Your one-stop source for practical education on almost anything.
Dear Stakeholders:

We are pleased to present to you the 2012 Annual Report for the St. Louis Co. Office of the University of Missouri Extension. Our faculty, who present the programs for our office, continued to do wonderful, life changing programming this year, which we highlight in this report. In addition, this year, we held a Recognition Event at which we honored eight community partners who in some way either assisted with our programming or assisted with the operations of our office. Those honored included representatives of St. Louis County Executive Departments, an employee of the Special School District, a member of the Missouri House of Representatives, a professor at UMSL, and representatives of two nonprofit organizations. We also held an Open House through which we educated community members about our programming.

We also started an interdisciplinary project to do economic valuations of six of our programs. This valuation will allow us to show the real value that Extension programming brings to the participants, their families, their communities, and even the County and State of Missouri in terms of job creation, increased tax revenue, or savings on safety net programs that may no longer be necessary for the person who took one of our classes.

This year brought new challenges in that the St. Louis County building in which we are being housed will be razed to make room for the new St. Louis County Family Court building, so we have had to find a new home. We believe that we’ve found an appropriate space near the Danforth Plant Science Center in which to continue to grow our programs and raise the profile of the St. Louis County Extension Office.

We continue to be grateful for the financial and other support St. Louis County gives us that helps sustain our office and some of our activities. We are particularly pleased with the County’s support in helping us find a new home and helping to support us in that new space.

Finally, we also continue to be grateful for the contributions of the St. Louis Co. Extension Council, our governing body, which is made up of St. Louis Co. residents who help to keep us connected to the needs of the community.

We hope this report gives you a snapshot of our important work, and we hope to see you soon at one of our classes. As always, if you know of ways we could improve our programming, or you want to get involved with or support our activities, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Nina Balsam, JD, MS  
Chair, St. Louis Co. Extension Council

Karen Watkins

County Program Director  
Office: 314-615-7637

Karen Watkins

Cell: 314-681-8989
Many thanks to our volunteer governing board!


The role of Extension Council members is to bring community interests to University of Missouri Extension and to facilitate program delivery.

University of Missouri Extension is a unique partnership of local, state and federal government with the University of Missouri and the people of Missouri. Each county-based office is governed by its own Extension Council, a volunteer governing board that guides extension programming, administers extension county funds and makes personnel recommendations.

2012 St. Louis County Appropriations

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Cover Photos (Left to right, top to bottom)

2. The MU Extension booth at the Best of Missouri Market held at the Missouri Botanical Gardens.
3. County Program Director, Nina Balsam (r) and Extension Council Chair, Karen Watkins (l), showing Mizzou pride for College Colors Day.
4. Jody Squires presented Bud Reber with an award at the East Central Region Celebration for his dedication and service to the University of Missouri Extension.
5. Damaris Karanja, Extension Nutrition Specialist, leading participants during a Stay Strong, Stay Healthy strength-training class at the Shepherd’s Center in Webster Groves.
6. Amanda Meek, 4-H coordinator, explains 4-H programming during the 2012 Open House.
7. Labor Specialist, Rob Russell, Extension Council Vice Chair, Sylvester Bolden, MU Chancellor Brady Deaton and St. Louis County Executive, Charlie Dooley, gathered at the Mizzou Global Reception held on August 1st.
9. Kandace Fisher-McLean at the MU Extension booth for the Green Homes and Great Health Festival.
10. There is nothing quite like showing Mizzou pride on a brisk Fall morning!
11. Damaris Karanja, Nutrition Education Specialist, instructs the Cooking Matters course at the John C. Murphy Health Center in St. Louis County.
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

4-H in St. Louis is a group of over 2,100 youths in the area building life skills, engaging in science and connecting to the community. The St. Louis area 4-H programming includes:

**CHOICES 4-H Club, 4-H Achievement Days, St. Louis 4-H Leadership Academy, Clover Leadership Institute for Public Service and St. Louis Area Youth Futures.** These programs provide Urban 4-Hers with a variety of experiences including leadership development, college prep and community service. MU Extension 4-H also serves as a partner with the Special School District of St. Louis County. (Donna Garcia, Terry Olishile, Jody Squires)

Historically, approximately 43 students from our program have graduated and gone on to college. This year, we are on track to have 7 more college bound graduates. **Youth who earn their bachelor’s degree, increase annual earnings by $2.01 million over their lifetime (Porter, 2003)** If just 75 of Missouri 4-H participants earn an additional $2.01 million over a lifetime, that will contribute $150.8 million to the economy.

