

UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, URBAN SUSTAINABILITY
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CAUSES **IMPACT** REPORT



October - December **2019**



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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Dwane Jones, PhD, ACC
(Associate Certified Coach)

Acting Dean and Director
of Land Grant Programs

College of Agriculture,
Urban Sustainability and
Environmental Sciences
(CAUSES)

UDC is the only public, HBCU, and land-grant institution in the nation's capital. The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES) is privileged to offer research-based academic and extension programs that improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for residents of the District of Columbia. The quarterly CAUSES Impact Report highlights some of the many ways we are affecting the community. We hope you will be inspired to join us as we advance "Healthy Cities, Healthy People."

The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES) of the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), embodies the urban land-grant mission of the University. CAUSES offers baccalaureate, graduate, and professional degree programs, as well as workforce development certificates, workshops, clinics and community education programs for learners of all ages.

MISSION

CAUSES offers research-based academic and community outreach programs that improve the quality of life and economic opportunity of people and communities in the District of Columbia, the nation, and the world.

VISION

CAUSES will be a world leader in designing and implementing top-quality, research-based academic and community outreach programs that measurably improve the quality of life and economic prosperity of people and communities in the District of Columbia, the nation, and the world.

COLLEGE/SCHOOL/DIVISION GOALS

CAUSES graduates are exceptionally well prepared to succeed in their chosen fields of study. In addition, our graduates stand out by having distinctive attributes and competencies. CAUSES graduates are:

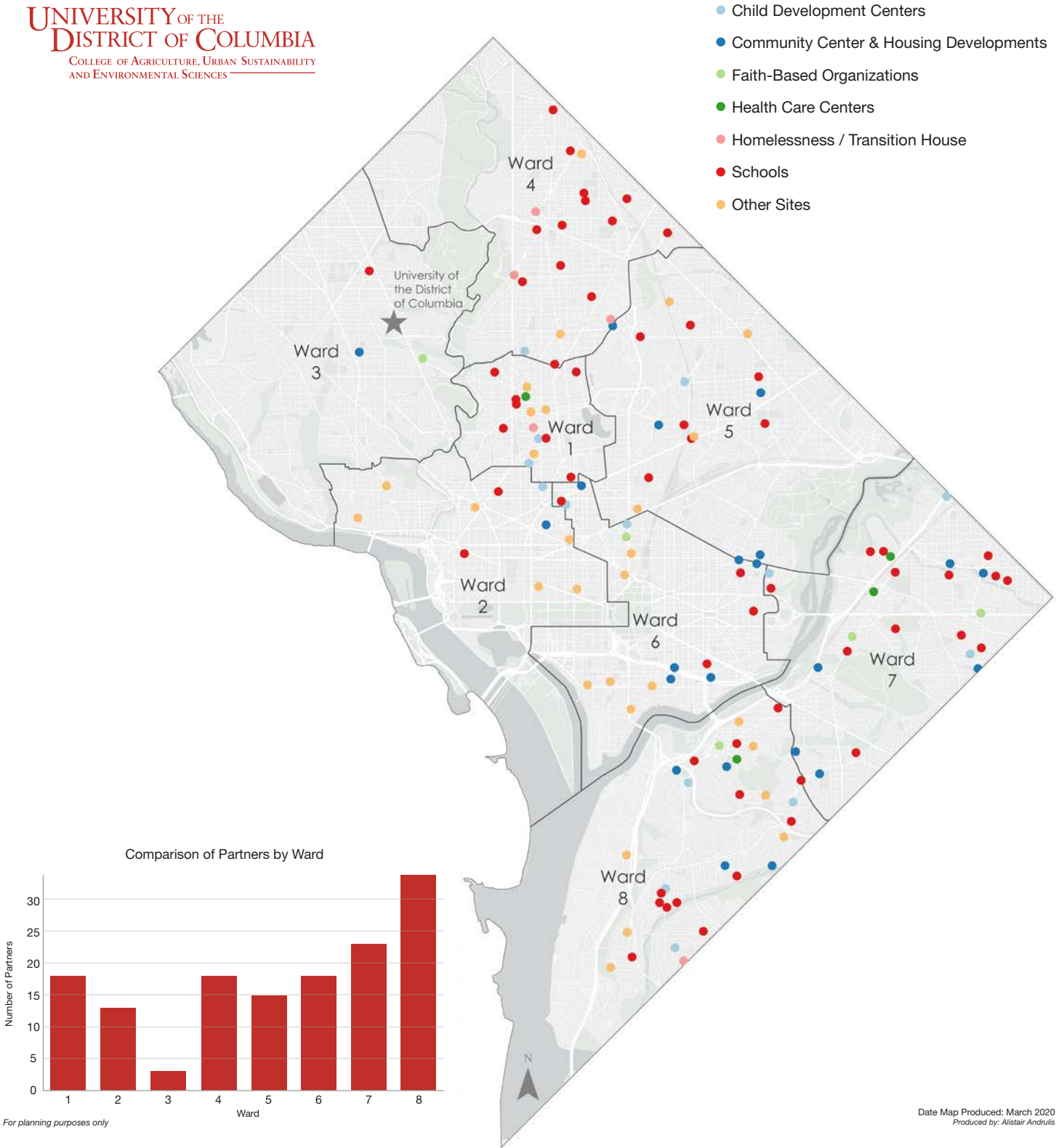
1. Global citizens committed to local relevance.
2. Adept at solving urban problems.
3. Committed to health and wellness, food and water security.
4. Skilled at navigating diverse social, cultural, built and natural environments.
5. Independent thinkers and collaborative team players.
6. Adaptive lifelong learners.

