



University of Nevada, Reno

Extension

College of Agriculture,
Biotechnology & Natural Resources

Extension | Washoe County Annual Report Fiscal Year 2024-2025

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Extension is the outreach unit of the University of Nevada, Reno, engaged in Nevada communities, bringing research-based knowledge to address critical community needs. It is a county-state-federal partnership providing practical education to people, businesses, and communities.



4-H Youth Development

Learning by Doing



Extension's 4-H Washoe County Youth Development team launched a pilot **In-School STEM program**, designed to engage K-5 students in fun, hands-on STEM lessons. These lessons align with Next Gen Science Standards and allow students to experience science through hands-on activities. This pilot was tremendously successful, reaching over **275 classrooms** across the County and **over 6,000 students**.

4-H Youth Development is the largest youth development organization in the United States. Kids and teens complete hands-on projects in a variety of delivery modes to learn about science, art, healthy living, animals, the natural world, and agriculture. These activities, supported by adult mentors, encourage youth to take on leadership roles and develop emotional intelligence.

Youth empowered and educated through 4-H Youth Development:

- **6,021** youth in In-School Enrichment Programs
- **3,217** youth in After-School STEM Programs
- **35** youth participating in overnight 4-H Camp Programs
- **266** youth engaged in STEM/STEAM Day Camps
- **307** youth involved in 4-H clubs led by volunteer leaders

"My students really enjoyed the hands-on learning. It's great to have them use their problem-solving skills as well!"
- WCSD Teacher



Above: Kindergarteners enjoy a 4-H in-school lesson on straw rockets. They learned principles of engineering and forces.



Above: A 4-H member poses with her sheep.



Above: a 4-H leader demonstrates UV-sensitive beads, which will be made into bracelets, to teach youth about light.

Living With Fire



Extension's Living With Fire Program (LWF) bridges the gap between science and action, convening communities and stakeholders to address the threat of wildfire. Through trusted partnerships, Living With Fire creates science-based education and outreach programs to address emerging social and ecological needs.

Between July 2024 and June 2025, LWF conducted 43 documented activities in Washoe County. These included seven presentations, six booth events, eight meetings, two webinars, and the 2025 Fire Adapted Nevada Summit. These efforts resulted in direct engagement with over **928 community members**.

The 2025 **Fire Adapted Nevada Summit** was the result of months of collaboration and coordination between LWF, Fire Adapted Nevada, and a broad network of agency and community partners. This two-day event aimed to strengthen partnerships, share knowledge, and equip Nevada communities with actionable wildfire adaptation strategies. LWF managed all event logistics, including sponsorships, venue and catering, marketing, research and video production, registration, workshop facilitation, speaker coordination, attendee support, and event evaluation.

The Summit brought together over **200 attendees** representing agencies, nonprofits, fire departments, and community groups. The program featured a keynote by Frank Frievalt on aligning stakeholders and exploring fire adaptation pathways, along with panel discussions on insurance, emergency alerts, and preparedness. Interactive workshops highlighted the Neighborhood Ambassador model and community organizing strategies. Additional sessions included small-group breakouts, peer learning opportunities, and video spotlights of successful community efforts.

Horticulture Community Education

Extension Master Gardeners are trained volunteers who support successful home gardening in Washoe County. This year, the Master Gardeners logged a total of 7,687 volunteer hours, which translates to a public value of \$259,743! The Master Gardener Help Desk provided research-based answers to home horticulture questions from 1,528 community members. The Mobile Help Desk, created to offer evening and weekend options at various community locations, supported an additional 337 questions. That's a total of **1,865 residents** who received free, factual advice for their home gardens.

The Gardening in Nevada talks hosted at Bartley Ranch had over **1,000 participants**. The talks are free, but canned food donations are encouraged. Extension collected over **400 pounds of food** at these talks to be donated to the Food Bank of Northern Nevada. The Master Gardeners also held monthly discussions at the Spanish Springs Library and Rancho San Rafael Master Gardener Teaching and Demonstration Garden.

