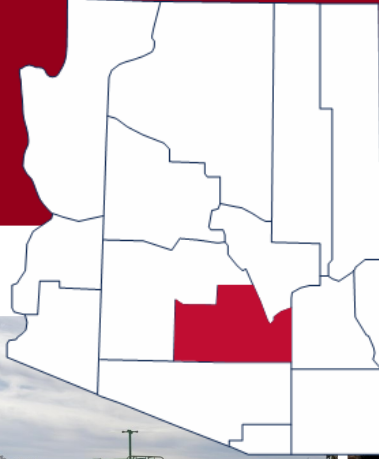


THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Cooperative Extension

Pinal County



Pinal County Annual Report



The Year in Review

2021



And Now, A Word from our Director...

Cathy L. Martinez, CED, Pinal County Cooperative Extension



We're pleased to share this 2021 Annual Report for Arizona Cooperative Extension in Pinal County. Cooperative Extension is part of the Division of Agriculture, Life & Veterinary Sciences, and Cooperative Extension (ALVSCE) at the University of Arizona. We are part of the statewide and national network of knowledgeable faculty and staff working in land-grant universities who provide lifelong educational programs that help people solve problems and put knowledge generated through research to work in communities.

In Pinal County, we address our mission through three pillars: Agriculture and Natural Resources, 4-H Youth Development, and Family, Consumer, & Health Sciences. Our programs include:

AG AND NATURAL RESOURCES: Supporting farmers, ranchers, and others through agricultural consultations and classes; education to build healthy outdoor spaces through gardening and landscaping; and teaching school-age children about agriculture

- Range Management and Livestock Production
- Field Crops Systems
- Horticulture and Master Gardeners
- Turfgrass Science
- Ag-Ventures Agricultural Literacy

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: Youth build life skills (such as responsibility, communication skills, and leadership) through 4-H clubs and programs; projects culminate with exhibits at the County Fair

- 4-H Club Programs
- 4-H Camping Programs
- 4-H Leadership and Citizenship Programs
- CHAT (Choose Health Action Teen)

FAMILY, CONSUMER, AND HEALTH SCIENCES: Families and caregivers gain tools to create nurturing learning environments for children, education to improve health and well-being, and opportunities to support early health and development

- AZ Health Zone
- Child Care Health Consultation
- Developmental and Sensory Screening and Education
- Diabetes Prevention Program
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
- Financial Literacy Education
- Pinal First Smiles (oral health screening and education)
- Parenting – including Positive Discipline and the Strengthening Families Program

We invite you to learn about our 2021 educational impacts and successes through this annual report. In addition, you can connect with us via phone (520-836-5221), email (Pinal-CE@arizona.edu), or through our website (<https://extension.arizona.edu/pinal>).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy L. Martinez". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Cathy L. Martinez
County Extension Director

Table of Content

Pinal County Cooperative Extension—2021 Annual Report

PROGRAM INFORMATION (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

- *Ag and Natural Resources* Page 4
- *Ag-Ventures*..... Page 5
- *AmeriCorps* Page 6
- *AZ Health Zone*..... Page 7
- *AZ Project WET (Water Education for Teachers)* Page 8
- *Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC)*..... Page 9
- *CHAT (Choose Health Action Teen)*..... Page 10
- *Developmental and Sensory Screening*..... Page 11
- *Diabetes Prevention Program*..... Page 12
- *EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program)*..... Page 13
- *4-H Youth Development*..... Page 14
- *Field Crops Systems*..... Page 15
- *Financial Literacy*..... Page 16
- *Horticulture Program*..... Page 17
- *Pinal First Smiles*..... Page 18
- *Positive Discipline*..... Page 19
- *Strengthening Families Program* Page 20
- *Turfgrass Science* Page 21

PERSONNEL

- *Faculty*..... Page 22
- *Staff*..... Page 22

OUR BOARDS

- *Pinal County Board of Supervisors*..... Page 23
- *Pinal County Extension Advisory Board*..... Page 23

3RD ANNUAL EXTENSION DAY

- *Saturday, October 20, 2021*..... Page 24

HOW WE SPENT OUR DAYS

- *Program Picture Collage* Page 25

CONTACT US

- *Our website, locations and Facebook Info*..... Page 26

Ag & Natural Resources

Ashley Hall, Area Assistant Agent

ABOUT - Ashley Hall has been an Area Assistant Agent since 2016, conducting educational programs in the focus areas of range management and livestock production. Ashley has an area appointment with an emphasis in Pinal (20% responsibility) and Gila (80% responsibility) Counties.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

A major programming effort is in administering a federally funded rangeland vegetation monitoring program which is in place on over 2.9 million acres on the Tonto National Forest, 317,000 acres of the Tonto are located within Pinal County. This program is a critical need because it provides information which quantifies rangeland health and the sustainability of livestock grazing. In 2021, collected data at 10 monitoring locations in Pinal County.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- Co-organized Livestock Artificial Insemination Clinic open to ranchers across the state; 2 participants from Pinal County were in attendance (clinic limited to 15).
- "After the Fire" Public Meeting was organized with Water Resources Research Center, other Extension Agents, Cobre Valley Watershed Partnership, and US Forest Service. The meeting included presentation from USFS Staff, Mayors (Globe, Miami, Superior), Superior Town Manager, Gila County Supervisor, and Emergency Manager. Presentation topics included status of local land and water resources following the Telegraph and Mescal Fires, priorities for post-fire recovery, how to prepare for future hazards, and what it means to live in fire-adapted communities. Ashley provided a presentation titled "Why Grass is on the Agenda." All of the videos of the presentations are available online at <https://extension.arizona.edu/after-the-fire>.
- Toured Pinal County ranches impacted by the Telegraph Fire with US Forest Service staff to look at fire damage and discuss management options immediately after the fire.
- Lead or co-author on 3 publications applicable to ranchers in Pinal County and available through the Extension website – Rangeland Plant Life Forms, Using Repeat Photography as a Tool to Monitor Rangelands, and Monitoring Drought in Arizona.
- Attended quarterly Winkelman NRCDC meetings to answer range or livestock related questions as needed.



