



2026 NACDEP Sessions

Monday, June 15

9-4 Pre-Conference Workshops

Workshop A- Community Development Essentials for Practitioners and Extension Professionals: Community Development (CD) Essentials is a 6-hour pre-conference workshop that provides a basic introduction to CD concepts, community engagement applications, economic data, workforce development and asset-based community development.

Workshop B- CB107: Community Engagement and Activation Strategies:

This course equips participants with strategies to engage and activate communities using asset-based approaches, partnerships, and equity principles. Learn to build trust, address power dynamics, and create actionable plans for sustainable impact.

Tuesday, June 16

9-10:30 Concurrent Session 1

1A- Station Room I:

The Middle of Everywhere: How Trust, Shared Risk, and Second Chances Builds Missouri's Strongest

Rural–Urban Workforce Partnerships: Workforce efforts in Missouri's "Middle of Everywhere" have grown from conversations among employers, courts, treatment providers, and Educators into a statewide movement rooted in trust, shared risk, and new perspectives on talent.

A New Conceptual Framework for Mentoring: Increase Engagement with a Nonformal Overlay: This session will introduce an emerging nonformal mentoring framework grounded in nonformal education and teaching practice. The approach incorporates adult development, motivation, and transformation theories. It will include free adaptable tools.

Using a Statewide Employer Needs Assessment to Guide Extension Workforce Development Programming: The Utah employer needs assessment of 226 (n = 226) firms using a ranked discrepancy model to identify significant gaps in soft skills, not technical skills, and strong support for work-based learning, stackable credentials, and AI competencies.

1B- Station Room II:

Growing a Community of Practice across Small Rural Communities: Strengthening community connections and fostering new networks: The Blandin Community Leadership Program fostered leadership and network development in twelve small, rural communities. Using an asset-based approach centered around the Community Capitals Framework (CCF), the program guided community leaders through in-person, online, and Strategic Doing™ to leverage existing strengths for community change and capacity building.

Beyond the Auction: A Look at Social Capital in Rural "Third Places": Sale barns do more than move livestock - they bring people together. As social "third places", it is where neighbors catch up, knowledge is shared and economic benefits occur. Research results will share social capital insights and opportunities.

Bridging and Bonding Social Capital: Building Unique Partnerships for Stronger Community Engagement: Two multi-state CYFAR projects show how bridging and bonding social capital, grounded in CBPR, shaped strong partnerships, surfaced barriers like silos/power gaps and informed actions. Participants will explore the model for their community work.

1C- Seidholz

Building Bridges: Connecting Child Care with Business and Economic Development: Access to quality, affordable child care impacts families, businesses, and communities. It supports children's development, enables parents to work, and strengthens the labor force—driving economic growth and stability.

Responding to Community Childcare Crisis: This presentation will highlight how the Purdue Extension Community Childcare Team is forging regional partnerships that address local needs through creative cooperatives and funding collaborations.

The Middle of Educational Advocacy: Civic Learning Labs Strengthen Family Engagement in Colorado: This session highlights CSU Extension's Family Engagement Civic Learning Lab and how statewide virtual civic learning empowers families, builds leadership and trust, and strengthens inclusive family-school partnerships across Colorado.

1D- Riverview

Extension technical assistance and community engagement for emerging land use planning issues: Purdue Extension supports Indiana communities addressing land-use challenges through renewable energy planning, agrivoltaics research, and coastal conservation. This session shares tools, strategies, and engagement methods for local solutions.

An Extension-Anchored Partnership for Addressing Aging Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization through Design Education: This proposal presents an Extension-Anchored Partnership embedding a design studio in Fairfield's RHRA 2.0 initiative to address aging housing, support neighborhood revitalization, strengthen trust, and offer a scalable model for rural Extension.

Free Little Art Galleries as Rural Placemaking: An Extension-Supported Model for Creative Economies and Community Identity: UI Extension launched the Free Little Art Gallery pilot program in 2025. Evaluation results indicate increased awareness of creative talent and products, strong intent to purchase from local artisans, and a high interest in continued engagement.

1E- Boisin (90 Min Workshop)

Amplifying Community Impact through Extension Podcasting: Podcasts as vital tools for community connections explores the podcast demographic and how Extension professionals can leverage this medium to deepen community engagement, expand reach beyond traditional workshops, and build community relationships.