**85 youth** were impacted by the **4-H Robotics program.** It was implemented at the Youth in Need afterschool program, the St. Ambrose on the Hill after-school program, and PAKT Community Resource Center summer camp. Students used LEGO Mindstorm NXT and LEGO WeDo kits to build robots. (Amanda Meek)

We partnered with Duke University in their **TechXcite engineering program.** We recruited middle school groups to join the program and supported them through the implementation of the modules. Groups received the supplies and curriculum for these kits: Solar Car, Bionic Arm, Rainwater Harvesting, and Wireless Burglar Alarm. Training was held in the spring and fall. At this time, we have **20 groups** participating as after-school programs, 4-H clubs, homeschool groups, and summer camps. (Amanda Meek)

In Missouri, the 2020 projected job growth for STEM occupations (+9.5%) is higher than the average (+8.8%) expected combined growth for all occupations in the state. The key to meeting this increased demand for STEM skilled employees is education. Of the 100 plus occupations classified as STEM in the state of Missouri, 90% require some education or experience beyond the High School level, and 70% require a Bachelor’s degree or more. ²

The 4-H Robotics programming in the St. Louis Area supports the increased demand for Missouri students to be prepared for careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

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The mission of the MU Extension Master Gardener Program is “helping others learn to grow.” The Master Gardener program provides in-depth horticultural training to individuals throughout the St. Louis area who then volunteer their time applying what they have learned to help others in their communities to learn about gardening and environmental education.

35 Master Gardeners and the same number of Master Naturalists were added to our ranks in 2012. Participants receive 15-19 sessions of practical classroom instruction and hands-on activities which prepare them to donate 40-50 hours of related volunteer service in their communities. Many of them define the overall experience as “life-changing.” Volunteers give in excess of 35,000 hours of service to the community each year. Based on the average Missouri income, their time is valued at $18.80 an hour, resulting in $658,000 contributed to our area in volunteer hours. Missouri Botanical Garden and Missouri Department of Conservation are Extension program partners. (Nathan Brandt)

St. Louis County victims of domestic violence at the Kathy J. Weinman Shelter are receiving help from MU Extension in response to a garden restoration request. In partnership with St. Louis County Parks, Extension constructed four raised garden beds on the shelter’s previous garden site and filled them with vegetable transplants. Basil, tomatoes, cucumbers and eggplants were among the first harvest enjoyed by shelter residents and staff. Greater plans began in June when the 2012 Master Gardener class adopted the shelter grounds and designed a complete makeover of the landscape areas most visible to residents. The project includes healing gardens for children and is funded by a $3,000 Master Gardener grant. (Nathan Brandt)

MU Extension expanded its Soil Testing Services in 2012 by partnering with Brightside St. Louis in the city neighborhood of Southwest Garden. MU Extension and Brightside processed 320 soil samples from lawns, gardens, flowerbeds etc. (Nathan Brandt)

St. Louis County farmers and homeowners struggled to keep ahead of climate-related damage this summer. Extension provided Drought-Relief Efforts by assisting agricultural producers with applications for state emergency irrigation funding. Extension also published and distributed information about mitigating the effects of drought to more than 200 arborists and landscape manager. (Nathan Brandt)

St. Louis Master Gardeners are involved with many local community horticultural projects spanning the area in both the city and county including downtown street medians, community gardens and St. Louis County Parks.
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

University of Missouri Extension helps people create communities of the future. Community development education helps citizens tap into local strengths and University resources.

