**Internal Compliance Review Best Practices for Program Year 2013**

University of Maryland Extension (UME) Internal Compliance Review (ICR) was conducted in the month of April and May 2014. 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. Please note that in all of the reviews conducted in April and May of 2014 are for program year 2013. The counties reviewed for program year 2013 are:

**Allegany County**

**Carroll County**

**Cecil County**

**Garret 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 groups tend 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**

* Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible for all participants.
* The office works to attempt a balanced program outreach to meet all ethnicity areas. The efforts to reach the African American/Black, Hispanic and Asian American or Pacific Islander populations are documented.
* County office continues joint programming efforts in the county and the Northern Maryland Cluster.
* The faculty outreach to female clienteles is excellent and well documented.
* The files were well organized and easily accessed.
* Programs are offered at various times and locations to meet the needs of the clients.
* Diabetes Education and Management classes are offered in this county office to assist diabetes clienteles.
* County faculty programs meet diversity in all ethnicity areas.
* Yearly check off sheet for each faculty member is used to determine if all materials are in the Central Files.
* Faculty and Staff are invited and encouraged to attend EAC meetings.
* Excellent use of ICR forms and documentation.
* Color coded filing system created easy access to documents.
* Distribution of 4-H publications to the general public and minority clienteles is well documented.
* 4-H Postcards are developed and distributed at community events.
* 4-H Partnered with EFNEP program for summer Day Camp events which was a great success. Continue this effort.
* Educator provided assistant to a participant with multiple learning disabilities such as the provision of a one-on-one reader/educator session when needed.
* Educator utilized Spanish translation/newsprint materials for media releases. Excellent Limited English Proficiency (LEP) practice. Continue this effort.
* Local UME office provides bus transportation to the MG Advanced Training day held in College Park. This is coordinated with Garrett and Washington County to facilitate greater opportunities because of the distance to travel. Cost is subsidized by the Cluster AED.
* All programs are held in handicap-accessible buildings/locations.
* Outreach is done using local and regional newspapers and radio stations to attract diverse clienteles.
* MG Educator works to meet ethnicity and gender parity. Parity is met in African- American, Hispanic and Asian American. Continue this this excellent practice.
* All programs are conducted in accessible locations; including parks, community colleges and senior centers to attract diverse clienteles.
* Increased male participation and engagement has been attributed to the Diabetes workshops (to further increase male participation, the Educator is planning to create a men’s health issues class as well as market to African American and Hispanic churches).

**Carroll County**

* Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs and open and accessible to all participants including minority clienteles.
* The office works to attempt a balanced program outreach to meet all ethnicity areas. The efforts to reach the African American/Black, Hispanic and Asian American or Pacific Islander populations are well documented. Continue this outreach.
* The county office continues joint programming efforts in the county and the Northern Maryland Cluster.
* Each department is charged with finding new EAC representatives including minority members.
* The files were well organized and easily accessed. Files are contained in the office of the Business Services Specialist and are accessible to all faculty and staff.
* Nondiscriminatory letters on file were all dated 2013.
* Programs offer meal accommodations to participants as needed which also attract minority participants.
* Programs offer Scholarships to clienteles including minority clienteles.
* Alternative programing includes Raised Earth Boxes for individuals with disabilities that are unable to bend to the ground.
* Picture recipes are used to accommodate low literacy participants and autistic clienteles.
* Portable “And Justice for All” posters are used when programs are offered off site.
* County faculty meets parity in all ethnicity areas.
* 4-H educators partnered with public schools and libraries to attract diverse clienteles.
* High proportion of female youth members engaged in the shooting sports program.
* Former camp members serving as an adult staff person. This practice increased opportunities for diversity.
* Ag-ventures is a free educational program offered to Title 1 schools to increase awareness in Agriculture.
* Educators maintained record of special accommodations made for youth and volunteers (i.e. dietary restrictions, large print, translation, etc.)
* AA statements were at the bottom of all handouts and promotional materials for FCS and FSNE programs e.g.—Let’s Move Child Care Training, Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Education, How to Communicate with Your Doctor, Grow It, Eat It, Preserve It, Small Steps to Health and Wellness. FSNE programs with the AA statement include—Growing Healthy Habits and Color Me Healthy.
* Diversity in populations served includes at risk groups such as Boys and Girls Clubs, the developmentally disabled and of low-income residents served through the FSNE program.
* Both programs utilize, print media to reach the general public (Carroll County Times, Harford Sun and The Patch) as well as radio (WHFC and WXYC) to advertise programming.
* Recipients of the Extracts of Thyme newsletter include: Senior Citizens, developmentally disabled clienteles, libraries, Department of Human Services as well as local minority churches.
* Committees planning FCS and FSNE programs were well diversified with African Americans, Asians, Indians, Whites, Latinos as well as Males and females on the following committees; Food Smart, Partnership for a Healthier Carroll County, Early Childhood Education and USDA curricula.
* The committees and partnerships meet on a regular basis (monthly and by-monthly).

