

Program Highlights, 2009-2010

breastfeeding
parenting
Home
biomass
urban
agriculture
beautification

Way2Go
Consumer Issues
Whole Community Project
4-H
EmpowerNY

rural
youth
diversity
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\$ave Dollars
gardening
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credit
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leadership
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community
Radon

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*Our Mission:
To strengthen
youth, adults,
families and
communities
through
learning
partnerships
that put
knowledge
to work.*

Lighten Up Tompkins! Targets 5,000 Homes with Door-to-Door Campaign

More than 300 volunteers visited homes throughout Tompkins County one Saturday in late October 2010 in what may be Upstate New York's largest door-to-door energy efficiency outreach effort. 5,000 rural households were targeted by the effort, dubbed *Lighten Up Tompkins!* and organized by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County.

"Although people have heard that small changes in habits can add up to big energy savings, it sometimes takes personal contact to convince them to take that first step," said Mike Koplinka-Loehr, CCE-Tompkins' Senior Energy Management Coordinator for Lansing and a coordinator of the event.

"Having trained volunteers visit individual households seemed like an effective way to break down that initial barrier and engage people in their own home's energy conservation," Koplinka-Loehr continued. "We also encouraged residents to call us at CCE-Tompkins with any additional questions they might have."

Advance publicity let residents know that volunteers would be visiting parts of the Towns of Dryden, Lansing, Danby, Newfield, Enfield, and Ulysses. In the weeks before the event, volunteers from across the county gathered at CCE-Tompkins, GIAC, Lehman Alternative Community School, New Roots Charter School, and Titus Towers to stuff 5,000 reusable shopping bags for distribution. Youth from the Dryden High School Sustainability Club and seniors from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) also volunteered. Night-shift employees at the Cargill Delcing Technologies salt plant in Lansing stuffed over 2,000

bags. Cargill was the event's major sponsor, donating \$15,000 for the effort. New York State Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA) also provided financial support.

Each bag included a compact fluorescent bulb (CFL), information on steps to increase home energy efficiency and on programs to help finance home energy upgrades, a list of local BPI-certified contractors, coupons from local businesses, a CD of energy-saving tips, and an entry form to a raffle for \$2000 in energy-related prizes and services.

300 Cornell University students were recruited to deliver the bags, through the Cornell University Public Service Center's annual *Into-the-Streets* student outreach campaign. They attended a group orientation, and received a script that guided them through the points they were to cover with each household.

"Responses to the effort have been positive," reports Dominic Frongillo, New York Energy Smart Communities Coordinator with CCE-Tompkins. "One woman called to thank us for the bags, saying she was unemployed and wanted more information on the incentives and rebates for making energy

upgrades to her home."

The volunteers also garnered positive reviews. "The students who came to our house were really wonderful," said John



Cornell student volunteers (right) distributed bags of energy-efficiency items and information to Tompkins County residents in a one-day, door to door outreach effort targeting 5,000 households on October 30, 2010. Students visited homes in Dryden, Lansing, Danby, Newfield, Enfield and Ulysses.

Sterling, a resident of Warren Road in Lansing. "We heard about the event on the radio. Our old driveway lamp burned out a few days ago and they kindly changed the bulb." At another home, an elderly resident's kitchen light had burned out and she couldn't reach the fixture to replace it, recounts Shawn Lindabury, an event organizer. "One of our volunteers swapped in a new CFL and brought back the old bulb for recycling."

"Changing our light bulbs is the first step on the path to energy savings," Frongillo added. "If all homes in Tompkins County were upgraded to Building Performance Institute standards, it would add \$34.3 million in energy savings to the local economy and create over 425 jobs for four years." Lighten Up Tompkins! *continued on p. 25*

New Finger Lakes Cheese Trail Joins Region's Agri-Tourism Offerings



Scenes from Finger Lakes Dexter Creamery in King Ferry on the May 2010 "Open Day".

Wine and cheese is a natural match, so a *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail* seemed like a promising way for local cheese producers to capitalize on the region's highly successful "wine trails" that draw many thousands of visitors each year.

Several artisanal cheese producers around Cayuga Lake tried out the trail idea with one- and two-day open house events on Columbus Day weekends in 2008 and 2009.

These first "open days" proved to be very successful and the resulting media attention -- including newspaper stories in Syracuse, Rochester and as far away as Pittsburgh and Philadelphia -- yielded numerous requests for information on Finger Lakes cheeses.

Well over 200 visitors toured 8 area farms during the October 2009 open days, and made purchases of \$100 to \$1000 per farm (depending upon producer location). By January 2010, regional cheese makers were enthusiastic about creating a more formalized *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail* to build upon the growing interest.

The original "open days" events were the brainchild of Nancy Richards of Finger Lakes Farmstead Cheese in Mecklenberg. Monika Roth, South Central New York Agriculture marketing specialist with CCE-Tompkins, worked with Richards and the other participating producers make the idea a reality.

When the time came to develop a plan for a *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail*, Roth convened a broader group that included the 8 artisanal cheese makers who hosted the original "open days", other regional producers, and representatives of food-related businesses and organizations.

A series of meetings in winter 2010 resulted in plans for four *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail* Open Days, scheduled for May 29, July 10, October 9 & 10, and December 11 of 2010. Ten producers committed to being part of these new events.

Cooperative Extension, Artisan Foods and the Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development (SCOPED) coordinated publicity for the events, which included press releases, a printed rack card for distribution through regional tourism bureaus, and emails to various lists of potential agro-tourists and local foods enthusiasts. One of the cheese producers created a *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail* page on Facebook, and bright red and gold outdoor signs were designed and printed for the farms to use on days when they would receive visitors.

"It has awakened the consumer to what is available in our areas as well as to great tasting cheese."

a producer

From the start, the 2010 events were well-attended and became progressively more successful as the year went on. By the July event, farms were receiving between 40 and 200 people, with one producer who was most off the beaten path going from 8 to 40 customers, a fivefold increase in traffic. Visitor numbers built to as many as 400 for the October weekend, with the one-day average being around 125-150 per farm. Visitors from Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, New York

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Rural Youth Services Program Delivers Value to Communities

Making sure that 'tweens and teens have access to quality youth programs can present a big challenge for rural towns with limited funds and infrastructure to cover staff salaries, benefits, training and supervision.

Through a unique and cost effective partnership with 9 municipalities and the Tompkins County Youth Services Department, CCE-Tompkins is providing over 2,000 rural young people each year with a diverse assortment of fun and skill-building activities, right in their own communities.

Since 1995, the Rural Youth Services (RYS) program at CCE-Tompkins has offered after school and summer programs throughout the county, primarily for middle-school aged youth.¹ Most RYS programs happen right after school, and many are held at the school for easy access. Activities are open to all, and offerings change throughout the year, ranging from one-time events to those that meet for 6-to-10 weeks or longer.

98% of youth surveyed said their RYS adult leader was someone they could count on for advice and support

Activities are designed to appeal to young people and include topics such as cooking and fitness, outdoor skills, rocketry, crafts, stilt walking, sign language, photography, hiking, geocaching, animal studies, and more. Most are provided free of charge or with small fees requested from those who are able to pay. Special pro-

grams may be offered during school breaks and can include field trips to local sites of interest, and overnights. All activities are designed to be fun, promote healthy choices, and to encourage the development of positive social and life skills.

Though the day-to-day operations of RYS are handled by CCE-Tompkins, the individual programs are overseen by youth commissions or community councils in Caroline, Danby, Dryden, Enfield, Groton, Lansing, Newfield, and Trumansburg/Ulysses, and a Joint Youth Commission that serves the Town of Ithaca and the Villages of Cayuga Heights and Lansing.

This community-level involvement ensures that all offerings are in keeping with what each town believes its youth need and want. An annual Municipal Youth Services legislative appropriation to the Tompkins County Youth Services Department is matched by the rural communities, and CCE-Tompkins is contracted to hire, train and supervise the Youth Community Educators / Program Managers who plan and deliver RYS programs in each locality.

The Community Educators are supervised by Linda Schoffel, a veteran youth development professional who for many years ran the Trumansburg After School Program (TASP). The

RYS staff meets regularly to share program ideas, and has become a network of peers who work with the same age groups. To stretch RYS resources, they



Youth in the O.U.R.S. Program display dreamcatchers they have made. O.U.R.S. is offered by RYS in partnership with the Cornell Public Service Center and pairs college-aged mentors with youth who live in rural trailer parks in Dryden and Freeville. RYS educator Julie Newman, is at center right, in blue.

regularly invite colleagues from other CCE-Tompkins programs - in composting, food and nutrition, gardening and Primitive Pursuits -- to offer special activities at their sites.

RYS programs are much more than fun and games, however. While the common focus of RYS is on building strong communities by fostering life skills, the programs also "give back" to their communities in tangible ways. Community service is encouraged at all RYS sites.

In Danby, for example, youth volunteer at the Danby Farmers' Market, and have helped to develop trails at Jennings Pond. Caroline youth distributed garden plants and information on how to grow *continued on p. 18*

¹ Exceptions are programs at Trumansburg's High School, Groton Elementary, and the O.U.R.S. program in Dryden. For more information on the O.U.R.S. program and a project they undertook with the Robert S. Smith Award, see page 12.