Community Forums – Community Partnership Project Seminar Series & Brown Bag Series
Over 225 community members, nonprofit organization staff, stakeholders, and elected officials attended the Community Partnership Project Seminar Series. The series focused on the state of community development nonprofits in St. Louis. In addition, a monthly Brown Bag series was launched that continued the conversation about how CDCs are making a difference in the region. Nearly 160 community leaders, nonprofit staff, municipal leaders and elected officials attended this series that examined job development, rental housing, retail development, youth and summer programs and using art as a community revitalization tool. (Kara Lubischer)

NLA and Advanced Workshop
In May 2012, 20 community leaders and nonprofit staff graduated from the 11th Annual Neighborhood Leadership Academy (NLA), joining the ranks of nearly 200 alumni who continue to work to improve their communities. Over 25 community leaders, nonprofit staff and Neighborhood Leadership Academy alumni participated in the second annual “Funding Your Neighborhood Project”. In this hands-on workshop, participants learned the tools and techniques to securing funding to successfully implement their neighborhood projects. This collaborative training brings together unique expertise from across University of Missouri: Community Partnership Project, Nonprofit Management & Leadership Program, and MU Extension. (Kara Lubischer)

St. Louis Healthy Corner Store Project
The St. Louis Healthy Corner Store Project successfully launched its first program year by seeking nominations in January 2012 of corner stores by neighborhood-based organizations. The St. Louis Healthy Corner Store Project is a comprehensive approach that combines nutrition education, business development and community leadership development in areas that lack the availability of affordable, nutritious foods. This project serves as a premier example of how MU Extension is working with community organizations in food deserts to improve access to healthy foods. It also serves as a model of program integration among local MU Extension faculty who are working across disciplines in order to have larger and more meaningful impact. (Kara Lubischer)

It is well-documented that diet and nutrition have a direct impact on the health of a community. By providing citizens with knowledge, leadership skills and awareness, MU Extension is on the forefront of stabilizing many St. Louis area communities. For instance, if an NLA participant opts to create a community garden as a result of the program, that community could be impacted in several ways. The American Heart Association states that 1 in 3 people have high blood pressure. Growing and consuming fresh vegetables in an area where many are living with hypertension can have a great economic benefit. Costs directly attributable to high blood pressure for the nation total almost $131 billion annually in direct medical expenses and $25 billion in lost productivity. Access to fresh food and the elimination of food deserts has a significant impact on the local economy.  

HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Human Environmental Sciences at MU Extension promotes optimal well-being of individuals, families and communities, with special recognition for the needs of vulnerable populations.

FINANCIAL EDUCATION

MU Extension in St. Louis offers several programs that are designed to instruct and inform women on the importance of personal finances throughout every stage of life. Some examples of the seminars and classes offered throughout the year are: The **Women’s Financial Education Series**, **Safeguard Your Savings**, **$tart $mart**, **Work $mart, Return $mart for Women** and **Divorce on the Horizon**. Our financial education programs address many issues such as estate planning, insurance and saving for retirement and helped approximately **300+ participants** address these critical financial matters in 2012. (Suzanne Gellman)

The **Women’s Empowerment Center (WEC)** is a collaborative effort headed by MU Extension to provide education that increases women’s financial stability. One of the more persistent problems is the pay gap that exists between men and women. In 2011, Missouri women who were full-time wage and salary workers had median weekly earnings of $628 or 74.7 percent of the $841 median weekly earnings for their male counterparts, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. The WEC arms women in the workforce with the confidence to negotiate salary offers which helps decrease the pay gap. (Suzanne Gellman, Kara Lubischer, Lynette Watson)

“{If that gap were to close and women were to be paid the difference, economist Heidi Hartmann, president of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, estimates that the stimulus effect *would grow* the U.S. economy by at least three to four percentage points. The $800 billion economic stimulus package that Congress passed in 2009 to bail banks out of the recession, by contrast, is estimated to have grown the GDP by less than 1.5 percent overall.”}^{1}


HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

As part of a partnership with the America Scores Program in May 2012, approximately **30 3rd – 5th graders** at Jefferson Elementary School in Pasadena Hills, MO learned about the importance of **sustainable living** including recycling and composting. Students were taught about what types of items could be recycled and how to recycle them. (Kandace Fisher-McLean)