The **Junior Master Gardener Program** took root in the Lemelson STEM Academy, providing weekly science-based horticulture STEM activities for grades PreK-5. They enriched the learning by hosting a field trip to the Master Gardener greenhouse.

The annual **Seedling Sale** provided locally grown, Nevada-adapted seedlings to community members, generating **\$22,691** in sales to support community education and engagement. They also sold native and adapted perennial plants for Pollinator Week and hosted a multi-county pollinator garden tour. They donated **37 flats of plants** to Soulful Seeds, a local community nonprofit that provides food and horticulture education to those in need.

Extension hosted **Grow Your Own, Nevada**, a horticulture training that provides practical information on growing food at home to reduce food deserts and help residents become more self-sufficient. The Horticulture program taught nine classes to 1,186 Nevadans, including **551 Washoe County residents**.



Promoting Healthy Eating and Living



Extension offers high-quality, research-based nutrition education to low-income Nevadans who qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This year, the program provided nutrition education to **156 preschool-age children**, with 4,316 repeat contacts. SNAP-Education connected with **892 youth** across Washoe County through direct nutrition education, with 4,316 repeat contacts. SNAP-Education supports healthy eating choices for adults by providing the “Cooking Matters” curriculum to **358 adults** across **12 community sites**, with 657 repeat contacts. In addition to these family engagement sites, SNAP-Education reached **796 students** through school-wide healthy food tasting events. In addition to direct nutrition education, SNAP-Education supports policy, systems and environmental changes at community resource sites serving early childhood, youth and adult audiences. They directed over **46 PSE changes**, intending to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Angeline Jeyakumar, PhD, joined Extension this year as a Nutrition Specialist. She developed and implemented community-based interventions to reduce chronic disease risk among Washoe County residents, including researching and writing “**Hi-Fiber**” **recipe booklets**. She is collaborating with stakeholders across the state to help ensure a seamless, complementary approach that reflects the unique characteristics of Nevada. She also engages in collaborative research with universities in the country and abroad, focusing on specific areas such as food security, nutrition transition, and emerging dietary behaviors to benefit underserved and isolated communities.

Strengthening Civic Engagement



Extension was proud to support numerous opportunities to promote civic engagement in Washoe County this year.

Extension is a proud partner in delivering the **Washoe County Leadership Academy**, a nine-month journey for Washoe County residents.

Participants experience a behind-the-scenes view of Washoe County government – from libraries to water treatment to environmental conservation. Marlene Rebori, PhD, provides training on leadership, public issues, civility, conflict management and collaboration throughout the academy. This year, Washoe County added a six-week accelerated Leadership Academy for Incline Village residents. By graduation, participants gain a deeper understanding of how the government collaborates with community partners to provide essential services and are eager to take on opportunities to support their community.



Many new leaders took office across Nevada after the 2024 election. Extension convened partnerships with the Nevada Association of Counties, Nevada League of Cities, and Dr. Brad Johnson to host a **“Newly Elected Local Officials Training,”** an educational summit for **15 newly elected City Councilmembers and County Commissioners**, teaching them how to be effective and confident leaders.

32 4-H youth from across the state participated in **“4-H Day at the Legislature,”** where they had the opportunity to learn about their state government, meet with their legislative representatives, and hear from University of Nevada President Brian Sandoval (a 4-H alumnus himself)!



Workforce Development

Extension programs engage in workforce development in a variety of fields. Our staff provides research-based, accessible training in the form of continuing education units and industry certifications.

Radon Education for Realtors

Extension's Nevada Radon Education Program informs Nevadans about the dangers of radon, a naturally occurring, radioactive gas. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. This year, the Radon Program Manager educated **181 realtors** on the importance of testing for radon during the homebuying process.

Pesticide Safety

Extension's Pesticide Safety Education Program held workshops in November 2024 and March 2025, with **65 participants** from Washoe County earning continuing education to maintain their pesticide applicator certification. Participants reported a 21.5% increase in knowledge, and 100% said they intend to use information gained during the workshop in their professional practice.

