



Travis Rovey poses with the Watusi steer from the Rovey Family Farm during Maricopa County Cooperative Extension's First Annual Spring Fiesta.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES
Cooperative Extension
Maricopa County

Maricopa County Cooperative Extension

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IMPROVING THE LIVES, COMMUNITIES, AND ECONOMY IN MARICOPA COUNTY

1st Annual Spring Fiesta

By Tricey Wilks

The University of Arizona Maricopa County Cooperative Extension opened its gates to the local community for the First Annual Spring Fiesta Event held on March 25th. It was a fun opportunity to highlight some of the programs we offer right here in the neighborhood!

Upon entering, staff and volunteers were on hand to greet guests, give them a raffle ticket, and provide information about the Maricopa County Cooperative Extension. Immediately, arrivals could smell the delicious food from the food trucks and hear the festive music playing on this beautiful Saturday morning. MyPlate Toss, Guess Who, the Obstacle Course and the Fruit and Vegetable Catapult were a few of the games available, designed to educate and stimulate physical activity. The Blender Bike is always a favorite of the kids, where they are able to sit on a



stationary bike and use kinetic energy (pedaling) to power a blender. The refreshing frozen fruit smoothies were a perfect accompaniment to the free popcorn.

No one could resist the rooster, baby goats and bunnies brought by the 4-H members and volunteers, who also sold ice-cold water bottles with proceeds going to support the 4-H youth development program. After a stroll through the Vegetable Garden Demonstration, one could stop by the Master Gardeners' table to ask questions and receive helpful hints or head over to the School Demonstration Gardens to learn about the importance of bees and worms. Arizona Project Wet was also there to promote water education in solving complex water issues with an awesome demonstration that was appropriate for all ages. MC's, Lupe Reyes and Tommy Verdera, kept the people dancing and in good spirits while giving away door prizes 30 minutes! The real star of the show had to be the amazing Rovey Dairy's Watusi steer that was available for pictures and petting.

There was something for everyone! Thanks to the Maricopa County Cooperative Extension staff and volunteers for making this event a success. See you there next year!

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Congratulations Ruth Jackson!

By Traci Armstrong Florian

On March 22, 2017, in Arlington, Virginia, while attending the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program's "Building for the Future" National Coordinators' Conference, Ruth C. Jackson was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation from the United States Department of Agriculture for her 38 years of service in EFNEP. EFNEP is a national nutrition program that targets limited-income families and teaches basic nutrition, meal planning, and grocery-dollar management. Helen Chipman, PhD, RD, National Program Leader for USDA-NIFA Nutrition Education, highlighted Ruth because of Ruth's unique beginning in EFNEP and poignant rise in the program:

Ruth started as an EFNEP participant in the 1970's, followed by being a volunteer advisory member, and then took an EFNEP position as a UA employee as a Program Aide in 1978. She worked for 20 years while earning her bachelor and master degrees and assumed the coordination of the Maricopa County EFNEP staff in the mid-1990's when she was accepted into a faculty position with direct responsibilities for EFNEP. In the mid-2000's, Ruth was promoted to Associate Agent with Continuing Status with the University. In 2011, Ruth retired and has returned part-time assisting the State Director of EFNEP.



It is indeed a rare occurrence when an EFNEP participant is able to rise above their circumstances and elevate others on their way up. From a struggling, single mother with four children to feed, to a mother with a post-graduate school degree, with four successful, grown children (with 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, Ruth proudly states), Ruth is truly a special person that was able to learn from the education offered to her by EFNEP and the UA.

Thank you, Ruth, for your work and dedication to empowering families for 38 years!



New Executive Director to Lead CENTRL Into The Future

By Scott Koenig

Participating in Class XXI of Project CENTRL from 2011-2013 changed me in three major ways: 1) It sharpened my tools to become a more effective leader in all facets of my life, 2) It created a wider network of colleagues and some lifelong friends throughout the state who share a passion for Arizona, and 3) It strengthened my commitment to make an impact in my community. I have a continued debt of gratitude to the donors, speakers, board members and classmates who made that experience possible. While some of the nuts and bolts of the program and administration have changed since 2013, CENTRL's commitment to creating a life-changing curriculum that equips and empowers leaders to meet the needs of rural Arizona remains steadfast. As the new Executive Director, I'm honored to partner with the Board and the University of Arizona (UA) to take CENTRL into its

next chapter including a return to a full-time Executive Director and part-time administrator. I'm grateful to Monica Pastor for her leadership over the past three years and her availability to help in the transition prior to her retirement.

