesity.¹

EDUCATION



185 K-6 classrooms received nutrition education, cooking lessons and evidence-based, common core-aligned curriculum kits.



>2000 students learned, worked or ate from the garden

IMPACTS



PARENT

My family has changed the way we eat and shop. We try and eat healthier and are saving money with the choices that we make, we spend less money on buying junk food. Thanks for this program, it's very good and helps our children.



TEACHER

I notice that more students are eating the healthy choice. [UC CalFresh] is making a difference on our campus.

Students who participate in school gardening activities have demonstrated significantly higher scores on science achievement tests.^{2,3,4}

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

128

student leaders in 4-H SNAC Clubs

4100

Youth leader hours spent in 4-H SNAC

4300

students and parents taught by 4-H SNAC youth

HEALTHY LIVING

85

% of teachers agree that students are willing to try new foods offered at school after participating in the program

2300

hours of teacher-led nutrition education

96

% of 4-H SNAC youth say they encourage their families to eat meals together and to purchase fruits & vegetables

Participation in high-quality positive youth development programming decreases incidence of risk behaviors, improves school achievement, and increases youths' sense of personal efficacy and empathy.⁵



Areas of Strength:

- School & UC partnerships that supports comprehensive nutrition education & youth engagement.
- Shared vision with school leadership of getting students more active and engaged in the garden.



Areas To Strengthen:

- Enhance communication and collaboration to integrate nutrition education services for greater impact.
- Create opportunities to increase family engagement.

The mission of the UCCE Youth, Families, & Communities Program in San Luis Obispo & Santa Barbara Counties is to cultivate environments where local youth, families, and community members have access to research-based resources and knowledge in order to be the creators of a healthy, inspired, active, & connected Central Coast.

Want to learn more or get more details about the YFC Program? We'd love to chat!

805-781-5951

Data for this report came from: 2016-2017 School Accountability Report Card, Bruce, Rice, Adam, Alvin, Oceano Elementary Schools & the FFY17 UC CalFresh Year End Report. Acknowledgements to: www.freeiconspng.com Kolowich, 2016 Developed by K. Soule, S. Klisch

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