

Over \$122 Million of  
Impacts and 14,344 Jobs  
Created or Saved

Operating as a team, state Extension leaders from the 12 North Central 1862 land grant universities developed common indicators for reporting the impacts of community development educational programs. The States collectively developed this report based on in-state action. Each partner university selected a subset of the indicators for reporting. The following table presents the most commonly used indicators. Thus, the impacts of our educational programs reported here, while impressive, are conservative estimates.

NORTH CENTRAL STATES 2016 IMPACT INDICATORS



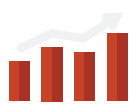
**11,198**  
No. of participants reporting new leadership and opportunities undertaken  
**12 states reporting**



**412**  
No. of community or organizational plans developed  
**11 states reporting**



**500**  
No. of community and organizational policies, plans adopted or implemented  
**12 states reporting**



**568**  
No. of businesses created  
**9 states reporting**



**7,631**  
No. of jobs created  
**11 states reporting**



**6,713**  
No. of jobs retained  
**10 states reporting**



**\$21,442,743**  
Dollar value of grants and resources leveraged/generated by communities  
**9 states reporting**

States reported value of volunteer hours, as well as dollar efficiencies and savings, bringing the total impact to \$122M. Full details broken down by state, are available at: [http://ncrcrd.msu.edu/ncrcrd/state\\_extension\\_leader\\_section1](http://ncrcrd.msu.edu/ncrcrd/state_extension_leader_section1). Our impacts stem from innovative, science-based approaches developed in partnership with our stakeholders. The programming associated with these impacts varies according to community needs and the creativity of university-based and other partners. To provide an idea of the types of programming used to generate our impacts, we provide several examples.



**Designing Healthy Communities** facilitated by University of Illinois Extension, is a sustained campus engagement between University of Illinois Architecture students, the City of Peoria, and residents of Peoria's Southside neighborhood, one of the poorest neighborhoods in the country. Students participated in a studio workshop designed for community leaders and residents to examine the relationship between health, design, and the built environment, with the aim of providing actionable recommendations to community leaders and neighborhood residents. Students described the most valuable aspect of the course as "working on real problems." Faculty and students gained a deeper understanding of the complex issues contributing to urban decay, and the challenges faced by communities to create policies and programs that can spur change. They also discussed the importance of community feedback to determine what is realistic for a community and finding a way to scale ideas for implementation.



**Dubuque's Central Avenue Corridor:** The City of Dubuque has partnered with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Community and Economic Development to launch a new initiative to engage residents and stakeholders to plan for the revitalization of Dubuque's Central Avenue Corridor (CAC). The CAC connects Dubuque's central downtown and Historic Millwork District to the city's North End and features a wide variety of historic buildings offering commercial and retail opportunities on the ground floor and residential spaces on upper floors. The goal of this initiative is the economic revitalization of the CAC through community engagement, educational outreach, and CAC community-informed storefront and streetscape design.



**Hometown Collaborative Initiative (HCI)** is an initiative of the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) in partnership with Purdue Extension Community Development, the Purdue Center for Regional Development, and the Indiana Communities Institute of Ball State University. During phase one, each HCI team takes steps to recruit and engage a diverse mix of local people who are willing to explore new ways to strengthen their community and take an active role in launching all phases of HCI. Initiative participants carefully study and analyze data, existing community plans and the viewpoints of local residents. Key activities include studying a Data SnapShot report on county data, conducting a community survey, assessing local assets, hosting a community forum and selecting a building block. In phase two, each HCI team, using information and deliberations undertaken during the first phase, chooses their focus of effort for their community: economy, leadership or placemaking. During the final phase, HCI teams work with key partners to propose a Capstone Project, and if approved by the State HCI Coordinating Team, put into action a plan intended to place their community on the path to achieving its longer-term goals and aspirations. There have been 179 sessions delivered to HCI communities over the past two years.



**Local food hub benefits farmers, consumers:** The food hub is a producer cooperative that goes beyond selling food at local farmers markets. The food hub helps farmers sell their products to larger buyers, such as restaurants, hospitals, schools and food companies. “For the most part, farmers are really good at retail and direct sales, and we are kind of good at what I call the ‘easy wholesale’ — such as chefs and grocery stores,” said Jill Elmers, owner of Moon on the Meadow Farm in Lawrence. “But there is a whole new, larger world that farmers have not even begun to tap into.” Today, smallholder farmers in Kansas have numerous options for providing their goods through the food hub. This food hub allows K-State Research and Extension to think critically about how to grow the local food system in a way that invests back into Kansas farmers and also benefits Kansas communities and consumers.



