

Case Study Series



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Program Overview – Central Kentucky Job Club

Following a community assessment that determined that no other organization offered a free community job search program, *Job Club* was created in 2012 to provide free resources to the public who are facing joblessness – many for the first time. In 2019, engagement averaged over 50 persons per session, aiding scores of job seekers to maneuver a difficult point in their lives.

Job Club is designed to improve employability skills needed to compete in today's workplaces for those having been laid off, gone through an unexpected job loss, underemployed, or need to find a better work situation. Meetings featured a guest speaker or panel presenting job search topics such as resume writing, interviewing, LinkedIn, salary negotiation, networking, and transferable skills. Meeting times are reserved for networking and sharing job leads.

Research shows that the unemployed face numerous health challenges beyond the loss of income (Reine and Hammarstrom, 2012). Job Club addresses health challenges by providing a positive environment for motivated job seekers to meet, connect, share, and learn while demonstrating Extension's commitment to improving health and well-being during tough times.

Since its inception Job Club has reached 5,354 job seekers with 186 jobs secured valued at an estimated \$8.4 million. In 2019, Doggett facilitated six extended hour workshops that provided additional individualized information on job search strategies with an average of 32 participants per workshop.

Post-program evaluations indicated that 86% of past participants reported improved employability skills as a result of Job Club. Beginning in March 2020, Job Club began meeting via ZOOM webinar and tripled program attendance.

Participant Testimonials

"Losing my job was more difficult than my battle with cancer. The encouraging environment of Job Club helped me maintain a positive attitude to secure employment."

"Losing my job because of the company filing bankruptcy was devastating. Job Club gave me invaluable help with my resume/cover letter as well as interview and networking skills."

"Job Club provided support and new ideas for the job seeker. Losing a job in society equals losing identity, never mind the practical concerns. Job Club offered concrete suggestions and ideas to move the search for a new position forward. The proverbial journey of 1,000 steps begins with the first one. Job Club pointed me toward a path that leads to change, growth, and at last, work!"

Reach

Central Kentucky Job Club has a national and international impact, having reached over 5,354 job seekers and 217 employment recruiters throughout 146 Job Club meetings. Job seekers represented 27 states and seven counties with 2020 participation increasing by 154% (Doggett, 2019).

To communicate Job Club opportunities, Fayette County Extension sends Job Club Public Service Announcements to 68 mass media venues, such as:

- Fayette County Extension and University of Kentucky Alumni Association social media pages
- LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram posts
- University of Kentucky Alumni Association sends Job Club email (38,000) twice each month
- Job Club regional employer database (335)
- Job Club recent attendees receive an email reminder twice a month
- Alumni Career Services colleagues/influencer list (100)
- Job Club guest feature spots on local radio (WUKY) and television stations (WLEX, WKYT, WTVQ)
- UKNOW posts (University of Kentucky social media)
- 20 Extension offices were added to regular program announcements with the advent of COVID-19

Urban Context

Scale

Lexington is a city located in Kentucky. With a 2020 population of 323,878, it is the 2nd largest city in Kentucky and the 61st largest city in the United States. Lexington is currently growing at a rate of 0.22% annually and its population has increased by 9.49% since the most recent census, which recorded a population of 295,803 in 2010. Spanning over 286 square miles, Lexington has a population density of 1,142 people per square mile.

The average household income in Lexington is \$83,111 and the poverty rate of 16.81%. The median rental cost is \$896 per month, and the median house value is \$189,800. The median age in Lexington is 34.6 years, 33.5 years for males, and 35.6 years for females. For every 100 females, there are 96.2 males.

Lexington is a city located in Fayette County Kentucky. Lexington is known as the “Horse Capital of the World.” The Kentucky Horse Park, The Red Mile, and Keeneland racecourses are all located in Lexington.