SewGreen Complements CCE's Youth & Environment Programs

In 2010, the grassroots community organization SewGreen affiliated with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County in a

eco-fashion design contests and gallery shows starting 2006 as *ReImagine Style*, with Valorie Rockney. In the course of these events, Skinner received many

requests for sewing lessons and ways to incorporate reuse into fashion.

residents. The teen program is free. After outgrowing several smaller spaces, SewGreen has landed at 112 North Cayuga Street, about a half-block from the Ithaca Commons. The reuse store and adjacent classroom together occupy about 2,000 square feet.

requests for sewing lessons and ways to incorporate reuse into fashion.

“In the fall of 2007, I invited a group of sustainability activists and needlecraft enthusiasts to help decide how to meet the demand for sewing and creative reuse,” says Skinner. “We invented SewGreen, and our first

“SewGreen has evolved in ways I never dreamed of,” says Skinner. In addition to the original goals of reuse and sewing education, SewGreen is a worksite for subsidized workers, young and old, through programs such as Experience Works (for older, unemployed workers), JobLink, the Youth Employment Service at the Ithaca Youth Bureau, and CCE-Tompkins Rural Youth Services. Troubled and at-risk youth are also placed at SewGreen through agencies such as The Learning Web Outreach Program, or they are informally referred by caseworkers or families.

Autumn Newell recently joined SewGreen as the Youth Program Director, a position made possible by a Community Development Block Grant from the City of Ithaca. Newell has owned her own earth-friendly clothing business, and is a professional designer who attended the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Newell's position and the talents she brings to the job have allowed SewGreen to expand its apprenticeship and youth employment programs.

Donations of fabric, yarn, sewing notions, and sewing machines help support SewGreen's activities. All of the sewing materials in the classroom are donated, and other donated materials are resold in the store to earn revenue to pay overhead,

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L-R: SewGreen teen apprentice Tanika Colemann helps younger student Annie O'Dowd, as Youth Program Director Autumn Newell looks on. Photo courtesy of Tompkins Weekly.

collaborative relationship to advance SewGreen's mission and add to Extension's family of community programs. SewGreen promotes sustainability through creative reuse of fabric, fiber, and fashion as well as responsible consumerism and a rediscovery of self-reliant skills.

“SewGreen shares many of Extension's environment stewardship and youth development goals,” says Sharon Anderson, Environment Team Leader at CCE-Tompkins. “It makes perfect sense that we should team up and work together.”

SewGreen was founded by Wendy Skinner as a local response to evidence of environmental degradation and poor labor practices within the textile and clothing industries. She initially organized annual

action was to test the market with a rummage sale for fabric and yarn. The sale netted what to us was an astounding \$1,000 and we felt we had hit on something the community wanted.”

Using that seed money and countless volunteer hours, SewGreen grew simultaneously in two programmatic areas: reuse and landfill diversion, and education. Its reuse program grew from occasional rummage sales to a volunteer-run reuse store that diverts about six tons of material from the landfill annually. The education program serves people all ages and backgrounds with a variety of sewing classes, and includes teen apprenticeships and job skills training. Affordable fees are charged for classes and summer sewing camps, and scholarships are available to lower-income

“SewGreen promotes sustainability through creative reuse of fabric, fiber and fashion...”

CCE-Tompkins' Role with Natural Gas Drilling in the Marcellus Shale

Whether it means collaborating to present a public discussion on health effects of hydrofracking, broadcasting an overview of the legal issues that surround gas leases, or taking a van of local decision makers on a tour of Pennsylvania gas drilling sites – CCE-Tompkins is providing Tompkins County residents with reliable information and resources they can use to make informed decisions on what increased gas drilling in our region may mean for them.

In the coming decades, natural gas drilling and extraction may occur in Tompkins County and the surrounding areas with greater frequency than previously has been experienced. In other states where natural gas drilling has increased, there have been substantial changes in population, land use, environment, community, and economy. The breadth of potential change is large and there is controversy about how positive or negative the transformation may be.

Cooperative Extension – statewide and in our community -- serves varied groups of constituents that each seek reliable, research-based information on natural gas exploration and drilling, especially concerning the “hydrofracking” extraction process in the Marcellus Shale geologic layer.

As is the goal with all CCE-Tompkins programs, efforts that address natural gas topics focus on education, training, and support so that county residents may consider both the potential risks and benefits. Currently, CCE-Tompkins addresses gas drilling issues through its Agriculture, Consumer Education, and Environment

program areas, as described below.

CCE-Tompkins' Agriculture program staff for many years has presented informational workshops and answered questions about natural gas leasing for farmers and other rural landowners. Extension educator Debbie Teeter provides staff support to Tompkins County's Ag and Farmland Protection Board (AFPB) on a contract basis. The AFPB and CCE-Tompkins proactively address local agriculture issues, including gas drilling education.

A jointly-sponsored program on landowner coalitions in March 2010 featured guest speaker Nick Schoonover, president of the Tioga County Landowners Group. Following his presentation, local residents formed the Tompkins Landowners Coalition (www.tompkinsgaslease.org), an independent group -- not sponsored by CCE-Tompkins or the AFPB -- that will provide information, programs and resources on this topic for other rural landowners.

The Consumer Education staff at CCE-Tompkins coordinates free, monthly “Consumer Issues” programs which feature a presentation by New York State Assistant Attorney General Mike Danaher, who then takes questions from the group, and consults individually with consumers on unresolved issues. For the last several years in February, Danaher's topic has been “Landowner Rights Regarding Gas and Oil Leases”. All of the “Consumer Issues” programs are taped and rebroadcast on Mondays at 7 am, 1 pm, and 7 pm on Public Access Channel 15, with the “Gas & Oil Leases” session running each Monday in April. CCE-Tompkins' Consumer *continued on p. 17*



From top: "Health Risks of Hydrofracking" presentation; natural gas drilling in PA; NYS Asst. District Attorney Mike Danaher at a Consumer Issues program; members of TCCOG on PA trip.

Parents of Special Needs Children Support Group Forms in Groton

Parents of children with special needs face challenges that can be both difficult and isolating, such as navigating the maze of regulations that govern

at CCE-Tompkins' Groton's *Families!* project and TCAction's Primary School Family Support Program Parent Group. Clark knew that -- with 18% of district



Heather Clark (left), parent founder of the Parents of Special Needs Children Support Group (POSNC) with Elizabeth Wolff of CCE-Tompkins' Groton's *Families!* program, which now supports the POSNC group.

educational services, identifying appropriate resources, and advocating for their child's educational success. Thanks to the efforts of one Groton mother, a new support group was created to help parents of special needs children connect with local services, meet other parents who share their concerns, and learn to be more effective advocates for their children.

Groton resident Heather Clark had personal experience working with the local school district to ensure that her children's special education needs were met. Clark had been active in her community on many fronts, and was accustomed to sharing the useful resources she found with other parents

group for Groton area families would be welcomed by other parents like herself.

Clark enlisted Elizabeth Wolff of Groton's *Families!* and Donna Veninsky of TC Action, as partners on a proposal to establish a *Parents of Special Needs Children* (POSNC) support group, and in 2008 they applied for a *Robert S. Smith Award for Community Progress & Innovation* (see p. 14). An award of \$1750 enabled Clark to get the group up and running, and covered project costs from May 2009 to May 2010. Clarke engaged a guest speaker for each meeting, scheduled the space (at TCA's Head Start site in Groton) and coordinated refreshments and child care services. Groton's

Families! provided all childcare and some food, and all project partners collaborated on promoting the events. TC Action served as the fiscal agent, handling and disbursing grant funds.

Since its first meeting in June 2009, approximately 90 people have attended POSNC monthly meetings, including a core group of 10-to-25 regular participants. Topics and guest speakers change each month, and time is allowed for a question-and-answer period, and for parents to interact, share skills and network after each meeting.

Guest speakers have included Groton Elementary School psychologist Cindy VanEtten; Jeff Boles, a peer advocate from the Finger Lakes Independence Center; social worker and parenting educator Edna Brown who spoke on siblings and autism; JoAnn Horton, Family Outreach Worker with the Tompkins County Health Department unit for Children with Special Health Care Needs; Patty Tvaroha from the Advocacy Center discussing the increased risk for sexual abuse that kids with special needs face; and staff from the Smith School at TST-BOCES who spoke about program offerings. Additional programs were offered in 2010 in collaboration with the Family Resource Network (www.familyrn.org).

During the summer of 2010, the POSNC Group met for a picnic at the Groton Memorial Park to thank Heather for her work as parent leader, and to celebrate group's one year anniversary. Parents at the picnic were asked for their feedback on the POSNC Group. *continued on p. 25*

1. A student partner is required on the team by the Robert Smith Awards; Cornell student Hailey Love was matched with the project as a student intern after funding was awarded. Paula Poteat, Family Advocate with the Primary School Family Support Program at TCAction also worked extensively on the POSNC project.

Second Graders Learn about Local Foods with “Feast For Health”

The current childhood obesity epidemic has led many researchers to focus on sustainable environmental change in schools and other settings where children can be exposed to a healthier diet that includes more vegetables and fruits. Concurrently, citizens have learned that eating more locally grown foods can reduce the environmental costs of our present food system, while supporting the local economy.

