



NEIGHBORHOODS USA NEWSLETTER AWARD
FIRST PLACE WINNER!

EMCC Celebrates Summer with Food & Fun



We all celebrated another school year under our belts in the anticipation of a great summer.

The real magic of the event, however, came from the activities that added that extra bit of joy to the gathering. For the younger crowd (and the young-at-heart), the face painting station was a hit, transforming kids into tigers, butterflies and superheroes. The look of pure delight on the children's faces as the kids strutted around in their new painted identities.

Not to be outdone, the balloon artist had a steady line of eager participants waiting for their chance to get one of his impressive creations. Whether it was a simple dog or an elaborate sword, the balloons added an extra touch of whimsy to the celebration. The colors of the balloons brightened the event as they floated above the crowd, and the joy of receiving a custom balloon animal added a playful element to the festivities. ■



Special thanks goes out to Culver's Scoopie for joining the fun and to the Madison Police Department for bringing their horses to meet the kids!



Visit EMCC's website at www.eastmadisoncc.org

Kids' Garden Grows Community

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New EMCC Website

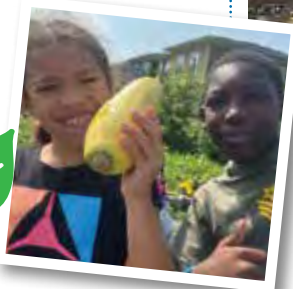
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EMCC Kids' Garden Grows Food and Community

By Emily Ramsey,
EMCC Youth Worker

This season, the East Madison Community Center (EMCC) is putting down roots—literally—with a new Kids' Garden initiative designed to engage young minds and grow fresh, healthy produce. The garden has ten beds, planted with a mix of veggies, herbs, and



flowers. Special thanks to Oakhill Correctional's garden program for providing plants.

With the help of volunteers, staff, and eager young gardeners, EMCC kicked off the project this spring. The plan is to form a Garden Club during summer camp programming, where kids will be responsible for the garden. From digging and planting to watering and weeding, kids will have hands-on lessons in sustainability, teamwork, and the joy of growing their own food.

But the Kids' Garden is about more than just gardening—it's about cultivating community. At the end of the growing season, EMCC will host a Community Harvest Dinner using what they've grown. Families and neighbors will come together to celebrate the harvest and the hard work of the young gardeners who made it all possible.



Youth News

We hope to make the Garden Club a fixture at EMCC; mark your calendars for the harvest celebration this fall!

Lastly, EMCC would like to welcome our newest volunteer in the Kids' Garden, Cathy Ramsey. Cathy has extensive landscaping and gardening experience and will be working with the kids during summer camp. We look forward to having her be part of our garden club this summer. ■

YOUTH PROFILE



Kaylani Jackson

Age: 9

School: Emerson Elementary, 3rd Grade

Favorite School Subject: Math

Years Attending the EMCC: 3 years

Favorite EMCC Program: All Activities

Hobbies: Gymnastics

YOUTH PROFILE



David McGuire, Jr.

Age: 11

School: O'Keefe Middle School, 6th Grade

Favorite School Subject: Reading

Years Attending the EMCC: 1 year

Favorite EMCC Program: Teen Room & Dodgeball

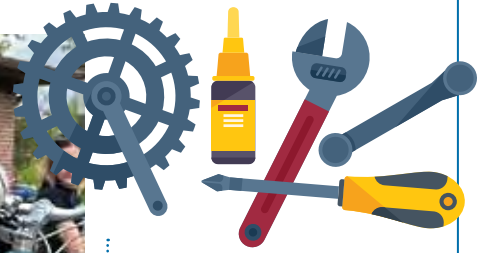
Hobbies: Riding Electric Scooter

facebook 

We are on Facebook! On Facebook, we have our up-to-date schedule of events. You will also be able to see pictures of EMCC events. Give us a "Like", so you stay up-to-date with what is happening in the community.

