

EXTENSION, MANITOWOC COUNTY NEWSLETTER



Summer Internships Benefit Manitowoc County Seniors

By: *Laura Apfelbeck, FoodWise Coordinator*



Since March of 2020, Manitowoc County has experienced a 34.4% increase in FoodShare enrollment, higher than the State of Wisconsin average. The largest demographic living in poverty are Females 55 - 64, followed by Females 25 - 34 and then Females 75+.

Older people face food insecurity, not knowing if they have enough food to last the month. Transportation is also a concern. **FoodWise** community partners Grow it Forward Community Dinner and Community Meals at First Presbyterian have been serving weekly free dinners, each distributing about 165 meals per week, primarily to seniors. One of the common issues is finding enough volunteers to organize and assist these programs. Interns can help fill that gap.

FoodWise partners with Grow it Forward, Salvation Army, and Community Meals at First Presbyterian to address food insecurity and nutrition through the Hunger Coalition.

As an example of increased need, Salvation Army of Manitowoc County recently acquired a refrigerated truck to allow more deliveries of monthly stockboxes to senior centers, senior housing, and food pantries throughout Manitowoc County. Stockboxes include shelf stable milk, cheese, rice, cereal, juice, pasta, beef stew, and vegetables.



Even with COVID waning, pantries and meal sites struggle to meet increased demand. Interns will help support pantries, supplementing pantry staples with freshly grown garden vegetables.



In partnership with North East Wisconsin Area Health Education Center (NEWAHEC), **FoodWise** will host two university student interns to add fresh garden produce to the menus of Community Meals at First Presbyterian and Grow it Forward. Interns will spend 8 weeks, 36 hours weekly, maintaining gardens, assisting with food preparation and distribution, creating gleaning projects, and offering a nutritious menu primarily for low income senior citizens.

If paid at minimum wage (\$7.25), for their nearly 600 hours, their work would contribute over \$4000 in support of hunger cessation. The **FoodWise** partnership with NEWAHEC brings these internships to the community at no cost. Internships contribute valuable work that host organizations cannot afford to pay and offer real-life, on-the-job skills that college students cannot afford to miss. With internships, everybody wins.

Extension, Manitowoc County Staff

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Who Needs to Know QPR?

By: Cath Tease, Health and Well Being Educator

Suicidal thoughts are common. Suicide threats and attempts are less common, yet more frequent than we realize. Thoughts of suicide often occur during times of personal crisis, extreme stress, depression, or when we are confronted with loss or fear.

Manitowoc County is not immune to suicide. Almost everyone has been impacted by the loss of someone who died by suicide. We lost 167 people to suicide in Manitowoc County from 2010-2020. Depression was reported in 73% of Manitowoc County suicide deaths for the same 10-year period.

As a health educator working for Extension, my role is to promote positive mental health by supporting individuals in developing and practicing activities to improve self-regulation and well-being in order to foster resilience in individuals and communities. Shortly after I was hired, I was trained as an instructor for QPR. In my role as health educator, I partner with Prevent Suicide Manitowoc County and continue to educate the public on suicide risk and prevention, stigma reduction and resource availability.

This spring, I coordinated a partnership between the Extension, Prevent Suicide Manitowoc County and Lakeshore Technical College. Three talented students, Mai Ka Cha, Emily Hockenhull, and Noelle Timler spent a semester working with our team to develop a brochure and informational insert to help us create resiliency through support and education.

QPR is designed to help you save a life. QPR consists of three skills:

1. Question...a person about suicide
2. Persuade...someone to get help and,
3. Refer...someone to the appropriate resource

QPR is something anyone and everyone can learn. QPR is not a form of counseling or treatment. QPR is positive action that offers hope and empathy. Similar to CPR, the basics of QPR are taught to everyday people and may save lives. Do you have a group you would like us to train? Are you connected to a service club? Place of worship? Youth-serving Agency? Neighborhood watch group? Consider scheduling a QPR training and help us reach our goal of 5000 community members trained in QPR by 2025.

For more information, or to request a training please visit <https://preventsuicidemanitowoc.com/> or contact me directly at cath.tease@wisc.edu or 920-683-5061

