The University of Maryland Extension (UME) was established in 1914 through the Smith-Lever Act. UME is a part of a larger national educational network known as Cooperative Extension delivered through the nation’s seventy-two land grant universities. In Maryland, UME operates through the University of Maryland at College Park and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. UME has field offices in all twenty-three Maryland counties and Baltimore City.

UME faculty and staff are professionals engaged in the delivery of non-formal educational programs that address issues of concern at the local and state level: Local Food Agriculture Systems, Environment and Natural Resources, Healthy Living, Youth Development and Building Resilient Communities.

Programming is made possible through successful partnerships between local, state and federal governments. Programming is also supported by grants, donations and a strong cadre of UME trained volunteers.

We are proud to have celebrated our 100th anniversary on a national and local level. The Cecil County office has been providing services to farming families since 1914. You will see in this report, how UME’s outreach efforts seek to provide educational support and solutions to improve the lives of Cecil County residents.
Master Gardener Program

Doris Behnke is responsible for the Master Gardener program. Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who work within the community to teach safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities.

Doris provides on-going trainings for the Master Gardener volunteers and together they provide learning opportunities to youth and adults in the community. Programming includes the Bay-wise and Grow-It, Eat-It curricula. Consultation, diagnostic and pest management information are also provided through plant clinics and 1:1 consultation.

Stakeholders/Partners:
- Cecil County Public Schools
- Cecil County Senior Services Program
- Cecil College Horticulture Club
- North Bay Environmental Center
- Cecil County School of Technology
- University of Delaware Extension
- Cecil County Economic Development Office
- Cecil County Department of Public Works
- Cecil County Farm Bureau

Cross Collaborations:
- 4-H, MG in Schools-Green School (CCPS)
- MG, Forestry Board
- MG, Cecil College

VOLUNTEERS GIVE BACK!

MASTER GARDENERS
- 26 volunteers
- 814 hours of service to the community
- Service valued at $18,315

4H VOLUNTEERS
- 257 Adults
- 1,285 hours
- $179,860
- 44 youth
- 3,912 hours
- $28,362

Services valued at $208,222

TOTAL VALUE OF SERVICE HOURS BY UME VOLUNTEERS
$226,537
4-H & Youth Development

4-Hers are leading a Revolution of Responsibility - a movement for positive change in every community in America including right here in Cecil County, MD! 4-H youth are a living, breathing, culture-changing revolution for doing the right thing, breaking through obstacles and pushing our country forward by making a measurable difference here in Cecil County.

3,083 youth served through Cecil County 4-H Programs

435 youth enrolled in 23 traditional and special interest clubs
99 youth participated in 4-H sponsored overnight camping
2,549 youth served via outreach programs at 22 school/community sites

Grants Secured for Youth Program Funding - $81,673

AGsploration -- The Science of Agriculture Education - $22,600
EYSC & OJJDP - S.T.E.M. Education & Leadership Development - $59,073

“Throughout my 4-H career, I have been fortunate enough to be surrounded by incredible mentors. Due to the influence and support from these role models, I was successfully elected to be the 2014 President of my local 4-H club, and in previous years, the Secretary and Vice President.” Lindsay S.

“I’ve done a lot of different things in my life- I was once mentored and now I’m the mentor- they teach me and I teach the children and they will teach their children- it’s been an experience in my life that I’m honored, pleased and proud for the people such as you all that help me help others” OJJDP Community Mentor
Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

2014 Community Partners include:

- Elkton Housing Authority
- Cecil County Health Department
- Cecil College’s Job Start Program
- Cecil County Social Services, WIC/TCA clients
- Meeting Ground Homeless Shelter
- Wayfarers House Women’s Shelter
- Ray of Hope Outreach Center
- Head Start
- Judy Center

EFNEP Adult Program Impacts:

Tammy Pryor delivered a series of workshops to 106 limited-income individuals (total = 392 family members) with an average of 8 hours spent with each client. Approximately 64% of these participants had an income at half the poverty level and 32% were enrolled in SNAP. As a result of completing the multi-lesson series:

- 85% of adults showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices, such as planning meals, comparing prices, stretching their food dollar so they don’t run out of food before the end of the month, or using grocery lists.
- 91% showed improvement in one or more nutrition practices such as making healthier food choices and reading labels.
- 54% showed improvement in one or more of the food safety practices such as storing and thawing food properly.
- 50% reported improving their diet by increasing their servings of fruits and vegetables.
- 35% reported an increase in physical activity.