**Cecil County**

**Best Practices:**

* Documents in files contained appropriate AA statements.
* Posting flyers and advertisements in libraries and local newspapers.
* FCS programs were not in parity for males, but the FCS educator has begun reaching greater numbers of males by offering well water clinics that are of interest to men.
* Although Asians make up only 1.1 percent of the county population, the FCS educator reached a large number of Asians by offering programs in targeted geographic areas.
* The FCS educator solicited two grants that enabled her to offer financial education programs in low-income housing communities. She also conducted train-the-trainer programs that prepared community health care workers to help low-income residents and senior citizens learn healthy homes principles.
* The FCS educator selects community teaching locations that are centrally located and accessible to people with disabilities.
* The EFNEP educator formed partnerships with organizations that serve low-income residents. These organizations include the YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Elkton housing communities.
* The EFNEP educator solicited human and pet food donations that benefited local residents. EFNEP also arranged transportation to and from educational programs and offered programs at different times to accommodate participant schedules.
* EFNEP materials are available in English and Spanish, and the curriculum includes materials for people with lower literacy levels.
* 4-H staff trained camp staff about ages and stages of youth; youth with disabilities and how to work with diverse audiences.
* Scholarships are available to anyone who requests them. Through a connection with the department of social services, the 4-H staff identifies at risk youth and offers them scholarships.
* 4-H provided accommodations to a member injured in an auto accident.
* Tests and PowerPoints are read to accommodate youth with special developmental needs.

**Garrett County**

* Everyone in the office is involved in ensuring programs are open and accessible for all clienteles.
* The office works to attempt a balanced program outreach to meet all ethnicity areas. The efforts to reach the African Americans/Blacks, Hispanics and Asian Americans or Pacific Islander populations are noted. Continue this outreach.
* The county office continues to expand its joint programming efforts in the county and the Western Cluster.
* Each department is charged with finding new EAC representatives.
* County office conducted numerous joint programming/events such as: Days Camps in the Community, FCS, 4-H in Agriculture, Growing Healthy Habits, EFNEP and FSNE. Continue these efforts.
* All faculties have a travel budget and their budgets are updated monthly.
* Yearly check off sheet for each faculty member is used to determine if all materials are in the Central Files. Continue this practice.
* Educators practiced excellent use of ICR forms. Continue this effort.
* Camp application and scholarship forms for all participants were well documented. Continue this effort.
* Distribution of 4-H publications was well documented. Continue this effort.
* Color coded filing system creates easy access to all relevant documents. Continue this effort.
* Educators are accommodating Amish populations by locating programs in facilities they will use. Continue this effort.
* Ag Educator collaborated with the Garrett Preston Rural Development Coalition, which meets two times per year. Continue this effort.
* Educators are advertising programs in regional agriculture publications such as: (Lancaster Farming and local newspapers) which have a higher percentage of minority subscribers than the local county newspaper.
* Ag Educator promotes programs by placing fliers at local agriculture supply stores that are frequented by small minority clienteles/farmers.
* Ag Educator participates in the Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia (MPWV) Meat Goat Producers Association. This offers opportunities to work with new nontraditional producers.
* Master Gardeners provided a Plant Clinic during the Farmers Market that attracts diverse clienteles. Continue this effort.
* Programs are promoted using a Facebook page for younger audiences and the general public. Continue this effort.
* The county office provided bus transportation to the MG Advanced Training day held in College Park. This event is coordinated with Garrett and Washington Counties to facilitate greater opportunities to all including minority clienteles.
* Educators targeted Growing Healthy Habits program that attracts diverse audience in public schools. Continue this effort.
* FSNE works at the Garrett Lighthouse to improve diversity. Continue this effor