**LEAD:** Michigan State Extension worked with three rural Michigan counties to build capacity and gain community input in a regional development plan. In total nearly 110 community members participated in various planning sessions, including more than 60 at a community forum to identify and prioritize opportunities for collaborative economic development activities. The planning effort, entitled LEAD, is part of the USDA Rural Development Stronger Economies Together (SET) program. Two additional SET regional economic development sessions were conducted in Michigan in 2016, engaging more than 200 community members.



**Extension Brain Gain Research Stimulates Regional Action:** Over the past decade, Ben Winchester and other Extension rural sociologists began to study rural demographics, and identified the “brain gain” phenomenon. Persons aged 30-44 years old are moving to rural areas. Winchester and other Community Vitality educators worked in communities and with the media to spread the word about that asset. In Minnesota, resulting enthusiasm from community groups and community leaders has stimulated action. Across the State of Minnesota, at least seven community and regional initiatives have been mobilized. With names like “Get Rural Minnesota” and “Greater Minnesota Rising”, these initiatives promise to market rural life, present the assets of rural life online and in local media, and work together to sustain those efforts over time. Funding from NIFA will create further research to inform those efforts.



**Community Emergency Management Program:** Missouri remains ranked among the most disaster-prone states. In the past six years, the Community Emergency Management Program collaborated with SEMA and directly supported communities and the state in planning and recovery from nine major declarations of natural disasters, three additional emergency declarations to cover emergency protective measures, and from USDA five crop declarations and three drought declarations. The program has produced the premier guide for Community Organizations Assisting in Disaster with additional materials for dealing with agricultural aspects of disaster.



**Community Vitality Initiative (CVI)** and Extension Interest Teams embrace partnerships with local, state and national entities to help fulfill its vision for Nebraska where communities are strong, businesses thrive and youth are engaged. CVI provides opportunities for networking, professional development, collaborative research and issue driven discussions with CVI advisory members. Extension programming and team members actively partner with organizations to best fit the needs of the community and bring University research and education to Nebraska.



**Lead Local and Lead Local for Youth** were developed by NDSU Extension to reinforce local leadership training for adults and youth and help them increase their confidence and willingness to serve. These intensive, one-day, hands-on programs provide the learner with training on conflict management, parliamentary procedure, open meeting law, ethics, project management, effective communication and understanding fellow board members. More than 283 volunteer groups have had representation in the Lead Local programs and 28 youth participated in the Youth Lead Local pilot on Election Day 2016. One community that hosted a Lead Local training now has two newly elected local officials, and six organizations helped to form new collaborations for community projects. A participant from that community shared, “I had been thinking of running for City Council for some time, and after taking the Lead Local program, it really gave me that extra confidence to move forward with that decision. The process of running for and winning the City Council seat was a great experience and I’m using the tools from Lead Local to help me be the best representative I can be.” - Pembina County Lead Local participant



**Engaged Ohioans, Vibrant Communities:** Understanding community and customer needs is an important component of an organization’s success. A combination of surveys and focus groups were used to identify the perceptions, expectations and experiences of Head Start parents, staff, board members and community partners. The information collected from this process helped the organization’s leaders put together a plan of action to best meet the needs of Head Start families.



**Strategic Planning with Non Profit Organizations:** In 2016, SDSU Extension Community Vitality staff assisted ten groups with strategic planning for the future. Each group was unique in its organization, mission and goals. Groups include: a city economic development organization, a new food hub, three Native American communities preparing for disasters, a literacy council, groups working on housing in rural communities, a health service agency, and a Chamber of Commerce. Each of the ten groups reports they are working on the various strategies outlined in their plan. At least seven of the groups report they are targeting new funding because they now have a written strategic plan.



**Community Vitality and Placemaking:** Small towns are searching for a shared vision that celebrates their unique sense of place. University of Wisconsin-Extension’s Community Vitality & Placemaking Team brings together a volunteer group of 20 planning and design professionals to conduct a 3-day charrette. The circus-like atmosphere attracts over 175 participants a day (impressive for small towns of 1,000 people). Dozens of hand-drawn illustrations inspire citizens into action. Within weeks, citizens in Grantsburg organized into teams to clean up a local river and trail system; while in Baileys Harbor, an underutilized building was transformed into a community center.



Data for this report collected by Extension systems of 1862 land grant universities located in states highlighted in the NCRCD logo. This report is compiled and published by the NCRCD, a federally and regionally funded center hosted by Michigan State University. Michigan State University is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer.