

Wisconsin's Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP - WI)
2025 Conference Schedule Session Descriptions

Thursday, April 3

9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Optional Pre-Conference Workshops

Network Building and Community Change

Room: Cedar Room



Tom Mosgaller

Need Hope? Want an antidote to polarization in your community? This session will introduce you to Pulling Together: A Handbook for Community Change is a practical and inspiring guide to getting things done in your neighborhood, rural town, or community. Pulling Together offers a simple but dynamic framework for community change combined with stories and lessons learned to inspire readers to work together to get things done wherever they are , with whatever resources they have.

This engaging session includes an introduction to the community change framework and includes discussion on opportunities to learn more about this framework and applications in your programming and communities. Join us in a stimulating conversation that you can take back to your county and apply.

Fun, Simple, and Effective Tools for Community Vitality and Placemaking

Room: Emerald Room with a possible walk outside



Todd Barman

Community Economic Development
Specialist
Extension - Statewide



Todd Johnson

Land Use and Community Development
Specialist
Extension - Statewide

The University of Wisconsin-Extension has created and adapted tools and approaches to help communities identify opportunities that improve quality of life. In this session, members of Extension's Community Vitality & Placemaking Signature Effort will provide training in the following tools/approaches:

- **First Impressions:** Assessing a community's "first impression" using a secret-shopper approach.
- **Business Walk:** A face-to-face Business Retention & Expansion program that celebrates local businesses while strengthening relationships.
- **Imageability Mapping:** Identifying the "bones of community" to help identify strategic opportunities for local investment.
- **Capital Asset Inventory:** A fun input to asset based community development organized around community capitals.
- **S.W.O.T.(C.) Mapping:** Creating interactive maps that allow community members to identify local strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats/challenges.
- **Community Placemaking Assessment Mapping:** Identifying local placemaking principles while contributing to a global community of case studies.

Participants will receive a quick overview of each of the elements above followed by direct training with expert facilitators. Participants will be encouraged to interrupt presenters with questions as they play with the tools and training materials.

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Optional Pre-Conference Workshops

Using and Analyzing Qualitative Data

Room: Elm Room



Jenna Klink

Senior Evaluation and Program
Development Specialist
Extension Milwaukee County



Macarena Urrets-Zavalía

Program Development and
Evaluation Specialist
Extension Statewide

Qualitative data can help us gain a rich, deep understanding of a topic and qualitative data collection can allow a participant to share stories, context, and descriptions. Come and work with real Extension data and learn about how to analyze data as a group, code, identify themes, and communicate your findings to others. Real world, Extension-generated data will be gathered from registrants ahead of time so that we can analyze one of our project's data together. We will learn the value of including people with different perspectives in analysis, starting with a pre-defined coding structure versus creating your coding structure from the ground-up, and cleaning up codes. In terms of using the results, we will review and discuss different styles of reporting out findings from qualitative data projects. We will discuss different scenarios where we gather qualitative data in Extension, discuss common challenges and brainstorm solutions together. We will learn about organizing and analyzing data using Excel and MAXQDA software. Feel free to come if you are a beginner or if you have some experience... if you have some experience, you may pick up a few tips & tricks and can also share your expertise with colleagues.

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Welcome Lunch

Lunch will include a welcome from Brown County Extension colleagues and Dean Karl Martin. This will also be an opportunity to network and connect with colleagues.

12:30 p.m. - 12:45 p.m. Break

12:45 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. Conference Sessions

Research Design

Room: Alley Room



Natasha Paris

Regional Crops

Educator

Extension Green Lake /

Marquette / Waushara

/ Adams Counties

This session will discuss how to design powerful research trials or evaluate your data while being practical with our busy Extension lives! The importance of different aspects of research will be discussed to avoid common pitfalls in conducting research. Then, and perhaps more importantly, you will learn how to run your own stats using a free no-code tool and create quality graphs to communicate your results.

Safe Icebreakers: Fostering Connection Without the Risk

Room: Cedar Room



Emery Bork
4-H Educator
Extension Vernon
County

This session will explore the crucial role of icebreakers in fostering connection at events while prioritizing participant comfort, neurodiversity, and psychological safety. Traditional icebreakers often rely on personal disclosures, potentially triggering discomfort or unease in attendees, especially when interacting with strangers. This session will address the potential pitfalls of such activities and offer practical alternatives.

We will examine common triggers, including noisy and chaotic environments, pressure to reveal personal information, being put on the spot, and physical contact. Participants will learn how these factors can create barriers to engagement rather than fostering connection.

The session will then delve into a toolkit of safe and effective icebreakers. These activities will focus on shared experiences, lighthearted interactions, and collaborative tasks, avoiding the need for potentially sensitive personal revelations. Examples will include quick polls, word association games, and small group problem-solving challenges. We will also discuss strategies for adapting icebreakers to different group sizes and event formats.

Attendees will leave this session equipped with the knowledge and resources to create welcoming and inclusive environments, ensuring that icebreakers serve their intended purpose: building rapport and encouraging meaningful interaction without compromising individual comfort or well-being. This session is ideal for all JCEP attendees from any institute, and it directly addresses the JCEP objectives by providing new skills and knowledge related to addressing a relevant problem and improving program effectiveness.

Extension: Why? What? How?

Room: Elm Room



Kristin Runge

Community Economic Development
Program Manager
Extension - Statewide



Todd Johnson

Land Use and Community Development
Specialist
Extension - Statewide

The purpose of this session is to facilitate a discussion about why, what, and how we do our Extension work. Facilitators will rely on participants to share their story of why they chose a career in Extension. Next, participants will work together to develop a shared story of what Extension is-not just a regurgitation of Extension's mission and vision, but what Extension means today in and for our communities across Wisconsin. Lastly, facilitators will encourage participants to identify the most important tools, methods, and resources Extension professionals rely on for their work as well as those tools, methods, and resources not yet made available. Results of the session will be shared with Extension leadership.

* Warning: This session relies on meaningful participation.

Democracy is Not a Spectator Sport

Room: Emerald Room ***20 minute presentation



Melissa Kono
Local Government
Specialist
Extension - Statewide

Democracy is not a spectator sport nor something that occurs only during Presidential Election years. As Extension professionals, we undertake a range of programming that fosters leadership and civic engagement yet we may be hesitant to engage in election-related work. However, election education is exactly where our non-partisan, research-based approach is needed most. Extension professionals are intelligent, qualified and highly engaged individuals in their communities and thus are well-suited to encourage civic health and participation and we should bravely go into these spaces to provide leadership and education.

It is my hope that participants will:

- Understand the role Extension can play in election education, civic engagement, and democracy
- Be inspired and empowered to become more deeply involved in election issues
- Have the courage to engage in election-related education.

What Hat are You Wearing?

Room: Emerald Room ***20 minute presentation



Melinda Pollen
4-H Youth Development Educator
Extension Brown County



Patrick Nehring
Community Development Educator
Extension Brown County

Hat is a metaphor for your role at any given moment. Sometimes you may change hats in the course of a few minutes. Board members wear the hats of governance, implementation, volunteer, and participant/parent. Staff often wear the additional hat of the coach. In this session we will learn about identifying the hats that board members and staff wear in different situations. As an Extension employee, we serve on boards, work with boards of organizations associated with Extension, provide education to organizations in the community, and report to boards in the county or at the University. Understanding what hat you are wearing or helping others understand what hat they are wearing is important for an organization to run smoothly.

1:30 p.m. - 1:40 p.m. *Break*

1:40 p.m. - 2:25 p.m. *Conference Sessions*

Dos and Don'ts of Science Communication

Room: Alley Room



Natasha Paris
Regional Crops
Educator

Extension Green Lake /
Marquette / Waushara
/ Adams Counties

Science communication is a huge part of what we do in Extension, even when we don't realize it. Making our message make sense to those around us is of utmost importance, but not always easy. In this session, we will discuss some key principles of communicating about science and research-based topics so that we can be better understood and avoid the pitfalls of misunderstanding.