EFNEP Youth Program Impacts:

Programs consist of a series of at least four interactive and behaviorally-focused nutrition lessons. During FY 2013-14, Tammy taught nutrition/cooking programs to 151 youth (ages 5-18) and worked with the following community partners:

- YMCA at Rising Sun and Perryville
- Boys and Girls Club
- Elkton Housing at Rudy Park and Windsor Village

Youth learned to: make healthy snack/beverage choices, choose healthier foods when eating out, eat a healthy breakfast, eat more fruits and vegetables, be physically active, cook healthy meals, and reduce screen time.

After participating in the series of interactive lessons, the youth showed the following increases in knowledge and behavior changes:

- 77% of youth improved their ability to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendations.
- 46% of youth used proper food handling practices.
- 42% of youth improved their physical activity practices.
- 32% of youth improved their ability to prepare simple, nutritious, affordable, food.
Agriculture

Doris provides support to producers throughout the year through educational programming and 1:1 consultations. In the winter, Doris hosts an Agronomy Day program for the agriculture community. Farmers who attend can attain recertification for private pesticide license, recertification credits for Nutrient Applicator Card, and training for first-time Nutrient Applicator Card. In addition, learning opportunities that are pertinent to local issues are offered. At the 2014 winter meeting, producers shared that the greatest challenges to their farm/farming operations were Regulatory Issues (21.79%), Weather (19.23%) and Input costs (17.95%). One hundred percent (100%) of the farmers indicated that the sessions at the meeting provided them with important information. Specifically, farmers indicated that they would implement the following production practices as a result of the winter meeting: Improve Crop Production Practices (22.06%), Regulatory Information (22.06%) and Improved Fertility Management (16.18%). The summer Ag Showcase, held during the county fair, provides farmers with opportunities to learn about recent technology changes, new research findings, and regulation updates. Local organizations who provide services to farmers participate as well.

Watershed Stewards Academy

The goal of the Cecil County Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA) is to develop and support a well-trained diverse group of volunteers ("stewards") conversant in storm water issues who educate communities and design, implement, maintain, and promote restoration projects focused on storm water management and improving local water quality. Cecil County Watershed Stewards will use their first-hand knowledge of rural and agricultural landscapes to tailor their efforts to the specific needs of Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

The pilot WSA enrolled 11 Cecil County residents who will complete 45 hours of class training and field sessions by February 2015. In the spring and summer of 2015, the class will plan and implement a storm water management class project and small group or individual Capstone projects that also manage storm water somewhere in the county.

A steering committee of partners comprising education, business, local government, and volunteer groups from around the Eastern Shore helped to adapt the WSA model for the Shore, and Cecil County was the first Shore county to adopt the pilot program. The program is run through a partnership between the University of Maryland Sea Grant Extension and the Cecil County Development Services Division.

Nutrient Management

Caleb Snyder wrote 147 nutrient management plans covering 5,864 acres of land for 51 farmers in the county. These plans are written for the farmer at no cost, resulting in a $29,322 savings for farmers who utilized UME’s nutrient management program.
Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS)

The FCS program is dedicated to improving the quality of individuals and families, and building strong, resilient communities. Karen Aspinwall offers research-based programs in Healthy Homes, Financial Education and Healthy Lifestyles. Single and multi-session programs are offered for adults and youth, often in collaboration with community agencies and non-profit organizations that serve audiences with identified needs.

Healthy Homes programs teach participants how to make their homes and backyards safer and healthier by minimizing problems related to drinking water quality, indoor air quality, lead, hazardous household chemicals and other poisons, and safety hazards. Karen has worked to develop a new STEM initiative partnering with the Fair Hill Environmental Foundation and local public system to pilot a new Chesapeake Bay watershed education to 5th grade (public and non-public) students in Cecil County.

FCS financial education programs teach people the knowledge and skills they need to manage their money wisely, reduce debt, understand and manage credit, and make informed consumer choices about health insurance.

Healthy Lifestyle programs focus on simple ways to increase physical health through better food management and eating habits, and emphasize successful strategies for behavior change.

2014 Programming highlights:

Healthy Homes programming:

- 2 Train the Trainer courses (61 health professionals state-wide)
- 1 Healthy Homes workshop (8 adults)
  
  “It [Healthy Homes program] really helped me see how healthy my home was and showed me ways to fix and improve my living situation.”

Water Science and Conservation programs:

- 9 Water Science and Conservation programs (327 youth and adult)
- 2 one-week aquatic camps (44 elementary youth)
- 2 CC Envirothon training classes: (78 high school youth)
- 5th grade water quality outreach program (8 schools, 271 students)

Financial Management programming:

- 3 SMART CHOICE workshops (33 adults)
- 2 multi-session Money Club programs (13 adults)

Don’t just get answers. Get solutions from someone you trust.

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