Developing a Model for Community Wellness

A neighborhood social-cooperative model is designed to build healthier communities from within.

▶ Description: The Allied Community Cooperative developed a social-cooperative model to support residents in Madison's Allied-Dunns Marsh neighborhood. This model emphasized resident-led initiatives and a network of peer support that is inherent in cooperatives.

▶ Relevance: Madison's Allied Dunns-Marsh neighborhood has a high number of African American and Latino families who live under the poverty level.

▶ Partnerships: Partnerships with 25 businesses and organizations such as Madison Community Cooperatives, Boys and Girls Club and Wisconsin Campus Compact led to additional grants totaling nearly $20,000, including funding for a one-year VISTA volunteer and a grant to improve access to technology.

▶ Results: The cooperative hired an Allied resident who, like many of her neighbors, had faced challenges related to issues of poverty; she learned new job skills and became an exceptional community organizer and outreach worker. Cooperative members worked to create a food cart business and developed skills in strategic planning, team building and small business development. Other resident-led activities included the development of parent support groups, a neighborhood newsletter, a recycling education project, community dances and dinners.

Neighborhood apartment complexes benefitted from container gardens and a farmer's market vegetable stand that evolved into Freshmobile, a health food delivery solution. Sponsored by Fresh Madison Market and other health and community organizations, this sustainable way to bring fresh fruit and vegetables to the Allied area and other neighborhoods throughout the city resulted in residents being hired in livable wage jobs.

**ALLIED COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE**

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