

OSU EXTENSION LISTENS TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Findings From A Regional Community
Engagement Forum Hosted In Jackson County



Jackson County

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Jackson County One of 16 Community Engagement Forums Held Statewide

In spring and summer 2019, OSU Extension hosted community forums at sites across the state of Oklahoma. The forums sought to ensure that a wide range of community members were engaged so that their opinions and perspectives on important issues would be represented in OSU Extension's strategic planning.

About OSU Extension

Oklahoma State University Extension is a thriving, sought-out, science-based educational resource dedicated to improving the lives of all Oklahomans. With a presence in all 77 counties, OSU Extension has the knowledge and leadership to help the state's citizens solve local issues and concerns, promote leadership and manage resources wisely through programs focusing on agricultural enterprises; natural resources and environmental management; food, nutrition, health and safety education; and youth, family and community development.

OSU Extension Community Engagement Statewide Forums

Executive Summary

More than 400 people participated in one of the 16 OSU Extension community forums. They were asked to provide input on what they thought the most important issues facing their communities were going to be over the next 3 to 5 years. They were specifically asked about issues related to Families, Youth and Children, and about issues related to their Community, Economy (Farms and Businesses) and Natural/Environmental Resources. Based on the results of the community forums, researchers at OSU provided site hosts with results specific to their communities, as well as perspective on issues that came up as common themes statewide.

The forum results are summarized in a series of handouts and on the OSU Extension website. Extension educators will be using their results to engage the community in action planning around the identified issues and action ideas. Trainings for follow-up engagement activities are being offered to Extension educators so they will have an even greater ability to engage their communities authentically and effectively.

Results can be found online at extension.okstate.edu/communityforums.

Top Issues and Action Ideas for Regional Forum Hosted by Jackson County

Children, Youth and Families

Support and Strengthen Families through Education and Skill Development

- Provide education for young parents (parenting skills, defining family roles, setting boundaries)
- Promote mentorship opportunities
- Work with OSU Extension to create summer internships
- Establish a book buddy program with older generation
- Offer home economics classes, teach finances, and simulate raising a child (using a doll)

Provide Youth with Mentorship Opportunities

- Offer a parenting class in high school
- Establish partnership between OSU Extension and nonprofits to make classes and mentorships available

Strengthen Career Development Opportunities

- Provide internship opportunities that would provide hands-on experience
- Host job fairs
- Establish program to help with career exploration

Promote Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media

- Provide education on improper uses and negative side effects of technology and social media

Community, Economy (Farms and Businesses) and Natural/Environmental Resources

Build Skills and Education for Local Workforce Development

- Offer internships for high school students
- Establish a job shadowing program in junior high
- Offer life skills classes
- Host job fairs and career days in high school

Enhance Quality of Life through Arts and Local Agriculture

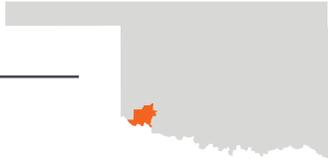
- Establish a farmers market
- Develop programs to bridge the generation gap
- Partner with Quartz Mountain to host concerts and summer activities
- Create community gardens
- Improve and repair water infrastructure

Utilize Existing Resources to Attract Good Paying Jobs

- Enlist aid and support of existing rail to market area for additional manufacturing
- Target manufacturers who take cotton, grains, and other ag products to the next level
- Develop water resources for both quality of life and industrial use

Refurbish Old Buildings for Reclamation (Small Business Support/Creation)

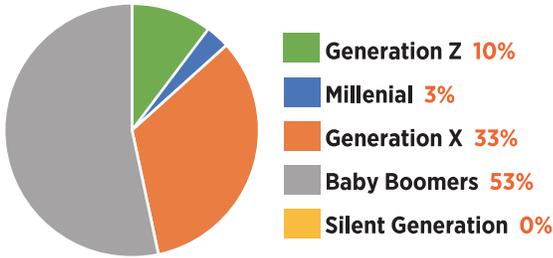
- Advocate for tax break for owners who take on a refurbishment
- Provide education on grant opportunities and historical preservation
- Turn vacant lots into community gardens
- Help train small business owners
- Promote certified healthy businesses
- Establish job and innovation Incubators
- Partner with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and the Oklahoma Main Street program to help with training and incentives to shop local



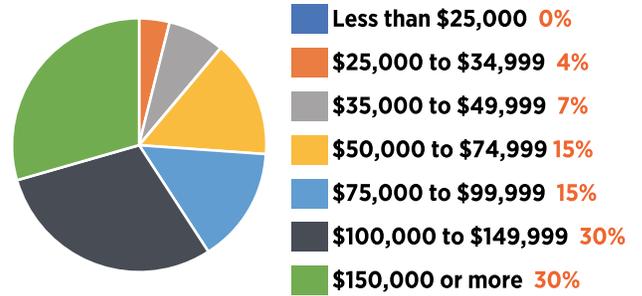
Responses from Regional Forum Hosted by Jackson County

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

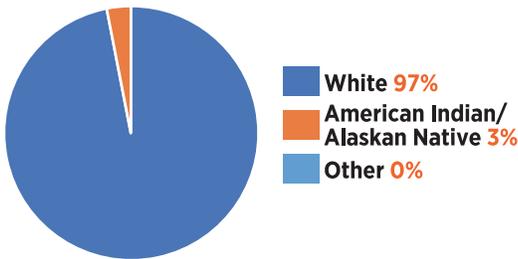
Age Range



Income Range



Race/Ethnicity



Gender



Military Veteran



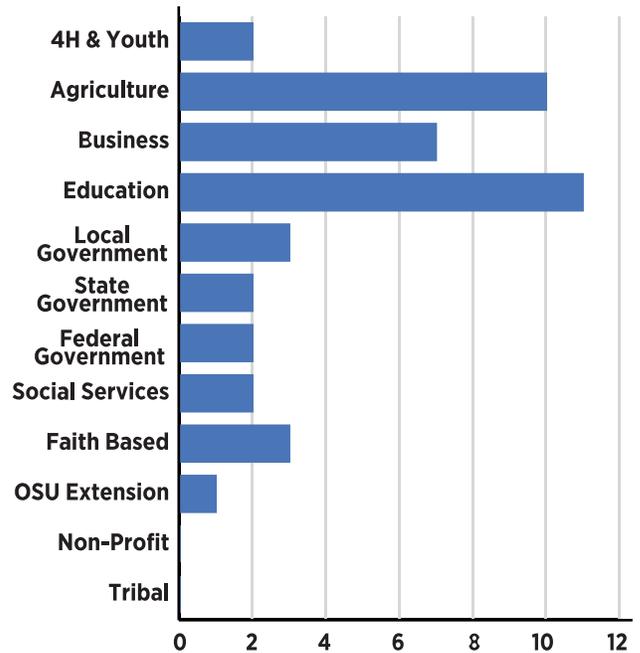
Have a Disability



Attended OSU Extension Program Previously



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