Working with Target Populations

 ***Person Reporting:*Carolyn Langley     *Location:*Randolph *Date:*2013-01-04**

On June 15, 2012 Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano announced that, certain young people who were brought to the United States as young children, do not present a risk to national security or public safety, and meet several key criteria will be considered for relief from removal from the United States of America or from entering into removal proceedings.

According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service and the Migration Policy Institute, there are from 800,000 to 1.76 million young undocumented immigrants (under the age of 31 by June 15, 2012 and who arrived in the U.S. before age 16) residing in the United States.

As a result of President Obama’s Directive, Randolph County Extension in conjunction with the Randolph County Latino Coalition and lawyers from the North Carolina Justice Center hosted a deferred action workshop in December at the Extension Center. As a result, seventeen individuals were able to complete their application in full. Eight others were advised on steps they should take to complete their application. To date, six have received approval; others are waiting on notification of their status.

***Person Reporting:*Wallace Simmons     *Location:*Wayne  *Date:*2013-07-05**

Latino youth currently have the highest dropout rate in North Carolina. The Juntos Academy which is put on yearly by County 4-H Partners and NC State staff is a week-long prevention program held during the summer to help change those numbers. This Academy focuses on providing knowledge about college to students, who because of language barriers, lack of parental support, and financial concerns might have thought that college was out of reach for them.

Wayne County was privileged to have been chosen to participate in this program. We took 18 youth to this program where they participated in workshops about financial aid, how to write a college essay, applying for college. They were also able to participate in a community service project with a local artist to describe their struggles in a collage and tour the universities of Meredith College and NC State. These youth after participating in the week long program came back home with the knowledge they need to pick the best school for them and how to pay for it. They will now be able to share this information with their parents and fellow peers.

***Person Reporting:*Minnie Mitchell     *Location:*Cabarrus Date: 2012-12-28**

The NC Cooperative Extension Service in Cabarrus County was asked to help five young homeless mothers. The women and children are allowed to conditionally remain in the Cooperative Christian Ministry center up to one year. Their stay requires regularly scheduled educational training that includes financial management.

Through a partnership with Fifth Third Bank, a four-week training session was designed to teach the women how to set personal goals to increase their knowledge of money management, control debt and manage their transitions in life. The women engaged in weekly homework assignments using the NC A&T University “H” Plan to monitor and account for their income versus expenses, track weekly money spending habits, obtain credit reports, and establish future financial and personal goals for their families. 100 percent of the women accounted for and acknowledged poor spending habits and set goals to build a more stable future for their families.

Eighty percent of the women followed through on obtaining their current credit reports, contacted the credit reporting agencies directly to reconcile reports, and set up monthly repayment plans with creditors. 100 percent of the women received certificates of completion. One mother with three children successfully graduated and moved in permanent housing. End of session evaluation indicated that 100 percent of the participants changed their level of money management knowledge from low/moderate to high and very high. Written comments shared that “Instead of guessing, I now know what steps to take;” It (class) helps me to focus and utilize my resources better.”

***Person Reporting:*Rebecca Liverman     *Location:*Washington *Date:*2012-12-12**

Washington County has 2,934 Medicare Beneficiaries. Information overload is one of the stressors associated with older generations, especially when the answers to confusing health insurance details must be found on the computer. Without adequate tutoring and personalized counseling for families, there is a high probability of making an uninformed and costly decision regarding health care benefits.

In 2012, the Washington County Extension Director worked closely with the NC Department of Insurance to offer free counseling sessions on their Prescription Drug Plans. With only one other volunteer, this program counseled 87 older adults with health related questions. Referrals come from local pharmacies, social service caseworkers, county agencies, local faith-based communities and walk-ins. By counseling these individuals, she was able to help save $87,000 in monthly health premiums and prescription drug costs for Washington County Citizens this year.

***Person Reporting:*Kittrane Sanders     *Location:*Harnett  *Date:*2011-12-29**

Success begins once a person has made their mind up to change. While success is measured on an individual basis most of the time, personnel, resources and care goes into that success of any community goal. Community leaders in the Riverside Community collaborated with Harnett County Cooperative Extension to assist in mobilizing for community change.

This community has seen an increase in crime, drugs and youth dropout. With the help of seven community leaders, Cooperative Extension provided workshops to nineteen citizens in the Riverside Community on how to approach issues and concerns gather from data obtain from a community survey. A small community center has been donated to address youth dropout and workforce readiness.

To date seven adults have been trained in construction work, these individuals have the potential to earn $40,000 a year or more. A storage building constructed by them and sold for $1,500.00 will provide revenue for community and economic development projects. Pre and post-test indicated working relationships formed with community organizations/agencies, an increase in capacity building among community leaders, and increase number of volunteers recruited in community coalitions.

***Person Reporting:*Debbie Cox     *Location:*Caldwell *Date:*2011-12-29**

Communities need leaders who can offer assistance in navigating complex issues such as bullying, acceptance of differences, and design educational training for volunteers working with minority populations. One particularly vulnerable group for bullying, suicide and isolation is LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) youth.

LGBT youth often lack community support. Violence against LGBT youth is a problem across the country, and our region had several acts of violence in 2010. To address this issue effectively, multiple levels of systems of support were targeted: community leadership, youth, and the larger community through a website and social media. At the community level a group of 11 citizens, met in late 2010/2011 to address the problem.

Caldwell County FCS agent was asked to participate in contributing to a new group, Out Right Youth of Catawba Valley (ORY) and local PFLAG chapters. The FCS agent provided Extension materials on bullying for outreach, designed a facilitation training program for volunteer group leaders, and secured a grant for a parenting conference in 2012.

The impact to date has been: the creation of a bi-monthly support group to LGBT youth providing 54 hours of support, outreach and education to community, improved coping skills of local light youth. There were 8,107 hits on the ORY website and 70 friends on ORY face book, two PFLAG chapters formed. One Father wrote to say “There is a growing group of people willing to step up and to put up an umbrella for young people like my son to access.”