



Community Development Programming Fond du Lac County: January to June 2025



Extension Community Development Educator Noah Reif (she/her/hers) supports local organizations through facilitated decision making, coaching, and strategic planning for the purpose of growing organizations ability to create positive change.

Current Projects

Nonprofit Financial Development Workshop Series*

- Workshop held on March 26th, 2025 in partnership with the Fond du Lac Area Foundation. Next offering will be in early Q4, 2025.
- Participants evaluated facilitation as a 4.9.

Broken Bread Food Pantry*

- Facilitated three board meetings focused on strategic planning; supporting organization as they incorporate into a nonprofit.
- The board evaluated the educator as being knowledgeable 4.9, providing useful information 5.0, and having high facilitation skills 4.9 across the sessions.

United for Diversity

- Continued facilitation of local nonprofit leadership gathering that builds organizational collaboration and capacity.

Planning Support for Prairie Theater and Event Center

- Facilitated three organizational planning sessions with the director of administration, PTEC staff, and the county executive.
- Conducted audience identification assessment and used a SWOC on each segment to better identify key messaging.

Community Development Position Needs Assessment

At the request of the county executive, the educator conducted an assessment during the summer of 2025 to guide future Extension Community Development Programming. 78 individuals participated across three listening sessions and a countywide survey. Participants represented entrepreneurs/small businesses, local government, and community organizations/nonprofits.

Key Findings

Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses need stronger community support, inclusive business culture, access to capital, and collaborative networks.

Local Governments face stretched capacity, require greater civic engagement, and should lead cross-sector collaboration on complex issues like housing and mental health.

Community Organizations and Nonprofits seek intentional collaboration, shared resources, and accessible training in fundraising, leadership, and strategic planning.

Across all sectors, participants emphasized the importance of and the need for:

- Cross-sector collaboration
- Effective communication and storytelling
- Civic engagement and leadership development
- Addressing systemic challenges such as housing, mental health, and education

One particular programming opportunity rises to the top as a way to address all key needs assessment themes and support all sectors: **work with Fond du Lac County to support a countywide initiative aimed at addressing a key community challenge.**

A full copy of the report will be available on our [Extension Fond du lac County website](#) by early August 2025.

Completed Projects

Nonprofit Skills Cram: Grants 101

- The first in a series of Nonprofit Skill “Cram Sessions” to teach local nonprofit leaders about nonprofit topics.
- Participants evaluated the session on new knowledge gained (3.7), usefulness(4.6), and facilitation (4.9).
- *I would love to go deeper on this topic! All of [the educator’s] sessions are so good and I can’t get enough of them. -Local Nonprofit Leader*

County History Book Update with Public Library

The connections you shared became essential to the book and I am so grateful we were able to share the voices and stories that we were. As a person who was very new to Fond du Lac, I had not been able to gain trust or working relationships with residents and creating that buy-in proved very challenging when I was tasked with this book. –Melanie Kearn, Information and Outreach Services Coordinator, Fond du Lac Public Library

*All evaluations given on a 5 point scale, (1=poor, 5=excellent)