





## REPORT TO THE PUBLIC February 2025

### **Extension Hosts Poverty Simulation**



OSU Extension educators and volunteers hosted a poverty simulation at Rose State College. The simulation participants consisted of staff from Goodwill Central Oklahoma, Rose State College and Oklahoma JumpStart Coalition. Poverty is a reality for many individuals and families. Unless poverty has been experienced, it's difficult to understand. This simulation sensitizes participants to the struggles of many Oklahoma families.



During the simulation, participants role-played a month's time in the lives of low-income families. They had to make daily choices based on their specific situation.



The simulation promoted awareness and increased understanding with the goal to transform perspectives and inspire local change. The main focus of this program is to shift the paradigm of poverty away from being seen as a personal failure and toward the understanding of poverty as a societal, structural collapse.







#### Jake FM Radio Interviews

This month, two Oklahoma County 4-H members were invited to speak on behalf of Oklahoma 4-H on Jake FM Radio. Dani McTague and Rexton Potter took this opportunity to highlight their service projects.

Dani's Dream collects art supplies and assembles bags of materials for underserved youth across the state. Meanwhile, the HUGS initiative is a county-wide effort aimed at providing hats, underwear, gloves, and socks to those in need.



Their interviews reached an estimated 200,000 listeners and viewers, raising visibility for the program and showcasing the impactful work being done by these youth leaders. In addition, this experience provided both Dani and Rexton a valuable opportunity to hone their public speaking skills, develop networking connections, and gain confidence as 4-H teen leaders.















# Cope-Able A card game to help mental health talks feel natural

Youth Mental Health Specialist, Danyelle Kuss

has been piloting an originally created program to middle schools across the state.

This engaging program, delivered through a 4-session curriculum, utilizes an interactive game format to educate students on the impact of various coping skills. By actively participating in the game, students gain a deeper understanding of how their choices affect their well-being.

Students end the program having created a personalized coping plan to begin increasing their use of healthy coping. So far, over 200 students have been reached.

Attendees at the LINK Family and Consumer Sciences Conference were also given the opportunity to experience the game and learn how it can be used in their classrooms. Participants were extension and classroom educators from across the state.





### OKLAHOMA COUNTY EXTENSION







### Oklahoma Master Gardeners Gardening 101 Workshops

In February, The Oklahoma Master
Gardeners organized and hosted a threeweekend gardening workshop titled
Gardening 101. This workshop focused on
garden soils, vegetable and flower
gardening, landscaping, houseplants, lawn
maintenance and other areas of home
gardening. The sessions were designed to be
similar to the year-long Master Gardener
course, adapted to a weekend format, and
available to those who cannot commit to the
Master Gardener training.

The workshops were held at the Oklahoma County OSU Extension Conference Center, which allowed participants to view the display gardens. Instructors for the course included OSU Horticulture faculty, Horticulture Educators, and some experienced Master Gardeners. The 38 attendees received a soil sample analysis and 3 full days of education.









#### **Master Irrigator Program**

The OSU Extension Master Irrigator Program is an advanced training initiative designed to equip producers with knowledge and skills in irrigation water management, system maintenance, energy conservation, and the economics of irrigated agriculture.

Andrew Fleet, Oklahoma County OSU Extension
Water Conservation Educator, participated in this
program and completed the training. The program
combined classroom instruction, peer-to-peer
discussions, and hands-on field demonstrations.
Instruction was provided by OSU Extension
specialists, irrigation experts, economists, crop
consultants, producers, and NRCS personnel from
Oklahoma and neighboring states.

A key focus of the program is to promote the adoption of advanced water management technologies, including soil moisture sensors and crop growth model-based irrigation schedulers.

By integrating irrigation strategies, the Master Irrigator Program educates producers to conserve water, reduce costs, and enhance sustainable agricultural practices.











# Importance of Soil Health and Growing Herbs

On February 19th, Mason Huddleston,
Urban Agriculture and Natural Resources
Educator, presented a lecture to the
Oklahoma Herb Society on soil health as it
relates to growing herbs.

The presentation covered key topics such as general soil health, nutrient requirements for herbs, and the best herb varieties suited for Oklahoma's climate.

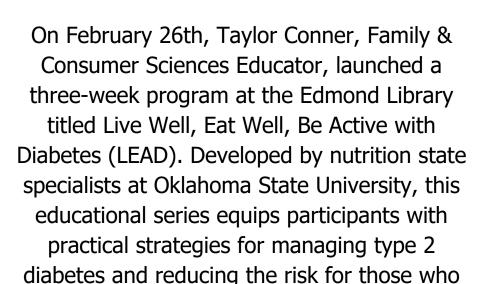
Although there was inclement weather the day of the workshop, the program was presented on zoom and well received.

The participants gained valuable insights into optimizing soil conditions for successful herb gardening in the region.









are pre-diabetic.

**Diabetes & Wellness at** 

**Edmond Library** 



The program emphasizes balanced eating habits, including the use of the American Diabetes Association's Plate Method and carbohydrate counting. Through hands-on activities, participants practice assembling well-balanced meal plates by identifying non-starchy vegetables, starchy foods, proteins, fruits, and dairy. Additionally, the series highlights the critical role of physical activity in diabetes management, empowering attendees with knowledge and skills to support a healthier lifestyle.





### CO-PARENTING WORKSHOPS OFFERED IN SPANISH

Since 2014, state law requires that all divorcing parents with minor children must complete a coparenting class before their divorce is final.

Oklahoma County OSU Extension is one of the only agencies in the state offering the court-mandated Co-Parenting programs in English and Spanish.

Family and Consumer Sciences Educator, Lisa Hamblin teaches the Co-Parenting for Resilience English workshop twice a month and the Spanish class is offered monthly at OSU-OKC. Norelis Cox, a native speaker from Stillwater, teaches the Spanish course.

Since 2024, approximately 140 parents have attended the Spanish workshop and 415 attended the English class.

During the four-hour session, parents learn how to better communicate, be consistent with their children, and recognize signs of stress. They also learn the benefits of mediation and receive a workbook that includes a list of additional community resources.











#### OKLAHOMA COUNTY **EXTENSION**

#### Extension Staff:

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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 <a href="https://calendar.okstate.edu/oces/">https://calendar.okstate.edu/oces/</a> 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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