

# 2008 MetLife Foundation 4-H Afterschool Training Grants

## **COLORADO**

The Colorado grantee produced two free online training modules about civic engagement. These courses gave foundational information concerning two important aspects of civic participation: political knowledge and engagement, and service learning. Since these courses are geared towards older youth, they are currently being rewritten (to be released in January 2009) to speak more to how younger youth can learn the importance of raising issues that concern them, the value of advocating for causes that are important to them, and the resources they have at their disposal that can help them do this. The expectation is that as youth become of voting age, they will understand the value voting brings to the American civic environment.

Each course was founded on research and includes practical application techniques and best practices. The service learning module, called *Engaging Youth in Civic Life*, teaches the foundational elements of service learning, the techniques of service learning model, and how service learning can make an impact on positive youth development. The course guides participants through the steps of infusing service learning into their already established program. A key first step is teaching youth the foundational knowledge of our government, where the 4-H Afterschool Civic Engagement Resource Guide was discussed. The course on political knowledge and engagement focused on the emerging trend that technology is playing in our political environment, including the most recent presidential race.

## **DELAWARE/MARYLAND**

Delaware 4-H afterschool, 4-H youth development, and Family Consumer Science programs combined efforts to provide training to 4-H Afterschool staff and community after-school and childcare providers serving children from elementary through middle school in family, school, and center-based programs. The training content focused on: the *Tools of the Trade for Afterschool Providers*, Programming for School Afters in mixed-age group programs, emergency Preparedness for Afterschool and Child Care Centers, and Programming for Intermediate and Middle school based programs.

The training sessions were conducted in a combination of full day conference workshops, a back-to-school training week, and a series of evening workshop sessions. Each set of workshops included selections of *Tools of the Trade* core curriculum along with hands-on learning focused on 4-H/ FCS curriculum in service learning, science, math, nutrition, arts, safety, and youth leadership. Guest facilitators presented sessions on Bully Prevention, Positive Behavior Support, Nutrition, and Using Board Games for the full day conferences and full week training sessions. A pilot 60 Hour curriculum was implemented using a combination of *Tools of the Trade* and *Moving Ahead* curricula to be used as a required course to meet qualifying criteria under the state Office of Child Care Licensing requirements. All workshop sessions were approved by the Department of Service to Children, Youth and Families as continuing education hours as required for child care licensing.

Evaluations were conducted at the end of each session, with over 90% of the participants reporting that the workshops contained relevant, new information that they will use now and in the future. Informal feedback indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the quality and variety of workshops.

## **LOUISIANA**

Louisiana 4-H identified six target parishes (counties) for the implementation of the Afterschool training program, which include Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Orleans, Jefferson, St. Tammany, and Cameron. Each parish was provided 100 school teachers, teen leaders, and educators who will actively participate in our training program, which was developed to be a train-the-trainer program where participants engaged in hands-on activities.

Trainings were originally slated for September and October; however, Hurricanes Gustav and Ike caused parishes to reschedule. The trainings provided and showcased new types of programs to educators, which will allow them to teach youth about civic engagement, character education, and the soft skills they need to deal with stress. Many of the programs can be taught alone or integrated into existing classroom/after-school settings as well; thus, impacting a broader base of youth.

## **MICHIGAN**

In Michigan, an online training series was developed which featured the MetLife 4-H Afterschool Civic Engagement Resource Guide. The online series, along with the guide, was featured at two Michigan 4-H Afterschool Conferences; an online Wisconsin Extension Faculty Professional Development seminar; five Michigan State University Extension Staff mini-workshops and round-table sessions; a presentation at the first Michigan Pre-College Youth Outreach Conference; CYFAR; and NAA.

Anecdotal feedback has recognized the importance of civic engagement experiences for young people. Trainings in the face-to-face format stimulated discussion as to the relevance of the curriculum and the importance of young people understanding the tenants of civic engagement. Currently, the 4th module is in the process of being developed, which should be completed at the end of 2008.

## **MISSOURI**

University of Missouri Extension, Jackson County 4-H, with a network of after-school partnerships, conducted professional development training for after-school providers who have an impact with many area after-school youth. Training sessions included a wide variety of content for diversified after-school programs: Kansas City CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition; Francis Families Center for Child Development; and Summer In-service Conference. University of Missouri 4-H Center for Youth Development hosted four trainings using *Tools of the Trade*, the Civic Engagement Resource Guide, and sessions on the 4-H Leadership Project (4HLP) based on teambuilding. 4HLP trainings serviced after-school professionals on communication, building leadership skills, and hands-on/active learning.

Additional trainings included: 4-H SET training in Robotics, GPS/GIS, and SportsFishing (Missouri Water Quality, Stream Team). Mini-Society® is an experience-based instructional system targeted primarily for teaching entrepreneurship, economics, and citizenship concepts to students. It was conceived by Dr. Marilyn Kourilsky in the early 1970s and has been refined, extended, and extensively tested over a period of nearly three decades. Mini-Society® has shown to be effective across socioeconomic boundaries and student learning styles. In partnership with Youth Phases, the training for instructors of Mini-Society was also provided for many after-school professionals.

## **NORTH DAKOTA/SOUTH DAKOTA**

Sparsely populated areas in both North Dakota and South Dakota make it difficult for after-school programs to be created and sustained. Knowing that there are relatively few after-school programs in

the two states, North Dakota and South Dakota collaborated in an effort to provide training for after-school providers. Several strategies were employed to meet the training needs and logistical challenges of after-school child care providers in the two states.