Why You Can't Work with Me: Understanding Scope and Silos

Room: Cedar Room



Jasmine Carbajal

Youth Development Educator
Extension Dane County



Neil Klemme

4-H Youth Development Educator
Extension Iron County

Have you ever wondered why you “can’t” work with a certain institute in your office? What do you have to keep in mind when starting a collaboration with other colleagues? Why does it feel like we are each in our own silos? If you have ever asked yourself any (or all) of these questions, then join our panel discussion where various representatives from across Extension share their insights, experiences, and advice. The goal of this session is to gain an understanding of different scopes and identify ways to collaborate across departments.

Creating Transformative Spaces and Navigating Change

Room: Elm Room



Noah Reif

Community Development
Educator
Extension Fond du Lac County

As Extension Professionals, we are called to teach, learn, and lead for the purpose of transforming the communities we call home. In this workshop, you will learn the importance of mental models and their role in systems change, identify pitfalls that limit or derail progress, and learn how to create a space where transformative conversations can take place.

Empowering Immigrant and Refugee Entrepreneurs: Addressing Emerging Issues and Community Needs

Room: Emerald Room



Najibullah Azad (Najib)
Refugee / Immigrant
Entrepreneurial
Ecosystem Navigator
Extension - Statewide

We'll be exploring the unique challenges faced by immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs in our community and the critical support they require to thrive. As an outreach specialist, I have witnessed firsthand the barriers that these individuals encounter, including language obstacles, cultural differences, and limited access to financial resources.

We will identify relevant problems such as the difficulty in navigating legal processes for business establishment and the challenges in securing loans and grants. Additionally, we will discuss the pressing need for tailored resources, mentorship, and community engagement to foster an inclusive environment that empowers these entrepreneurs.

By understanding these emerging issues, we can work together to create effective solutions that not only support business development but also enrich our community as a whole. This presentation aims to inspire collaboration among local stakeholders, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations to build a robust support system for immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs. Join us as we delve into these vital topics and explore actionable steps to address our community's needs.

2:25 p.m. - 2:35 p.m. Break

2:35 p.m. - 4:05 p.m. Association Meetings

Wisconsin Extension Environmental and Community Development Association (WEECDA) Room: Alley Room	Wisconsin Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (WEAFCS) Room: Cedar Room	Wisconsin Association of County Agricultural Agents (WACAA) Room: Elm Room	Wisconsin Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals (WAE4-HYDP) Room: Crystal Ballroom
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4:05 p.m. - 4:10 p.m. Break

The Alley Room will be available for social time for those who will not be attending the ESP Annual Meeting.

4:10 p.m. - 5:25 p.m. ESP Meeting in the Crystal Ballroom

This meeting is open to all. The meeting will start with a quick overview, welcome, and introduction of ESP.

5:25 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Break

5:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m. Networking / ESP Silent Auction / WEECDA Live Auction

Networking Room: Alley Room	ESP Silent Auction Room: Alley Room	WEECDA Live Auction Room: Alley Room
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6:45 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Association Dinners

Wisconsin Extension Environmental and Community Development Association (WEECDA) Room: Alley Room	Wisconsin Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (WEAFCS) Room: Cedar Room	Wisconsin Association of County Agricultural Agents (WACAA) Room: Elm Room	Wisconsin Association of Extension 4-H Youth Development Professionals (WAE4-HYDP) Room: Crystal Ballroom
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Friday, April 4

7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. *Breakfast in the Crystal Ballroom*

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. *Sessions*

Shifting the Narrative: Promoting Positive Aging through Communication

Room: Balcony Room



Sara Richie

Life Span Outreach
Program Manager
Extension Portage
County

We are all aging, but what does this truly mean? And why is it important to shift the way communicate about aging with others in our communities? Join this session to explore what it means to be aging, learn how to foster positive conversations about it, and understand the impacts of ageism on individuals in our communities. Ageism is pervasive, with 1 in 2 people globally holding ageist attitudes towards older adults. It has serious consequences for physical and mental health, including increased risk of depression and social isolation. This interactive session will engage participants in reflecting on their own perceptions of aging and how these views might influence their communication with others.