Ag-Ventures

Victor Jimenez, 4-H YD Agent

ABOUT - The MAC Farm (Maricopa Agricultural Center) Ag-Ventures educational program includes a combination of videos, educational presenters, hands-on learning experiences, and tractor-trailer rides round this 2,100 acre farm. The philosophy is for students to learn and have fun while learning about the source of our food and fiber. Programs include: Nutrition, Water Science, Gardening, Plant Science, and a Summer Ag-Institute for teachers. To enhance the Ag-Literacy experience, the Ag-Venture program reaches out to schools in multiple counties (Pinal, Maricopa, Yavapai, and Gila).

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Due to the University of Arizona’s COVID Rules, as well as those in the community at large, Extension program outreach was hampered in its effort to promote Ag-Literacy programs through the channels it normally has pursued. Total number of youth outreach with this educational effort from January to December, came to 1,517 participants. This was up by 300 from the previous year. To augment the outreach and learning, a partial shift in program was accomplished through virtual Ag-Literacy presentations.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- MAC Farm funding continued to the amount of \$24,000 to repair the MAC Farm Ag-Village learning site and to support the teaching and outreach experience.
- Built and installed new benches and fencing in the MAC Farm Ag-Village learning center.
- Educational Ag-Venture curricula included Nutrition, Water Science, Plant Science, and Food Comes from the Farm.
- A new series of (4,000) Ag-Venture post cards was revised to share with elementary school teachers in program promotion.
- Professional development included zoom training and workshop, social media, and video.
- Supported the 4-H Expo and 4-H Healthy Living programs
- Moving forward gradually with future Ag-Literacy teaching in multiple counties as the health status improves.
- Prepared for another Virtual Agricultural Academy.



AmeriCorps

Esmeralda Castillo, Program Coordinator
 Esther Turner, Program Coordinator, Sr., M.P.A.



AmeriCorps

ABOUT - AmeriCorps is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of many people by serving their communities. It is a chance to apply skills and energy toward helping others and meeting critical needs in the community, such as in housing, health, or technology. Each year, AmeriCorps offers 75,000 opportunities for adults of all ages and backgrounds to serve through a network of partnerships with local and national nonprofit groups. Whether your service makes a community safer, gives a child a second chance, or helps protect the environment, you will get things done through AmeriCorps.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

AmeriCorps members recruited, coordinated, or supported thirty-six (36) non-member volunteers.

Over 250 families were served each month (November - August) through Produce on Wheels Without Waste (POWWOW) where our AmeriCorps members helped sort, package, and distribute produce to the community.

Forty-nine (49) families completed Strengthening Families with the assistance of AmeriCorps members.

Two (2) promotional/award videos were created for the 4-H program.

Members participated in the staff retreat, Cooperative Extension Days, Holiday Light Parade, Holiday Events, Lights Out Event, 4-H Turkey Shoot, and 4-H Hybrid Expo.

A new summer activity celebrating STEM began. We met for 8 Saturdays teaching a new STEM activity each week. This not only provided activities for 4-H members during the summer, but also boosted enrollment in the Fall.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- Our AmeriCorps members are a very important part of our Strengthening Families parent education program. Home visits were made to drop off dinner and supplies needed for the program's activities each week.
- Our AmeriCorps members continued to assist in the delivery of our Strengthening Families Program (SFP), 4-H, and the nutrition education programs.
- Each month, outreach bags were prepared by our AmeriCorps members. The bags contained nutrition education materials, recipes, and activities. They were distributed at events such as POWWOW.
- AmeriCorps members attended monthly Zoom meetings with the Wildcat Corps team.





AZ Health Zone

Sybil Peters, Interim Program Coordinator, Sr.

ABOUT - AZ Health Zone is a collaboration of public and private organizations committed to working together to promote healthy eating and physical activity among low-income Arizonans. AZ Health Zone has partnerships with school districts and community organizations, such as senior centers, community gardens, farmers markets, preschools, etc., throughout Pinal County. AZ Health Zone provides nutrition, physical activity, and health related educational support, materials, and resources.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

We provided social marketing and community education to promote adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviors, as well as changes in policies, systems, and environments. The program provides educational programming for SNAP eligible individuals and families in nutrition, physical activity, gardening, and food safety.

Our goal is to provide classes, resources, and events to communities which support and educate consumers to make healthier choices with their daily food and activity decisions. Consumers are empowered with knowledge, tools, and skills to make informed decisions to achieve a healthier lifestyle, improve food safety and food security, and increase physical activity. Families improve their overall quality of life and health outcomes; as a result, improved healthy nutrition and physically active lifestyle behaviors are reported among children and adults.

Our partnerships with different agencies throughout the county helped increase the number of physical activity opportunities in Casa Grande, Coolidge, Eloy, and Florence. We conducted 9 virtual class series utilizing the *Color Me Healthy* and *Seed to Supper* curricula, reaching a total of 177 youth and 76 adults. As we were able, we also began offering series in-person. We conducted a total of 15 class series, reaching a total of 375 youth and 114 adults. We attended various events as part of the U of A Cooperative Extension team, as well as attending 2 additional one-time events and 3 monthly events, reaching an additional total of 330 youth and 1,100 adults. At each event we taught and provided resources to participants about healthier choices they could make in their daily food & activity decisions.

We received a lot of positive feedback from all of our class series, one-time, and monthly events from the participants that attended. Many shared that the content taught and the resources given helped them utilize the knowledge they gained in attending the classes and reading thru the informational resources.

We also supported and sustained community gardens in 3 of our cities, providing hands-on educational learning for the volunteers of those gardens. Programming was done weekly for each garden.