CAUSES embodies the land-grant tradition of UDC. In addition to offering innovative academic programs, the college also offers a wide range of community education programs through its land-grant centers and institutes: (1) The Center for Urban Agriculture & Gardening Education, (2) The Center for Sustainable Development & Resilience, (3) The Center for Nutrition Diet & Health, with its Institute of Gerontology, (4) The Center for Architectural Research & Building Science, with its Architectural Research Institute, (5) The Center for 4-H & Youth Development, and (6) The Water Resources Research Institute.

CAUSES land-grant programs are well positioned to advance the sustainability goals of the District of Columbia and the six core objectives of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These are:

1. To improve food security.
2. To mitigate climate change.
3. To combat childhood obesity and other food related illness.
4. To improve food safety.
5. To improve water safety and management.
6. To expand alternative energy solutions.

CAUSES PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS



CAUSES IMPACTS

FIREBIRD FARM “GLEANNING DAY”



Statement of the Issue:

One out of every ten residents in the Washington, DC, region is considered food insecure. This problem is often more pronounced during the holiday seasons. Meanwhile, 10.1 million tons of food are wasted on farms in the United States each year. This waste is the result of either (1) unintentional spoilage of food that is left in the fields or (2) intentional composting of produce that does not meet marketability standards.

Statement of Action Taken:

The CAUSES Production Team advertised and implemented a Gleaning Day to rescue any edible produce remaining in our fields prior to the 2019 Thanksgiving holiday. The harvested produce was then donated to a local-area food bank, where it was offered to food insecure households in Washington, DC.

Statement of Results:

Ninety-one (91) volunteers joined us for the 2019 Thanksgiving Gleaning Day. CAUSES donated 1,238 pounds of produce to D.C.-area households in preparation for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Project Contact:

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MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM



Statement of the Issue:

From consuming produce that is tastier and higher in nutritional value to decreasing CO₂ emissions by harvesting as locally as your backyard, District residents are all “abuzz” about the many benefits of local food production. Urban agriculture has caught on, and unlike large scale intensive agriculture operations, urban agriculture utilizes comparatively smaller spaces, while focusing on diversified, edible crops. Many residents already supplement what they buy at the grocery store through community garden plots and by growing in their backyards. Technical assistance is needed with issues ranging from cultivar selection, soil testing, soil contamination, planting dates, fertilizing, and integrated pest management. Alternately, other District residents do not have access to grocery stores, let alone yard space, or a nearby community garden in which they can grow their food.

Statement of Action Taken:

Eighty-Seven (87) participants were trained as Master Gardeners, receiving 45-50 hours of basic horticulture training. Program trainees agreed to work in their communities to teach District of Columbia residents how to cultivate garden spaces and manage landscapes sustainably using research-based information. This environmental horticulture approach reduces fertilizer and pesticide use, resulting in improved soil and water quality.

Statement of Results:

178 Master Gardeners and Trainees provided 8,000 hours of horticultural expertise to the District of Columbia. The value of volunteer time to the District is over \$310,160.00. Various Master Gardener projects were established throughout all eight wards. Produce harvested was donated to local food banks, UDC’s Student Food Pantry, and elderly volunteers. One-third of Master Gardeners continue their education in horticulture related fields, and obtain employment.

Project Contact:

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PR HARRIS URBAN FOOD HUB



Statement of the Issue:

Urban food deserts – areas lacking access to grocery stores and other types of access to healthy produce – disproportionately affect neighborhoods of color and communities that fall on the lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum. This lack of fresh produce in these areas often leads to higher rates of long-term dietary health risks – such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke – severely impacting the local population.

Statement of Action Taken:

To help combat this reality, the UDC-CAUSES Urban Food Hub – located at the PR Harris Educational Center in Washington, DC's Ward 8 – grew fresh vegetables and fruits for distribution throughout these historically disenfranchised communities.

Statement of Results:

Since becoming fully operational in September 2019, the farm has made an immediate impact on our partner non-profits' ability to serve by increasing their access to reliable, local produce. From October 2019 through December 2019, this Urban Food Hub has successfully produced and distributed 495 lbs. of food throughout D.C. This amount is comprised of a mixture of leafy greens and peppers.

Project Contact:

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PESTICIDE APPLICATION: PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING



Statement of the Issue:

A recent report generated by the District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) found unreasonably high occurrences of pesticide residues in District waterways. These findings highlighted the need for educational resources, and an increase in certified pesticide applicator licenses to protect human health and the environment by improving the quality of pesticide services in the District.

Statement of Action Taken:

UDC CAUSES developed a 15-hour training program to prepare applicants for DOEE pesticide applicator certification and recertification examinations. Certification topics of the workshop included: 1) Ornamental Pest Control 3A; 2) Turf Pest Control 3B; and 3) Public Health Pest Control 8.

Statement of Results:

There were a total of 27 registrants, and 25 certificates were awarded. Analysis from pre- and post-test scores collected revealed that the mean scores of the post-test (86%) were significantly higher than the pretest (52%), showing a significant gain in knowledge.

Project Contact:

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FOOD PRODUCTION/AGROECOLOGY



Statement of the Issue:

Climate change is projected to increase weather vagaries such as low and erratic rainfall, increased storms and floods, and extreme temperatures. Rising temperatures will affect yield in addition to increasing demand for more water for irrigation, leading to food and water insecurity. It is critical to educate and train students to grow food in a sustainable manner.

Statement of Action Taken:

UDC CAUSES taught a food production/agroecology course, consisting of comprehensive and interactive lectures and videos, on the principles and elements of agroecology, including climate change, sustainable agriculture, urban agriculture, food security and financial mechanisms. Students attended talks and workshops on related topics when held on campus, including a workshop on mushroom cultivation. They were given assignments where they gathered information to write papers and give oral presentations. Students were also exposed to the impacts of science, social movements, and cultural practices on issues related to agroecology and climate change. A survey was administered at the end of the semester to gauge change in knowledge and change in behavior/attitude.

Statement of Results:

During discussions in class, it was evident that students were gaining knowledge on different topics related to agroecology. Discussions revolved around climate change, recycling, water conservation, waste reduction, and food security, indicating a positive shift in their behavior/attitude towards the same. Students also became adept at collecting and condensing information on course-related topics that were new to them – so much so that they showed interest in continuing to work on a group assignment beyond course requirement to prepare a more comprehensive and informative article. In addition, they eagerly embraced a challenge to contribute to mitigation of climate change impact by adopting a new habit related to waste reduction/recycling/water conservation, or by committing to what they had already adopted. A short survey administered at the end of the semester to assess changes in knowledge and behavior/attitude indicated a positive shift, with an 85 percent change in knowledge and a 75 percent change in behavior/ attitude. These outcomes show that the course was successful not only in imparting knowledge in agroecology and related aspects, but also in sustaining interest and enthusiasm beyond the classroom and the semester.

Project Contact:

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UDC SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM-EDUCATION (SNAP-ED)



Statement of the Issue:

Nutrition is critical for the healthy growth and development of children. Obesity, chronic disease, and premature mortality can be prevented with healthy eating habits (Khambalia, et al, 2012). Low- and middle -income populations are the most prone to obesity. The obesity rate of children who live in households below the poverty level in the US is 2.7 times the average (Warren et al., 2018). School-based interventions can be the most effective way to change the nutritional knowledge and behavior of children (Boocock 1995).

The University of the District of Columbia (UDC); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed); College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability, and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES); and the Center for Nutrition, Diet, and Health (CNDH), contributed to meeting national health objectives by targeting children 2-5 years old in schools and childcare, their caregivers, and families. UDC SNAP-Ed delivered obesity prevention-focused nutrition education designed to influence behavior in the areas of nutrition, food safety, and physical activity. UDC SNAP-Ed activities concentrated on District wards that exhibited higher rates of chronic diseases — namely, Wards 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8.

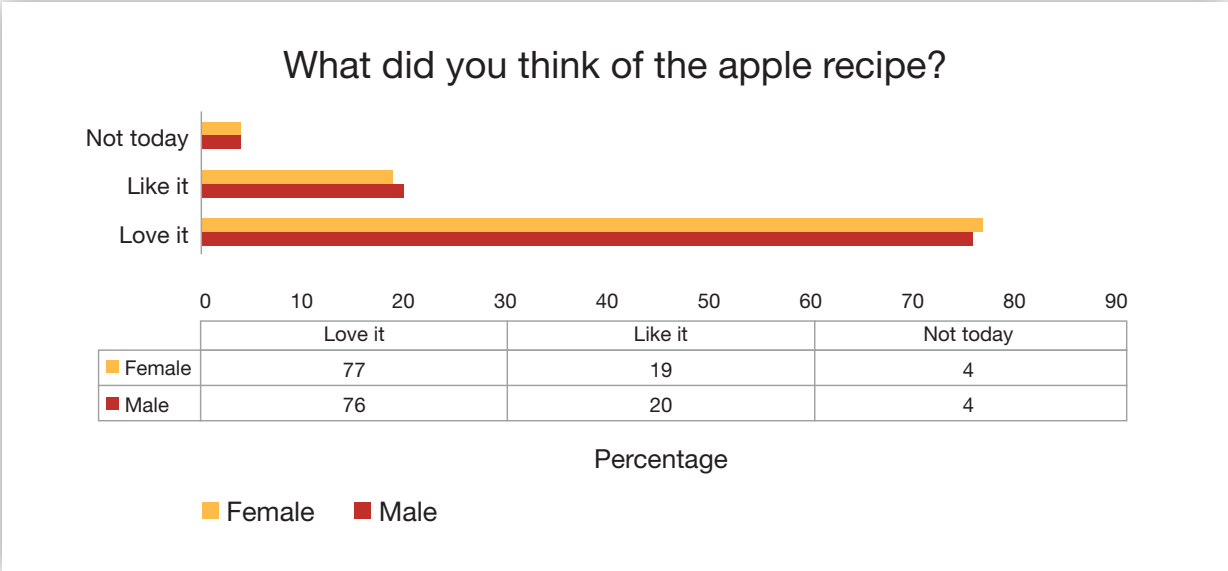
Statement of Action Taken:

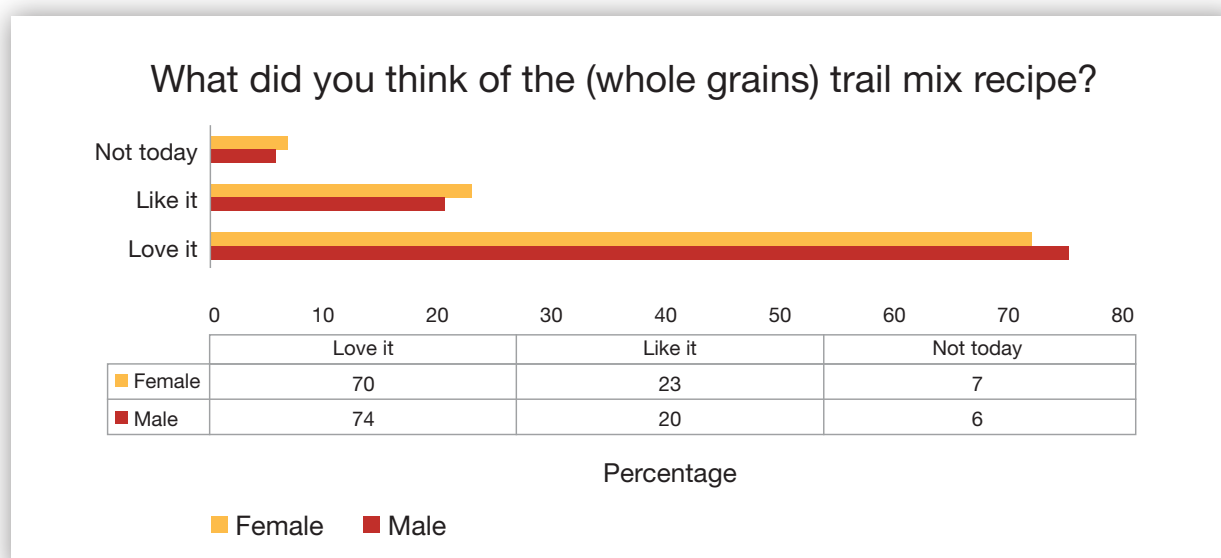
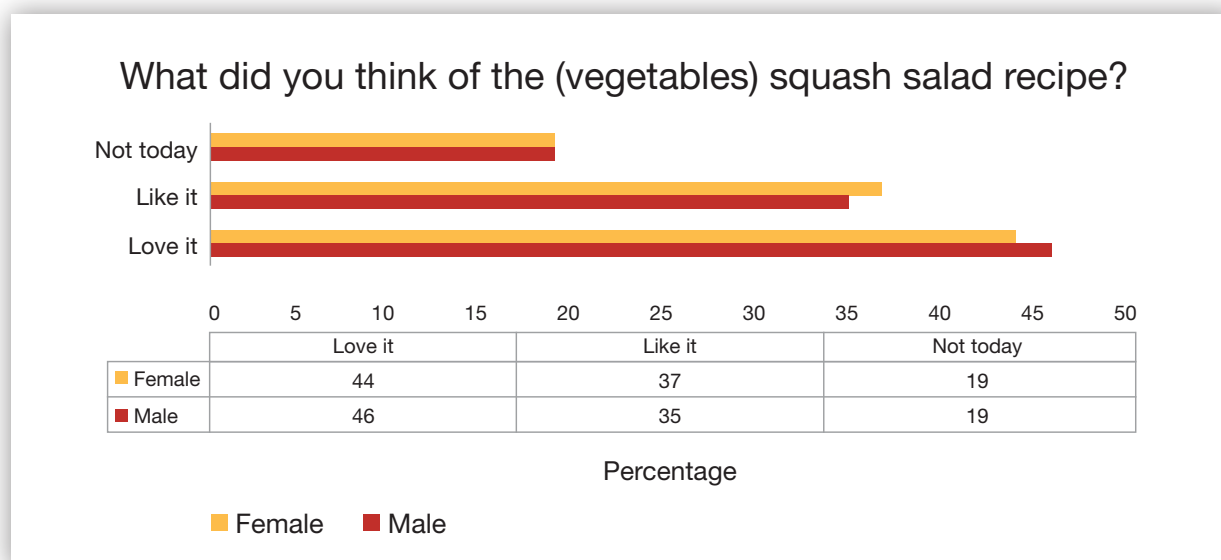
UDC SNAP-Ed served children, parents, teachers, and staff by conducting monthly nutrition education workshops and healthy food demonstrations in classrooms of various childcare centers and elementary schools across the District. Participating teachers were provided with technical training on the most current version of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, MyPlate, and nutrition education curricula, to deliver a series of nutrition education workshops. Direct educational events were held for staff and caregivers to encourage reinforcement of healthy eating and physical activity behaviors, and to influence policy, systems, and environmental changes in the classroom, at home, and in communities. Educational messages included increasing consumption of vegetables and whole grains, along with increasing daily physical activity, food safety, proper handwashing, and hygiene practices. SNAP-Ed educators utilized two evidence-based curricula, Color Me Healthy and Nutrition Essentials, to deliver educational messages and activities.