10:45-12:15 Concurrent Session 2

2A- Station I-

Northeast Ohio Agricultural Innovation Center: Impacts and Outcomes: Funded by USDA Rural Development and Ohio State University Extension, The Northeast Ohio Ag Innovation Center (NEO-AIC)...

Strengthening Local Food Systems through Education and Partnerships: This presentation highlights a local food systems initiative that strengthens connections between producers, consumers and communities through youth education, workforce development, and partnerships that improve food access and community resilience.

Local Food Fellows Expand Local Food System Capacity Across Kansas: The Local Food Fellows program enhanced the capacity of communities across Kansas to undertake local food system projects, raised awareness of the value of investing in local food systems, and provided Fellows with training in local food system work.

2B- Station II-

Youth Workforce development a work in progress: A look at integration of youth workforce development with in OSU. How this program became a reality and the first year of progress. Shared
resources, work in progress and important partnerships to consider.

Launching a Youth Drone Program Through Extension: Curriculum, Safety, and Community

Partnerships: Westfall Drone Program is an OSU Extension youth drone club preparing high school students for the FAA Part 107 remote pilot license through hands-on instruction in flight safety, airspace/sectional charts, weather, and workforce pathways.

Uplifting Student Voices: Opportunities to Integrate Extension Work with University

Community and Economic Engagement Efforts: Join students in the ESP program explore the impact of rural community development applied learning to date, program's structure, and the long-term impact on building a diverse and effective workforce in community development.

2C- Seidholf-

Advancing Community Economic Development, Educational Opportunity, and Equity through Extension

Partnerships: The Washington Giving Grid Project: WSU is part of a multi-party public/private partnership that has been able to generate funding to support under-resourced educational programs at not cost to them, while addressing complex economic challenges faced by small rural communities.

Is Economic Development Evolving? Research Highlights from the IEDC State of the Field project.: IEDC's 2025 State of the Field survey reveals five dimensions defining economic development practice: Traditional Growth, Community Well-Being, Systems Building, Entrepreneurship, and Shared Prosperity—offering Extension professionals insights.

Strengthening Rural Economies through Extension E-commerce Training and Technical Assistance: The E-Commerce Accelerator provides digital tools training and technical assistance in online sales to rural Utah small businesses. From 2024–2025, 35 businesses launched e-commerce websites and 68% reported increased online sales revenue.

2D- Riverview

Community Communication Plan for Urban Extension, A Case Study: Urban communities often struggle to understand extension, sometimes leading to budgetary/political challenges. We will present a case study on a recent challenge with ideas for forming appropriate, positive extension advocates.

Opportunities to Integrate Extension and University Community Engagement Efforts: This session explores how to effectively integrate community engagement into our Extension work through partnership-focused programming, including with our universities at large, to build community capacity for sustained and impactful outcomes.

Leveraging Volunteers for Community Engagement at Farmers Markets and Outreach Events:

Volunteers want to make a difference but lack engagement training, leading to passive outreach. This workshop equips participants with simple engagement models and tools to expand capacity, support brand consistency, and build community trust.

2E- Boisin (90 Min Workshop)

Extension-Led Data Platforms for Community and Economic Development: A Multi-State Model:

Extension-led, multi-state data platforms, All Things Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas, support community and economic development by expanding access to local data, strengthening planning and decision-making, and positioning Extension as a community partner.

2:00- 3:30 Concurrent Session 3

3A- Station I

Strengthening Rural Leadership Systems for Community Wellbeing and Succession: Rural communities often rely on a small core of leaders, risking burnout and stalled momentum. This session shares a six-month, project-embedded leadership systems model that clarifies pathways, expands participation, and strengthens leadership depth

From Theory to Practice: A Bootcamp-Style Leadership Intensive for County Managers and Supervisors: UW Extension and Laramie County HR piloted a 48-hour Leadership Institute, then redesigned it as a full-week Leadership Intensive. Evaluation showed knowledge gains and intended behavior changes. Follow-up results will be shared

OSU Leadership Collective program: Learn about a program that aligns with evolving leadership competencies in Extension and Engagement, strengthening leadership development and better meeting the professional growth needs of faculty and staff.

3B- Station II

South to West--Extending CD Essentials to California's Sierra: Adapting Community

Development 101 Curriculum for Rural Capacity Building and Leadership Development in an Outdoor Recreation Community: In California's Eastern Sierra, Extension partnered with SRDC to pilot a Community Economic Development workshop series. Adapting CED 101 curriculum, the program built planning capacity, strengthened collaboration, and advanced regional priorities.

