

YOUTH, FAMILY, COMMUNITIES



Building Communities through Wellness and Finances

Today's economic situation reflects a severe lack of financial preparedness and awareness about wellness and better nutrition. Notably, consumers need to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate in a complex economic marketplace and achieve lifetime financial security. Extension experts at land-grant universities have developed educational programs to encourage sound habits and improve lifestyles.

SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Extension programs in **Texas** provide educational services to homeless and addicted men in a series on Money Management. Participants learned about budgeting and shopping strategies for food, clothing and necessities of life.
- In Nevada, **Missouri**, university Extension programs conducted a five-year collaborative Healthy Nevada project intended to change an entire community's culture around health. It helped the community collectively develop healthier living practices and improve wellness in areas such as obesity, diabetes, smoking and food insecurity. The program resulted in a farmers market, a school/community walking trail and community gardens with enough produce to donate to food pantries and educate families about healthy food products and preparation.
- Military occupations and training are not always considered transferable to the civilian workforce, placing some veterans at a disadvantage when competing for employment. Extension programs in **Texas** have developed workshops to help veterans, homeless persons and the unemployed increase the pool of trained applicants to address the flood disaster rehabilitation workforce, facilitate service learning for university students, minimize homelessness, provide skills training, create jobs and help service-based nonprofit organizations increase capacities.
- Extension programs in **Alabama** provide financial management education to help individuals and families learn the value of saving money that could offset economic crises and enable them to meet short- and long-term financial goals.
- The USDA Rural Development Agency in **Arkansas** provided approximately \$250,000 in housing grants (504 Grant Program) and \$500,000 in housing loans (502 Housing Loan Programs) to socially disadvantaged residents in southeast Arkansas. Many program participants were able to install new roofs, receive new central heating and air units and remodel their kitchens.

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The Land-Grant University System is a uniquely American institution, and has operated successfully for more than a century. The landgrantimpacts.org website documents and demonstrates the collective and individual impacts of the national system of joint teaching, research, and extension institutions.

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