Aiden Keeps Youth Rolling on Two Wheels

On the afternoon of May 7, 2025 as most kids in the Truax neighborhood ran home to get their bikes to get repaired for free, thanks to the following partners: The City of Madison, Wisconsin Bike FED, Dream Bikes and Wheels for Winners. There was one kid who did not run home to get his bike; but rather jump into action to help out. He put his bike on the kickstand to help his peers in his community. From the first bike to the last bike Aiden was involved. He made sure that every bike he repaired was



rideable and safe. He helped with chains, tires, seats, handlebars and brakes. He can do it all when it comes to bike repairs. With his help most if not all of his peers and other community members got their bike repaired for free. This is the true meaning of having the right tools to be able to give back to his community. ■



EMCC Hosts First-Ever Youth Sleepover

EMCC recently hosted its first-ever sleepover for kids, and it was a day full of fun from start to finish! The evening kicked off with a talent show, where participants wowed the crowd with singing, dancing, musical performances, and even basketball ball-handling skills. After the show, the excitement continued with a movie on the big screen, plenty of pizza, and popcorn. As the night wore on, some began to drift off to sleep, but the gym stayed open late for those who still had energy to burn. Basketball games, jump rope, and other gym activities kept the night lively well into the early morning hours. A few kids even made a pact to stay awake all night—though in the end, no one succeeded. The last holdout finally fell asleep just one hour before breakfast! The sleepover was such a hit that it quickly became the talk of the week. Everyone is already looking forward to the next one. Shout out to all the staff and volunteers who stayed up most of the night to help create lasting memories for the kids. It wouldn't have been possible without a team effort. ■

AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE®

American Family Insurance is pleased to help underwrite East Madison Community Center's newsletter.

THANK YOU
to American Family for printing Centerpoints!

YOUTH WORKER PROFILE



Holly Kohlmeier

- Attended University of Wisconsin-Madison
- EMCC Summer School Teacher & Youth Worker: 3 years
- Hobbies: Volleyball, Running, Spending time with friends

EMCC HOPES PROGRAMS

HOLISTIC ORGANIZATION OF PARTNERS FOR ECONOMIC STABILITY

The HOPES program—Holistic Organizational Partners in Educational Success—continues to bring meaningful wellness opportunities to our community. From digital literacy classes for seniors, fitness sessions, and monthly wellness workshops, to fun social events like karaoke and Mystery Maker Monday, there has been something for everyone to enjoy. Field trips to FEED Kitchen’s Taste the Future, a nature walk at Warner Park, and Olbrich Botanical Gardens have given participants a chance to explore, learn, and connect outside the center. These programs are more than just activities—people tell us they come because they learn something new, build healthy habits, and enjoy the chance to socialize with friends and neighbors. We look forward to continuing to grow together in wellness and community! ■

Sign up in the front office, by calling **608-249-0861** or emailing info@eastmadisoncc.org



Thanks to our HOPES sponsor:
UNITED WAY OF DANE COUNTY

DIGITAL LITERACY

In February through a partnership with the Madison Senior Center and DaneNet, digital literacy classes for seniors at the community center were a wonderful success, helping participants build confidence with technology. Seniors learned essential skills like using smartphones and email, navigating the internet, and staying safe online — all in a supportive, hands-on environment. We’re proud to support lifelong learning! ■



ADULT OUTINGS

There’s been quite a few fun adult outings recently! We’ve tasted delicious food at the FEED Kitchen: Taste the Future, learned about local birds with a Naturalist at Warner Park, and kept warm during the winter by enjoying the Bolz Conservatory. A favorite was the tour of the Capitol building followed by a lovely picnic lunch. It was nice to learn about our state and city’s history and enjoy the warm spring weather and good company. ■



KARAOKE NIGHT

Karaoke Night at the community center was a hit, with voices of all kinds filling the room with music and laughter. From classic ballads to upbeat crowd-pleasers, participants brought energy and heart to every performance. Thank you to everyone who joined us for a memorable night of fun and community spirit! Watch for more Karaoke nights on our monthly calendars. ■



FITNESS

We’re grateful to Karen Contreras, a passionate Madison College volunteer, who led a series of fitness classes and wellness workshops at the community center during the winter months. Her enthusiasm, encouragement, and knowledge helped participants stay active and learn practical tools for healthier living. Thank you, Karen, for the energy and care you brought to our community! During the summer, she’ll be leading a Tuesday evening walking group that everyone is welcome to join. ■

Learn more about EMCC programs at
www.eastmadisoncc.org



EMCC HOPES PROGRAMS continued....