- Florence Community Garden—7 youth/4 adults
- Hope Women’s Center—7 adults
- CG Middle School/Alliance-3youth/7adults

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

In 2021 we adapted to virtual delivery for ‘SEED to Supper’ and ‘Color Me Healthy’ curricula using PowerPoint Presentations and Zoom. As COVID guidelines and suggestions continued to shift during the year, many participants shared that they were very thankful for the flexibility to attend classes in the way they were most comfortable.



AZ Project W.E.T.

Shevonda Joyner, Program Coordinator

ABOUT - Arizona Project WET's (APW) Pinal Education Program brings STEM literacy through water education to teachers and students across Pinal County. We develop K-12 education programs that instill a deeper understanding of water in the earth system and Arizona's water resources. Acting on the belief that individuals knowledgeable about their local water resources are able to make more informed decisions about water, we strive toward an ethic of water conservation and stewardship. Through partnerships with businesses and water professionals, we offer teacher professional development, online resources, facilitated presentations, and community outreach events. The Pinal Program was established in 2009, thanks to the generosity of our founding sponsor, the Abbott Fund.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Fifty-five (55) Florence, Maricopa, Coolidge, and Casa Grande teachers participated in workshops and improved their mastery of content knowledge and instructional practice. We reached 1,316 students through participating teacher facilitation.

APW Pinal Program reached 9 schools, 12 teachers, 303 students, and 34 adult parents through the Maricopa Water Festival Event.

APW Pinal Education Program reached 8 schools, 14 teachers, and 389 students through the Florence Water Festival Water Event.

There were 43 volunteers who participated in the Arizona Water Festival training. Five volunteer hours were served with APW Pinal Education Program by each volunteer (215 hours total).

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- Hired new coordinator Shevonda “Shevy” Joyner.
- Began marketing Arizona Department of Water Resources funded Groundwater Conservation Education program, connecting with Maricopa Unified School District (1 administrative professional, 4 schools), Florence Unified School District (1 water provider—EPCOR, 26 schools, 26 principals) Casa Grande School District (2 schools, 12 teachers).
- Delivered four Water Festival Teacher Workshops fully online. Totals: 55 teachers and 9 hours of teacher contact time (6 days, for 1 ½ hrs. per day).
- Professional development for coordinator through Project CENTRL, learning about Natural Resources and connecting with different water companies such as Central Arizona Project (CAP) and Salt River Project (SRP).
- The Cooperative Extension Day booth was ‘Grogu’ themed (from Star Wars) and demonstrated the Groundwater Model for 79 adults and 73 youth.
- Attended the Eloy Light Parade to recruit volunteers for the Coolidge and Casa Grande Water Festivals reaching 150 attendees.
- Contributed to Arizona Water Festivals in Marana, North Peoria, Verde Valley, and Chandler.
- Workshopped Groundwater Education Classes in Surprise, AZ preparing for in-person presentations for the APW Pinal Program.



Child Care Health Consultation

Ashley Dixon, Assistant Agent - FCCHS (Gila County)

ABOUT - Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC) work with a childcare provider's administration, staff, parents, and children to design educational activities, support policies, and identify resources to enhance the health and safety of the children participating in the childcare environment. The Consultants are health professionals, including registered nurses and others, specially trained to meet the needs of the childcare programs.

2021—THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Thirty-nine (39) COVID-19 Health and Safety Assessments were completed for 100% of all sites still open through COVID-19. As a result of CCHC efforts and other technical assistance, childcare facilities implemented new changing tables/stations that met state requirements and new safety protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Examples of changes sites implemented include: mask wearing, developed lessons and trained staff on new mask policies and social distancing guidelines, increased sanitation and hand washing, and wellness checks to be completed upon arrival and before entry to childcare sites. Additionally, all Quality First childcare sites received regular communication about updated safety guidelines in relation to the pandemic from the CDC and ADHS, as well as assistance navigating protocols if sites had positive COVID-19 cases or exposures.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- Provided over ten customized trainings on health and safety issues such as blood borne pathogens, handwashing, sanitation, COVID-19, medication administration, diapering, and policy formation.
- Provided assistance for twelve sites with possible COVID-19 outbreaks, assisted four sites with verified COVID-19 exposure including assisting in proper closure protocols, disinfectant procedures, notifications, etc., and an Molluscum Contagiosum outbreak.
- There were over 1,200 contacts made either in-person, by phone, or via email to 39 different facilities. Centers were provided with technical assistance, observation, advice, and essential supplies. Multiple correspondence from different agencies on various subjects was distributed.
- Essential supplies were dropped off 32 times to providers. These included: masks, gloves, bleach, cleaning wipes, hand sanitizer, thermometers, etc. Every site that was open also received a 'Provider Appreciation' educational reinforcement item; these were delivered to about 300 individual childcare staff and administrators with a note thanking them for all they do for young children.
- Participated in approximately 42 collaborative meetings, which include the center director, the coach, smart support, and the CCHC.
- Published the CCHC quarterly newsletter and distributed it to all centers and CCHC's.
- Participated in the Pinal County Cooperative Extension Day outdoor event and educated the public on proper handwashing and disease mitigation.



C.H.A.T.

Esmeralda Castillo, Program Coordinator

ABOUT - Choose Health Action Teen (CHAT) program is designed to recruit teens to teach younger children the benefits of healthy eating and active living. CHAT teens participate in fun training sessions, learn leadership skills, and participate and lead active games. CHAT teens also volunteer and participate in community service events.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Our CHAT True Leaders in Equity Team worked hard on their garden project, El Jardine de Unidad/Garden of Unity by cultivating, tilling, and planting in the outdoor garden.

Our CHAT True Leaders in Equity Team had their Grand Opening of El Jardine de Unidad/Garden of Unity in March with great success in attendance of community members and dignitaries.

El Jardine de Unidad/Garden of Unity project was recognized at the 4-H Clover Ball in June and was represented by our CHAT True Leaders in Equity Team.