Diversity

According to the most recent census data, the racial composition of Lexington was:

- White: 74.86%
- Black or African American: 14.61%
- Asian: 3.75%
- Two or more races: 3.75%
- Other race: 2.81%

- Native American: 0.19%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.03%

According to Lexington Urban County Government, there are over 185 languages spoken in Lexington, with the top 10 foreign languages being Spanish, Swahili, Arabic, Japanese, Nepali, French, Mandarin, Kinyarwanda, Korean, and Portuguese in addition to the official language, English. The most spoken language is Spanish, which is spoken by 6.2% of the population.

Strategic Approach to Urban Engagement

The “Job Club” concept includes the following objectives:

- To teach job search strategies including resumes, interviews, LinkedIn, and more.
- To provide networking and professional development opportunities for participants.
- To engage professionals in the community as program volunteers to share their job search, network, and career knowledge.
- To provide a forum for local employers to promote job opportunities.
- To provide opportunity for Extension agents to provide program and resources to job seekers.

In addition to meeting important local needs, Job Club also addresses two of the National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) primary focus areas:

- Strengthen Communities
- Improve Our Health

The Family and Consumer Sciences Extension agent facilitates media interviews, resume reviews, financial management service, Job Club database, surveys, and evaluation of Job Club. As noted earlier in this case study, Job Club demonstrates how the Extension model is utilized in urban communities to develop unique programming to address issues identified by community assessment/need identification.

Additional resources were utilized by engaging the University of Kentucky Human Resources – Employment Resources and the University of Kentucky Alumni Association. University of Kentucky alumni director and HR specialists regularly presented during Job Club meetings.

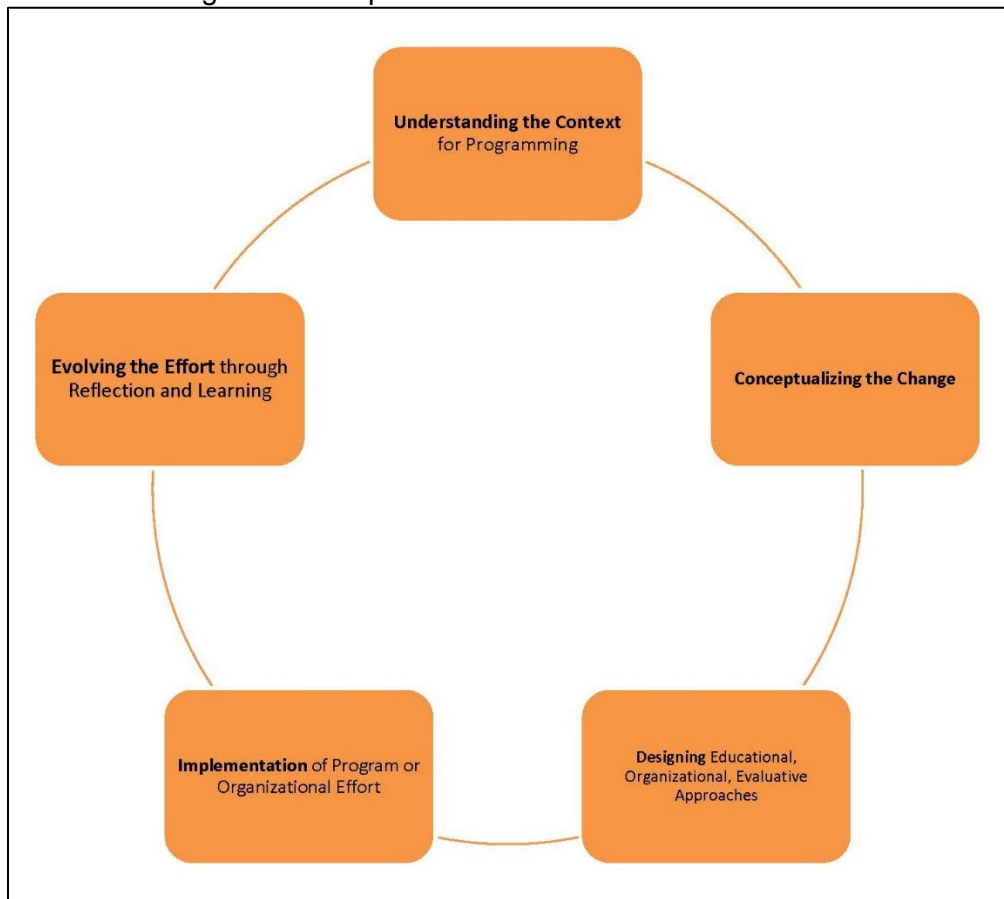
While originally designed for face-to-face implementation, Job Club was adapted to the COVID-19 crisis and continued by utilizing web conferencing tools provided by the University of Kentucky.