State of Neighboring in Missouri: Lessons from 2022-2-24 Study: Missouri faces declining deep neighbor connections, rising isolation, and shifting expectations of "good neighboring." This study identifies trends affecting civic engagement and offers data-driven strategies to rebuild trust and belonging.

Gathering the Village: A Cohort Model for Leading Community Transformation: In a world of "wicked problems," how can Extension educators move beyond traditional workshops to foster deep community change? This session highlights "Leading Community Transformation," a 6-session cohort designed with community partners to prepare emerging and established leaders for transformative community change

3C- Seidholff

From Planning to Practice: Launching the Connect Newton Implementation Initiative: The Connect Newton Implementation Initiative supports K-12 teachers in delivering workforce-connected lessons aligned with local career pathways. This pilot tested a funding and support model for teacher-designed classroom projects.

Emerging AI Dependency Among College Students and Risks for Workforce Readiness: Emerging patterns of generative AI dependency and academic self-efficacy among college students (n = 444) were analyzed to identify risks to workforce readiness and guide Extension strategies for building resilient AI-enabled workers.

The Food Business Start-Up Summit: Where Extension Facilitates Innovation: This session helps develop clearly defined community challenges, vetted next steps, expert connections, and practical tools from a three-day entrepreneurial working retreat that pairs design-based problem solving with targeted "speed-dating" TA.

3D- Riverview

Strengthening Health and Communities in the Middle of Everywhere: Immunization Education through

Trusted Messengers and with Effective Messaging: Vaccine hesitancy within the U.S. is growing and the number of vaccinated individuals is dropping. Extension as a trusted messenger for science-based, timely, accurate, and seasonally relevant immunization information is more critical than ever.

Logging Scars to Economic Impact- How Multiuse Trails Contribute to a Rural Economy in Transition: Surveys and interviews to assess trail usage, user spending, and desired developments inform current economic impact and that of planned developments. This will guide the development of trails and illuminate the county's economic path forward.

Digital Skills Education: Extension's Role in Rural Health Transformation: Extension belongs at the Rural Health Transformation table: pairing Digital Skills Educators with FCS agents builds telehealth readiness, portal use, credible info seeking, and scam protection—improving care access and follow-through.

3E- Bosin (90 Min Workshop)

Building Interdisciplinary Collaboration for Community Design: An exploration of Policy, Systems, and Environment Change's place in Community Development practice: Policy, Systems, and Environment change (PSEs) are impactful approaches to creating healthy communities. Extension has significant experience in this work, previously funded by SNAP-Ed. Join us to discuss applications in Community Development (CD).

Wednesday, June 17

9:45 – 11:15 Concurrent Session 4

4A- Station Room I

The GRAIT Test for Ethical Use of Generative AI in Extension Practice: Generative AI speeds Extension content creation but raises accuracy, bias, and copyright risks. The *GRAIT Test* is a five-question heuristic checklist that helps users screen AI-assisted outputs for quality, fairness, accountability, and timeliness.

Tips for Leading a Curriculum Development Project from the Field: Let's demystify the Extension curriculum development process, a critical skillset for advanced leadership in community development. Gain tips for growing your great program idea into a published, branded statewide or national curriculum.

Success Sustained: Document Your Extension Programs To Inform the Future: Long-running Extension programs often shape leadership, strengthen communities, and build regional networks - yet much of what makes them successful is lost when programs end or staff transition. This presentation uses the Emerging Leadership Program, a 40-year regional leadership initiative, as a case study in documenting legacy educational programs. Presenters will share strategies used to preserve program history, structure, values, and impact following the program's sunset in 2024. Through guided discussion, participants will exchange insights and examples from their own work, contributing to a shared understanding of how documenting legacy programs supports continuity, learning, and future community development practice.

4B- Station Room II

Missouri Good Neighbor Week: An Official Holiday Celebrating Engagement and Belonging: Communities face declining civic engagement and isolation. Missouri Good Neighbor Week addresses this challenge by using a statewide celebration to spark connection, belonging, and local civic participation.

Responding to Community-Level Transportation Needs: This presentation will explain how Purdue's College & Community Collaboration Initiative piloted a regional workforce rideshare transportation strategy (CityVan) that Extension professionals could potentially replicate in their own state.

