

OSU EXTENSION LISTENS TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Findings From A Regional Community
Engagement Forum Hosted In Pittsburg County



Pittsburg County

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Pittsburg 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 Pittsburg County

Children, Youth and Families

Promote Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media

- Work with OSU Extension to provide mentoring for adults and students
- Use social media to help parents and students interact
- Work with legislators around issues in the schools
- Give students more opportunities to learn life skills

Promote Parenting and Life Skills for Families

- Prevent cycle of poverty from happening
- Offer life skills trainings for families
- Offer parenting classes

Focus on Substance Abuse Prevention

- Encourage families to start early with talking to youth about making better choices
- Engage parents with what children are learning
- Assess talents/interest of youth at younger age to help them form career or life goals
- Offer life skills training

Encourage Character Development, Career Development and Strong Work Ethic

- Teach more character, moral, work ethic development classes
- Offer training for professional careers
- Establish youth mentoring program
- Teach more about industry
- Find ways through technology to reach youth and adults who can't travel to face to face meetings
- Use CNEP to introduce kids to 4-H

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

Provide Education and Support for Programs to Address Environmental Issues

- Provide youth education for water conservation
- Create a program related to ag and environmental issues, recycling and impacts of trash in communities
- Improve marketing for OSU Extension programs
- Connect different perspectives through public deliberations to discuss ways to reach common ground
- Open a recycling center
- Utilize social media to educate families

Support and Fully Fund Extension

- Market extension better
- Find alternative ways to get a community calendar
- Host more fundraisers
- Create a produce item for 4-H to sell year round to help support the program

Invest in Skill Development and Education of Local Workforce

- Create a mentorship program through OSU Extension
- Create more affordable postsecondary education opportunities

Promote Economic Development through Mentorships and Grant Opportunities

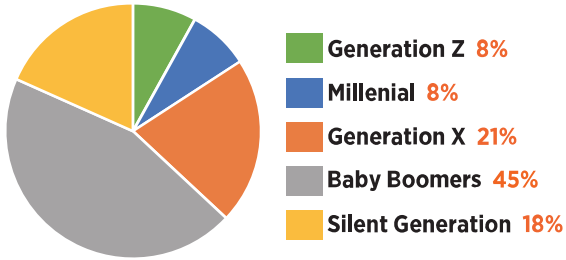
- Focus on bringing new businesses into the community
- Create small business education program at local tech schools
- Host career days in local schools



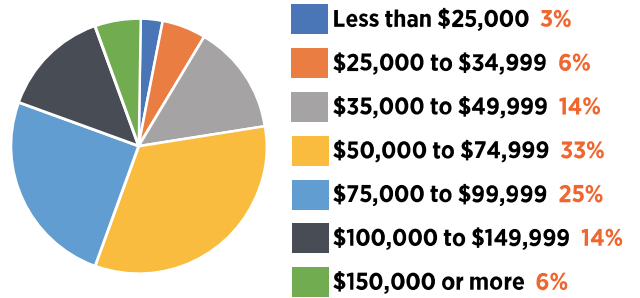
Responses from Regional Forum Hosted by Pittsburg County

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

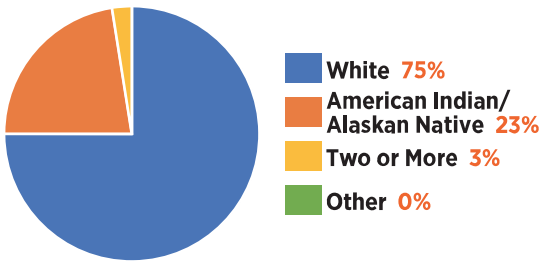
Age Range



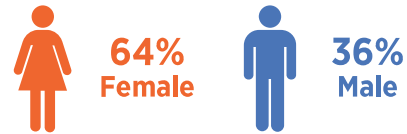
Income Range



Race/Ethnicity



Gender



Military Veteran



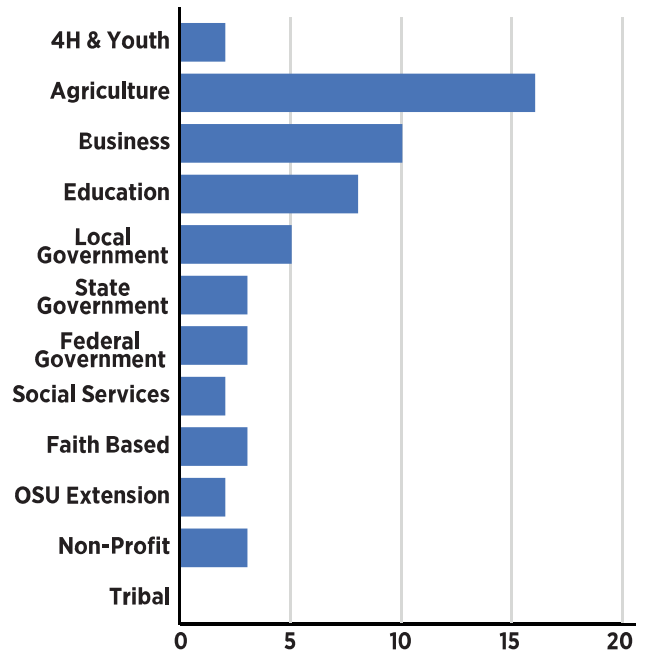
Have a Disability



Attended OSU Extension Program Previously



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