Twenty-eight (28) youth completed the 6 lesson series of healthy living lessons and activities.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

Despite COVID still affecting how programming was delivered to youth, we managed to teach our healthy living program in an outdoor setting to youth at a local recreation center.



Developmental & Sensory Screening

Esther Turner, Program Coordinator, Sr., M.P.A.

ABOUT - *The Vision and Hearing Screening Technicians screen young children, ages 1 - 5, to help identify any potential hearing or vision problems that may impact a child's development. The program helps parents in the Pinal Region understand developmental milestones and behaviors, as well as the importance of early vision and hearing screening, and responds to concerns families may have. Screenings can identify developmental delays for children birth to age 5 and detect potential vision or hearing issues that could be corrected. When there is a need for further evaluation, referrals are made to local professionals.*

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

At total of 1,243 developmental screenings, 1,470 vision screenings, and 1,634 hearing screenings were conducted this year.

Referrals for further evaluation were given for 1,155 children for developmental, hearing, and vision.

We distributed 476 resource bags to child care centers, home –based child care centers, libraries, screening participants, and pregnancy centers.

Staff provided 31 vision certification trainings, 38 hearing certification trainings, and 1 ASQ3/ASQ-SE training. These trainings were provided to school districts, home visitation programs, and the Gila River Indian Community.

Our social media platforms (Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and website) continue to grow with new subscribers.

We are back in-person to most schools and childcare centers. The sites that still have restrictions in place are given the option to do developmental screenings online and make office appointments for individuals that are high risk or who need vision and hearing screening.

We participated in 49 community outreach events including First Things First's Week of the Young Child, Cooperative Extension Days, Holiday Light Parades, and library story times.

We attended several virtual events that were coordinated with libraries (Chicka Chicka Zoom Zoom events) and other community partners (3 Friends, Families, and Neighbors trainings) .

We hosted a bi-monthly Resource Recap series that focused on providing community resources to our county. This was a collaboration with several community partners including CAHRA, Against Abuse, and First Things First.

Staff attended several professional development opportunities including the Annual Aces Summit/Child Abuse Prevention Conference, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Strong Families Virtual Conference, Prevent Child Abuse America National Conference, First Things First Virtual Conference, as well as other webinars and trainings.

In partnership with ADHS, we have been reviewing and rebuilding the vision and hearing screening curriculum and training to include the state's updated rules and regulations and to be delivered in a virtual format.

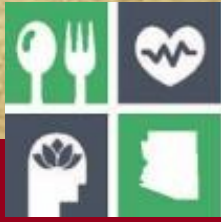
WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- *We won the Western Region Social Media Award from the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) for our online presence.*
- *We won 2nd place in the Western Region National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) for our innovative outreach.*

Diabetes Prevention Program

Esmeralda Castillo, Program Coordinator

Mary Gonzales, Instructional Specialist



ABOUT - If you have pre-diabetes or are at risk for type 2 diabetes, it's time to take charge of your health. The PreventT2 Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is proven to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes and is taught by trained lifestyle coaches. The Diabetes Prevention Program includes: 1) A CDC tested and approved curriculum 2) weekly sessions with a trained lifestyle coach to help you lose weight, eat healthier, be more physically active, and manage stress, and 3) support from others like you!

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

We enrolled 18 new participants, 11 of which completed the year-long Prevent T2 Diabetes Prevention Program.

The participants lost a total of 202 pounds.

An average of 260 minutes of physical activity was recorded each week (nearly double the program's goal of 150 minutes).

Retention rate at the end of the program was 61%.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- COVID shifted the Diabetes Prevention Program to online delivery through Zoom, which seemed not to impact recruitment.
- Statements from a couple of Zoom participants:

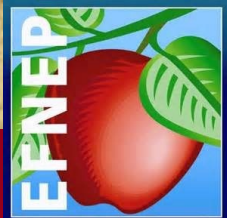
PARTICIPANT #1

*"This program has helped my whole family improve their health.
I learned about carbs, exercise, accountability, and support.
Best use of my time with a program that is amazing."*

PARTICIPANT #2

*"I have my coach in my head—make better choices,
or 'You can do this', 'Don't eat that-eat this'.
She is with me all the time in a positive way.
I had severe swelling in my feet
and because I know what I am eating I was able to say—I had a pretzel with salt.
Right away I knew what added to my meal.
Sure enough that was it so no more pretzels-not worth the physical side effects."*





EFNEP

Esmeralda Castillo, Program Coordinator

ABOUT - The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) began in 1969. The program's mission is to empower limited-income families through nutrition education for healthy lifestyles and a positive future. EFNEP provides up-to-date education in diet quality such as nutrition, food resource management (budgeting and planning), food safety, physical activity, and referrals to community resources. EFNEP is a community-based, educational approach for families to learn and develop healthy lifestyles and create behavior changes. EFNEP has positively impacted economic, obesity, and food insecurity challenges that affect the overall well-being of families in our county.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

We enrolled 91 participants in the program. COVID affected our target population's ability to participate, since many have limited or no internet access to do virtual programming.

Of those who began, 36 participants completed the EFNEP program (overall completion rate of 40%; this is actually a good rate since many low-income participants either do not possess the technology or confidence in their ability to participate remotely).

Each graduate received 8 hours of training on nutrition, food safety, food resource management, food security, and physical activity.

A total of 621 lessons were taught.

Approximately 1,200 bags with educational handouts on food safety, fruits & vegetables, whole grains was handed out at the monthly Produce on Wheels.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

COVID in 2021 still affected how classes were delivered. In-person classes were slowly coming back, but still with some restrictions, and this affected the participants reached. Online classes were still made available.