FEAST for Health is a comprehensive school-based nutrition education program originally developed at CCE-Tompkins to address these issues. The program works with school food service staff to improve the school food environment by including more locally grown plant foods in their menus. Children are introduced to a seasonal vegetable in the classroom, and learn to prepare a recipe featuring it. The children then name the dish and promote it to the rest of the school. Finally, the dish is introduced on the school lunch menu and everyone is urged to try it.

The foundation for the *FEAST for Health* curriculum was laid in the mid-1990s through a Healthy Heart/Health Promotion grant from the NYS Department of Health. The grant enabled CCE-Tompkins and the Tompkins County Health Department to develop and pilot a 4-unit nutrition education project called *Field to Table*¹ which linked classroom instruction with cafeteria food service. From 2006-2008, new federal funds from Cornell

Cooperative Extension supported a partnership between Cornell Nutrition researcher Jennifer Wilkins and CCE-Tompkins to expand and revise the curriculum, and to pilot and evaluate it in second through fourth grade classrooms at Caroline and Groton Elementary Schools. The program was renamed *FEAST for Health*² and was revised and updated by CCE-Tompkins educator Carole Fisher.

In 2009, *FEAST for Health* was introduced to second-graders at Trumansburg Elementary School by CCE-Tompkins Nutrition Education staff with funding from the Carman and Sandra Brink Hill Fund of the Community Foundation of Tompkins County. An enthusiastic proponent was Trumansburg’s School Food Service Director, Deborah Bush, a Registered Dietitian with over 30 years of experience in school food service. Bush is strongly committed to serving healthy food to children, and has made many steps in that direction in her district’s school food program.

In November 2009, CCE-Tompkins staff and Bush met with the second grade teachers to introduce them to the program, review an introductory lesson, and set a schedule for implementing the project. At a second session, the Winter Squash lesson was reviewed. In the classrooms, teachers cut open several varieties of squash, children removed the seeds for roasting, and the cafeteria staff assisted by baking the squash *continued on p. 19*



Children sample “Mystery Delight” (squash apple crisp) at Trumansburg Elementary.

1. The *Field to Table* curriculum was developed at CCE-Tompkins by Susan E. Travis, PhD, RD, CDN, now a faculty member of Cornell University’s Department of Nutritional Sciences; Cornell Extension Associate Tracy Farrell; Theresa Lyczko, TCHD Health Promotion Director; and Shirley Cuykendall, food service director at the Lansing Central School (now retired).
2. The acronym “FEAST” stands for Families, Education, Agriculture, and Schools Together. CCE-Tompkins educators, Myra McKinney, Karen Robinson, Carole Fisher and dietetic intern, Vanessa Hoffman, conducted the school pilots at Caroline and Groton. Helen Howard arranged for Feast to be delivered at Trumansburg Elementary by consumer and food safety educator Carole Fisher, nutrition educator Heather Bastian and CCE-Rural Youth Services program manager Carissa Mann Parlato.

Way2Go Helps Residents to “Go Green and Save Green” on Travel

A new community resource designed to help Tompkins County residents “take charge of their transportation” was launched by CCE-Tompkins in 2009. Named Way2Go, this grant-funded program now offers a comprehensive website, free consumer workshops, educational materials, and trainings for employers and social service agency staff, all with the aim of helping local consumers make informed – and hopefully, sustainable – transportation choices.

Way2Go development began in 2008, with the hiring of Chrisophia Somerfeldt as program manager. Somerfeldt compiled data on consumer transportation habits and needs, local services, money-saving and safety tips, individual planning tools, and more.

These resources now can be found on the Way2Go website (at ccetompkins.org under “Community”, or at way2goinfo.org). Sections of the website target the needs and interests of specific groups such as newcomers, parents, seniors, people with disabilities, rural residents, households with limited economic resources, those who are interested in saving money, going ‘green,’ transportation equity, and other priorities.

Of general interest are pages on the many “Ways to Get Around” in Tompkins County, which detail how to access each form of travel, and the financial

and environmental pros and cons of each. Visitors can find useful tips on topics such as how to set up a successful carpool, what to look for when buying a bicycle, and ways to get around for less.

To ensure that the Way2Go website, workshops and promotional materials reflect and respond to community needs,

table and speaking with people at community events.

At workshops and events, Somerfeldt is fond of describing how the existing alternatives to private, single-occupancy autos can save consumers substantial amounts of money. One adult could, for a year, ride the bus, commute by vanpool, drive

an Ithaca Carshare car for two hours a week, spend \$30 on taxis per month, buy \$150 walking shoes, invest \$350 in a bicycle, and rent a car for a full week’s vacation—

and still save over \$4,000 over the average cost of owning and using a car.

“While we hope that people will make sustainable choices,” Somerfeldt says, “Way2Go is here to show how our transportation choices can save money, support health and well-being, lessen pollution and climate change, and promote a strong and equitable community.”

Another important goal for the Way2Go program is to encourage communication between interested citizens, staffs of local businesses and organizations, and transportation providers, planner and advocates.

“Part of helping people to overcome transportation barriers is to make those barriers more apparent to the service providers,” *continued on p. 23*

Take Charge of Your Transportation!

Way2Go

Save money. Stress less. Go green.

Visit: way2goinfo.org

The graphic features icons for a bus, a car, a person on a bicycle, and two people walking.

Somerfeldt recruited a diverse Community Team to guide the program. Members include social service agency staff, people of color, differently-abled people, and others with an interest in transportation issues.

The Team provided input and feedback as Somerfeldt developed a “Go Green, Save Green: Getting Around For Less” workshop for consumers, and a user-friendly packet of transportation information called the “Transportfolio” for human services professionals to use with their clients and program participants.

In the first year of the program, Somerfeldt delivered workshops to 60 participants, distributed “Transportfolios” to 125 human service professionals, and reached another 300 individuals by staffing a Way2Go display

Way2Go web pages on the “Ways to Get Around” in Tompkins County detail how to access each form of travel and the financial and environmental pros and cons of each.

Primitive Pursuits Educators Co-Teach New Ithaca College Course

Two Primitive Pursuits educators have taken their wilderness expertise to another level – as co-instructors of the popular *Environmental Sentinels* class at Ithaca College. A core course within IC's new Environmental Studies department, the class is designed to help students develop a personal connection with the natural world - something that the Primitive Pursuits staff is known for bringing about in their day-to-day public programs.

The *Environmental Sentinels* class was conceived, co-created, and offered as a pilot in 2008 by Jason Hamilton, then a faculty member in Ithaca College's biology department, along with Jed Jordan and Tim Drake, two of three co-founders of the Primitive Pursuits 4-H program at CCE-Tompkins. Hamilton had encountered Primitive Pursuits six years earlier when his son enrolled in the program. Excited by the work that he saw, Hamilton joined the adult apprenticeship and continued on as an adult volunteer with the program.

“What’s exciting for us is that we’re working primarily with Environmental Studies majors who have a commitment to leadership in this field,” Drake says.

Primitive Pursuits first was offered to the community-at-large by Jordan and Drake in 2001, several years after it was started as an afterschool pro-

gram in the Town of Dryden by Dave Hall, a 4-H educator with CCE-Tompkins' Rural Youth Services Program. Hall had studied with some of the nation's leading wilderness skills instructors, and wanted to share his experiences with youth. Jordan and Drake came to the program along similar paths. Drake studied with some of the same teachers as Hall, while Jordan had spent many years travelling in wilderness areas of the U.S. As interest in the program grew, the three developed and refined the popular outdoor classes that now reach more than 600 youth and adults each year.

A shared principle of both Primitive Pursuits and the *Environmental Sentinels* class is for participants to learn how to use their senses, identify what they see and observe, and predict changes in the ecosystem. The course syllabus defines an “environmental sentinel” as a citizen and member of the community, who will be able to notice when changes start, understand what is causing the changes, and can then participate in developing solutions. Throughout, wilderness living skills are taught as a context for deeper connection. Drake describes the approach as, “Taking ecology out of the text book and going back into the forest to experience it.”

Requirements for the 4-credit course are rigorous and involve

many hours of first-hand nature study. “We leave the classroom within 15 minutes on the first day with no intention of going back” according to Jordan, “About 90% of the time is spent outdoors.”



Jed Jordan (left) and Tim Drake of Primitive Pursuits navigating in the National Forest, 2007. Photo by Carolyn Wiley.

In addition to required readings, students complete an ongoing journal assignment that requires them to spend at least three hours each week in the forest recording their observations, which counts for 40% of their grade. “Sometimes they go into the woods at night, and it’s initially really terrifying to them,” Drake recounts. “You can see it in their journal entries.” Students also must create resources such as maps of plant communities or trails at a location that they choose and observe over the semester. As members of “clans” into which they are grouped early in the semester, students also make individual and group presentations to the class on what they’ve learned.

Class projects change with the

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About 90% of the class time is spent outdoors.

Spreading the Message of Energy Efficiency, One Home at a Time

Demonstrating to local households the benefits of home weatherization -- with the idea that they in turn would "spread the word" -- was the focus of the 2009 Energy Conservation Corps, a grant-funded pilot project at CCE-Tompkins that trained

tially could reduce local energy consumption, keep more "energy dollars" in Tompkins County, and support local businesses by encouraging more homeowners to undertake home weatherization upgrades.

