

## Climate Master Programs

### What is the Climate Master Program?

In 2007, the University of Oregon's Climate Leadership Initiative (UO CLI) began developing the following suite of educational programs:

- **Climate Masters at Home (CM-H):** is a model for providing citizens research based information about climate change and engaging them as volunteers to help reduce household expenses and greenhouse gas emissions. This program is modeled after the Master Gardener and Master Recycler programs. Individuals take a 10-week class and then volunteer at least 30 hours to assist others in reducing their expenses and greenhouse gas emissions. The CM-H program has resulted in increased use of alternative transportation, changes in daily habits, and home energy efficiency improvements.
- **Climate Masters at Work (CM-W):** is designed to educate and engage small and medium sized business leaders in resource efficiency and risk management to reduce costs and increase productivity, while also making smart environmental choices. The program consists of an initial 20-hour train-the-trainer program for small and mid-sized businesses that focuses on increased energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in facilities, packaging, materials selection, transportation and other topics while strengthening the businesses' economic standing.
- **Junior Climate Stewards (JCS):** is a six unit curriculum for middle school students, that covers global climate change and how it relates to transportation, home and school energy, food and waste. The material includes background information for teachers and students, plus activities, quizzes and grading rubrics for each topic. The curriculum culminates with a service-learning unit that guides classes through school and community based projects.

### Why is OSU Extension involved?

The OSU Extension Service is partnering with the UO CLI to deliver the Climate Master program. Extension provides research based education in local communities based on the needs and issues of importance to that community. Some community members are interested in agricultural production techniques and technologies; some are interested in providing safe and stimulating opportunities for youth; some are interested in learning to purchase and prepare healthy meals for their families; some are interested in improving the environment; some are interested in encouraging entrepreneurship; some are interested in improving health; some are interested in reducing everyday expenses to live within their means; some are looking for ways to improve the livability of their community. Whatever the topic, Extension works to apply research based knowledge to the issue which allows participants to explore current research and best practices and to make up their own mind about what and how to apply that knowledge to their situation. Extension works hard to present all sides of an issue based on current research. At times this may be controversial, for example hybrid corn and other seed crops were very controversial when first introduced. Pesticide use, integrated pest management and organic gardening, for instance, continue to be controversial for some. Again, Extension's role in these and other areas is to introduce the most current research and knowledge so that individuals can make up their own mind.

### Is the Earth's climate really changing?

Some believe that it is and it is due to normal cycles of change. Others believe that it is and is at least in part due to both normal cycles of change and human activity. Some believe the Earth's climate is not changing. Regardless of your position, in these days of economic struggles many people are seeking ways to reduce their everyday living expenses. The Climate Master programs present options from which participants may choose depending upon what makes good sense to them in their situation. Climate change science is a priority goal area of the US Department of Agriculture's National Institute for Food and Agriculture, which funds Extension in Oregon and in all other US states and territories.

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