4-H Youth Development

Cathy L. Martinez, Area FCHS Agent

ABOUT - The 4-H Youth Development program provides opportunities for youth ages 5 to 18 to explore and learn more about: sciences and technology, healthy lifestyles, animals, plant science, citizenship, leadership, and other leisure activities. Approximately 150 volunteer leaders assist youth through Pinal County 4-H annually. The mission of 4-H is to provide educational opportunities for youth to become capable and contributing members of a global society. 4-H is the youth development program of the University of Arizona, College of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension, in Arizona. Enrollment in 4-H has rebounded to the pre-pandemic level of about 400 youth.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

4-H continued to support the shift from in-person 4-H club and project meetings to virtual meetings. Our office provided articles, tips, and trainings on how to hold virtual 4-H meetings that would engage members and keep us in alignment with pandemic requirements.

Fortunately, we were able to begin holding in-person meetings, particularly outdoors, such as shooting sports, rocketry, horse, etc. The challenges faced highlighted the quality of our volunteer leaders and their ability to be flexible and maintain interest, and to help continue growth for our members. It also gave us the opportunity to test ways of programming using virtual platforms, which may help to eliminate some barriers to future participation.

We encouraged our members to reach beyond their local club and become more active on the State and National levels. We look forward to seeing more activity in these areas going forward.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- Held virtual update meeting for all club leaders; included information on the guidelines for virtual engagement and county events and activities.
- Scholarship Committee of 5 volunteer judges awarded 7 scholarships, totaling \$7,750 to past/present 4-H members.
- Launched the new 4-H enrollment platform called Zingbooks—trained staff, leaders and members. The new system also enables registration for most 4-H events and includes the 4-H Record Book.
- Several New Leader Orientations were held; a total of 38 new volunteers were fully certified.
- Record Book Committee judged, scored and awarded a total of 27 4-H Member Record Books.
- 4-H had a total of 12 Arizona State Horse Show qualifiers and Pinal's Junior Skillathon Team won state.
- Continuously communicated with 4-H families via newsletters, emails, calls, and virtual meetings .
- New to the team: 4-H Extension Assistant for the Pinal County 4-H Program and 4-H Program Coordinator for the Gila River Indian Community.
- Created a 4-H Video to promote becoming a 4-H volunteer which aired throughout late summer and fall at the Casa Grande Harkins Theater .
- Completed an outdoor 4-H Expo event at the Maricopa Ag Center in lieu of County Fair (only large animals were shown at the fair in 2021).
- Conducted a STEM Saturday program on 8 consecutive weeks, introducing many new families to 4-H and attracting 64 youth.



Field Crops Systems

Blase Evancho, Assistant in Extension

ABOUT - Field days, seminars, and other types of programs help agriculture producers, industry representatives, and support personnel learn up-to-date production techniques during the year. Emphasis is placed on presenting and discussing new research-based information that has been locally tested by University of Arizona and industry sources.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Field crops program continued delivering production information through hybrid and in-person events hosting a guayule field day, a state-wide cotton symposium, and a field crops breakout session at the Southwest Ag Summit. These courses offered 9 continuing education units to over 150 stake holders to maintain their professional licenses.

Timely crop management information was delivered weekly to over 300 newsletter subscribers, detailing weather and crop stress information, agronomic/pest updates, and important information on technology updates.

Communication lines remained open between Pinal County growers and pest control advisors to address field issues and crop management issues resulting in approximately 25 field visits to assist in insurance claims, crop failures, new cropping systems, and low water use crop adoption.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

- Field trials to understand the effects of cotton heat stress on yield are ongoing with a field assessment tool that will be ready to test in 2022. This will give cotton producers another piece of information to use when selecting the best cotton for their operation.
- A new statewide program to map, monitor, and educate stakeholders on herbicide resistant Palmer amaranth has mapped every cotton field in the state finding that 7% of Arizona's cotton fields have poorly or unmanaged resistant populations and has delivered presentations at 5 conferences and meetings to increase education on this pest.



Financial Literacy

Sybil Peters, Instructional Specialist

ABOUT - Financial Literacy education will help individuals gain the knowledge, self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-awareness to become in control of their finances, and thus improve their lives controlling their financial health. This program will help with daily stressors such as: worrying about electric bills, putting food on the table and wondering if they have somewhere to sleep tomorrow night, which all influences the way individuals interact with their child(ren), their families and their communities.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Our continuing goal with the Financial Literacy program is to increase participants understanding of basic financial planning skills that will assist them in their personal finance journey. We believe that gaining this basic knowledge participants will be able to identify ways in which they can improve their practices concerning their finances to reduce feelings of stress & that individuals & families are able to use the tools & skills they have learned in classes to manage & improve their personal financial security & well-being. These programs provide group education on basic financial skills such as budgeting, credit, saving, and wants vs. needs. Target audience is adults and teens.

- Four single-session “Where Does Your Money Go” classes reached 33 youth and 21 adult participants.
- Six of the 4-week “Building Financial Security” series reached 7 youth and 26 adults.
- We participated in multiple outreach events with other Extension programs.

Participants were asked to provide feedback about their overall experience taking online financial literacy workshops. The following comments are typical of the responses we received:

- “I believe we all know that we do spend more than what we earn, but once we put it on paper it does make you realize more that we should start acting differently.”
- “The savings calendar was the best tool given in this workshop.”
- “I loved the reflection. I saw what I’m spending money on that wasn’t necessary.”
- “I liked making a SMART goal. If I save \$35 per week, in 4 years I will have enough money saved to serve a mission for my church.”
- “The saving game was easy. I just had to reduce then track. And see how much I could put away from each check. This I felt was very helpful because it doesn't stay on a set amount. Just what you can save from it all. Like in a real-life sense.”

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

In 2020 we had adapted to virtual delivery for ‘Where Does Your Money Go’ and in 2021 we were able to finalize the adaptation of the virtual delivery for the “Building Financial Security” curricula using Zoom, D2L, and Nearpod platforms. Statewide Instructional Specialists were trained on these modes of delivery. As COVID guidelines & suggestions continued to shift during the year, many participants shared that they were very thankful for the flexibility in attending classes in the way they were most comfortable.