The idea for an Energy Conservation Corps arose from conversations between Peter Bardaglio, head of the Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative (TC-CPI) and Ken Schlather, CCE-Tompkins' Executive Director.

The Association already had created a "Path to Energy Ef-

iciency" web-site (at <http://cctompkins.org/energy/energy-efficiency-path>) that outlines steps to make a home more energy efficient -- from no-cost and do-it-yourself projects, to those requiring a skilled contractor. Bardaglio and Schlather thought that a streamlined version of an energy audit -- conducted by volunteers or interns -- could persuade homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. They also believed that participant word-of-mouth would encourage others to do the same.¹

A total of 34 undergraduates from Cornell University and Ithaca College took part in the Energy Conservation Corps in summer and fall 2009. The summer crew of 13 interns researched home energy improvements and designed the pilot program, under the supervision of Dominic Frongillo.

With the help of local home performance contractors and Mark Pierce (a Cornell Extension building science expert), the interns devised a process for conducting relatively quick and simple energy tests that could help homeowners identify the highest priorities for weatherization upgrades.

The process included a homeowner interview, visual inspection of the home and appliances, a whole-house blower door test for air infiltration, and a follow-

The average New York household spends over \$2,500 per year on energy... and 20-60% of that amount can be saved through home energy improvements.

up visit to review the results, all offered free-of-charge to the homeowners.² By August, the interns had performed 50 free energy tests on homes located throughout *continued on p.22*



Members of the 2009 Energy Conservation Corps pose with the CCE-Tompkins banner with CCE staff Dominic Frongillo (center front) and Shawn Lindabury (center rear).

college students to perform free energy tests on local homes.

Home weatherization efforts can yield substantial savings. The average New York household spends over \$2,600 per year on energy for electricity, heat and hot water, and 20-60% of that amount (or up to \$1,500 a year) can be saved through home energy improvements.

To achieve these savings, however, homeowners must know specifically what upgrades are needed. Finding an easy and inexpensive way to identify home "energy wasters" poten-

1. Some earlier exploration of this idea was done in 2008 by Schlather and local home inspector Anne Korman, who together had photographed homes in Fall Creek with an infrared thermal imaging camera, to determine whether it could be an effective tool in a volunteer-based energy testing program.

2. Note that the resulting energy reports are for educational use and are not a Building Performance Institute (BPI) certified energy audit (as would be required for a renovation project to qualify for NYSERDA incentives). A full home energy audit assesses the home's heating system, air infiltration, insulation (in floors, walls, ceiling and rim joists), utility consumption, hot water, appliances, windows and doors and lighting use and can cost \$200 or more.

Safe Food Preservation Skills Taught in CCE-Tompkins Class

Tompkins County has experienced an upsurge of interest in food preservation. In January 2009, CCE-Tompkins cosponsored a community meeting -- with Sustainable Tompkins and IthaCan (a web-based social network for local food preservers) -- to discuss a variety of food preservation topics, including food storage, and the possible need for a shared community kitchen. Approximately 120 people attended the gathering.

With a long history of providing public workshops in home canning and drying according to USDA guidelines, the food preservation staff at CCE-Tompkins was concerned that any community-wide planning or education efforts should use and share only safe, reliable, and up-to-date information on home food preservation methods. Although many home canners have learned handed-down canning techniques that "have always worked", following the current safety guidelines will ensure that the foods preserved will always be of high quality, and safe for your family to eat.

CCE-Tompkins food preservation staff Ann Gifford and Carole Fisher next met with key representatives of the community groups to explore possible collaborations during the coming food preservation season. A result of that meeting was a 3-day Master Food Preserver training, offered April 15-17 at the CCE-Tompkins Education Center.

The class was instructed by a team of two Extension Food Preservation experts, Katherine Humphrey and Judy Price, and assisted by Ann Gifford and Carole Fisher from CCE-Tompkins. Humphrey and Price make up the CCE State Food Preservation Expert

Team, and have developed the New York State Master Food Preserver Manual which was used in the training. Twelve people enrolled in the training, including a nutrition educator from CCE-Tompkins who wanted to teach canning techniques to her program participants, and several people with an interest in becoming Master Food Preserver volunteers for CCE-Tompkins.

The workshop was fast-paced and covered a lot of information. It included many small group, hands-on activities so participants could practice what they had learned. During the first morning, the class learned about the economic and nutritional considerations of home preserved foods, studied the science behind food preservation, and watched a demonstration of canning basics and equipment.

That afternoon, they learned about high acid canning, and then rolled up their sleeves to prepare and can hot pack and raw pack tomatoes and unseasoned tomato sauce using the boiling water bath canning method. They also learning about techniques for freezing as a food preservation method, and reviewed the day's lessons.

On Day 2, the class was introduced to procedures for low-acid canning, and then prepared and canned both carrots and stewed tomatoes using a pressure canner. They learned about drying foods while waiting for their canned foods to finish processing, and learned how to unload the pressure canner before lunch.

Next covered were pickling techniques, and the group prepared and canned hot chili salsa, pickled green beans, and marinated peppers using a boiling water bath. Finally, they quickly continued on p. 23



Scenes from the Master Food Preservers Class in April 2009.

Robert S. Smith Award Supports Civic Leadership Development



Scenes from the Hanshaw Village Mobile Home Park Beautification Project, recipient of a 2009 Robert S. Smith Award.

A vibrant new weekly market in Southside, and an improved outdoor recreation area at a Freeville mobile home park are two of the inspiring community projects funded by *The Robert S. Smith Award for Community Progress and Innovation*, administered since 2008 by CCE-Tompkins.

The awards support partnerships between grassroots community leaders and area college students to jointly plan and carry out innovative projects that strengthen Tompkins County communities.

Awards can be as much as \$3,000 for project expenses. Proposals that involve people from local communities of color, immigrant communities, and/or low-to moderate-income communities as team members and project leaders receive priority in the selection process.

Congo Square Market

Longtime Ithaca resident and social worker Jhakeem Haltom conceived the idea for the weekly Congo Square Market after years of conversations with African-American community members. Located in the small park next to the Southside Community Center, the market provides a safe space where people of color from the community can have access to affordable healthy foods, and positive social interaction.

Named for New Orleans' famous Congo Square, the market honors African-American history. In the early 1800s, recently enslaved Africans and others could gather in Congo Square on Sundays for music, dance and stories.

Ithaca's Congo Square Market opened on June 12, 2009 and operates on Friday evenings from May to October. It features a weekly stall that sells local

vegetables and fruit, and other produce that is in high demand in the community.

Vendors sell ethnically diverse foods, clothing, and locally produced goods. All profits from vendor fees and the produce stand are reinvested in the Market as needed, and in Southside Community Center programs. Music, crafts, entertainment and

The Awards support partnerships between grassroots community leaders and area college students to jointly plan and carry out innovative projects that strengthen Tompkins County communities.

culturally relevant health/wellness will be added as the Market takes on its mission for the community.

The Robert S. Smith Award was one of several sources of support that helped Haltom to establish the Congo Square market. Haltom's partner on the proposal was Christian Duncan, a Cornell business student. Nonprofit partners were the Multicultural Resource Center, GIAC, the Southside Community Center, and the Whole Community Project. Local youth were hired through Youth Employment Services to work in the market during its first summer. Haltom and Jemila Sequiera of the Whole Community Project *continued on p. 15*

Smith from p. 14

serve as co-managers of the weekly market.

Mobile Home Park Beautification

In another funded project, young people at the Hancock Village mobile home park in Freeville saw a need for a “green space” where youth could play safely and adults could watch them while socializing with one another. The youth believed that by beautifying their park, they also could increase its sense of community.

The mobile home park is a site of the O.U.R.S.¹ Program, a 4-H/Rural Youth Services afterschool and summer offering for youth who live in or near the Hancock Village and Congers mobile home parks in Freeville.

Each week, volunteers from

the Cornell University Public Service Center’s Y.O.U.R.S.² Program work with the youth through mentoring, games, crafts, outdoor activities, and field trips. Established in 2005, the program now serves about 50 youth, ages 7-17, each year. Most participate in at least two programs each week during the school year as well as during the summer and school breaks.

For this project, Alice Connors-Kellgren (a Cornell student and Y.O.U.R.S.

President) partnered with Sharon Patte (a Hancock Village resident and parent of an O.U.R.S Program student) and members of the O.U.R.S Teen Leadership Council to apply for this award.

The project was overseen by Julie *continued on p. 22*



In addition to fresh vegetables and prepared foods, vendors at the new Congo Square Market in Southside sell ethnically diverse clothing and crafts (photo courtesy of Jemila Sequeira).

1. O.U.R.S. stands for Opportunity, Understanding, Respect, Success
2. Y.O.U.R.S. stands for Youth Outreach Undergraduates Reshaping Success

About the Robert S. Smith Award

The Robert S. Smith Award for Community Progress and Innovation was endowed in 1994 by the Tompkins Trust Company in honor of the late Robert S. Smith, former bank chairman and W.I. Myers Professor Emeritus of Agricultural Finance at Cornell. In 2008, CCE-Tompkins was chosen to administer the awards program. While CCE-Tompkins oversees the program, the Robert Smith grant selection committee consists of representatives from the Tompkins Trust Company, Cornell Cooperative Extension-related faculty and staff from Cornell, and established leaders from the prioritized downtown communities.