As an Arizona transplant from Ohio, in 2017 I will have spent as much of my life in Arizona as I did around Toledo. I was recruited to UA as a member of the diving team. It's from the ten-meter platform on campus where I first felt the call to explore the four mountain ranges surrounding Tucson. After graduation, I did crisis intervention, mediation and volunteer recruitment and employee training at a non-profit in Tucson. But I also answered that call to explore as a hiking guide at Canyon Ranch. I transitioned to marketing work in Phoenix which inspired me to pursue an MBA. But first, I continued to explore our great state by living, working and playing in one of the most remote and rural areas: the Grand Canyon's North Rim. Following the Eller MBA program, I started my fundraising career at the UA in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the UA Alumni Association and Health Sciences. CENTRL's 26th Class will begin in June and our network of over 600 alumni actively strengthen their communities so we and future generations can continue to thrive in rural AZ.

The Maricopa County Fair



4-H Staff Robin Etnyre and John-Martin Rigsby enjoy their time at fair. It's John-Martin's first time ever at fair!



4-H youth await their turn to show off all of their hard work.



4-H staff member Veronica Duron prepares for a long day of county fair processing and judging.

County Fair Brings More Than Meets the Eye



By Kim Christman & Josie Slade

Close your eyes and imagine for a moment what you loved about going to the Fair when you were a child. Do you have thoughts of lighted ferris wheels, delicious Fair food, and trying to win your favorite stuffed animal? Well, Maricopa County 4-H members love the fair too, but they put in a lot more and get a lot more out of it when it comes to the County Fair. 4-H members work hard to prepare and train their animals, develop some great hands-on projects and posters, and learn about the project that they will showcase at the County Fair.

The County Fair boasts everything mentioned above and more! It gives families time to make great memories together; it gives youth a chance to show others all that they have learned in the past year, it allows friendships to be made, and fun to be had! Our 4-H members helped to fill the 4-H General Exhibit Area with over 600 projects! Amazing projects made with 4-H members own hands, minds, and hearts show fairgoers just some of what our 4-H members are learning. Fairgoers could also tour the barns where hundreds of animals that our 4-H members have fed, raised, and prepared for showing called home for the week!

This year, 4-H Staff members took the opportunity to turn the 4-H General Exhibit Area into a homey place to not only relax, but also to learn! Our 4-H AmeriCorps interns led the charge with Josie Slade teaching youth to make friendship bracelets; Rabia Jama, teaching youth about density and then helping them make their own colorful lava lamps; and Brittany Alger helping youth to learn how to conduct plant propagation. 4-H Program Coordinators Jenn Amundsen and Haydee Pardee taught youth how to make dog toys to donate to local animal shelters. Finally, youth had an electrifying experience when Intel Fellow, Tim Lonchar, helped them build their own electrical circuit.

Our new 4-H Recruitment Area attracted the attention of many potential members and volunteers and received positive attention from many interested individuals. 4-Her's represented Maricopa County well with many ribbons and awards for livestock categories, as well as general project areas. County Fair serves not only as an event, but as a way to draw people together, and a bittersweet one for the 4-Her's who have thoroughly enjoyed the past 4-H year.

Cooperative Extension, AmeriCorps Connect to Create Opportunity



UA Wildcat Corps member, Rabia Jama and 4-H Associate Agent, Kim Christman during a team-building event.

A program referred to as the "domestic Peace Corps," and offered through a traditional partnership with University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, is providing jobs, skills for future jobs and new experiences to AmeriCorps members.

When Rabia Jama first began as a UA Cooperative Extension Wildcat Corps member, she toured the James 4-H Camp, which provides youth development programming in northern Arizona.

"I told my supervisor I'd never been to a camp like this — the only camp I've been to is a refugee camp," said Jama, who fled to Kenya after the start of the Somali civil war. Later, Jama and her siblings moved to Phoenix and became U.S. citizens, and now Jama serves Maricopa County's 4-H program.

"When I first started working as an AmeriCorps member, I never anticipated the impact I would have on the kids and vice versa," she said. "It's been an amazing experience and I've learned so many things."