Discussion Project: Facilitation Skills for Good Community Discussion

Room: Cedar Room



Neil Klemme

4-H Youth Development
Educator
Extension Iron County

This session focuses on developing essential facilitation skills to lead productive, engaging, and inclusive discussions. Through exploration of core competencies like active listening, questioning techniques, and managing group dynamics, participants will learn to foster collaborative environments and maximize participant contribution. The project delves into various facilitation methods, addresses common challenges, and provides hands-on practice through role-playing and case studies, equipping educators, leaders, and community organizers with the tools and confidence to effectively guide discussions, build consensus, and achieve collective goals.

Creating Effective Communication Plans

Room: Elm Room



Matthew Call

Director of Communications and
Stakeholder Engagement
Extension - Statewide

In this session, we will explore how to utilize an annual plan of work, project scope, or other identified program outcome as a foundational tool for developing a comprehensive communications plan. This approach involves a series of strategic steps: selecting a programming outcome, identifying a key audience group, analyzing the audience to craft targeted messages, brainstorming effective outreach tactics, and leveraging existing assets and relationships. We will cover the art and science of communications and leave with a worksheet to use as a guide for applying these concepts.

Immigration in Wisconsin: Past, Present, and Future

Room: Emerald Room



Dave Long

Spatial Data Analyst
Extension - Campus Specialist



Joe Maldonado

Youth & Family Specialist
Extension - Statewide



Kelly Maynard

Cooperative Development Specialist
Extension - Statewide



Matt Kures

Community Development Specialist
Extension - Statewide

Join us for this interactive multi-layered presentation that breaks down the impacts of immigration in Wisconsin, past, present, and future. This 2-hour workshop will review the history of immigration in Wisconsin and its current workforce impact on local communities and statewide. It will end with a presentation on immigrants' rights that provides a broad overview of current policy and practices.

9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. Break. Beverages in the Mezzanine

9:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. *Sessions*

Eight Ways to Wellness

Room: Balcony Room



Explore SAMHSA's 8 Dimensions of Wellness and discover practical strategies to enhance well-being in all areas of life. This interactive session will introduce each dimension, provide actionable wellness tips, and engage participants in activities to practice balance and self-care.

Katie Jaegly

Health & Well-Being
Educator
Extension Winnebago
County

Effective Facilitation

Room: Cedar Room



Joy Kirkpatrick

Distinguished Farm Succession
Outreach Specialist
Extension Richland County



Steph Plaster

Farm Management Outreach Specialist
Extension Ozaukee County

Effective facilitation is crucial for driving successful outcomes in workshops and individual conversations. In this session, participants will explore the core principles of facilitation and learn how to design and lead engaging workshops, facilitate meaningful stakeholder conversations, and provide effective one-on-one guidance to help individuals determine their path forward.

Using Stories to Communicate Impact

Room: Elm Room



Deilee Calvert

Communication
Manager
Extension - Statewide

Do you struggle to explain the work you do and why your work matters? Stories are an effective way to help people understand the value that you bring to your community. Impact storytelling is a way to talk about your efforts and outcomes to non-expert audiences. We'll talk about the power of storytelling and offer tips for explaining your impact so that people understand and feel connected to your work.

Immigration in Wisconsin: Past, Present, and Future *Continued*

Room: Emerald Room



Dave Long

Spatial Data Analyst
Extension - Campus Specialist



Joe Maldonado

Youth & Family Specialist
Extension - Statewide



Kelly Maynard

Cooperative Development Specialist
Extension - Statewide



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10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. *Break*

11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. *Roundtable Discussions: Effectively Community Extension's Value to County Boards*

Room: Crystal Ballroom

This is an engaging opportunity to share ideas and get feedback on effectively community Extension's value to county boards and county leaders. This recognizes the diversity of perspectives across counties and the value of sharing ideas and having conversations with colleagues about this topic.

11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. *Lunch with Awards and Intentional Networking*

Room: Crystal Ballroom

ESP will give awards during this luncheon; this will also be an opportunity for networking.