Horticulture Program

Anne LeSenne, Assistant Agent - Horticulture

ABOUT - *The Horticulture Extension Program includes Residential Horticulture, Commercial Horticulture, Arboriculture, and Beekeeping. The Residential Horticulture aspect of this program focuses not only on residents being successful gardeners, but also on the professional landscapers that take care of the common area landscapes in all the Home Owner Associations throughout the county. Master Gardeners are part of this program and are University trained volunteers that educate residents throughout the county on how to be successful gardeners in their own yards. The Commercial Horticulture aspect of this program is for all wholesale growers and retail nurseries selling and growing plants for use, not only in our county, but also those sold or shipped to other areas. The Beekeeping aspect of this program is focused on helping beekeepers in the state to become more successful through education on current research and best management practices.*

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Residential Horticulture – Pinal County is experiencing explosive growth, and with that a need to educate new residents on how to garden in the desert. The SmartScape program has been successfully educating professional landscapers on best management practices for sustainable landscaping in the desert for more than 20 years in Pima and Maricopa Counties, and we started the process to get this valuable program taught in Pinal County. A partnership was started with one of the eight water companies that serve the county, and they will host the first series of classes next summer in the City of Maricopa. Another budding partnership will host classes in Coolidge and Apache Junction next year.

Commercial Horticulture – Partnerships have been started with growers and nurseries in Pinal County to offer more educational classes at their retail sites.

Arboriculture – Partnerships with Arizona Community Tree Council and the Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture have been started to promote increased training and certification of tree workers, as well as education on best management practices for tree care.

Beekeeping – Partnerships were developed with the state’s two largest and most active Beekeeping Associations to help promote increased education of the beekeepers in Pinal County. A survey was created and distributed to their active members to assess the greatest opportunities and needs of this group. Development of instructional videos and publications to help educate this group of producers are underway.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

The Master Gardener program lost some of their volunteers due to the continued pandemic, but were still able to give 7,703 hours of volunteer labor and education to their communities. (Down from 10,300 hours pre-Covid) They also wrote timely articles for local publications and increased their presence on the internet."



Pinal First Smiles

Greta Mills, RDH Med, Oral Health Professional

ABOUT - *Pinal First Smiles Oral Health Program provides preventative oral health education, oral screening, referral, and navigation to a dental home for children birth to age five and pregnant women; and fluoride varnish for children with emergent teeth up to age five. Fifty-two percent of kindergarteners in Arizona have experienced tooth decay, and more than half of those go untreated. According to the 2019 National Survey of Children’s Health, 17% of children age 1-5 nationally had decayed teeth, and 21% of Arizona children 1-5 had decayed teeth.*

Cavities can be prevented with education and dental care of pregnant women, early dental visits for children, topical exposure of fluoride, brushing, flossing, healthy diets, and age appropriate education. The Pinal First Smiles Program provides education to childcare providers as well as medical and dental professionals on how to recognize and understand oral diseases and conditions, particularly in children.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Pinal First Smiles had 1,216 children and 328 adults participating in our oral health education programming. We provided risk assessment and oral health screenings to 807 children, and 465 of those received fluoride varnish. Of those children seen by our program, 22% had decay either currently or previously, and 55% were High Risk for decay. Referral and navigation for expectant mothers was provided to four expectant mothers, and six professional training sessions were held in Pinal.

Parents and caregivers are being contacted following the screenings to answer questions and provide anticipatory guidance on several topics including nutrition, oral health habits, and oral development. Children are referred to a dental home beginning at their first birthday. Many parents whose children are covered by AHCCCS are unaware that dental exams and care is covered. When First Smiles assists these families to locate and navigate to a dental home, they express appreciation for the guidance and education we provide.

Using social media and networking with the Kith and Kin Care program, in-home childcare providers are promoting UACE First Smiles and we are being invited into their private homes to screen children.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

2021 was a year of continued “feeding and care” of relationships that were disrupted by the pandemic. Many screening sites were not open, and those that were open did not allow visitors yet. Preschools and childcare facilities were supported during this time through delivery of individual resource bags specific to oral health, containing information for parents/caregivers, activities for children, tooth brushes, toothpaste, and dental-related books.



Positive Discipline

Sybil Peters, Instructional Specialist

ABOUT - *Positive Discipline Parenting classes are intended for parents of children ages 3-18 years old. Positive Discipline is an evidence-informed curriculum that teaches parents how to change the lens through which they view their relationship with their children. These classes will help individuals experience a paradigm shift that allows mutually respectful consequences to child behavior, generating empathy and empowerment for both. Participants gain the ability to recognize their child's needs and the skills necessary to adopt more positive and productive behaviors.*

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The goal of the Positive Discipline parenting program is to offer free virtual and in-person classes that consumers may attend in the format they feel most comfortable. The goal of each class is to increase parents' knowledge of their and their child's behaviors, and how they impact each other.

- Four six-week "Positive Discipline" series reached 23 adults.
- Three six-week "Positive Discipline Parenting Teens" series reached 10 adults.
- We also participated in multiple outreach events with other Extension programs.

Participants shared that they hadn't thought of including their child's perspectives and feelings in many situations prior to taking the classes. They had not realized how their personal perspectives and feelings in situations or about the child could negatively or positively impact their child's behavior.

Some participants shared that they were able to start using the tools and verbiage they learned right away and were already starting to see a positive shift in their relationship during the 6-week Positive Discipline Parenting class series.

Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of participants (85%) reported increased frequency of understanding their children's belief behind the misbehavior. Another 77% reported an increase in frequency of responding to their children with kindness and firmness. A majority (51%) reported reducing the frequency with which they yell at their children.

