

Competitive Awards

2017 Funded Projects

TEACHING AND ENGAGEMENT

Ending Mental Health Stigma & Promoting Mental Health Among Rural Nebraska College and University Students – Principal Investigator: Sonja Franziska Tutsch Russell, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Rural Health Education Network

The growing shortage of mental health professionals in rural areas, alongside the rising number of rural college and university students who experience mental health difficulties, calls for a comprehensive public health approach to addressing underlying causes of mental illness and related stigma. In collaboration with faculty and students at Wayne State College, the team seeks to develop and implement a promising mental health promotion curriculum aimed at addressing stigma and alleviating mental health difficulties among college and university students in Nebraska.

Rural Narratives on Welcoming Communities – Principal Investigator: Athena Ramos, University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Public Health, Center for Reducing Health Disparities

The team will use appreciative inquiry to interview community leaders and highlight their role in creating welcoming communities. The team will then construct positive messaging with communities around the value of immigrants in rural areas.

Systems Thinking for Sustainable Future – Principal Investigator: Ashu Guru, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

This project provides an opportunity for youth to develop system-thinking skills by understanding how food, energy and water systems are interconnected. Undergraduate students from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln College of Engineering will design and develop aquaponics system kits as well as lesson plan trainings and implement the project in K-12 schools in rural Nebraska. They will use a train-the-trainer model to prepare middle school educators and high school students to implement the plan in their school system.

Obesity Intervention and Service Learning – Principal Investigator: Danae Dinkel, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Health Physical Education & Recreation

In an effort to combat the epidemic of rural pediatric obesity, Peru State College and the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partnership with rural stakeholders, seek to develop a new service-learning course for undergraduates. The course will introduce post-secondary students to service learning and the prevalence of overweight and obesity in rural areas. It will also seek to engage existing and new partnerships with community-based organizations for students' service learning.

Teaching Health, Exercise, Technology, & Aquaponics (THETA) Day Camps to Grow Future Health Professionals – Principal Investigator: Gregory Brown, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Kinesiology & Sports Sciences

Developed by a team of seven faculty members at the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) this project focuses on inspiring and motivating rural middle school students to pursue careers in health science. Students will participate in a series of half-day science education camps during which they will learn about various careers that are associated with health science topics through physical activity, nutrition and food growing programs. UNK undergraduate students with career goals in health science will lead the camps.

RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT

Building Capacity for Developing, Implementing, and Evaluating the Family Health and Wellness Coalition's Community Health Improvement Plan – Principal Investigator: Todd Bartee, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Kinesiology & Sports Sciences

The Family Health and Wellness Coalition was formed in 2015 with the focus of reducing chronic disease risk among Nebraska residents of Boone, Colfax, Nance and Platte counties. This emerging coalition is motivated yet hampered by challenges to participation, resources and other core capabilities such as planning, implementing and evaluating their work. Through this project, partners will produce a systematic community change process that can be replicated in other rural areas.

Assessment of and Treatment Applied to Food Addiction to Encourage Self-Management of Obesity – Principal Investigator: Trina Aguirre, University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Nursing

The research team will evaluate the efficacy of using nurse practitioners to deliver interventions to patients referred to an outpatient clinic for the treatment of obesity. The primary objective is to evaluate the efficacy of four interventions in obese rural patients with and without food addiction to develop effective, better-targeted interventions to help obese rural residents successfully self-manage their obesity to enable them to live healthier lives and reduce the high cost of treating the comorbidities associated with obesity.

Nurturing High School Entrepreneurs and Transforming Local Business Owners – Principal Investigator: Surin Kim, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, College of Education and Human Sciences

There is a substantial need for educational programs that promote entrepreneurship and vocational skills for both adults and youth whose retention will be critical for rural futures. Such programs can help local business owners maintain and grow their enterprises and promote career readiness and entrepreneurship for youth. This project intends to analyze the unique needs of rural businesses and youth to implement a highly successful entrepreneurship program within the local context, modify as needed and disseminate via extension professionals and relevant educational entities.

Increasing Rural Civic Engagement in the Digital Age – Principal Investigator: Roberto Gallardo, Purdue University, Purdue Center for Regional Development

There is significant interest in the role digital platforms play on increasing civic engagement in urban communities. However, their role in rural settings is not understood but critical as well. This project seeks to increase civic engagement in three rural Nebraska communities by developing strategies and tactics for engaging in conversations online, as well as social media training, to assist rural communities in increasing and improving overall engagement.

For questions or comments please contact:

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