



**OKLAHOMA COUNTY
EXTENSION**

REPORT TO THE PUBLIC April 2025

Poverty Simulation Receives Several Prestigious Awards

The Poverty Simulation in Oklahoma - Education to Action, helped participants to rethink the challenges that millions of low-income individuals face every day. The simulation involved volunteers taking on the roles of individuals from 26 different families, each navigating a range of common yet difficult life circumstances. Participants were to identify areas of change that can directly impact the effects of poverty on individuals, families, and communities. The simulation was taught by Oklahoma County Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) Educators along with others across the state.

The FCS state team received the "Women for OSU Partnering to Impact" grant, National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) Florence Hall Award and the NEAFCS Mary W. Wells Memorial Diversity Award.





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**OKLAHOMA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

4-H at the Capitol

Eight Oklahoma County 4-H members proudly represented their clubs and communities at the 26th annual 4-H Day at the Capitol on April 23, 2025.

This event offered youth a unique opportunity to engage directly with state legislators, share their personal 4-H stories, and learn about the legislative process firsthand.

Participants joined 4-H'ers from across the state in meetings with their local senators and representatives, a Q&A session with 4-H alumni interns, and heard from leaders such as Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Blayne Arthur, Sen. Warren Hamilton, Rep. Judd Strom, and Rep. Toni Hasenbeck.

Highlights included the reading of a resolution declaring April 23rd as the official 4-H Day at the Capitol in both chambers of the legislature. Oklahoma County youth proudly demonstrated the impact of 4-H in their lives and the positive change it continues to bring to all 77 counties.

The event underscored the vital role youth play not only as the future, but as current leaders making a difference in their communities.





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Earthkind Earth Day

On Saturday, April 19th, OSU Extension Educators Julia Laughlin, Mason Huddleston and Andrew Fleet teamed up with the City of Oklahoma City Water Utilities Trust, Oklahoma County Conservation Committee and the Friends of Will Rogers Gardens to celebrate an "Earth-Kind Earth Day" educational event. The event was held at Will Rogers Gardens in OKC.

Programs were taught on environmental topics such as water conservation in the landscape, selecting drought tolerant, adapted and native plants, supporting pollinators, soil building, composting and nature friendly gardening methods. The morning classes were followed by a locally sourced lunch. Afterwards, there were presentations in the gardens including a ladybug release, a composting demonstration and a tree seedling and seed giveaway.

The event was attended by over 80 participants and involved around 30 volunteers including the Girl Scouts of America.



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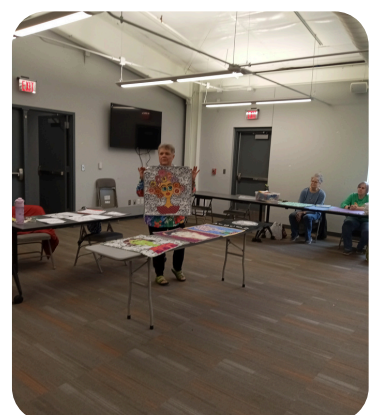

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OHCE HOSTS FABULOUS FACES QUILT WORKSHOP

The Scissor Tales OHCE (Oklahoma Home and Community) group recently hosted a workshop where participants learned a new quilt block technique from guest instructor Debbie Wanzer of the Modern Quilt Guild.

The Fabulous Faces method is not only a fun way to re-use fabric scraps but also keeps textiles out of the landfill. Clothing and textiles take up a large portion of landfills and are slow to decompose.

Due to the popularity of the workshop, another is planned for the fall.





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Wellness Days



Youth Mental Health Specialist, Danyelle Kuss, supported mental health education in a variety of ways this month. In Blaine County, she worked with 113 fifth graders to teach stress management skills. Youth identified what stressors raised their stress temperature and what coping skills cooled their stress thermometers down. In Major County, she worked with 90 high school seniors to identify their decision-making styles. They also learned to process strengths and weaknesses of their style that should be helpful as they move into adulthood.