In Oct. 2021, our statewide team attended an in-person Positive Discipline Association Conference and Think Tank in San Diego. We had two teams present during this conference and all came away with many additional resources, skills, and techniques that we have been able to implement in our classes.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

With our modified curricula, we continued to deliver online as well as started to offer in-person sessions as we were able. Due to use of online delivery methods, we were able to serve participants from throughout Arizona. Online delivery allowed Instructional Specialists from different counties to pair up and deliver the program, which allowed us to present the interactive activities efficiently and thoroughly. Monthly statewide meetings supported the transition to virtual delivery and future program planning. As COVID guidelines and suggestions continued to shift during the year, many participants shared that they were thankful for the flexibility in attending classes in the way they

Strengthening Families Program

Esther Turner, Program Coordinator, Sr., M.P.A.

ABOUT - the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) is a skill building program for children ages 3-5 and their parents. SFP is an evidence-based family skills training program for high-risk and general population families that is recognized both nationally and internationally. Parents and youth attend weekly SFP skills classes together, learning parenting skills and youth life and refusal skills. They enjoy a family meal together, followed by separate classes for parents and youth the first hour, followed by a joint family practice session the second hour. The curriculum consists of three skills courses: Parenting, Children's Life Skills, and Family Skills.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

There were 30 adult participants in 2021. We offered two types of delivery (in-person and virtual) to meet the diverse needs of the community over 3 cohorts.

Staff enhanced the existing curriculum with exciting new activities gathered from training and incorporated some of the Positive Discipline content with SFP.

We made 4 professional presentations across the county to promote the class and educate families about parent resources.

Staff participated in the Week of the Young Child event, providing a session on Family Engagement.

Participated in 5 Outreach Events (Cooperative Extension Days, Eloy Festival, Christmas in the Park, Light Parades).

Staff was re-certified in *Introduction to the Arizona Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines* and *Introduction to the Arizona Early Learning Standards*.

Our volunteer base for this project is amazing. Volunteers served 147 hours valued at \$4,195.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

We had online and in-person options available for families. Both classes met for two hours each week for 16 weeks.



Turfgrass Science

Kai Umeda, Area Agent, AgNR (Maricopa County)

ABOUT - Kai Umeda has been an area extension agent for turfgrass science since 2003, working with golf course superintendents, sports turf managers, and commercial landscapers in the metropolitan Phoenix area and adjacent counties in Arizona. His turfgrass extension program areas of emphasis are in weed science and pest management.

2021 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Despite COVID-19 and a continuing drought, field research results provided low water use alternatives in places with turfgrasses.

WORKING THROUGH COVID IN 2021

Weeds: COVID-19 challenges continued through a whole second year but, unlike the previous year's drought conditions, the monsoons provided some moisture relief so that turfgrasses, along with weeds and insect pests, flourished and required control measures on golf courses, sports fields, parks, and landscapes. As we come out of this winter season, it's been relatively dry again and weeds such as stinknet and red brome in the deserts have not been so prolific as they were a couple of years ago. The experimental performance of pre-emergence herbicides in the desert landscapes have been "iffy" depending on when they were applied before or after timely rains that would have activated them. Our entomology graduate student started last fall and trekked around selected golf courses to collect masked chafer beetles in light traps to analyze them in the lab using molecular techniques to identify specific turf pests. Speaking of the drought, turf areas targeted for removal can install alternative planting materials that could use less water with fewer maintenance inputs. Kurapia is a drought and cold tolerant new groundcover that has potential to fit in desert landscapes and our field research demonstrated that it could perform well with almost half of the water that bermudagrass lawns use in the summer. For replacing turfgrasses, native grasses such as alkali sacaton, blue grama, plains lovegrass, alkali muhly, and big galleta can be seeded and ultimately use less water and fertilizers and require less mowing while maintaining very good year around aesthetic qualities. Outreach education was virtual and shifted to hybrid in-person sessions to provide clientele with opportunities to obtain continuing education to maintain professional licensing requirements. Reports and presentations about the activities of the Turfgrass Science Extension Program can be found at: <https://turf.arizona.edu>



Personnel

Cooperative Extension, Pinal County

The Pinal County Cooperative Extension Office has been located in Casa Grande since 1918. The office is currently staffed with faculty in the areas of Agriculture and Natural Resources; Family, Consumer, & Health Sciences; and 4-H Youth Development.



Cathy L. Martinez
Director / Area FCHS Agent



Victor Jimenez
4-H Youth Dev. Agent



Anne LeSenne
Asst. Horticulture Agent



Blase Evancho
Field Crops, Asst. in Extension

PINAL COUNTY STAFF

- Flo Bargo
Data Input Operator, Developmental / Vision & Hearing Screening
- JT Best
Agriculture Worker, II, Field Crops Systems
- Esmeralda Castillo
Program Coordinator, AmeriCorps / EFNEP / CHAT / T2 Diabetes Prevention
- Sonnette Cherry
Program Aide, Strengthening Families
- Samantha Colarusso
Instructional Specialist, Developmental / Vision & Hearing Screening
- Chris Crockett
Media Technician, Sr., Administrative
- Samantha Dominguez
4-H Extension Assistant I, Administrative
- Lisa Elliott
Business Manager, Administrative
- Theresa Ellsworth
Administrative Assistant, Administrative
- Twylla Gibbens
Oral Health Professional, Pinal / Gila First Smiles
- Shelby Gibson
Health Education & Promotion Professional II, Child Care Health Consultation
- Mary Gonzales
Instructional Spec, T2 Diabetes Prevention / Cmty Out Asst II, AZ Health Zone
- Victoria Iniguez
Instructional Specialist, AZ Health Zone
- James Jepsen
Community Outreach Professional II, AZ Health Zone
- Shevonda Joyner
Program Coordinator, Sr., AZ Project WET
- Nubia Lara
Extension Program Assistant, EFNEP / Program Aide, Strengthening Families
- Connie Lorenz
Program Coordinator, AZ Health Zone
- Tammy McCarville
Instructional Specialist, Developmental / Vision & Hearing Screening
- Maria Melendez
Administrative Assistant, Administrative
- Janie Miller
Instructional Aide, Ag-Ventures
- Greeta Mills
Oral Health Professional, Pinal / Gila First Smiles
- Barbie Moreno
Home Living Assistant, Strengthening Families
- Sybil Peters
Instruct Spec, Financial Lit & Parenting / Interim Cmty Out Mgr I, AZ Health Zone
- Candy Ramos
Extension Assistant I, EFNEP / Home Living Assistant, Strengthening Families
- Leticia Rivera
Program Aide, Strengthening Families
- Amanda Rowse
Program Coordinator, AZ Health Zone (La Paz Co.)
- Jennie Treadway
Program Coordinator, Developmental / Vision & Hearing Screening
- Beverly Tribuna
Instructional Aide, Ag-Ventures
- Esther Turner
Program Coordinator, Sr., Dev/VH Screening / Strengthen. Families / NCCC / 4-H
- Cinda Willittes
Instructional Aide, Ag-Ventures
- Rita York
Program Aide, Strengthening Families