Another critical addition to Job Club has been the involvement of businesses and organizations that are seeking employees. Job Club provides a forum for networking and communication between job seekers and potential employers.

Program feedback consistently demonstrated a positive economic impact for participants in the form of improved skills and jobs gained.

The Extension program development model (Figure 1) is used for program development, design, implementation, and evaluation.

Figure 1. Extension Program Development Model



Impact

In recognition of the impact that Job Club has within the city of Lexington, Mayor Linda Gorton endorsed Job Club for Lexington's urban community and the unemployment office officially recommends attendance. Successful job seekers frequently serve as panelists and share the value of Job Club during their job search. Surveys indicate this experience is highly regarded by attendees.

According to Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, unemployed Americans face numerous health challenges beyond the loss of income (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2013). Laid-off workers are far more likely than those continuously employed to have fair or poor health. Family and Consumer Sciences Extension is committed to improving the health and well-being of individuals and families. Through this Extension program, job seekers gain the skills needed to compete in today's workplaces and acquire jobs.

In 2020, Doggett was awarded the Southern Region National Urban Extension Leaders Leadership Award for her work with Job Club.

Closing Comments and Looking to the Future

As we look to the future and the challenges we will continue facing, initiatives like “Job Club” serve as beacons. They remind us that Cooperative Extension can and must continue to have a thorough understanding of our most pressing community needs. We must be willing to collaborate and explore ways to bring non-traditional resources from other university units and community organizations who share interest in addressing these types of challenges.

Multimedia Documentation/References

Resources

- Sample Job Club Schedule (Figure 2)
- Meeting Reminder (Figure 3)
- Newsletter (Figure 4)
- Fayette County Cooperative Extension – Job Club Webpage (Figure 5)
- University of Kentucky Alumni – Job Club Web Page (Figure 6)
- Job Club Facebook Page (Figure 7)

References

Doggett, D. (2019). Job Club Continues to soar. KERS.

<https://kers.ca.uky.edu/core/reporting/story/directory>

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Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2013). How does employment – or unemployment – affect health? Health Policy Snapshot. <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2012/12/how-does-employment--or-unemployment--affect-health-.html>

U.S. Census (2018). 2018 ACS 5-year estimates subject tables.

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S1101&tid=ACSST5Y2018.S1101&q=1600000US2146027>

Figure 2. Sample Job Club Schedule

Central Kentucky Job Club – July & August 2020 Schedule

The Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service, University of Kentucky (UK) Alumni Association, and UK Human Resources STEPS Temporary Employment are pleased to announce the July and August 2020 Central Kentucky Job Club schedule. In an effort to continue to provide Job Club, an important community resource, while practicing responsible social distancing during the evolving COVID-19 situation, the summer schedule will be offered online via Zoom Webinar. The planning team is pleased to welcome our new partner to the Job Club team, UK Human Resources STEPS Temporary Employment.

The purpose of Job Club is to provide a positive environment for motivated job seekers to meet, connect, share and learn. The free group is open to the public and meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, from 9:00–10:15 a.m. Job Club is for you if you are a motivated professional and currently out of work, underemployed or looking to make a career transition. In addition, recruiters and employers are always welcome and introduced to Job Club attendees.

For more information, call the UK Alumni Association at 859-257-8905, the Fayette Cooperative Extension Office at 859-257-5582 or UK Human Resources STEPS Temporary Employment at 859-257-9555, Option 2. Additional information including testimonials from former Job Club participants can be viewed at: www.ukalumni.net/jobclub.

