

Northeast Iowa Food & Fitness Initiative
Regional Leadership Team's Minority/Low Resource Work Group
Teleconference Notes
2/12/08

The Regional Leadership Team minority/low resource work group teleconferenced on Tuesday, Feb. 12th at 4:30 pm. Present were Lora Friest, Lana Snitker, Lori Egan, Teresa Wiemerslage, Leah Brown, Viktoria Stockman, Deborah Walker and Brenda Ranum and missing were Larry McGee and Paul Raul.

The purpose of the minority/low resource work group is to learn from the community members and key informants. The group will seek out existing assets that exist in the minority and low resource communities in the region around food production and consumption and the assets around the fitness environment related to physical activity and play for families and youth. Where important data on assets is not available, focus groups and key informant interviews may be processes that are used to gather this data to help inform our Initiative. The data gathered will help us identify strategies to increase equity and accessibility around local healthy food and spaces and places for physical activity and play. Opportunities to incorporate assets/strengths identified by communities will also be incorporated. The timeline for gathering data is June 2008.

Lora, Leah, Viktoria and Paul had met on Mon., Feb. 11 to discuss their roles. They shared the following suggestions:

- A plan is needed for minority liaisons so they know key questions to ask community members.
- A reporting opportunity needs to exist at Regional Team meetings for key feedback points
- Resources/Opportunities need to be created to engage minority community members; some ideas included:
 - Handouts/Brochures/Bulk Mailing
 - Music radio program in Jewish, Russian and Hispanic languages that include recorded messages in own language about the Food & Fitness Initiative work and possible call-in for prizes
 - Survey questionnaire for growers and buyers of local food (Following the teleconference Teresa sent out the following links to an Institutional Buyer survey and Consumer survey developed by the NIFF Coalition prior to the start of the Food and Fitness Initiative:
 - Here is a copy of the consumer survey.
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/NR/rdonlyres/89585664-F071-413D-96FB-972710C15F1E/61750/Allamakeehouseholdsurvey1.pdf>
 - Here is a copy of the institutional buyer survey.
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/NR/rdonlyres/89585664-F071-413D-96FB-972710C15F1E/72169/NIFFINSTITUTIONALSURVEY2006.pdf>
 - Engage youth in gathering information (Lana said an additional youth representative is needed for Allamakee Co. for the Regional Team.)
 - Instead of focus groups which community members may not be receptive to, instead sponsor activities, like dance classes for people and liaisons can talk to

people. (Viktoria said that community members will not go to regular meetings. There is not enough trust based on their previous experiences.)

Deborah asked Leah what support would look like? Leah responded:

- More communication from the Initiative Leaders as to who should have information, who cares and who needs to know. (She has been sending information to Lora, reads the website and takes information to her community but because she is not able to attend meetings she does not feel as informed about opportunities.)
- Funds to do community sponsored activities
- What should be our focus? What information are we to gather?

Brenda shared that each month this work group and others will be asked to report their needs and financial requests to the Regional Team. This work group is to determine what information should be gathered (some may already exist) from minority and low resource communities and request funds if needed. Lora said the Regional Team allocated additional funds of approximately \$6,000 to the translators for diverse community members.

Viktoria agreed with Leah's comments and added that it would be helpful to hear from the TAP Team and other experts on what has been successful in other communities to engage and learn from minority and low resource communities. Deborah said she believed she could help with this request.

Lana shared that she is not familiar with the Chasidic Jewish communities cultural traditions around food. She would like to learn more. Leah said she could help with this. Deborah suggested it might be useful to provide some education to our Regional Team about our minority and low resource communities.

The work group set their next teleconference meeting for Tuesday, Feb. 19, 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm. Brenda said we could use the same teleconference call in number. She will send an e-mail notice out again with the number.

Report submitted by: Brenda Ranum