The Natural Leaders Initiative (NLI), along with Cornell Work Study students, provide assistance and support to applicants, when needed, for writing proposals, matching student and community partners, and fine-tuning project ideas. Margo Hittleman, NLI Coordinator, says “The Robert Smith grant committee’s goal is to target these awards to “everyday” or “natural leaders” – members of the community who often have wonderful community-building ideas, passion and commitment, but who generally lack access to other established funding sources. NLI is a collaborative project of CCE-Tompkins, GIAC, the Multicultural Resource Center and TCAction.

Recognizing that many grassroots leaders do not have established relationships with college students, NLI and the Work Study students act as “brokers” to help community leaders with good ideas find and partner with students interested in helping develop those ideas into action projects. If needed, project teams can also get help linking with established community organizations already working in their areas of interest.

There are benefits even for projects that are not funded, says Ken Schlather, Executive Director of CCE-Tompkins. “The application process initiates student-community partnerships, and sometimes conversations with nonprofit community partners. Good ideas can result and we can help people to think about ways they might be implemented, even without the Smith funding. Our intention is that people also will learn from participating in the proposal process,” Schlather concludes.

The awards target “everyday” or “natural” leaders who often lack access to other funding sources.

Cornell "Greeks Go Green" With Help from CCE-Tompkins

Cornell's "Greeks Go Green" piloted a model composting and recycling program in three sorority and fraternity houses as part of a longer-term effort to support a culture of sustainability

practices could add up to big environmental impacts. About 30%, or 4000 Cornell undergrads are involved in Greek life. In the winter of 2009 an online survey of the 53 chapters with residential houses

take back to their communities," Schlather said.

Copeland's summer work plan included collaborating with Master Composter volunteers Tom Shelley, Valerie Ober, and Kristen Vitro to create a ten-



Christina Copeland surveys kitchen disposal and sorting practices in Greek residential housing as part of the "Greeks Go Green" waste assessment project (photo provided).

showed that over half of the respondents do not always recycle the hundreds of empty cans and bottles that are left after parties, nor do they have an everyday recycling program that members use consistently. About half also report-

By initiating composting practices in early 2010, Alpha Chi Omega expects to save \$64/month and reduce their trash pickups to two per week.

minute presentation that would cover the basics of composting and steps needed to implement a program in a chapter house. She researched the available options (on-site, at Cornell, or by contract with Cayuga Compost) and the economics of choices that support waste reduction, such as loan payback time for buying reusable plates.

She also projected the potential savings from fewer trash pickups when a composting program is added. While reviewing her own sorority's trash invoices, Copeland was surprised to learn that they were paying over \$300/month for three weekly trash pickups. By initiating composting practices in early 2010, Alpha Chi Omega expects to save \$64/month and reduce their trash pickups to two per week.

At least five of these compost presentations were given at different Greek chapters in Fall 2009 by CCE-Tompkins' Master Composters, who will continue upon request to make presentations and *continued on p. 20*

and waste reduction on the Cornell campus. Some of the preliminary work for this pilot was accomplished at CCE-Tompkins during the summer by Christina Copeland, a Natural Resources major in Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and a co-founder of Cornell's "Greeks Go Green" initiative.

Copeland had heard Ken Schlather, CCE-Tompkins' Executive Director, give a presentation on local Extension programs at a University Neighborhood Council meeting in March 2009 and contacted him afterwards about ways that CCE might assist with sustainability education among Cornell's Greek chapters.

A member of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority, Copeland knew that fraternities and sororities were an area where small changes in waste management

ed using disposable dishes the majority of the time. Clearly, there was room for improvement.

A grant from the Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division (TCSWMD) and some additional funds from Cornell University enabled CCE-Tompkins to hire Copeland for six weeks as a 2009 Summer Intern. She worked concurrently with CCE-Tompkins' Environmental Issues team and Master Composter volunteers, and with staff from Tompkins County Solid Waste, to design the components of a fall waste management education pilot, and to develop the accompanying educational materials.

"This is a quintessential example of how Extension works with people to develop their ideas and interests into a form they can

Over half of the 53 residential houses did not recycle empty cans and bottles after parties.

Gas, from p. 7

HelpLine volunteers also receive calls on gas leasing issues, and refer callers to reliable, research-based information.

Reducing the demand for fossil fuels through energy conservation and efficiency is a key part of the strategy of the CCE-Tompkins Environment program team. The Environment Program was created in 2008 by the association's Board of Directors in response to community demand for more programs and information on green building and natural resource conservation – including Marcellus Shale natural gas development.

Staff provides information on the environmental risks, protections and unknowns related to drilling and disposal of drilling wastes, and partners with other state and local Cooperative Extension, and with a wide variety of local and regional groups to present public educational programs.

Environmental Program Leader Sharon Anderson serves on two state-wide teams -- Cooperative Extension/Cornell Marcellus Shale Team and the CCE Energy Team - that identify community needs; coordinate educational programs; and encourage faculty to address gaps in research.

Anderson has developed a "library" of natural gas resources on the CCE-Tompkins website (<http://ccetompkins.org/gaslibrary>) that includes a large selection of reports, PowerPoints, webinars and videotaped public programs on gas drilling topics.

In December 2010, CCE-Tompkins partnered with Penn State Cooperative Extension to take members of the Tompkins County Council of Government (TCCOG) on a day-long van trip to Bradford County, PA. After spending 2 hours at a Chesapeake Energy drilling pad and speaking with the crew, the

Chesapeake Energy drilling pad and speaking with the crew, the group met with elected officials from Bradford County, the Township of Wyalusing, and the Borough of Troy who shared their experiences.

In order to provide education on a broad range of topics, CCE-Tompkins works with diverse partners who represent the various sides of this issue. CCE-Tompkins has or will co-sponsor educational programs with the AFPB, the New York State Attorney General's Office, Shaleshock, Sustainable Tompkins, Tompkins Landowner Coalition, and Tompkins County Soil and Water Conservation District, among others.

Each county's Cooperative Extension office is independent and seeks to serve the needs of the county in which it is located. CCE-Tompkins has an extensive system for getting input from diverse interests in the community. CCE-Tompkins is also part of a state- and nation-wide system and does work cooperatively with efforts in other counties and at the state level. While we may provide feedback or suggestions to regional and state efforts, we have no control over them. The website gasleasing.cce.cornell.edu is hosted by the state-level of Cornell Cooperative Extension.

If you are interested in how CCE-Tompkins sets policies and program priorities please contact Sharon Anderson, Environment Program Leader or Ken Schlather, Executive Director. ☀

Cheese, from p. 4

City. New Jersey and Canada were reported.

The additional traffic meant improved sales, with a majority of visitors buying cheese at each stop. In addition, according to Roth, "Subsequent sales at farms have resulted from the events. Four producers indicated their on-farm sales have tripled as a result of the *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail* Open Days". One producer who previously had no "open days" has since added tasting room staff and public hours.

At the end of 2010, the group met again to evaluate the events and make plans for 2011. Two additional producers were invited to join the *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail*, while two other farms dropped out as they felt they could not handle the traffic. Officers were elected, and the group is working on bylaws and a budget. Each producer has committed to pay a membership fee to support promotional efforts.

Members of the *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail* have been invited to take part in Keuka and Cayuga Wine Trail events for Spring 2011, at which artisanal cheese producers will be paired with wineries and will provide samples and conduct sales.

Finger Lakes Cheese Trail Open Days for 2011 will be: May 28, July 9, October 8 & 9, and November 19. For information on participating cheese producers, visit *Finger Lakes Cheese Trail* on Facebook, or <http://ccetompkins.org/cheesetrail>. ☀

"We had a limo pull up with 8 people who had been visiting the wineries and cheese trail and they all said they had a blast..."

*Rita
SideHill Acres
Goat Dairy*



Scenes from Rural Youth Services Programs from around Tompkins County.

Rural Youth, from p. 5

them to Caroline Food Pantry participants, and re-established a composting system near the Center. Enfield youth helped prepare for and run the Enfield Fall Harvest Fest, learning life skills such as how to raise large tents, cooking, and appropriate ways to interact with the community while enjoying their volunteer work. Lansing youth host an annual fishing derby at Myers Park, and help with the Harbor Fest.

These activities all provide experience that can help kids get their first jobs; other offerings directly address job readiness. RYS programs at several sites train participants for potential babysitting jobs. “Cool Careers”, offered during lunch at Dryden Middle School, brought local professionals in to talk about their jobs and describe what they did, academically and experientially, to get where they are today.

In “Get a Job!” - another Dryden program - youth identified careers of interest, learned how to create a resume and fill out an application form, and practiced interviewing skills. Although the 6th graders in this program were too young to be employed, they focused on finding volunteer work that could help make them job-ready.

Perhaps the most visible job training and community service opportunity has been staffing the CCE-Tompkins youth stands at the summer Farmers’ Markets in Danby, Groton and Trumansburg. Youth are recommended for positions at the markets by the RYS Youth Community Educators who know their abilities, help them apply and coach them on necessary skills. And, because RYS has established connections to youth throughout the county, new job opportunities for youth increasingly come their way; Community Educators often are contacted by individuals and businesses looking for youth to

help with “odd jobs”, and have been able to quickly identify and refer income-eligible youth for summer TANF jobs, Joblink, and local grant initiatives.