Statement of Results:

UDC SNAP-Ed nutrition educators were present in 15 DC Public Schools (DCPS) and six Child Development Centers (CDC). Of the 15 DC Public Schools (DCPS), five were located in Ward 8, five in Ward 7, one in Ward 5, three in Ward 4, one in Ward 2, and one in Ward 1. Of the six CDCs, two were in Ward 8, two in Ward 7, and two in Ward 4. The nutrition educators were present in 77 DCPS classrooms and 18 CDC classrooms, working with an unduplicated count of 1,694 children and 106 teachers. The total of duplicated contacts during Quarter 1 (Q1) was 5,257.

In-classroom surveys were conducted monthly after each food activity. Each month a different recipe was introduced to the children. The lessons and food activities for Quarter 1 included food safety/ hand washing in October 2019; vegetables in November 2019; and whole grains in December 2019. Physical activity was included as part of each monthly lesson. The food activity was assorted apple slices in October, squash salad in November, and trail mix in December 2019.





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Project Contact:

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COMMUNITY NUTRITION



Statement of the Issue:

Persistently high rates of non-communicable diseases with their resultant increased medical costs require comprehensive and coordinated prevention strategies.

Statement of Action Taken:

The Center for Nutrition, Diet and Health developed a program to present dietary guideline education sessions and food demonstrations in all eight wards of the District of Columbia. In the last quarter of 2019, over 300 DC residents in Wards 4, 5, and 7 have been provided regular dietary guidelines education sessions at Good Success Christian Ministry in Ward 7, Church Food Pantry in Ward 4, and Langdon Education Center in Ward 5.

Statement of Results:

Over 70% of participants reported meeting learning objectives consistent with dietary guidelines.

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SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM



Statement of the Issue:

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2015, the District of Columbia had 114,278 adults who were 60 years and older, and in 2018, there were approximately 119,417 adults 60 years and over residing in the District. There was an increase of 5,139 older adults in three years residing in the District due to steady growth in the aging population locally.

As we get older, we are less able to adapt to significant changes to our routines and our lives. For seniors who are not as capable as they used to be, it can be difficult to manage day-to-day activities and tasks such as going shopping, cooking a meal, and taking medication. As a result, additional services and programs are necessary to address the challenges of living independently. Aging services and programs are resources that assist older adults with successfully aging in place and staying connected in their communities.

Statement of Action Taken:

The Senior Companion Program of the Institute of Gerontology, Center for Nutrition, Diet and Health (CNDH), College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences (CAUSES), provides companionship, friendship, assistance in managing daily chores and activities and connects seniors to additional resources. The Senior Companion Program, funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, has recruited and trained Senior Volunteers aged 60 years and older, living in the District of Columbia, to serve other District citizens in their places of residence or at group facilities such as senior housing, long-term care facilities, and senior centers.

Statement of Results:

In 2019, Senior Companion volunteers provided 71,505 hours of service with 77 volunteers serving 174 special need clients -- 34 clients with Alzheimer's Disease; 64 with chronic care disabilities; 4 with substance abuse problems; 33 terminally ill adults; 10 visually impaired adults; and 45 with other special needs.

In alignment with the University's *Equity Imperative* goals to enhance relationships with government and other major stakeholders, the Senior Companion Program partnered with organizations such as the Mayor's Office on Volunteerism - Serve DC, Department of Aging and Community Living, AARP, United Healthcare, Alzheimer's Association, and Georgetown University.

The Senior Companion Program continues to provide educational outreach activities and programs to over 2,500 senior citizens from all eight wards of the District of Columbia. Training for volunteers is provided through the Institute of Gerontology's network of guest speakers, community partners, staff, and faculty.

Project Contact:

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BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE PROGRAM IN NUTRITION AND DIETETICS



Statement of the Issue:

There is an inadequate number of qualified nutrition professionals in the District of Columbia. Senior citizens are one of the most vulnerable populations of the District. This population is woefully underserved. There is one government-assigned nutritionist for each of the eight wards. Because of the insufficient number of qualified nutritionists in the District of Columbia who choose to work with older adults, individuals who lack a strong background in nutrition may be hired by not-for-profit organizations to fill the void.

