

# 2023



**Extension**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
KENOSHA COUNTY



Extension Kenosha County  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

# ANNUAL REPORT

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# 2023

in review



## 4,416

People participated in  
Extension Programs



## 2,404

FoodWise program  
participants



## 640

Youth and adult  
volunteers enrolled in 4-H



## 790

Residents in Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee County  
participated in the plant health advising program

Photo: Antioxidant rich blueberry  
variety trial performance in raised beds



# COMMUNITY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Through research, education, and community-based partnerships, Extension Kenosha County Youth Development programs are focused on helping young people gain knowledge and skills to become productive citizens.

**“Nia: Pathways and Purpose for the Future” Program:** The Nia program in Kenosha County focuses on teenagers beginning in middle school and encourages them to explore opportunities, work with mentors, and learn about college, professional training, and work options before making decisions about their futures.

For BIPOC youth, who are often the first in their family to pursue post-secondary education, this knowledge and social network can increase success in an unfamiliar environment.

Programs that focused on creating bridges between BIPOC community members and youth of color as well as provide college and career readiness opportunities for participants were provided at the Kenosha Public Library and Kenosha Unified School District.

- One educational trip planned, in-school programming launched at Lincoln Middle School, and a Rest and Reset Event during exam week
- 27 youth participants

**Youth in Governance (YIG):** Youth leadership development is critical in building civic capacity and long-term community sustainability in Kenosha County. Programs that teach useful skills and build the self-confidence of young people ensure capable, effective leaders for the next generation.

The 2022-2023 YIG cohort finished their term in May 2023. **18** youth completed the full term of the program. In addition to participating in Kenosha County Board Committees, youth completed a service project that focused on removing invasive species in the county.

In May 2023, the 2023-2024 YIG representatives were sworn in. Eighteen youth representatives were appointed to seven County Board committees and Joint Services.

**Youth as Resources (YAR):** Kenosha County Youth As Resources (YAR) is a grant-giving program that funds youth-designed and youth-led community service projects in Kenosha County. Youth, with guidance from adults, determine the project they believe will address a need in their community.

The 2022-2023 Board took office in May 2022 and funded **12** projects, launched a YAR social media presence, and awarded \$4,400 to youth-led service projects.

The 2023-2024 Board took office in May 2023. They funded two projects (total of \$1,000 awarded) and volunteered at the United Way Centennial Jubilee.





# POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H involves youth in project-based education. Through project learning, youth can explore their interests (“sparks”) and master new skills. 4-H projects are meant to be hands-on to create a memorable learning experience. Since 4-H started in the early 1900s, youth have learned by doing. This hands-on process allows youth to understand not only how to do something but also why they are doing it.

The four H’s are head, heart, hands, and health. That means we are committed to providing opportunities for youth to learn life skills like decision-making, problem solving, caring for others, generosity, making healthy choices, and more. Youth make decisions. Youth can make their voices heard. The most important part of 4-H is YOUTH.



At the end of 2023, Kenosha County’s 4-H enrollment was:

**550 youths and almost 90 adult volunteers**

Kenosha County has 10 community clubs where kids participate in learning, leading, recreation, and community service projects. Projects include:

- Making blankets for shelters and Children’s Hospital
- Visiting long-term care facilities
- Having food drives
- Providing winter clothing for those in need
- Writing letters to veterans
- Cleaning parks and cemeteries
- Ringing the Salvation Army bells during the holiday season

We offer 18 countywide projects including:

- 7 animal projects
- Archery
- Fishing
- Sewing
- Foods and nutrition
- Model rocketry
- Ukrainian Eggs
- Photography and more

Youth participated in the Kenosha County 4-H Pinewood Derby, four camps, and several statewide and nationwide 4-H opportunities such as art camps, a trip to Washington D.C., and American Spirit, a 10 day bus trip to historical sites. One of our youth even traveled to Japan on 4-H’s outbound travel program.

Participating in the Kenosha County Fair is a highlight for 4-H members, as they are able to demonstrate what they have learned throughout the year and show off their skill and creativity.







# HORTICULTURE

Extension's Horticulture Program in Kenosha and Racine Counties provides research-based information to gardeners and Green Industry professionals. Horticulture training programs offered through Extension Kenosha and Racine Counties in 2023 include:

**Plant Health Advising Program:** Provided research-based plant health information services to Milwaukee, Kenosha, and Racine County residents, where the educator and trained Master Gardener volunteers answered more than **790** inquiries through email, phone calls, texts, and walk-ins. Eighty-nine percent (**89%**) of inquirers felt extremely satisfied with our plant health advising program.