At the **St. Louis Times Geriatric Symposium** in January 2012, approximately **50 attendees** learned about modifying their homes to promote aging-in-place. Utilizing Universal Design Techniques, participants learned about changes that can be made such as increased lighting and lighting quality, increased color contrast, proper flooring selection, suitable furniture selections, lever handles added to doors, handrails, grab bars, roll out shelving, as well as other home adjustments that would allow them to remain in their homes. (Kandace Fisher-McLean)

Over **4,000 people** attended the **Green Homes and Great Health Festival** in September 2012 at the Missouri Botanical Gardens. Approximately **500 people** visited the booth hosted by the University of Missouri Extension to learn about tips for making their homes more energy efficient, keeping their homes healthy and having their soil tested. Renewable, recyclable, and non-toxic building products were on display to educate participants about the different types of environmental friendly materials they can use in their home rehab projects. (Kandace Fisher-McLean)
If the recyclable materials in Missouri’s municipal solid waste were recovered instead of landfilled, nearly **28 billion** BTUs of energy could have been saved, equivalent to the annual amount of energy used by **262,000 houses**. Based on the average cost of propane, **28 billion BTUs** would equate to cost savings of more than **$500 million**. Further, if the recyclable materials had been diverted and used in new products instead of using virgin materials, more than 1.1 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions could have been avoided. (MORA, 2010) Continued education in the areas of sustainability and recycling in St. Louis County is exceedingly important to the overall financial health of Missouri.

Education provided through the University of Missouri-Extension for the United Way’s Youth IDA program taught youth aging out of the foster system about saving and investing, their rights and responsibilities as renters, properly caring for their homes, and proper nutrition and food safety. Youth will use their matched savings towards asset specific investments such as rent for an apartment, continued education, a vehicle, etc. (Kandace Fisher-McLean, Suzanne Gellman, Damaris Karanja, Mary Wissmann)

**NUTRITION AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

A continued partnership with Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services enabled **32 teachers, teacher’s aides, and cooks** to be trained on the Missouri Eat Smart Guidelines for Child Care Centers. These centers implemented the guidelines and significantly improved the nutritional quality of breakfasts, snacks, and lunches served daily to nearly 150 children in St. Louis County. (Damaris Karanja and Mary Wissmann)

In St. Louis County, **80 people** participated in Basic and Advanced Stay Strong, Stay Healthy, 10-week strength training programs for middle-aged and older adults. These programs are designed to increase aging adults’ access to a safe, structured, and effective strength training program. University of Missouri Extension collaborated with Missouri Botanical Garden, Shepherd’s Center of Webster/Kirkwood, and Douglass Manor to offer the program. By participating in these programs, participants will increase their physical activity and may improve strength, balance and flexibility, resulting in reduced risk for falls, better overall health and greater independence. These health benefits decrease the likelihood of a participant entering a nursing home, which costs on average **$51,465 per year** in Missouri. The money saved benefits the community by keeping more discretionary income in circulation locally. It also keeps people actively, independently contributing to society longer. (Damaris Karanja and Mary Wissmann)

1 The MetLife Market Survey of Adult Day Services & Home Care Costs, 2011

University of Missouri Extension continues to be the trusted source for tested and safe **home food preservation** information. **60 people** learned about safe food preservation techniques and tested recipes through partnerships with The Thomas Dunn Center, EarthDance Farms, Indian Trails Branch of the St. Louis County Library, Hawken House, and the Maplewood/Richmond Heights Garden Club. (Damaris Karanja and Mary Wissmann)

In St. Louis County, **15 people** participated in the University of Missouri Extension educational program series, Eat Well, Be Well with Diabetes. The program was held in collaboration with St. Louis Co. Health Department’s North County Community Health Center. The program was funded by a grant from Eli Lily.
Eat Well Be Well with Diabetes program participants report:

- adoption of healthier food choices (lower saturated fat intake, decreased sugar consumption, increased vegetable intake)
- increased their knowledge of and adoption of diabetes-specific meal planning methods (Carbohydrate Counting and Plate Method)
- increased confidence in their ability to manage a high or low blood sugar level
- preparing healthy meals from home more frequently
- improved confidence in their ability to make healthy food choices when eating from a restaurant

Based on the feedback:

**86% of the participants** reported that their knowledge, skills, and understanding improved “a great deal” after participating in the program.