Coordinators in both states consulted with various child care services and after-school program directors to assess the training needs of after-school providers. Frequently requested topics were: bullying, cultural diversity, social skills, discipline, positive reinforcement, community service, and children with learning disabilities. These topics were given priority along with Civic Engagement and the topics addressed in the *Tools of the Trade* curriculum. All of the Educators were given the *Tools of the Trade* CD-ROM, *Engagement: Afterschool Activities for Citizenship, Leadership and Service* (created by National 4-H Council and MetLife Foundation), South Dakota's *Bully-Proofing Your School: Teacher's Manual and Lesson Plans* (Sopris West Educational Services) curriculum and resources for training.

## **OREGON**

This year, with the grant provided by MetLife Foundation, we trained participants who solely work with children and youth grades K-12 in after-school or out-of-school time programs. A big part of our success this year was in further developing our partnership with OregonASK. OregonASK currently consists of 28 partners throughout Oregon that have created a network to educate providers and communities about quality after-school programs. In addition to the trainings, curriculum fairs were held where networking and discussion of the various curricula on display took place. The curricula focused on the areas of science and technology in after-school programs. More after-school providers were reached this year by offering 4-H leader trainings in addition to community-wide trainings. The civic engagement curriculum was well received by the participants and many great ideas were shared on how after-school programs could be more involved in their communities.

Having engaged partners was the key to success in providing successful trainings for after-school providers in Oregon. Regional libraries, community parks, and recreation departments offered free training space and also contributed speakers and trainers.

## **WASHINGTON**

Washington State University 4-H, in collaboration with long time partners, provided training in nine locations utilizing the expertise of 18 trainers. Participants included managers and site directors as well as front line staff in licensed and non-licensed programs. By participating in the professional development opportunities provided through the MetLife grant, the after-school staff is better able to implement quality after-school programs for children in Washington.

Training topics met the Core Competencies identified by the State Training and Registry System (STARS). *Tools of the Trade* is compatible with the STARS competencies and was utilized as a training resource. Training experiences were experiential and hands-on to provide participants with skills and knowledge to meet required competencies in the field of after-school care. In conjunction with the 4-H focus on Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET), several sessions focused on teaching inquiry learning and science process skills in after-school programs. 4-H curricula were included as examples of excellent resources to engage children and youth. Another strong focus of the training topics was healthy living and workforce development skills.

*The Engagement: Afterschool Activities for Citizenship, Leadership and Service* and *Teens as Volunteer Leaders Guide* were used as a basis for teaching effective strategies to include service learning and leadership skill development in after-school programs. The *Engagement: Afterschool Activities for Citizenship, Leadership and Service* guide was also utilized as a training resource for 4-H audiences working in the State's 4-H Know Your Government program.

Washington State University 4-H has continued to strengthen partnerships with community organizations dedicated to supporting the field of after school. With the support of MetLife Foundation, WSU has provided many training experiences for providers that enabled them to increase their skills, build their personal tool box of strategies and resources for serving children and youth, and renew their commitment to positive youth development.


## **WEST VIRGINIA**

Afterschool and out-of-school settings across the state have the need for training programs for their employees. Working collaboratively with after-school and out-of-school directors, we have been able to enhance staff training opportunities. While many of the workshops and professional development experiences that currently exist are designed for program directors, few target the front-line providers, who were the focus of the *Tools of the Trade* workshops. The *Tools of the Trade* training emphasizes the need for after-school and out-of-school programs to create an extension of what is learned in the traditional day and make it relevant to the lives of youth. During the training, trainers stressed the importance of integration with the resources of the community and building on regular school day learning to yield positive outcomes for youth and their families.

The West Virginia Statewide Afterschool Director, along with the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC state director, was critical in the recruitment process. This year a major effort was undertaken to collaborate with the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and to get the after-school providers, which they are assisting with funding, to attend the *Tools of the Trade* workshops. Agents and providers served as instructors for various sessions. In addition to the day-long training format, the *Tools of the Trade* materials were used as a basis for state summer residential camp staff. The training of Extension Camping Instructors and staff for the three state 4-H camps provided an additional opportunity to utilize the materials. Extension Agents served as facilitators of the training modules for participants who were trained in sessions to prepare them for working with youth in after-school programs. Qualified staff members have the best interest of youth at the heart of their programs; when after-school and out-of-school time providers can develop strong relationships with other staff, peers, and families, it creates youth who are motivated and excited about learning. These youth will ultimately do better in school.

## **WISCONSIN**

The Wisconsin Afterschool Network (WAN), co-lead by 4-H, recruited 22 experienced staff to provide leadership to help train partners at seven regional WAN workshops, a Wisconsin AfterSchool Association Conference, four Wisline Web sessions, two Desire2Learn online courses, a Wisconsin Prevention Conference Seminar, and two National AfterSchool Association Conference Seminars. These trainers also worked with 4-H Youth Development staff in 10 counties to train additional local after-school partners. Training sessions ranged from a two-month online course to a two-hour Wisline Web session. Over 119 different training sessions were held from January 15 – October 16, 2008, to support after-school partners. Through the MetLife Foundation partnership with 4-H, we were able to



demonstrate how Extension provides leadership for building strong partners to work collaboratively to train after-school partners.