**Gardening for Beginners:** A four-week series of on-site training programs for beginning level gardeners taught by the Horticulture educator in Racine and Kenosha County. Twenty-one (**21**) people participated in this training.

**Teen Task Force Gardening Program:** A multi-session hands-on gardening training program for **4** teens at the YMCA Kenosha Facility.

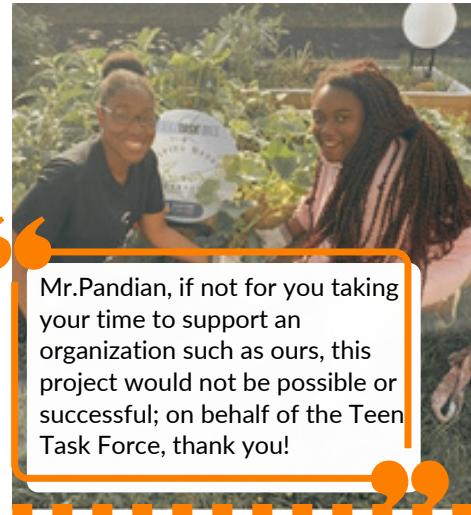
**Landscape and Grounds Maintenance Short Course Program:** A four-week online program hosted in partnership with Dane, Waukesha, and Sheboygan Counties for the green industry audience. Approximately **236** participants learned about emerging issues, new research, new plants, and environmentally sound best practices.

**Spring into Gardening Conference:** A day-long conference for consumers in collaboration with Racine/Kenosha Master Gardener Association. Participants trained and developed gardening skills with the goal to enhance sustainable landscape and gardening. On average, **125** people participated in this program.

**Urban Forestry Training Program:** A day-long pruning workshop hosted in five locations across the state for municipal employees and private arborists. Collaborated with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Urban Foresters and Horticulture Educators in Dane and Waukesha County. **50** people participated in the Milwaukee training location.

**Wisconsin Arborist Association (WAA)/Extension's Urban Forestry Webinar:** Hosted three urban forestry webinar series in partnership with WAA. The goal of this program is to provide professional development opportunities for professional arborists. Approximately **55** people participated.

**Arbor Day Program in Kenosha and Racine:** Hosted Arbor Day tree planting ceremony in Kenosha and Racine Counties in partnership with Kenosha County 4-H Educator and Parks Department in Racine County. Distributed free tree saplings to 4-H youth, county officials and residents, **35** participants.



Mr. Pandian, if not for you taking your time to support an organization such as ours, this project would not be possible or successful; on behalf of the Teen Task Force, thank you!



# FOODWISE



Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The University of Madison, Division of Extension Racine and Kenosha FoodWise program goal is to provide learning opportunities and empower communities to select healthy foods and beverages. Nutrition Education is an essential part of improving health outcomes within the Kenosha community.

**Improving Nutrition Education in Faith-Based Settings:** The Kenosha FoodWise team in 2023 had the opportunity to work collectively with New Jerusalem, a faith-based organization to empower their families to learn about Healthy Eating on a Budget.

The Nutrition Educator presentation (offered in English and Spanish) included resources for fresh fruits and vegetables, opportunities for families to taste a USDA-approved strawberry yogurt parfait recipe, and SNAP-Ed and EFNEP information on how to sign up for the FoodWise programming. The FoodWise Program creates programming that is inclusive with a nutrition-cultural approach that is tailored to the needs of the partner, participants, and environmental setting.

**New Jerusalem Partnership Program Success:** Nutrition Educators established a new relationship with New Jerusalem Church, a predominantly Hispanic-serving church in Kenosha. All bilingual Nutrition Educators assisted with planning and implementing a Spanish “Healthy Eating on a Budget” workshop to approximately 25 church members. Efforts were coordinated with OAIC (Office of Access, Inclusion, and Compliance) to have the workshop interpreted into English for the few members who did not speak Spanish. This collaboration is set to continue in 2024.

**FoodWise Program Outcomes:** In 2023, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) FoodWise Team provided direct education to:

**Over 2,404 participants and reached 6,782 participants indirectly**

The SNAP-Ed Team engaged and maintained:

**22 partnerships**

In 2023, the EFNEP FoodWise Team provided direct education to:

**39 adults and 362 youth**

The EFNE Team engaged and maintained:

**7 EFNEP partnerships**





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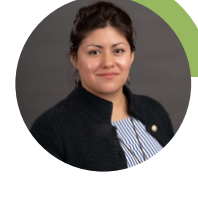
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