Equally important are the opportunities RYS gives young people to develop a sense of belonging, while connecting with a caring adult mentor. Notices of upcoming programs are sent home with students, and the Youth Community Educators also spend time at the schools, get to know the youth, and are in a position to recruit them individually to programs. Many youth develop friendships with the adult educators and are drawn to try new things they might not have

Research on adolescent development shows how important it is for teens to interact with supportive adults from outside the family.

considered simply because they know, trust, and enjoy spending time with that adult. These youth often become leaders and role models in teaching skills to new participants.

Research on adolescent development shows how important it is for teens to interact with supportive adults from outside the family. Relationships with RYS staff - who are strong and positive non-parent role models -- may well be the most critical contribution that RYS makes to county youth. *In a recent evaluation, 35% of youth surveyed reported they did not have this support before entering the RYS program. At the program’s end, 98% of youth reported that they could count on the Community Educator for*

continued next page

Rural Youth, from p. 18

advice and support.

Many youth choose to join programs because the subjects interest them, or they know and enjoy the company of the adult educator. The Community Educators also make special efforts to include young people who aren't involved in other school activities or sports, or who are referred by school staff, and invite them to join. "They may notice a young person who consistently sits alone at lunch, or who they know has moved around a lot or isn't part of an established group at the school," says Schoffel. "Many times, this personal invitation is what gets the youth involved." This creates balanced groups that bring together a diverse range of youth, providing them with opportunities to learn from each other, appreciate their differences, and build new friendships and a sense of belonging.

Research also shows that youth who have these opportunities and have adult supports outside the family have better developmental outcomes. When these needs are met, they develop characteristics (or life skills) that protect them against becoming involved in risky behaviors.

"Adolescence is a time of change, and youth need to take risks by trying new things," concludes Schoffel. "Through RYS programs, they can do this in a safe place with adult support." ☀

FEAST, from p. 9

and seeds for tasting. Later each class made a Squash Apple Crisp recipe, again with help from the cafeteria staff.

Second graders named the squash dish "Mystery Delight" and created posters to promote it, that were displayed on the hall walls. A FEAST banner was



Guillermo Metz (center), Green Building and Renewable Energy Program Coordinator at CCE-Tompkins, talks with a visitor at the Home Wood Heat Expo, held in October at Cayuga Nature Center. Visitors to the event could learn about buying and stacking firewood, best burn practices and proper maintenance of wood stoves, and the latest in high-efficiency technology. Tours were given of Cayuga Nature Center's new high-efficiency wood chip-fired boiler.

hung outside the building to help generate excitement about the program and a FEAST for Health newsletter (customized for the Trumansburg school by CCE-Tompkins) was sent home with students. It contained information about the classroom activities, and provided the recipe used in the classroom, along with additional activities or readings about the food. The newsletter aims to encourage parents to ask questions about the program, and also to try the recipe at home.

Art teacher Katharine Sinko had all the second graders make squash hats which the children wore on the day that the recipe was served in the cafeteria. Many second graders chose the item on the lunch line, and Food Service Director Deb Bush encouraged children to taste the item even if they had not taken it on their trays. As a result, many children returned to the serving line to request a full helping. The entire cafeteria staff participated enthusiastically in the process.

Although most teachers appreciate the importance of including nutrition education in the elementary curriculum,

incorporating this subject matter while meeting existing learning standards can present a challenge. FEAST for Health offers eight educational units, developed for second through fourth grades, which can be integrated into curriculum goals, including math, language arts, science, and social studies. Classroom education is reinforced when the recipes prepared in the classroom are served as part of the school lunch menu, and the pilot showed that new menu items are more readily accepted when students have studied, prepared, and tasted the food already.

For more information about FEAST for Health, contact Jemila Sequeira, Whole Community Project Coordinator at CCE-Tompkins, at (607) 272-2292 x157 or es538@cornell.edu. ☀



Posters promoting home radon testing appeared on Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) buses on a variety of different routes throughout the county in December 2009 and January 2010.

Greeks, from p. 16

consult with Greek houses on ways to set up or improve their composting programs.

Concurrently, Copeland worked with TCSWMD to create the waste assessment and reduction portion of the pilot program. She researched waste management practices of other universities, and reviewed the results of the free TCSWMD ReBusiness Program waste assessment performed two years earlier at CCE-Tompkins. Copeland then shadowed Kat McCarthy and Dan Carrion of TCSWMD on a real assessment of a local housing complex. She used that experience to develop a step-by-step procedure for performing a waste assessment in a Greek house.

A short application was sent to the sustainability chairs of all Greek chapters at Cornell, inviting them to participate in a pilot waste reduction project. Two sororities and one fraternity (Kappa Delta, Kappa Kappa Gamma, and Phi Kappa Tau) were selected, through discussion with Kat McCarthy of TCSWMD, Adam Michaelides and Sharon Anderson of CCE-Tompkins, and

Master Composter Kristen Vitro (Cornell Class of '11 and incoming president of the 2010 Cornell "Greeks Go Green" committee).

Copeland and Kat McCarthy completed two assessments in September, and a third in December. Participating houses each received a personalized waste report that included recommendations for establishing and strengthening a waste reduction program. Additional material was developed by Copeland on how to live sustainably in a house with a large group of people, and on resources in Tompkins County that can help with that.

Adam Michaelides, Compost Education Program Manager at CCE-Tompkins, worked with Copeland and the Master Composter volunteers to develop strategies for educating the Greeks and for making the project sustainable.

Michaelides was familiar with fraternity life as a 1996 Cornell graduate and member of the Seal & Serpent Society. "I knew the project could have a great potential impact," Michaelides recalls, "But I also was concerned with helping Christina create a program that would be sustainable, that wouldn't simply end when its student originators graduated."

With sustainability of the program in mind, Copeland and

Vitro recruited a "Greeks Go Green" committee of 24 members that had its first meeting in October 2009. The members divided into four project teams that focus on green purchasing, outreach, composting, and recycling. Each also is assigned to work with sustainability chairs at three chapters, so each house now has a contact to help them improve an existing recycling system or implement a new one, identify green solutions for their individual needs, and provide information on green purchasing and composting.

"I would say that the pilot program of doing waste assessments on Greek Houses was a success," Copeland reflected. "Many of the houses know that they could be doing things in a more sustainable manner, and this program really gives them the push they need to take action."

Thanks to Master Composter volunteers Valerie Ober, Tom O'Connell, James Rounds-Jones, Tom Shelley, Sarita Upadhyay and Kristen Vitro for their work on this project. Note: Greeks Go Green is a sustainability initiative for fraternity men and sorority women to participate in on college campuses across the United States. ☀

seasons and outdoor activities can range from identifying natural fiber plants and making rope from them, to silk screening the class logo onto t-shirts using dye made from black walnut hulls the students have gathered. Finally, each student must pass a minimum competency test in four areas: tree identification, forest forensics, track identification and interpretation, and ancestral fire skills.

For Drake and Jordan, there are new challenges involved in working with a different age group, as well as a slightly different set of duties: their usual 4-H public programs don't involve the grading that accompanies a college course, or reading and providing feedback on 80 journals, for example. Both, however, are enthusiastic. "What's exciting for us is that we're working primarily with Environmental Studies majors who have a commitment to leadership in this field," Drake says. "While it's extremely satisfying to work with younger groups and introduce them to the Primitive Pursuits skills and ideas, when you're teaching at this level, you know they'll take this unique approach and experience with them into their lives and careers."

Graduates from the public Primitive Pursuits 4-H program already have gone on to share their skills and experiences. One former participant, now enrolled at Syracuse University, has started a "Primitive Pursuits Club" with 30 members. Another former participant, now at Tufts University, heads an outdoor club and coordinates and leads wilderness trips. According to Drake, IC students have been inspired to do the same, and several now are planning an "Environmen-

tal Sentinels Club" at Ithaca College.

While there are no *Environmental Studies* graduates yet -- the first will come several years from now -- the connection with Ithaca College already has benefitted the Primitive Pursuits program. "Some former *Environmental Sentinels* students now volunteer with the program, and five students

Since its inception in 2008, the class has evolved from a pilot course with one section, to a core requirement for the Environmental Studies degree program.

from another core *Environmental Studies* class fulfilled a required field placement as interns with Primitive Pursuits afterschool programs," says Jordan.

Since its inception in 2008, *Environmental Sentinels*

has evolved from a pilot course with one section, to a core requirement for the Environmental Studies degree program, with 3 sections offered in December 2009. A fourth section is planned for 2010.

Primitive Pursuits offers a wide variety of public courses year round, which are described online at csetompkins.org/primitive-pursuits. For those who are interested, the 2009 reading list for *Environmental Sentinels* follows. Required texts: Wessels, T. *Reading the Forested Landscape*; Gibbons, D. *Stories in Tracks & Sign*, Farrar, J.L. *Trees of the Northern United States and Canada* and Localbirds.com. *Local Tracks of N. America: Quick Guide to Commonly Seen Animal Tracks & Scats.* ☼



Nancy Munkenbeck (standing) of Ellis Hollow Farm responds to a question from the audience at the "How to Buy Local Meat" class in May 2009. Other panelists from left are: Richard Sabol of Sabol Farm, John Wertis of BWW Farm, Tina MacCheyne of High Point Farm and Tom Quinn of Quinn's Irish Hill. Not shown: Greg Reynolds of Glen Wood Farm and Michael Glos of Kingbird Farm.

