



Connecting UCB Students to UC ANR Cooperative Extension

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Project Description

Graduate students at UC Berkeley are often looking to partner with the people eventually impacted by their research. However, students are often isolated from the best entity to facilitate these collaborative projects, **UC Cooperative Extension**. This is a loss for both sides as many graduate students are interested in doing applied research and UCCE academics can often use help.

My Global Food Initiative project was designed to strengthen the connection between UCCE and graduate students at UCB as well as facilitate skills building workshops to help prepare students for Cooperative Extension. Getting well qualified students into Cooperative Extension will help research, including research on sustainable food production, get to the people actually doing the work, such as farming.

RIGHT: Participants in the Cooperative Extension Showcase hear about Mary Blackburn's, Family and Consumer Science Advisor for Alameda County, program promoting healthy eating for low income seniors in Alameda County.



Media Training Workshop

The media is an essential tool to get research results out to the public; however, **it greatly benefits the scientists and the story if we are well prepared to communicate well.** Ann Brody Guy, the director of communications of the College of Natural Resources at UC Berkeley, led the workshop and covered how to prepare for an interview as well as how to get coverage for your story.

Cooperative Extension Showcase

At the Cooperative Extension Showcase, UCCE academics came and discussed their extension programs with students and faculty and students presented the CE work they had been doing. This year the UCCE presenters were Mary Blackburn, Kent Daane, Mike De Lasaux, and Rob Bennton. **They discussed their work in areas ranging from integrated pest management to promoting healthy eating for low income seniors to how to foster community engagement.** Graduate students Stella Cousins, Adam Calo, and Kevi Mace also presented their work. **This is now an annual event.**

Skills for Sharing Science Workshop

This workshop focused on how youth and adults engage with information. **The goal was to build communication skills for informal education settings like group outreach, demonstrations, field trips, scientists-in-schools lessons, and other public venues.**

RIGHT: Media Training Workshop participants learn to tell scientific stories.



RIGHT: UCCE County Director Virginia Bolshakova and graduate student Kevi Mace collaborating on an outreach project in school gardens.



Objectives and Outcomes

- 1) Establish a continuing relationship between graduate students and ANR academics**
 - Cooperative Extension Showcase
 - Creation of graduate student group dedicated to Cooperative Extension
- 2) Create a framework for student to gain skills relevant to work in Cooperative Extension**
 - Media Training Workshop
 - Skills for Sharing Science Workshop



LEFT and BELOW: Participants in the Skills for Sharing Science workshop learning guided inquiry through an exercise with paper planes.



Conclusions

The creation of the graduate student group ensures that the Cooperative Extension Showcase will continue to happen as an annual event, strengthening the relationship between students and UCCE. The enthusiastic participation in the trainings generated enough interest to continue running them while also adding new trainings to address other necessary skills.