MYSTERY MAKER MONDAYS

Mystery Maker Mondays are a huge success at East Madison Community Center (EMCC)!! The 2nd Monday of every month, Kelly Lovelace, who runs UBU Studios, hosts a creative experience. What do we make? That's the "mystery" part! So far it has included making our own stamps to print onto canvas tote bags,



sticker mosaics, canvas pour paintings, and no-sew tie blankets. Every month features a unique project, which is inclusive and designed for all ages and abilities to participate. No experience is necessary either, just be open to creative flow and fun. Learn something new, while building community and improving mental health! ■



WRITING WORKSHOP

In January, a two-part writing workshop led by Araceli Esparza. These workshops offered participants a chance to explore their creativity and strengthen their storytelling skills. Over the course of the classes, attendees shared ideas, developed goals, and gained confidence in their writing. It was an inspiring experience for all involved! ■



WARNER PARK NEW BRIDGE CONCERT

The beginning of this year's adult and senior summer trips was to the first New Bridge concert in Warner Park. The New Orleans Jazz tribute band was fantastic and made you want to visit New Orleans. It was a lot of fun and everyone was jamming. ■



2025 Woody Carey Scholarship Recipients

Each year since 2013 the EMCC has awarded scholarships to local students as a part of the Woody Carey College Scholarship Program. Long-term EMCC Board Member, Dr. Ellwood "Woody" Carey served on as a volunteer here for over 25 years. The Scholarship is a meaningful and long-lasting tribute to Woody's legacy, loving spirit, and positive values, especially in the area of equal opportunities.



Sean Nwadinobi

Sean has been working at EMCC for the past semester as a youth worker through Madison College as he works towards his Nursing degree. He wants to make a direct and meaningful difference in under resourced communities. Eventually he hopes to be in a leadership or educational role and shape future generations of Healthcare workers. ■



Karen Contreras Rodriguez

Karen has been around EMCC for a while now though you may not have seen her. Karen started volunteering here helping out with our social media. Most recently she has been running our Group Fitness class and Wellness Workshops as she works toward her degree in Fitness/Recreation/Wellness Management. Karen's long-term goal is to empower women to build and maintain healthy habits through fitness and wellness of both body and mind. ■



Aaron Wolfersperger

Aaron worked at EMCC as a youth worker for the last school year gaining valuable experience working with a variety of children. Aaron wants to be a school social worker so he can be a resource for kids and families and advocate for their needs. We enjoyed having him with us and wish him the best in his future endeavors. ■



Janelle Hill

Janelle is working towards her nursing degree at Madison College as well as wants to open her own child and adult day care center. She is a busy mom of a son who has participated in EMCC programs for many years. ■



Congratulations Scholars!

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



MADISON ARTS COMMISSION

Meet Amanda Riley! She is a dedicated volunteer at EMCC, serving weekly in the youth program. Amanda brings creativity and passion to her work, teaching multicultural arts and most recently helping EMCC launch a brand-new theater arts program. With her support in planning and in applying for a Madison Arts Commission grant, EMCC was awarded funding to bring this exciting new program to life.

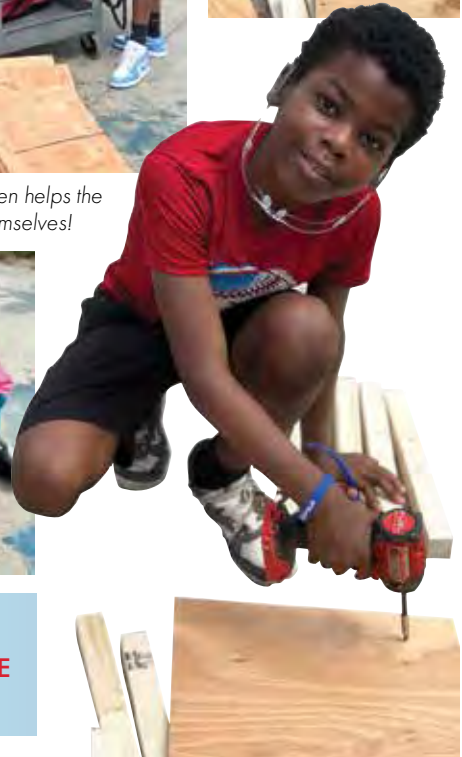


Amanda is a trained elementary teacher with a master's degree in education and extensive experience teaching art to children. She is also a self-taught textile artist — you can even see her piece on prairie soil ecology featured at the Madison Children's Museum.

