

Internal Compliance Review Best Practices for Program Year 2009

University of Maryland Extension (UME) Internal Compliance Review (ICR) was conducted in the month of May 2010. Internal Compliance Reviews are structured procedural methods used to monitor UME organizations' performances based on its Affirmative Action (AA) plan. The following counties best practices should be utilized as benchmarks to improve parity, minority participation and disability access in all UME counties and regional offices. The counties reviewed for program year 2009 are:

Allegany County

Carroll County

Cecil County

Garrett County

Kent County and

Queen Anne's County

Best Practices-Overall Themes

1. Broadening Agricultural and Natural Resources program content generally results in greater program participation by minorities and women.
2. Extension Advisory Committees (EAC), that include minorities and both genders result in better program participation by a representative cross-section of the community than when there is no committee or when that body is homogenous.
3. Having a diverse volunteer group tends to result in greater participation by minorities.
4. Faculty and staff that collaborate with other agencies or entities are likely to expand their audience reach and increase participation in all UME programs.

Best Practices by County

Allegany County

- Two reviews are conducted by this county office every year. One review is conducted in house by the CED and the second review is conducted by the RED.
- The county office has a youth EAC member representative. EAC meetings are held in flexible locations to engage and improve EAC members' participation.
- Faculty and staff are aware and involved in ensuring that their programs are open and accessible to all participants.
- Affirmative Action and Civil Rights training are part of every monthly staff meeting. All faculty and staff have the knowledge of Affirmative Action requirements throughout the review session.
- The county office educators conducted programs in churches and other social service programs where their clientele felt comfortable. The EFNEP educator offered programs in AME Church where there are significant numbers of African American members in order to engage and increase minority participation.
- All reasonable efforts and plans are in place to start a new club including the Robotics 4-H club that would attract large minority clientele.
- The county office has a good record keeping track in relation to all of its 4-H programs.
- Through the Grains All the Way program, the educator reached out to 430 youth and 39 adults in public and private schools including minority clientele.
- The Master Gardner program made presentations at a local library called Catch the Reading Bug program to attract parents to join the Master Gardner program.
- The Master Gardner program posted information about the Master Gardner program at local libraries and several southern state stores including Tractor-supply stores to recruit new Master Gardner volunteers.
- The county office FCS educator partnered with the (Release Preparation Program) in the Federal Correctional Institute in Cumberland to teach job readiness skills to clients including African Americans and male participants.
- Efforts to attract racially and ethnically diverse clienteles include outreach through partners and non-traditional organizations such as: WIC, Head Start, YMCA, transitional housing, homeless shelters, Department of Social Services, Salvation Army, Churches and public Libraries.

Carroll County

- The county office educator kept program costs down to a minimum for all agricultural program participants. This cost containment practice encouraged local farm owners to bring their employees to agriculture programs that have a high number of minority employees.
- The county office continues to offer in-school programs that increased the number of minority participants.
- The county office FSNE program utilized parents as interpreters for other parents with limited English proficiency. This program always attracts high numbers of Hispanic participants.
- The school enrichment program in Mt. Airy High School was targeted to reach and increase minority population.
- The county 4-H Ambassadors presented 4-H information about (SET) and other program opportunities to local schools and minority participants.
- The county office 4-H program conducted Children's Day at the county fair that reached out to 1000 youth groups from diverse backgrounds.
- The promotion of overnight camp programs includes information on the county website and pictures of camps featuring minority participants.
- Camp scholarships focus on the needs that are identified through government reduced lunch or health care programs.
- The urban Horticulture educator is reaching out to male clientele by conducting Invasive Species Awareness programs. The educator is also reaching minority participants by partnering with the (CORE) program for the developmentally challenged clientele.
- Commercial Horticulture educator is reaching female clientele by participating in the Women in Agriculture program, and by conducting programs at the Pearl Stone Jewish Retreat Center.
- The Commercial Horticulture educator works with other small minority businesses to distribute Spanish Worker Protection materials to commercial Horticulture clientele.

Cecil County

- The county office events are held in a variety of public locations to increase minority participation.
- The county office has a variety of outreach programs that contributed to increase minority participation.
- The county office EAC members provided outreach to several organizations and communities in order to increase the number of its minority participation.
- Youth and adults from diverse backgrounds attended the Leaders quarterly meetings on a regular basis.
- The county office 4-H camp counselors have diverse volunteers to assist with the recruitment of minority clientele in 4-H programs.
- County office has developed a plan for growth which involves outreach to NAACP and Wrights Church in order to increase minority participation in all of its programs.

Garret County

- The county office EFNEP outreach program is specifically designed to target male participants. This practice is a unique approach to the ongoing challenge involving lack of male participation in EFNEP programs.
- Two interim reviews are completed every year by this county office to increase minority participation, faculty and staff awareness about Affirmative Action and equal opportunities.
- All faculty and staff are involved in ensuring that programs are accessible and open to all clients regardless of their disability status, ethnicity, race, religion and sexual orientation.
- The county office has a Robotics and Entrepreneurship programs that are designed to attract larger audience and minority clientele.
- The county office has a good record keeping practice that involves minority enrollment and volunteer programs.
- The county office 4-H program posters and flyers are properly displayed for easy access.
- The county office one night camp for afterschool program participants involves the inclusiveness of clientele who are unable to attend the one week residential camp program.
- The county office has a good practice of displaying banners and other promotional items and 4-H youth photos throughout the office.

- The county office educators on a weekly basis collaborate with other social programs and offered transportation to clientele with transportation needs to participate in their programs.
- The county office educators partnered with other social programs staff in the county such as the Department of Health and Human Services to increase African American participations in Agriculture programs.
- The county office FSNE educators planned a Dinner for Dads program to reach out to the low income male population.
- The county office FSNE programs are offered in public schools to increase male participation.
- The county office FSNE and 4-H programs partnered with Juvenile Services to reach high risk male population living in residential facilities.

Kent County

- The county office educators used a variety of methods including Urban Agriculture techniques to reach out to minority clientele and posted Extension information on office websites for all participants.
- The county office website is well organized and regularly updated.
- The county office Master Gardner and Urban Agriculture programs are offering classes at locations where minorities can meet and share ideas. Flexible classes are offered during the day, evenings and on weekends to meet the needs of their clientele.
- Newsletters are sent to local minority organizations, i.e. NAACP, to engage and increase minority involvement in Extension programs.
- The county office Grow It and Eat It program is reaching many non-traditional minority groups.
- Numerous programs are held in locations that are accessible to all clientele including participants with disabilities.
- The county office is conducting In-school programming that is reaching out to all students including minority youths in all the public schools and surrounding areas.
- The county office has a minority membership participation in its EAC.
- The county office 4-H events are published on a regular basis via a local newspaper outlet to attract diverse clientele.

Queen Anne's County

- The county office In-school programming is reaching all public school youths and minority clientele. The county office also has a good representation of 4-H events in a local newspaper outlet including pictures of white and non-white youth groups.
- The county office made several announcements on its television shows regarding county fair and other taped programs.
- The county office has a plan in place to recruit new volunteers with emphasis on recruitment and training minority adults.
- The county office is using more print items/materials such as posters and flyers to reach out to minorities and those without internet access.