

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Sargent County Youth Lead Local

The Situation

In the fall of 2017, school administrators and Extension Advisory Councils in Dickey, LaMoure and Sargent counties identified a need for their youth to acquire skills for civic engagement and leadership in their schools and communities.

Research shows student volunteerism and involvement in community issues is four times more likely if the students receive effective civic training. "Young people who engage in and know more about their communities are more likely to want to improve those communities through better government, voting, political discussion, and other civic activities than their less engaged and knowledgeable counterparts."

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/10/48/11048.pdf>; National Center for Learning and Civic Engagement)

Extension Response

NDSU Extension agents Aimee Ellinger (Dickey county), Caroline Homan (LaMoure county), and Cindy Klapperich (Sargent county) planned Youth Lead Local workshops for students in grades 9-12, challenging them to envision a goal or needed change in their communities. Three separate 6-hour workshops were planned, one for each county.

Thirty-two teens and 3 adults participated in the Sargent county workshop. Aimee Ellinger taught the principles of ethical leadership, integrating discussion-based scenarios to create a dynamic, interactive learning environment. Caroline Homan led personality assessment activities that helped youth discover strengths within themselves and others and build skills to communicate and work effectively with others. Cindy Klapperich introduced participants to skills and strategies for planning and managing group projects and facilitating group discussions that lead to effective decision-making. The workshop also included a presentation on Managing Conflict and a demonstration on the use of parliamentary procedure for effective meetings.

Impacts

Participants gained knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for civic engagement and leadership.



38% increase in the number of students confident to serve in a leadership role



23% increase in number of students who understand knowing how to work well with others



28% increase in the number of students confident to manage a project with committee members



19% increase in the number of students confident to handle conflict during a meeting

Feedback

"I will be able to compromise and figure things out easier." (Student)

"I intend to create more structured Student Council meetings and lead more projects that are effective." (Student)

Public Value Statement

Youth who learn to communicate effectively and are trained in leadership skills will maximize their contributions to their communities for generations.

Primary Contact

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Collaborators

Caroline Homan, Extension Agent, LaMoure County
Aimee Ellinger, Extension Agent, Dickey County

Non-Extension Collaborators

North Sargent School, Administration, and FFA
Sargent Central School
Milnor Public School
Farmers Union Insurance/David Bergeman Agency