

VCE Programs Meet Critical Community Needs

Especially for Arlington's Most Vulnerable Populations

Without full funding, VCE programs will be irrevocably disrupted. These are just a few of the VCE programs that will be seriously affected or eliminated:

Training and management of over 940 Extension Volunteers, contributing over 40,000 volunteer hours annually. This work is valued at over \$1,200,000 and provides the equivalent of 20.5 FTEs.

Urban Agriculture & Food Security

Vital support of the Arlington Public Schools Victory Gardens

Extension Master Gardeners and VCE Extension Agents provided technical support and risk management guidance for this initiative to grow food for local food pantries. These four Victory gardens transitioned from education and minimal production gardens to full-time production gardens, donating over 2,000 pounds of food to local pantries during the pandemic.

Oversight of the Rock Spring Produce Bagging Initiative

VCE established a system of receiving, bagging, and distributing produce to serve 16 local food pantries during the pandemic. This effort received support from over 50 gardens and gardeners, including the Extension-run Potomac Overlook Vegetable Garden. The effort led to over 27,000 pounds of produce donated to local pantries, valued at \$47,090.

Agriculture & Natural Resources

Extension Master Gardener public education classes teaching environmentally sound gardening practices, including how to grow your own food, to nearly 4,000 participants in 2020.

Extension Master Gardener Help Desk including personalized research-based guidance and access to Virginia Tech Insect Identification and Plant Disease labs reaching over 1,400 people in 2020, an increase from 2019.

Distribution of over 11,000 seed packets to local gardeners annually.

Landscape pesticide reduction education for over 200 individuals annually.

Support for public education and direct action on invasive plant and animal species with over 3,800 hours by 51 volunteers at over 40 public lands sites and 43 public education programs.

Management and support of Arlington's six Demonstration Gardens that beautify Arlington parks and community centers, highlight native plants, and demonstrate sustainable landscape practices in support of Arlington's urban forestry and natural resources management plans of work.

Financial Education

One-on-one Financial Coaching for nearly 100 Arlington residents, with an emphasis on serving clients at affordable housing sites.

Classes in English & Spanish on Budgeting, Credit Scores & Reports, Retirement, and other topics reaching over 330 individuals annually.

Youth financial simulations including Reality Store and Kids Marketplace reaching over 1,000 youth at Title 1 schools annually.

Nutrition Education

Classes on planning on a budget, cooking quick and healthy meals, shopping with limited options, and ways to be physically active at home.

Reaching over 3,200 Arlington residents annually in English, Spanish, Tigrinya and Amharic.

Energy Conservation

Energy Master Volunteers have installed energy efficiency upgrades in over 800 Arlington affordable housing units, saving electricity and lowering tenant utility bills over the past 10 years.

New this year: Provided virtual programs addressing utility assistance and energy saving tips, demonstration videos, and 100 energy efficiency kits to low-income Arlington residents, all of which receive food through AFAC.

4-H Youth Development

4-H Clubs for over 400 underserved youth at 16 sites annually, including all eight APS Title I Schools.

Girls with Goals afterschool soccer clubs at Title I Schools, a partnership program with Arlington Soccer Association.

Hands-on education in STEM, natural resources, financial literacy, resume writing, leadership, and other critical life skills.

4-H Camp: a highly subsidized ACA accredited overnight camping program.

And much, much more!