A Statewide Stakeholder Engagement Study on Colorado's Multi-Network Resilience Plan for Electrified Transportation: This study summarizes findings from 14 outreach sessions on EV infrastructure resilience in Colorado. Stakeholders identified regional priorities and shared needs for reliability, workforce training, redundancy, and equitable infrastructure planning.

4C- Siedhoff Salon

Doing Business with Texas: Navigating the State Procurement Process: This session offers a roadmap for small businesses to navigate Texas state procurement. Learn vendor registration, bid requirements, and resources for minority-owned firms to compete for contracts, driving economic growth and community sustainability

Empowering Communities Through AI Literacy: Practical Strategies for Public Education & Digital Equity: Learn community-centered, culturally responsive, and bilingual strategies for AI education and outreach. This session shares practical tools to boost digital equity, empower underserved communities, and build confident, informed AI learners.

Nature-Based Community Development for Justice-Involved Youth: A cross-sector partnership between USU Extension and Utah's juvenile justice system uses nature and adventure-based learning to build wellbeing, resilience, and belonging for justice-involved youth, via a scalable, community-based diversion model.

4D- Riverview

Stories of Small Business Succession and Transition: Good, Bad and Ugly. University of Minnesota's new case study collection: We learn from stories. We will present biz transition success AND failure stories including small town, family business, and rural grocer themes. These stories build on Minnesota's quantitative research. They'll be posted at z.umn.edu/BizSuccession.

Governing Essentials: Going Back to Basics to Strengthen Michigan Local Communities: High turnover among local officials create risks and harms public trust. This program builds the foundational skills needed for effective decision-making. Learn how MSU Extension is going "back to basics" to ensure strong local governance.

Regional Food Systems and Local Development: The Case of the Rio Grande Colonias Regional Food Business Center: Agriculture is a major economic engine in the Texas border region. This study examines the agrifood system across 33 border counties. It also analyzes the role of the Rio Grande Colonias Regional Food Business Center (RGC-RFBC)

4E- Bosin III (90 Min Workshop)

Reimagining Leadership Development in the Middle of Everywhere: Transforming Access, Participation, and Community Impact: Redesign of a long-standing leadership program expanded access and relevance in rural

communities; Using learner-centered, practice-based strategies, we spotlight replicable outcomes that strengthen leadership pathways and community capacity.

Thursday, June 18

8-9:30 Concurrent Session 5

5A –Station Room I (90 Min Workshop)

Measuring What Matters: A Statewide Framework for Evaluating Long-Term Impact of Organizational Development Education: A new evaluation framework measured long-term outcomes of Extension organizational development programming in the state. Through streamlined data collection, initial results are contributing to a compelling statewide narrative of impact.

5B- Station Room II (90 Min Workshop)

Building Civic Infrastructure for Economic Mobility: Lessons from the Civic Collaboration Fellows Program: The Civic Collaboration Fellows program builds regional leadership and economic mobility capacity by uniting community leaders with economic partners for workshops, an experiential trip, and a project, strengthening networks and mobility strategies.

5C- Siedhoff Salon (90 Min Workshop)

Using Pre-Apprenticeship and Innovation to Start Careers and Change Lives: With a \$350K, 1-year grant, TRWA launched PathFinderU, a pre-apprenticeship program offering certifications in four industries, expanding access to training through partners, employers, unions, and using immersive tools aligned to industry standards.

5D- Riverview (90 Min Workshop)

Extension in the Middle of Community: Fostering Belonging to Create Impactful Programming: A sense of belonging is a fundamental human need that contributes to positive community development because it propels participation and engagement, strengthens trust, and nurtures resilience*. In Extension workplaces and departments, belonging contributes to enhanced teamwork and retention.

Therefore, fostering a sense of belonging improves both Extension programming and organizational productivity. This session will explore the challenges and opportunities for fostering a sense of belonging through dialogue and experiential learning. It will offer strategies and activities for strengthening belonging in Extension programs and among Extension staff to build organizational and community cultures that further the promise of community development.

5E- Bosin III (90 Min Workshop)

Extension Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting: An in-person meeting of the Extension Entrepreneurship Working Group to advance national coordination. Participants share program approaches, integrate new members, and establish shared priorities and goals for Extension entrepreneurship programming.

12:00-5 Post Conference Workshops

Implementing a Rapid Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Assessment Process Virtually: Facilitator Training for the Rural INclusive Venturing Ecosystems via Strategic Transformation (Rural INVEST) Program: A facilitator training approach builds capacity to lead communities in transformative strategic planning for more inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystems. See the supplement for more details.