Another challenge faced by the District of Columbia is the need to find nutritionists trained to work with diverse cultures. This diversity manifests itself not only in terms of race and national origin, but also in terms of age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and disability. Wards 7 and 8, though experiencing the phenomenon of regentrification, still have the highest proportions of children and low-income residents in the District of Columbia.

Statement of Action Taken:

The faculty of the Nutrition and Dietetics Program has addressed the need to increase quality nutrition services to older adults through several means. First, there is a required course in Geriatric Nutrition. Second, we collaborated with the Institute of Gerontology, University of the District of Columbia, as well as the D.C. Department of Aging and Community Living (D.C. Office on Aging) and ward leaders of older adult services. Students were assigned to field experiences as part of their practicum courses.

For example, through these courses, Food Systems Management I and II, Community Nutrition, and Nutrition Education, students can gain experience in working with senior citizens and building cultural competence. They gain experience under the supervision of nutrition and food service professionals in nutrition assessment, nutrition education, and food systems management.

Service-learning is a significant component of several courses in the major, from first-year courses through three- and four-hundred level courses. Students are also encouraged to extend their learning through volunteer activities outside of class, including through professional organizations that serve residents of the District of Columbia and the surrounding counties.

To address the challenge of diversity, all Nutrition and Dietetics courses have a cultural competence component. Faculty members have all been trained, to varying degrees, to address the needs of diverse populations and to teach students how to incorporate cultural competence into life-long learning. Our program will continue to actively seek and retain a diverse population of students, including veterans, males, African Americans, and multilingual students to help fill the void of individuals underrepresented in the discipline, and to serve a diverse population of residents of the District of Columbia.

Statement of Results:

Service-learning and the development of a spirit of volunteerism allow students to provide food and nutrition services to the District of Columbia residents while building their resumes and confidence in serving diverse populations. Students develop strong technical skills through immediately applying theory to practice. They fill the gaps for nutrition services throughout the District of Columbia, including those in Wards 7 and 8. Senior citizens help our nutrition students see how they can learn so much from patients and program participants.

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BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (RN TO BSN DEGREE PROGRAM)



Statement of the Issue:

The District of Columbia (DC) has an adequate number of primary care providers, but they are clustered primarily in the northwest quadrant of the city. According to a report published by the Kaiser Family Foundation (2017), there are 2,842 active primary physicians and 4,649 registered nurses working in DC. However, 15 geographic areas, population groups, and health facilities are listed among the designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) and Medically Underserved Areas\Populations (MUA\Ps) in wards 1, 6, 7, and 8. The Department of Health (DOH) (2016) defines primary care HPSAs as having a population to full-time equivalent primary care physician ratio of less than 3,500:1. The designation criteria are based on the number of primary care physicians, so the trend is iterated among registered nurses and other health care professionals (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2017). The health professional resources are disparately distributed, thereby leaving the areas with the highest prevalence of heart disease, diabetes, and stroke in wards 7 and 8 desperately under-resourced.

Statement of Action Taken:

The faculty of the Bachelor of Science (BSN) degree program found service-learning pedagogy to be useful in comprehensively confronting health issues, encouraging lifestyle changes, and preventing and protecting the health and safety of residents. The faculty also promotes the redesign of some areas of the community. Key risk behaviors such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, obesity, and poor diets are addressed through health education and behavioral changes that can decrease chronic heart disease, diabetes, and stroke prevalence.

Statement of Results:

The elimination of risk factors will result in a decline in the incidence of chronic diseases in the triad. The activities are designed to inform community members of their health state, help them transition into the healthcare systems, coordinate care with health providers, and supplement their healthcare knowledge needs.

Exposing health professional students to service-learning experiences in different areas is a recruitment tool attracting them to explore new opportunities and discover their true worth in the areas of greatest needs. Being an educational methodology that combines community service with explicit learning objectives, preparation for community work, and deliberate reflection, service-learning activities allow our students to transfer their didactic knowledge into real-life experiences.

Project participants include RN to BSN Faculty and senior students. The project originator is Anne Marie Jean-Baptiste, PhD, RN, MSN, MS, CCRN, CEN.

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