**Kent County**

**Best Practices:**

* Documents in files contained appropriate AA statements.
* Educator is conducting programs with female landowners to encourage best management practices for conservation activities on farms. Continue this effort.
* Documents in files contained appropriate AA statements.
* Conducting programs with schools, Kent Parks & Recreation and local food pantry to encourage best management practices for the community.
* In 2013, FCS educator collaborated and delivered programs at Parks and Recreation and two county based school which reached out to variety of demographics.
* Educator very efficiently delivered nutrition program at Crossroads Community, which is psychosocial rehabilitation services to adults with serious and persistent mental illnesses. In this process, educator adapted many different curriculums and nutrition activities to meet the need of the participants e.g. increasing the font size of the handouts, reading the document out loud, inclusion of more activities as compared to verbal messages.
* Educator also trained the caregivers of the center on healthy eating, planning healthy meals and healthy food budgeting.
* In 2013, the FSNE educator conducted nutrition programs at three of the four elementary schools in the county that qualify for FSNE services. These programs reached a broad cross-section of the county’s student population.
* The FSNE educator formed partnerships with the Judy Center and provided programs that reached young children from homes where Spanish is spoken as the main language. Spanish-language newsletters were sent to homes of these participants.
* Age-appropriate curricula were selected to meet the needs of adults and youth of various ages.
* Youth with severe intellectual disabilities were included in several school-based nutrition lessons.
* All 4-H flyers and media releases include Affirmative Action statements.
* The 4-H staff member continued to recruit minority volunteers and minority youth through numerous media connections, including weekly radio updates of 4-H programs, as well as through the schools and community outreach programs. Flyers were provided to all the students in the county schools as well as private school students in grades K-8.
* Members of several clubs made posters and hung them on a wall in Galena Elementary School to encourage youth to join 4-H.
* Upcoming 4-H events and activities were posted regularly on the UME Kent County 4-H Facebook page.
* The 4-H staff member brought character lessons to a class each week in one of the county elementary schools. All the students in this class are exposed to positive 4-H learning experiences.
* The 4-H staff member shares programs and recruits youth and volunteers through outreach and connections with numerous community organizations.

**Queen Anne County**

**Best Practices:**

* Educator conducted programs/events related to women and agriculture. This events help to increase the number of female participants in agriculture titled “Women in Agriculture Program” in this county office.
* Educator conducted events in female Landowner Program to encourage women landownership.
* Educator is conducting programs with female landowners to encourage Best Management Practices for Conservation activities on farms.
* Documents in files contained appropriate AA statements.
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* In 2013, FCS educator collaborated with minority serving faith based organizations and delivered nutritional programs titled “Body and Soul”.
* Educator replicated the Crossroads Community program from Kent County to Queen Anne County center, in this process, educator adapted many different curriculums and nutrition activities to meet the need of the participants e.g. increasing the font size of the handouts, reading the document out loud, inclusion of more activities as compared to verbal messages.
* Educator also trained the caregivers of the center on healthy eating, planning healthy meals and healthy food budgeting.
* Educator created program planning tool and training logs which precisely recorded special needs of the participants before conducting the program.
* Sudlersville Elementary School is the only school in the county that qualifies for FSNE services, so the FSNE educator changed her focus in the county to serving low-income adults through a partnership with the county’s Family Support Center.
* Diverse families referred to the Family Support Center by Social Services participated in FSNE programs. The FSNE educator was able to help these families better understand essential nutrition concepts such as menu planning.
* FSNE programs served families with Spanish-speaking parents, and Spanish language materials were made available to participants.
* The FSNE educator is a member of the Queen Anne’s Child Care Council and is working to make new connections with after school centers that serve diverse youth populations.
* 4-H flyers and media releases include Affirmative Action statements.
* 4-H club files contained club public relations efforts, bylaws and other required forms and central file contained club nondiscrimination letters.
* 4-H program has done a good job with accommodating youth with special needs accommodations.
* 4-H staff members continue to recruit minority volunteers and minority youth through numerous media outlets, as well as through the schools and community outreach programs.
* 4-H program has reached into the school system through 21st century grant and STEM programming to reach out to more youth.
* 4-H staff members share programs and recruits youth and volunteers through outreach and connections with numerous community organizations.
* Females are involved in the 4-H shooting sports program. Continue this effort.