Our Board

Pinal County Board of Supervisors



Kevin Cavanaugh
Dist. #1



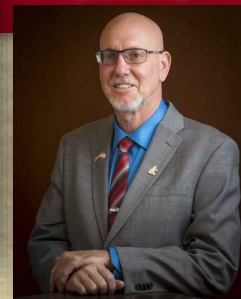
Mike Goodman
Dist. #2



Stephen Q. Miller
Dist. #3



Jeffrey McClure
Dist. #4



Jeff Serdy
Dist. #5



THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

“In 1921, the Legislature of the State of Arizona provided for the organization of County Farm Bureaus, who served as the official sponsoring body for Cooperative Extension work. This provision was repealed in 1964 when Senate Bill 179 established Extension Boards, appointed by the County Board of Supervisors, in each county. In 1974, the State Legislature through House Bill 2125 amended the law to provide for greater latitude in financial support of Cooperative Extension work.”

Our Board

Pinal County Extension Advisory Board

The board of supervisors of each county shall appoint seven persons, who are residents of the county, to a county agricultural extension board, four of whom have as their principal business the production of agricultural commodities, and the other three of whom shall be representative of organizations or persons who utilize the county agricultural extension services.

Each member shall be appointed for a term of two years.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Supervisorial District</u>	<u>Extension Program Representing</u>
Oliver Anderson, Chair	District #4	Agriculture & Natural Resources
Joel Belloc	District #4	Agriculture & Natural Resources
Richard Cariño, Secretary	District #4	Family, Consumer & Health Sciences
Carlos Carranza	District #3	Agriculture & Natural Resources
Rick Miller	District #3	Community Leadership & Resources Development
Orlenda Roberts, Vice-Chair	District #1	4-H Youth Development
Le Smith	District #5	Agriculture & Natural Resources

3rd Annual Extension Day

Saturday, October 20, 2021

ABOUT - Extension Day was created to promote Pinal County Cooperative Extension and the many programs we provide the citizens of Pinal County. Despite COVID conditions, we had a strong turnout out from the local community. This events gives us an opportunity to grow stronger, reaching beyond the Casa Grande area and into other communities. An outdoor open house of Cooperative Extension, this event lets people know what we do, who we are, and how we meet the goals and mission of bringing Cooperative Extension education to the masses.

- 14 booths w/activities pertaining to each program
- 152 in attendance (79 adults/73 youth)
- Promoted the event through the local newspaper, our Facebook page, flyers, different events we attended, and people driving past the day of the event.

SIGNED PROCLAMATION FOR 2021

“NOW, THEREFORE, WE, the Pinal County Board of Supervisors, hereby proclaim October 9, 2021, as University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Day, throughout Pinal County, and encourage all of our citizens to recognize the Cooperative Extension for the significant impact they have made through their commitment to delivering high-quality, relevant educational programs and information to Pinal County citizens and communities. Proclaimed this 6th day of October, 2021.”



HOW THE DAY WENT...



Field Crops Systems Booth / Ag Ventures Booth



EFNEP Booth



Pinal First Smiles Booth



Strengthening Families Booth



4-H Youth Development Booth / STEM Demo



Developmental/Sensory Screening Booth



AZ Project WET Booth

How we spent our days in **2021**



Contact Us

<https://extension.arizona.edu/pinal>

OFFICE LOCATIONS

MAIN

820 E. Cottonwood Lane, #C
Casa Grande, AZ 85122
(520) 836-5221, phone

SATELLITE

121 W. Florence Blvd., Suite J
Casa Grande, AZ 85122
(520) 836-5221, phone

MARICOPA

37860 W. Smith-Enke Rd.
Maricopa, AZ 85138
(520) 374-6216, Vic Jimenez
(520) 374-6263, MG

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, WHO WE ARE...

Cooperative Extension is a statewide non-formal education network bringing research-based information into communities to help people improve their lives. Today's Cooperative Extension is many things to many people throughout Arizona.

CONNECT WITH THE UA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

- *Pinal County 4-H:*
<https://www.facebook.com/pinalcounty4h?fref=ts>
- *Maricopa Master Gardeners:*
<https://www.facebook.com/MaricopaAzMasterGardeners?fref=ts>
- *Child Care Health Consultants:*
<https://www.facebook.com/PinalCCHC?fref=ts>
- *Sensory & Developmental Screening:*
<https://www.facebook.com/UACE.developmental.sensory/>
- *Pinal County Garden and Landscape Program:*
<https://www.facebook.com/PinalExtensionGardenLandscape>
- *Pinal County Cooperative Extension:*
<https://www.facebook.com/PinalCountyCooperativeExtension/>

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Edward C. Martin, Interim Director, Extension, Division of Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences, and Cooperative Extension, The University of Arizona.

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