This summer, Amanda introduced our summer camp kids to the world of theater, guiding them through the many roles that bring a performance together. The kids are currently working on their own play, which will soon be shared with the community. ■



Kevin Flynn from JP Cullen helps the kids make the props themselves!



WE ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR AMANDA'S CREATIVITY, LEADERSHIP, AND GENEROSITY IN HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE EXPLORE THE ARTS AT EMCC!

Save the Date

Mark your calendar for the
29th Annual EMCC Bowl-a-Thon!
 Saturday
 November 1, 2025





In 2020, EMCC had to pivot and move the much loved Bowl-a-thon fundraiser to a virtual event. This included a promo video for the center which gives a glimpse into programs at EMCC. This video includes interviews and highlights the primary programs at the center. Masks and plexi partitions are seen throughout the video during the COVID-19 period. In 2023, team EMCC was out in the community doing a presentation on PFAS and met an area resident, Joel Sacramento, who just happened to be a videographer. Fast forward to 2025 and this amazing community member offered to work with us to create a new video to highlight current programs and needs. Stay tuned for the video release! ■



METER STUDIO

Joel Sacramento is a lifelong midwesterner and founder of digital media company Meter Studio. He is an award-winning filmmaker whose work includes commercials, travel shows, animation, and documentary films.



EMCC Website Gets a Makeover

Shout out to the Amazing team at Bizzy Bizzy Creative who gave the EMCC website a much needed makeover. EMCC was fortunate enough to be selected for an in-kind website update. Our staff worked with the team to bring new life to the website and learned a lot in the process. Check it out at eastmadisoncc.org and let us know what your favorite change is and if you have any suggestions for future updates.

Bizzy Bizzy is a Madison web design and branding agency that helps busy business owners and nonprofits with their branding, digital marketing, design and website development. Visit their website at bizzybizzycreative.com to learn about their unique 1 Day® Sprints process where they work in real time with clients! ■

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It's a part of BizzyBizzy's mission and core values to give back to the community and help those in need. They offer **15% off all prices** for nonprofit organizations. They also offer complimentary nonprofit office hours. Check out this link for details:

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EMCC FOOD PANTRY

Tuesdays from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm

*Household and clothing items on the last Tuesday of the month



Visit the EMCC website at www.eastmadisoncc.org and our Facebook page for more photos.



NEIGHBORHOODS USA
NEWSLETTER AWARD
FIRST PLACE WINNER!

Current occupant or

E M C C C E N T E R P O I N T S

EMCC 2025 VOLUNTEERS

Youth Volunteers

Antuan Graves-Haskins, Zach Burton, Zaniya Lewis, Aiden Sanneh, Jerome Gibson-Murphy, Antonio Harris, Kiarrah Jackson

Food/Clothing/Household Items Distribution

John Boyton, Marylin Barker, Angela Braebender, Marbeli Bruno, Mary Cuccia, Martha Galston, Naykea Harrison, Rosie Haskins, Chris Hughes, Linda Jameson, Issac Lueck, Vicki McDonald, Judy Morhoff Carlson, Tami Niemisto, Tom Novotny, Zack Redd, Nick Robarge, Mylas Sparks, Matthew Steensen, Nariyah Tillman, LC Williams, Susanna Yangzapata, Tyler Zelen, Ryan Zelen, CDA East, Madison Metropolitan School District, National Guard, UW Credit Union

Program Volunteers

Marbeli Bruno, Karen Contreras, Martha Galston, Melissa Gundlach, Rosie Haskins, Kelly Lovelace, Tami Niemisto, Cathay Ramsey, Brian Reynolds, Amanda Riley, Zach Robinson, Sara Scott, Matt Steensen, Ascendium Education Group, Associated Bank, JP Cullen, Madison College Service Learning Academy, Old National Bank, TruStage, UW Credit Union,

Graphic Design/Newsletter

Sandy Wagener

Board Members

Marbeli Bruno, Antonio Cruz-Rodriguez, Keia Freeman, Neri Haried, Rosie Haskins, Diane Keene-Meadowcroft, Tracy Lomax, Jamal Palmer, Sharon Rice, Tauri Robinson, Je 'Dauri Robinson, Bridget Rogers, J. Alberto Quiroga, Bejay Udchitz

thanks!



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James Xiong
Richard Xiong

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Custodial Service..... JanPro

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