**72% of the participants** reported frequently using the plate method or carbohydrate counting at most meals.

There was an increase in consumption of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains and a significant increase in the number of participants who reported engaging in 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day most days of the week.

The cost of diabetes in Missouri is estimated at $3,006,000,000 which includes excess medical costs ($1,990,000,000) and costs due to lost productivity ($1,016,000,000) (American Diabetes Association, 2009). According to the American Diabetes Association, the cost of medical care for people with diagnosed diabetes increased from $1 billion per year in the 1970s to $116 billion per year in 2007. (Damaris Karanja)

A total of **13 people participated** in a 6-week Cooking Matters course sponsored by University of Missouri Extension Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Operation Food Search. The program’s goal is to engage underserved low-income adults in a series of participatory cooking classes designed to empower them to get the most out of their limited budgets. The program was held at Jackson Park Senior apartments in St. Louis City.

Graduates of Cooking Matters courses complete a survey on the last day of the course. There were documented changes in behavior and attitudes as a result of the course. Based on the feedback, **70% of the participants** reported that their cooking skills have “improved a lot” as a result of taking this course and **70%** made a cooking matters recipe at home. There was an increase in consumption of vegetables, fruits, low-fat or fat-free milk products, whole grains, lean meat, chicken, or fish. Fifty percent are eating more vegetables, **80%** are eating more fruits, **70%** are eating more whole grains, **70%** are eating more lean meat, chicken or fish, and **70%** are drinking more water. By the last session, the number of participants who reported engaging in 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day **increased by 54%**.

“Before this class, I never knew that carbs were sugar.”

**Eat Well, Be Well participant**
Unhealthy eating and inactivity contribute to 310,000 to 580,000 deaths each year according to the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The typical American diet is too high in saturated fat, sodium, and sugar and too low in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, calcium, and fiber. Such a diet contributes to four of the six leading causes of death and increases the risk of numerous diseases. Unhealthy eating habits and physical inactivity are leading causes of disability and loss of independence. According to the USDA, healthier diets could prevent at least $71 billion per year in medical costs, lost productivity, and lost lives. According to the CDC, state and federal governments spend one thousand times more to treat disease than to prevent it ($1,390 vs. $1.21 per person each year). Avoiding or delaying onset of a disease increases a person’s productivity/earning potential. Comparing Cooking Matters participants’ evaluation data shows that significant lifestyle changes occur during the participant’s enrollment, thereby strengthening the evidence of Cooking Matters impact. (Damaris Karanja)

FAMILY NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAMS (FNEP)

Family Nutrition Education Programs (FNEP) provides information on nutrition, food safety and physical activity for lifelong health and fitness. Nutrition education for youth provides information in child-friendly terms and lessons with hands-on activities. Activities include opportunities for taste-testing healthy foods and practicing skills that lead to good health. During 2012, some 2690 individuals were served through schools, community groups and agencies. (Teressa Caine-Glasper, Janet Stallmann)

LABOR EDUCATION

The MU Extension Labor Education Program is a dedicated partner in the development and delivery of high quality leadership training programs for trade union leaders throughout the St. Louis community.

Labor Law Breakfast Series
There were 292 participants from 48 different unions and other organizations. There were 15 presenters/partners from St. Louis and throughout the state of Missouri, including university faculty, appointed state officials, attorneys and neutrals. Collectively over 300 hours of learning occurred throughout 2012. Presenters discussed a variety of topics, including health care reform & what it means for Missouri; social media in the workplace; Missouri’s prevailing wage law; the psychology of collective bargaining; employee privacy rights; the arbitration of employment disputes; and updates on what is happening at the Missouri Department of Labor.

Labor relations are a continually evolving area of the law. These continuing education programs help practitioners understand these changes and the best practices in labor & employment relations so that they can continue to work effectively as advocates. (Rob Russell)
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MISSION
University of Missouri Extension improves Missourians’ lives by addressing their highest priorities through the application of research based knowledge and resources.
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