Job Club Meeting Schedule:

July 14: Virtual Networking: Link Up via LinkedIn

Presented by Beth Austin, Associate Director of Career Advising, Stuckert Career Center, University of Kentucky

Explore the art of virtual networking and learn to maximize your LinkedIn profile! These marketing strategies and ideas will help you build an audience for career growth.

REGISTER HERE: https://uky.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9wNJzL14TE-ijbWEZiYJxQ

July 28: Writing on LinkedIn as a Job Transition Strategy

Presented by Cathy Fyock, Author & The Business Book Strategist, Cathy Fyock LLC

At age 59, Cathy reinvented herself and transitioned from HR professional to book coach, and she did it all by writing. Many of Cathy's clients have used writing books, articles, and blogs as a career transition strategy. In this interactive session she'll share some practical ideas for beefing up your LinkedIn profile by publishing articles as a way to position your thought leadership.

Come prepared to roll up your sleeves and write!

REGISTER HERE: https://uky.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2vBiU4RRRTAmYK8dfh6fx9w

Figure 3. Meeting Reminder



Central Kentucky Job Club Meeting Reminder

July 14: Virtual Networking: Link Up via LinkedIn

Presented by Beth Austin, Associate Director of Career Advising, Stuckert Career Center, University of Kentucky
Explore the art of virtual networking and learn to maximize your LinkedIn profile! These marketing strategies and ideas will help you build an audience for career growth.

REGISTER HERE:

https://uky.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_9wNJzL14TE-ijbWEZiYxQ



Expand Your Job Search through Networking

Plan to join us for a fun, interactive networking session immediately following this Job Club presentation. The post-Job Club networking session will be hosted on Zoom Meeting and the address code will be posted when the presentation concludes. Audio capacity is required, video capacity is preferred. We will split into small groups of 3-4. Networking and Zoom tips will be shared as well. We hope you will join for a fun time!

Let us know when you get an interview and/or a job! In order for Job Club to continue to receive funding, we must show impact which always relates back to numbers. We want to either continue to assist you in your job quest or celebrate your success.

Remember to share this Job Club opportunity with a friend.
We depend on your networks to spread the news.

Career Advice Resources



[Networking Email Templates for Job Seekers During A](#)

[Pandemic If you really want the job, show you have these 6 qualities](#)

[How To Find Hope During A Career Crisis](#)

[LinkedIn: New Features to Give and Get Help From Your](#)

[Community LinkedIn: Insights to the Labor Market](#)



Financial Resources

[Managing Financial Stress](#)

[Protect yourself from COVID-19 scams](#)

Figure 4. Newsletter



June 23, 2020

Central Kentucky Job Club News

Job Leads

76 job leads in central Kentucky on UK's job board--Handshake--for students alumni with 12+ academic credits.

Visit www.uky.joinhandshake.com to set up your account.

(attached)

[Census Taker](#)

[Commerce Lexington Jobs Boards](#)

[Deloitte](#)

[East Kentucky Power Cooperative Forcht](#)

[Bank](#)

[Galls](#)

[Hoosier Uplands](#)

[Kentucky Career Center Job Listings Kentucky](#)

[Chamber Workforce Development Kentucky](#)

[Contact Tracer Staffing](#)

[Kentucky Educational Television](#)

[Kentucky Non-Profit Network Kentucky](#)

[Personnel Cabinet Kentucky River](#)

[Community Care Keyence](#)

[Lexington-Fayette County Health Department](#)

[Lexington Rescue Mission](#)

[LinkedIn: Who's Hiring Right Now New](#)

[Opportunity School for Women New Vista](#)

[University of Kentucky](#)

[US Department of Homeland Security](#)



"Job Club provided support and new ideas for the job seeker. Losing a job in a society equals losing identity, never mind the practical concerns. Job Club offered concrete suggestions and ideas to move the search for a new position forward. The proverbial journey of 1,000 steps begins with the first one. Job Club pointed me toward a path that lead to change, growth, and at last, work!"

Former Job Club Member



"Losing my job because of the company filing bankruptcy was devastating. Job Club gave me invaluable help with my resume/cover letter as well as interview and networking skills."