Members are provided a small living allowance, depending on how many hours they commit. After successful completion of their service, members also receive the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award as a benefit, providing \$1,000 to \$6,000, also based on hours. The award can be used for tuition or to repay qualifying student loans.

"AmeriCorps has a unique partnership with Cooperative Extension, whose mission is to take the University to the community," said Chris Dixon, program coordinator for UA Wildcat Corps. "This is one way to engage communities. AmeriCorps expands the capacity of Cooperative Extension to reach more people."

Jama, who graduated with honors with a degree in biology in 2013 from Arizona State University, hopes to pursue medical studies at the UA. She said she is grateful for the experience with AmeriCorps and Cooperative Extension.

"Being an American means your success is a product of your hard work and the contribution of those who pave the path for you," she said. "I am grateful for this American dream."

As a Wildcat Corps member, Jama assists with teaching robotics and is helping to initiate a 4-H program for students at Luke Air Force Base focusing on science, technology, engineering and math.

"They have definitely helped grow the program. They are all different, but all amazing, and come from such different backgrounds," said Kim Christman, associate area agent for 4-H youth development in Maricopa County. "They give us the boots on the ground that we need."

Christman said of Jama: "She is amazing. I always get choked up talking about her story."

AmeriCorps members in Arizona, such as Jama, have been involved in Cooperative Extension programs for several years, working in gardens and facilitating education programs such as those focusing on school readiness and healthy lifestyle initiatives. Some serve with 4-H programs, military youth and other youth development programs.

[To read the full story, click here.](#)

The Director's Cut

By Ed Martin



No, Monica Pastor has not become the new Director for Maricopa County Cooperative Extension. However, there was a very important event that took place on April 17th that warranted me giving up my Director's Cut section to recognize one of the best in state. On April 17, at a ceremony on campus, Monica Pastor was awarded the 2016 Extension Faculty of the Year Award. Never has a county director been prouder when I heard her name announced. Of course, I knew ahead of time and it took a little bit trickery to assure that Monica would be at the event on campus. But in the end, it was all well worth it. The Cooperative Extension Faculty of the Year Award was created to recognize and honor outstanding achievements and

contributions by a faculty member in Cooperative Extension in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. One of the major purposes of the award is for peers to recognize outstanding faculty. As part of the nomination process, letters of support are needed. I can assure everyone that there was no shortage of people willing and wanting to help support Monica's nomination. One supporter wrote "Monica Pastor is the embodiment of the intents and purposes of the Cooperative Extension Service." Another wrote "... Monica [has] the respect and admiration of those whom she serves." Finally, a third letter summed it up nicely, "Monica Pastor has been an outstanding contributor to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cooperative Extension for many years and your organization will be well-served by recognizing her contributions." Congratulation to Monica from everyone here at MCCE and from the thousands of people whose lives you touched throughout your career in Cooperative Extension. Everyone at MCCE is proud and honored to be working with you!

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ABOUT TOWN

Family Resource Center - Parent-Child Interaction Classes

More Information:
<http://extension.arizona.edu/roosevelt-early-childhood-family-resource-center>

Annual Turfgrass Field Day

When: May 11 7:30am - 12:00pm
Where: UA Rincon Vista Sports Fields
More Information:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/annual-turfgrass-field-day>

Farm Business Essentials for Women

When: May 12, June 9, & July 13 8:30am - 4:30pm
Where: Arizona Farm Bureau
More Information:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/farm-business-essentials-women-day-1>

Stop Pests in Housing Workshop

When: May 16 7:30am - 5:00pm
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension
More Information:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/stop-pests-housing-workshop>

Citrus and Palm Tree Seminar

When: May 18 8:30am - 2:00pm
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension
More Information:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/central-arizona-citrus-and-palm-tree-seminar>

Brain Builders for Life

When: May 20 8:00am - 5:00pm
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension
More Information:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/brain-builders-life-maricopa-county-may20-2017>

DIG: Raised Bed Gardening

When: June 18 2:00pm - 4:00pm
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension
More Information:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/dig-raised-beds>

Master Gardener Training - Fall Session

When: July 25 - Nov. 14 9:30am - 12:30pm
Where: Maricopa County Cooperative Extension
More Information:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/maricopa-county-master-gardener-training-fall-2017>

Maricopa County Cooperative Extension Monthly Event Calendar

<http://extension.arizona.edu/maricopa>



Check us out at:
<https://www.facebook.com/MaricopaCountyCooperativeExtension>

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