



# Dane County 4-H Program

Provides positive youth and adult relationships, a welcoming atmosphere, and a place for youth to explore their interests and passions – their sparks!



## Situation:

Many youth in Dane County do not have opportunities to participate in STEM activities outside of the school day to learn and explore new interests. The Dane 4-H staff recognized this need and wanted to expand access to new youth audiences that are not currently well represented in Dane County 4-H community club program.

## Response:

Nadia Alber, 4-H Extension Educator, reached out to community clubs and after-school programs with the hopes of starting a future 4-H club. Alber made contact with the Kennedy Heights Community Center (KHCC) and shortly after was awarded an Expanding Access grant through Wisconsin 4-H to start a ChickQuest program. Alber offered the 7-week ChickQuest curriculum that covers the life cycle of a chicken to the KHCC after-school program in the Fall 2023.

## Results:

Fifteen youth, ages 6-12, participated in the ChickQuest curriculum at Kennedy Heights. The group met each Monday for 1 hour for 7-weeks, which culminated in the hatching of 13 baby chicks during the after-school program. The kids thoroughly enjoyed when Nadia “the chicken lady” showed up to do activities with them. Favorite activities were cracking open unfertilized eggs to explore the inside and of course meeting the newly hatched chicks for the first time!

The hope is that KHCC Director will eventually start a new 4-H club in a slightly different format than the traditional 4-H community clubs in our state. This partnership expanded the perception of 4-H and brought 4-H STEM activities to a larger audience that normally has not had access.



Extension prepares the youth of today to become the effective, empathetic adults of tomorrow. Our research-based youth enrichment programs build youth and adult capacity and partnerships that help both sides grow. 4-H clubs, camps and afterschool programs give young people the hands-on experiences they need to develop an understanding of themselves and the world.



To learn more about Dane County 4-H:  
<https://dane.extension.wisc.edu>

## Evidence:

Evaluation of the program by the after-school students and staff showed positive results. Kids who participated shared that they felt welcome and enjoyed their time participating in ChickQuest. In the evaluation survey, the youth commented on things they learned and favorite lessons. The Community Center staff shared that the youth continue to talk about the chickens they hatched.

*“My favorite lesson was when we got to hold the baby chicks”*  
~ 2<sup>nd</sup> grader

*“I learned a lot about what it takes to keep chicks alive in their eggs!”*  
~ Afterschool Staff

## What’s next?:

Plans are underway to bring ChickQuest to other after-school programs in Dane County starting with the Goodman Community Center’s after-school program this month. And the Kennedy Heights Community Center has contacted Nadia to explore other curricula and opportunities available from Dane County 4-H.



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