Former Job Club Member

"Losing my job was more difficult than my battle with cancer. The encouraging environment of Job Club helped me maintain a positive attitude to secure employment."





Virtual Networking: Link Up via LinkedIn

Tuesday, July 14, 2020
9:00-10:15 a.m.

Zoom Webinar
Register via link below

Presented by
Beth Austin,
Associate Director of
Career Advising, Stuckert
Career Center, University
of Kentucky

Explore the art of virtual networking and learn to maximize your LinkedIn profile! These marketing strategies and ideas will help you build an audience for career growth.

REGISTER HERE:
<https://uky.zoom.us/j/74147E-4BWEZYJxQ>





Online resources

<http://fayette.ca.uky.edu/content/job-club>

<https://www.ukalumni.net/s/1052/18/interior.aspx?sid=1052&gid=1&pgid=8226>

Figure 5. Fayette County Cooperative Extension – Job Club Webpage

<http://fayette.ca.uky.edu/content/job-club>

The screenshot shows the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Job Club webpage. The header features the University of Kentucky logo and the text "College of Agriculture, Food and Environment". A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main navigation menu includes links for Home, About Us, 4-H Youth Development, Ag & Natural Resources, Community & Economic Dev., Family & Consumer Sciences, Horticulture, Publications, Upcoming Events, Online Class Registration, Staff Directory, and Subscribe to our Newsletters. A breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: Home » Family & Consumer Sciences » Job Club. The main heading is "Job Club". Below this, there is a list of topics: Embracing New Opportunities Conference, Eye Opening Symposium, Food Preservation, Grandparents/Relatives as Parents, Homemakers, Job Club (highlighted), and Kentucky Proud Evenings. To the right of the list is a large graphic of the state of Kentucky with a blue location pin icon in the center, containing a silhouette of two people. Next to the graphic is the text "CENTRAL KENTUCKY Job Club". Below the graphic, a paragraph states: "The Fayette County Cooperative Extension Service, the University of Kentucky (UK) Alumni Association and UK Human Resources STEPS Temporary Employment are pleased to announce the winter/spring 2021 Kentucky Job Club schedule. In an effort to continue to provide Job Club, an important community resource, while practicing responsible social distancing during the evolving COVID-19 situation, the spring schedule will be offered online via Zoom Webinar®." At the bottom, a sentence reads: "The purpose of Job Club is to provide a positive environment for motivated job seekers to meet, connect, share and".

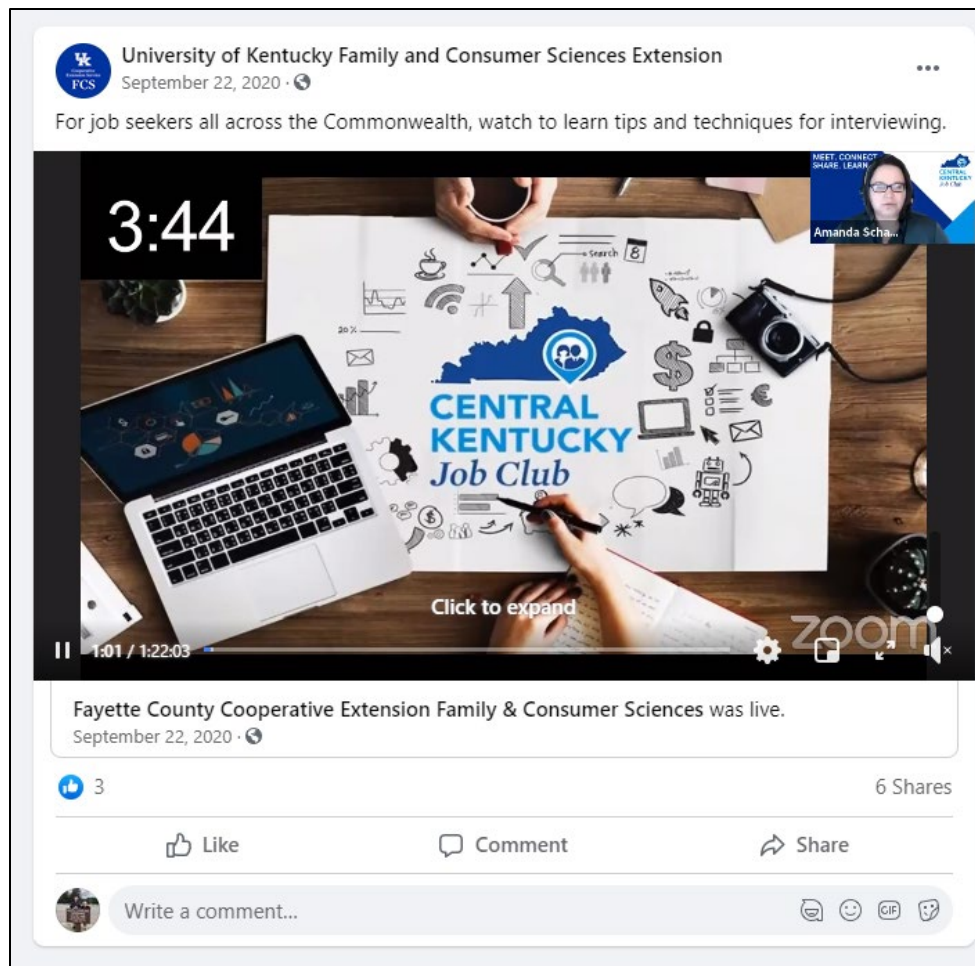
Figure 6. University of Kentucky Alumni – Job Club Webpage