Energy, from p. 12

Tompkins County.

In fall 2009, 21 new interns were enlisted to work part-time on the project. They met with participating homeowners to review the initial test results, and to recommend energy conservation measures.

During these follow-up visits, interns also shared “path to energy efficiency” information, a deck of cards showing financing options and NYSERDA incentives, and a list of area BPI certified contractors who could be hired to perform energy upgrades³ (available online at: <http://ccetompkins.org/energy/home-energy-savings-0>).

Finally, interns talked with participants about the economic development potential of large scale energy efficiency retrofitting and how community leaders can help develop the education, financing, and workforce development programs needed to dramatically increase residential energy efficiency throughout the county.

To date, all 50 participating households have signed up for the project’s benchmarking program in which GECO (Green Energy Compass) software developed by Performance Systems Development of Ithaca will be used to compare their home’s energy use to that of similar homes. In a year’s time, energy bills for each participating household will be compared to see if energy usage has decreased.

There were no income requirements for households to enroll in the project. Participants were identified for this Leadership Education Program by Schlather and Frongillo with an eye toward including local government representatives and officials, and informal community leaders,

all of whom were thought likely either to share the information they received on home energy efficiency, or to contribute to local policy development.

Renters were not targeted for the pilot in 2009, however a landlord-tenant pilot is planned. Developing a replicable, intern-based program that can be used in other communities, and providing students with weatherization-related summer work experience have been two early benefits of the project.

In 2010, interns will reach out to the broader public through workshops, tabling, efficiency competitions, and other efforts. It is hoped that leaders who have been through the leadership education program will help the project reach the broader public by publicizing and organizing educational programs over their networks of community contacts.

Funds for the Energy Conservation Corps project have been provided by Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative (TC-CPI), The Park Foundation and CCE-Tompkins. Shawn Lindabury was co-coordinator of the Energy Corps interns during Fall 2009.

Special thanks to: The Park Foundation, TCCPI, Mark Pierce of Cornell University Cooperative Extension; John & Elisabeth Harrod of SnugPlanet; Paul Myers of Upstate Energy Solutions; Conrad Metcalfe, Rich Andrulis and Alywn John of Performance Systems Development; Stacey Murphy & Jaime Hazard of Tompkins Community Action; Ian Shapiro of Taitem Engineering, and Anne Korman of Every Square Inch Home Inspections, LLC; Interns: Josh Betances, Dan Bogan, Alexandra Bond, Jason Button, Naomi Childs, Rachel Cluett, Keegan Ebbets, Justin Finkle, Tristan Fowler, Jake Friedman, Kevin Gill, Bari

Greenfeld, Lindsey Hardy, Dana Hills, Alexis Izor, Shene James, Sofia Johnson, Matt Lowe, Sherry Martin, Ariane Moss, Clayton Munnings, Angelica Romeo-Hall, Nick Roscoe, Alex Rosenblatt, Andrea Sanders, Kimberley DC Schroder, Roy Segura, Ariana Shapiro, Noah Slovin, Kimberly Standridge, Reed Steberger, Alyssa Y. Tsuchiya, Ann Velazquez, Nancy Webster and Shay Yu. ☀

Smith from p. 15

Newman of the Rural Youth Services Program at CCE-Tompkins, with approval from the Hancock Village landlord. Project work was done by the applicants, 50 Cornell University student volunteers, 35 O.U.R.S youth from Hancock Village and Congers mobile home parks, and Hanshaw Village residents.

Elements of the project design were conceived by the youth, who surveyed residents to get their input and involvement. An area near tenant mailboxes was redesigned, and on four weekends in May and June, youth and adult residents and volunteers built and installed two picnic tables, two locust benches, a “bus shelter” where residents can wait for a community van, a tire swing and an 8’ x 15’ geo dome climber suitable for youth of all ages. The park landlord provided ice cream and new swing sets on the project’s first day, and residents of the park celebrated with a potluck dinner and barbeque funded by the grant when the redesign was completed.

“I’m always impressed by the passion, commitment and ideas of the many ‘everyday’ leaders throughout Tompkins County,” said Ken Schlather, CCE-Tompkins Executive Director. “While we could only provide monetary grants to some, we will look for other ways to help all interested applicants turn their ideas into action.” ☀

3. The Building Performance Institute (BPI) establishes the standards for the building performance contracting industry, providing an integrated certification, accreditation, and quality assurance program. In order to qualify for NYSERDA incentives, homeowners must contract with BPI contractors.

reviewed other preservation methods such as preserving garlic in oil, making flavored vinegars, curing, fruit cellaring, and techniques for preserving without using salt and sugar.

Day 3 began with a lecture on jams and jellies, followed by hands-on preparation of freezer-jam, and boiling water bath canning of pectin-added jam, low-sugar jam, sugar-free jam, and artificially sweetened jam. That afternoon, the class took the Master Food Preserver examination, and received their Master Food Preserver certificates documenting class participation and passing of the exam. Those wishing to become certified Master Food Preservers have to complete specific further training activities under the direction of local CCE staff and take another exam. It usually takes another food preservation season to earn certification.

“I had expected to learn the science behind what I was already doing, and I did. But I learned a whole lot more that will change the way I do food preservation.”

2009 Class Participant

Evaluations of the class were enthusiastic and CCE-Tompkins hopes to hold another Master Food Preserver Training course in the spring of 2011. Please check our Calendar of Events in early spring for details and registration information. ☀

says Somerfeldt. To this end, she welcomes comments, suggestions and even complaints about routes, schedules and other transportation issues at her workshops, and the Way2Go website is designed to allow users to submit feedback.

General feedback thus far has concerned the challenges of rural households with limited resources to meet their transportation needs, the lack of familiarity many consumers have with Ithaca Carshare, vanpooling, ridesharing strategies, and questions about ways to overcome barriers to bicycling or riding the bus.

“TCAT and other service providers are very interested in hearing from the public and in making their services more responsive to community needs,” Somerfeldt says.

In 2010, Way2Go will begin to target professional and employer audiences with information on the benefits of sustainable transportation to an employee workforce.

The Way2Go website already offers pages on commuting options, employer opportunities, and commuter tax incentives.

Way2Go is funded by a Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) grant from the Federal

Our transportation choices can save money, support health and well-being, lessen pollution and climate change, and promote a strong and equitable community.

Transit Administration (FTA) administered locally by the Tompkins County Department of Social Services. Employers, Human Resources professionals, and non-profit agency staff who would like to schedule a meeting or workshop, may contact Chrisophia Somerfeldt at (607) 272-2292 or css17@cornell.edu. ☀



Beekeeper Mike Griggs gives visitors a tour of White Dog Apiary during the 2009 Farm Trail Open House. The event was held on Saturday and Sunday, August 1 & 2, with half the farms open each day. Participating farms included Cayuga Pure Organics/Earthly Mirth Farm, Farmer's Choice Blueberries, Heaven Llama Farm, Lew-Lin Farm, Littletree Orchards, Locust Woods Blueberries, Plantasia Nursery, Quinn's Irish Hill Farm, Settlement Stables, Three Sisters Farm (out of business) & White Dog Apiary.

Ithaca Children's Garden YHAP Program



Participants in the Youth Horticultural Apprentices Program at ICG during summer 2009.

The Youth Horticulture Apprentices Program (YHAP) at Ithaca Children's Garden is a six-week youth development and workforce preparation program that teaches job skills, fosters personal growth, and introduces youth to career opportunities in the horticulture

industry. This program is well known in the Ithaca community for providing high quality experiential learning and employment opportunities to underserved youth during the summer. Most participants are 14 and 15 year olds seeking first-time work experience.

In 2009, the program employed 13 youth. Their wages were funded by a grant from the Dryden Youth Commission and a partnership with the Ithaca Youth Bureau's Youth Employment Service (YES).

The YHAP apprentices performed daily garden maintenance and worked on the following projects: design and installation of the Bird Habitat Garden and kid-sized bird's nest; construction of gates, pergola and deer fencing in the Edible Garden; renovation of 4 bench swings; entryway beautification, seed starting and

garden replanting.

In addition to these site development projects, the apprentices also piloted an ICG farm stand and developed farm entrepreneurship skills. They spent one day on The Ithaca Commons with the Community Beautification Coordinator and mulched planter boxes throughout the area. Fifteen community members shared their expertise by introducing garden-related topics and careers in the green industry.

This year, the YHAP also welcomed weekly visits from a CCE-Tompkins Farmers' Market Program representative who provided lessons on nutrition, local foods and produce identification. YHAP also was highlighted on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Celebrate Urban Birds Program Partners' webpage. ☀

Multicultural Resource Center (MRC)



Members of the Community Unity Music Education Program entertain guests at the 2009 Sister-Friends Luncheon.

The Multicultural Resource Center (MRC) started in 1987 and is a small, grassroots 501(c)(3) non-profit organization housed at the CCE-Tompkins Education

Center in Ithaca NY. MRC offers a variety of programs and cultural celebrations throughout the year, diversity workshops and trainings, and a lending library with resources on undoing racism and diversity education.