Weed Warriors

Extension's Weed Warriors Program, provided in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Agriculture, trains weed management professionals to identify and effectively manage noxious weeds. Extension staff trained **35 weed management professionals** from Washoe County. Attendees were able to identify an average of six more noxious weeds on a test of 16 weeds after the training than they could before.



Early Childhood Education

Extension's Early Childhood Education team provided professional development opportunities to over **100 early childhood educators** in Washoe County, with **728 hours of training and on-site coaching**. The workforce development programs include Spiral Up, a foundational program for new educators in professionalism and safety; a Child Development Associate credential offered in English and Spanish; and Nevada Ready Pre-K, a training to empower educators to implement state-funded Pre-K programs with a focus on social-emotional development. When educators grow in knowledge, confidence, and compassion, children benefit through enriched learning environments, stronger relationships, and joyful experiences.



Protecting Nevada's Watersheds and Pollinators

Extension programs collaborated with a variety of community partners to educate the community on methods to protect our waterways, pollinators, and natural resources.

Extension's **Northern NevadaScapes** is a hands-on training program that teaches homeowners to conserve water in their landscapes and reduce irrigation run-off, keeping pesticides and pollutants out of the Truckee River. 26 people participated in this course and reported an average of 23% increase in knowledge. All participants stated they intend to use at least one recommendation from the course.

Extension collaborated with The Biggest Little Bee City USA to host **World Bee Day**, an event at Idlewild Park with 49 families in attendance. They provided a demonstration on pesticide and pollutant safety. After the demonstration, many of the kids were able to list several pollutants, including garbage, oil, fertilizer, chemicals, weed killer, dirt, soapy water, and pesticides. All adult attendees said they intend to use at least one of the tips to protect pollinators and our local water quality.

Extension Master Gardeners partnered with the local chapter of Bee City USA to launch a **Pollinator Garden Tour** in June 2025 during National Pollinator Week. Nearly **200 people** attended; 80% of attendees reported increased knowledge of how to protect pollinators, 96% plan to use more pollinator plants in their garden, and 82% said they intend to use fewer pesticides in their yards.



“How do we get this out of here?!”

After the lake pollution demonstration, children expressed genuine concern and curiosity about cleaning the lake, demonstrating an understanding that it's difficult to remove pollutants from watersheds after exposure.

FY25 Fiscal Report

FY25 Expenses by Revenue Source	
State	\$1,316,706
Federal	\$194,013
County	\$2,043,121
Grants	\$2,554,135
Gifts	\$235,226
Total	\$6,402,826

FY25 County Funds Summary	
Opening Balance	\$2,485,568
Revenue	\$2,353,696
Expenses	\$2,043,121
Ending Balance	\$2,796,143



For more information, scan the QR code or visit our webpage at [Extension.unr.edu/washoe.aspx](https://extension.unr.edu/washoe.aspx).

We acknowledge that the University of Nevada, Reno is situated on the traditional homelands of the Numu (Northern Paiute), Wašiw (Washoe), Newe (Western Shoshone), Nuwu (Southern Paiute) peoples. These lands continue to be a gathering place for Indigenous Peoples, and we recognize their deep connections to these places. We appreciate the opportunity to live and learn on their territory.

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a place of work and learning free of discrimination based on a person's age, disability, whether actual or perceived by others (including service-connected disabilities), gender (including pregnancy-related conditions), military status or military obligations, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, national origin, race (including hair texture and protected hairstyles such as natural hairstyles, afros, bantu knots, curls, braids, locks and twists), color, or religion. Where discrimination is found to have occurred, the University will act to stop it, prevent its recurrence, remedy its effects, and discipline those responsible.



The University of Nevada, Reno Extension's Mission:
To discover, develop, disseminate, preserve, and use knowledge to strengthen the social, economic, and environmental well-being of people.

Extension's work is made possible through partnerships with Washoe County, the State of Nevada and the United States Department of Agriculture. We appreciate our many nonprofit partners contributing to our mission. If you are interested in collaborating with Extension, please contact Abbey Pike at abbeypike@unr.edu.