<https://www.ukalumni.net/s/1052/18/interior.aspx?sid=1052&qid=1&pgid=8226>

The screenshot shows the University of Kentucky Alumni Job Club webpage. The top section features a large image of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard, with a mug and a pen on the desk. To the right of the image is a calendar icon for January 26. Below the image, the text reads: "Central KY Job Club: Economic Outlook: Looking Back, Looking Out and Looking Up?". The main heading is "Economic Outlook: Looking Back, Looking Out and Looking Up?". Below this, it states: "Presented by Chris Bollinger, Ph.D., Sturgill Professor of Economics, Gatton College of Business & Economics, UK January 26, 2021 | 9 - 10:15 a.m. Online via Zoom To Register, click here". A section titled "ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS:" provides details about the registration process and the live session. On the right side, there is a "Date & Time" section with two options: "Tue, Jan 26, 2021, 9:00 AM ET" and "Tue, Jan 26, 2021, 10:15 AM ET".

Figure 7. Job Club Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/UKFCSExt/posts/3827236987289775>



Contributors



Dr. Jeffery Young, director for urban Extension, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. He brings over 30 years of experience with the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, encompassing many diverse roles in one of the nation's most robust Extension systems.

This experience includes 20 years as a County Extension Agent serving urban and suburban communities, 10 years as a District Director, Director of County Operations, and currently as Director for Urban Extension. In this current role, he supports county and state Extension faculty and agents working to address the challenges facing our urban communities.

Dr. Young is committed to the land grant instruction mission and serves as an Assistant Professor on the Executive Sub-Committee for the Online Master of Science Translation and Outreach Program. Dr. Young also has teaching responsibilities within the College of Agriculture Food and Environment, where he has developed a unique undergraduate course focusing on urban issues and Cooperative Extension engagement.

Dr. Young is active with the National Urban Extension Leaders (NUEL) and serves on the National Steering Committee, National Conference Planning Committee, and as Southern Region Network Chair. Additionally, Dr. Young is a graduate of the Food Systems Leadership Institute (Cohort 13) and the North Central Region Administrative Boot Camp.

Diana Doggett is a family and consumer sciences agent with the University of Kentucky, Cooperative Extension Service. In addition to Diana's county programming efforts, she has served the field of family and consumer sciences at the regional and state level as well. Diana has served as a mentor to over 20 Extension interns, from at least three different universities. She has held leadership positions in the Kentucky Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, as well as within the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food, and Environment Alumni. Diana is recognized as a leader within her community and has been selected through a competitive process to participate in Leadership Lexington, Leadership Central Kentucky, and Leadership Kentucky.