In the area of diversity education, MRC served 987 people in 2009. These included 678 adults, and 309 teens and youth at area schools, community centers and workplaces.

MRC collaborates with other local groups and institutions to offer the community special events that enhance local knowledge and appreciation of cultural and racial diversity. Events in 2009 reached 1,526 people and included: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Celebration, the annual Sister Friends luncheon celebrat-

ing women and their relationships, The Diversity Roundtable, and others. Community partners for these events included Cornell University, Ithaca College, Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC), Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County, Tompkins County Public Library, City of Ithaca, the MLK Community Build, and others.

MRC's Talking Circles on Race and Racism enrolled 167 people in 2009; 40 people attended an Interfaith Talking Circle; 35 people attended a Talking Circle Brunch; and 38 people attended Talking Circle Think Tanks.

To learn more about any of these programs, contact MRC at (607) 272-2292 or visit <http://multicultural-resource.org/> ☀

SewGreen from p. 6

and utilities.

The next step for SewGreen is to spread the word to other communities on how to start similar programs. "All it takes to get started is a handful of dedicated volunteers and a cheap space," says Skinner. "The rest of it will come."

SewGreen's growth has been augmented by grants from The Park Foundation, the Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency, the Legacy Foundation, the Social Services League, Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division, and others. The new relationship with CCE-Tompkins is expected to bring further growth, collaborations, and stability. For more information about SewGreen, visit www.sew-green.org. Contributed by Wendy Skinner ☀



Student volunteers gather to stuff CFL bulbs and materials on home energy efficiency into reusable grocery bags for delivery to 5,000 homes throughout Tompkins County in Upstate New York's largest door-to-door energy efficiency outreach effort.

Lighten Up from p. 3

was inspired by *Lighten Up Caroline*, a 2008 outreach effort (with which Frongillo also was involved) that delivered CFLs to every Town of Caroline home, saving residents a total of \$70,000 in energy costs.

In addition, *Lighten Up Tompkins!* supports Tompkins County's policies on energy-reduction; in 2008, the County Legislature pledged to reduce 80% greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. If all 5,000 households targeted in the *Lighten Up Tompkins!* effort install their CFLs, \$278,000 will be saved -- and 3.46 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions avoided -- over the life of the bulb.

Home owners and renters, businesses and organizations are invited to get on the path to energy savings. No-cost and low-cost steps to take to reduce your energy consumption can be found online at <http://ccetompkins.org/energypath>.

Educational materials and raffles prizes for *Lighten Up, Tompkins!* were donated or provided at-cost by Home

Depot, Wegman's Markets, Ithaca Agway, 84 Lumber, Baker-Miller Lumber, Eagle Envelope, Builder's Best-Cortland, Snug Planet, Sunny Brook Builders, HALCO and Tompkins Community Action. Refreshments for volunteers were provided by: Cornell Catering, Rogue's Harbor, F&T Distributors, Cornell Orchards, Tops, P&C, Ludgate's Farm Market, Regional Access, GreenStar Cooperative Market, and Ithaca Bakery. Special thanks to the Cornell Public Service Center, Tompkins Weekly and Area Congregations Together for their support.

Credit for coordinating the project goes to Anne Rhodes of Freeville, a 2010-11 Cornell Civic Leaders Fellow and member of the Dryden Solutions Project; and to CCE-Tompkins staff members Dominic Frongillo, Shawn Lindabury, and Mike Koplinka-Loehr. ☀

POSNC from p. 8

Many shared that the thing that they liked best was the extra support the group provided. One mother noted, "I learned things, but the most important thing was getting to talk to other parents and learning that they are going through the same things I am." Another parent shared, "I like knowing that there are resources out there that can help."

Clark served as parent leader of the POSNC group until August 2010, when the increasing demands of her work and family required more of her time, however she attends monthly meetings whenever she can. Responsibility for coordinating the POSNC Group has been taken on by Groton's Families!, a project of CCE-Tompkins that is funded through 2011 by a grant from the NYS Children & Family Trust Fund. ☀

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Donations from friends and family in memory of Patricia Ziegler, a long-time Master Gardener volunteer and 2007 Friend of Extension award recipient, funded the creation of the Patricia Ziegler Memorial Garden at the CCE-Tompkins Education Center (above)

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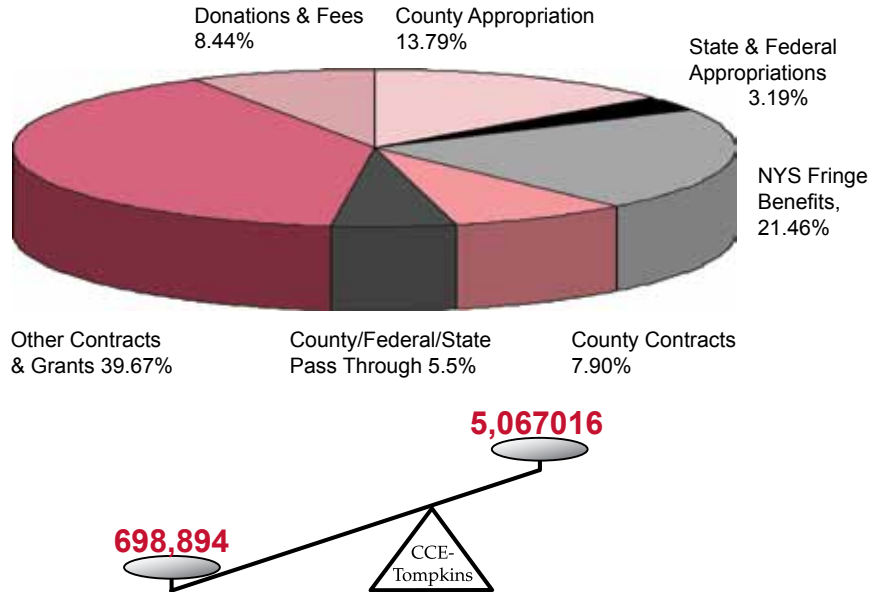
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Tompkins County Appropriation Leveraged the Following Support in 2010

Cooperative Extension uses its unique partnership with federal, state, and local governments, adding volunteer involvement, fund raising and in-kind contributions to bring an 12-fold return in educational resources for each Tompkins County tax dollar received.

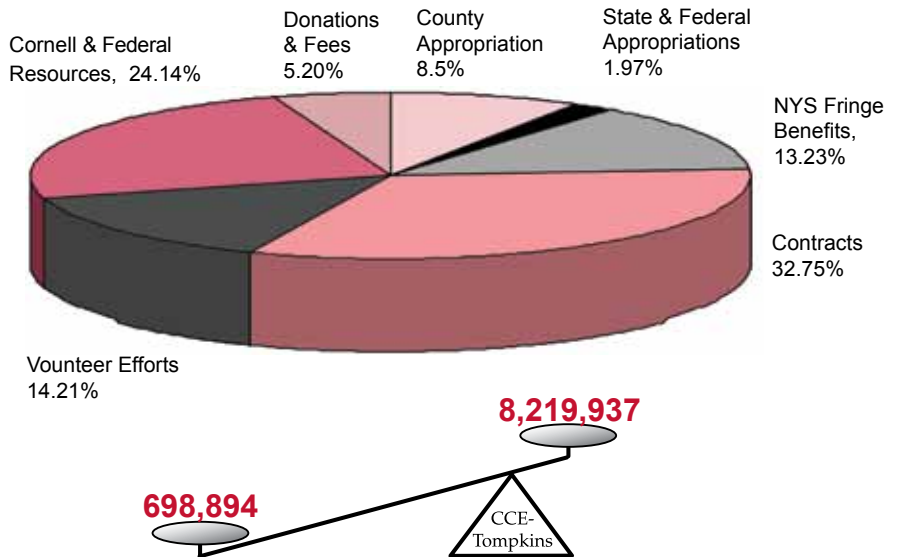
Direct Support Ratio 1 : 7.3

County Appropriation	\$698,894
State and Federal Appropriations	161,640
Fringe Benefits, NYS	1,087,154
County Contracts	400,662
County Fed./State Pass Through	281,284
Other Contracts/Grants	2,009,945
Donations & Fees	427,437
Total	\$5,067,016

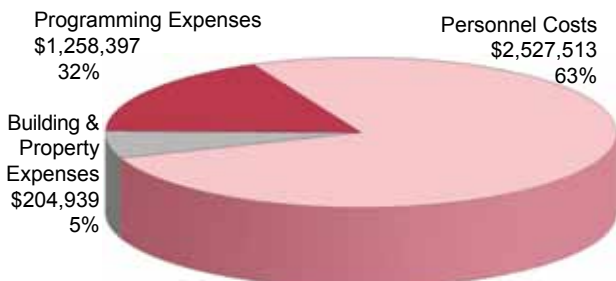


In-Kind & Direct Support Ratio 1 : 11.8

County Appropriation	\$698,894
State and Federal Appropriations	161,640
Fringe Benefits, NYS	1,087,154
Contracts	2,691,890
Volunteer Efforts	1,168,457
Cornell & Federal Resources	1,984,464
Donations & Fees	427,437
Total	\$8,219,937



2010 Expenses by Type



2010 Employees (FTEs) by Funding Source