As a member of the Oklahoma City Children's Behavioral Health Coalition, Danyelle supported efforts in hosting the first annual Fill Your Cup, Parent Resource Symposium. The Symposium had a variety of speakers and vendors to help Oklahoma parents better access local resources to support their children who may have behavioral health needs or require additional support. The Symposium reached 1,000 attendees.





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OSU Extension Hosts Budget Board

OSU Extension welcomed Oklahoma County's elected officials to a special "Budget Board" luncheon held in their honor this April.

The program started with Karen Potter, 4-H Adult Leader and a parent of two 4-Hers. Karen told the story of how 4-H has touched the life of their family. She gave examples of how 4-H equipped her children with a broad skill set that helped them grow into well-rounded, responsible, and capable young teenagers.

Rosanna Reynolds of Latchkey Child Services talked about the partnership with the Community Nutrition Education Program (CNEP) and how they have made an impact on the children that attend their afterschool programs. She stated that the children have learned the importance of eating healthier and being physically active.

The last speakers for the day highlighted the Strong Dads Program. Ryan O'Toole, Chief Development Officer for OKC Metro Alliance, spoke about the benefits the dads have gained through this program. He voiced that this initiative has strengthened fathers' roles in their children's lives by providing them with the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to be more involved, engaged, and supportive parents. In closing, one of the dads that graduated from the program, shared his story on how much he appreciated the opportunity to attend the workshops and the amazing bond he has made with other dads.





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Eastside Fresh Market Grand Opening

The Eastside Fresh Market, located at 3748 N. Lincoln, kicked-off its 2025 season with 26 vendors and around 200 shoppers! This is a seasonal farmers market designed to expand access to fresh, affordable, and locally grown food. Open every Tuesday from April through October, the market provides a welcoming space where neighbors can purchase fruits, vegetables, meats, baked goods, and more, directly from the people who grow and produce them. With SNAP, DUO, and SFMNP benefits accepted at many booths, the market ensures that healthy food options are available to all, regardless of income.

Supported by Oklahoma County OSU Extension, the market is part of a broader effort to build a more resilient and inclusive food system. It creates opportunities for small producers, promotes food education, and fosters community connection.

As one vendor shared, "This market has allowed us to build relationships with our customers, grow our business, and be part of something that really matters. It's not just about selling food; it's about feeding our community."





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Beekeeping Workshop at Southern Oaks Library

Urban Agriculture and Natural Resource educator, Mason Huddleston, presented a workshop on the basics of beekeeping at Southern Oaks Metropolitan Library in Oklahoma City.



With the help of a master gardener, Mason covered various topics related to beekeeping including setting up a hive, site selection, honeybee species selection, pests and diseases associated with honeybees, as well as general care. A demonstration hive was brought to show the attendees the different parts of the hive.



Later that month, Mason acquired honeybees, where he cleaned and prepared the hives for the bees to be relocated to the OSU Extension Center. He plans to offer classes on honey production and educating the public on how to become successful beekeepers.





OKLAHOMA COUNTY EXTENSION

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Mason Huddleston - Urban Ag
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Andrew Fleet - Water Conservation
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Cody Yount - 4-H Educator

Serena Woodard - 4-H Educator

Lori Goodbary - CNEP Area
Coordinator

Danyelle Kuss - 4-H Youth Mental
Health Educator

Aleshia Maldonado - Strong Dads
Educator

Kenny Garcia-Taveras - Strong Dads
Educator

OSU Extension provides research-based resources you can use to improve your home, workplace, and community. We offer programs and services that are specifically designed to solve the problems that county residents face. Please check out our website for the calendar of events <https://calendar.okstate.edu/oces/> to learn of new workshops or programs being offered.

You can follow us on Facebook for a glimpse into how your Oklahoma County Extension Educators and staff are serving you and the community.

Be sure to check out Oklahoma County OSU Extension's monthly podcast "The Urban Gardener" with Julia Laughlin, Horticulture Educator, Mason Huddleston, Urban Ag & Natural Resources Educator and Andrew Fleet, Water Conservation Educator



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