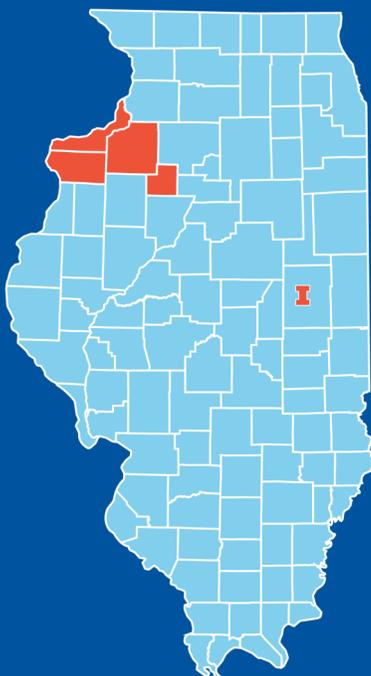




University of Illinois Extension provides practical education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future. Based in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, Extension is the statewide outreach program of the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.



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## A Message from the Chancellor

The University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign is an economic engine and a driver of innovation, deeply rooted in the Illinois prairie and engaged statewide, from Cook County to Cairo. Illinois Extension brings the University to your doorstep. Extension educators live and work alongside you in every county, allowing the university to support local leaders, businesses, farmers, and residents to address grand challenges and everyday problems with practical, research-based solutions. As a youth, my own 4-H experience inspired a rewarding career in agricultural research and higher education. Today, it's an honor to lead this great public university and deepen its commitment to serve the people of Illinois.

Robert J. Jones  
 Chancellor, University of Illinois



## A Note from the County Director

Greetings from University of Illinois Extension serving Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark counties. We are thankful for our 4-H adult leaders, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, 4-H and Extension Foundations, Extension Advisory Council, Home & Community Education Associations, County Boards, and our many community partners who support our mission to deliver robust and relevant programming to the people of our region.

Through research-based programming....

- ▶ Our 4-H youth get the hands-on, real world experience they need to learn, grow, and work together as catalysts for positive change.
- ▶ Our community development program works with communities and organizations to address issues and solve problems with inclusive and broad-based decision making.
- ▶ Our agriculture and natural resources staff and volunteers share expertise in the science and art of gardening, watersheds, environment conservation, pesticide management, and nutrient management.
- ▶ Our nutrition and wellness staff promote healthy lifestyle and public health practices on topics of nutrition, food safety and preservation, chronic disease management, and overall physical wellness.

Thank you ALL for a remarkable 2018!

Best,  
 Jenny Garner  
 County Director





## Extending Knowledge and Sharing Research in a Variety of Settings

One effective way Illinois Extension educators share research, promote programs, and stay in the public eye is through local newspapers, television, and online publications. Kristin Bogdonas, nutrition and wellness educator, has been able to discuss topics such as winter self-care routines, food safety, and food rescue at home on Paula Sands Live! (KWQC), Living Local (WHBF) and the News at Noon with Marcia Lense (KWQC).

In addition, Kristin regularly updates her nutrition and wellness blog, Turnip the Beet!, which had 143,000 views in 2018. Another outlet for her nutrition and wellness articles is the Quad City Times column “Start the Week Off Right,” which can be found in Monday’s paper on page 2. She submitted ten articles on topics such as “Go Further with Food,” “Mediterranean Eating Patterns,” and “Getting Kids in the Kitchen.” This column reaches 60,000 readers. Kristin also partnered with WVIK Quad Cities NPR radio station to launch a new health and wellness podcast in November 2018. “Wellness Wake Up Call” provides timely news, information, and ideas to promote healthy living in the Quad Cities and beyond. “Wellness Wake Up Call” is produced by WVIK in partnership with University of Illinois Extension, and sponsored by the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center and The Planning Center in Moline.



Kristin Bogdonas, nutrition educator (far right) is with “Wellness Wake Up Call” podcast producer Jared Johnson of WVIK Quad Cities Public Radio, as they appeared on “Living Local” with co-host Brittany Price of WHBF TV.

A recent report by Edison Research estimated that 64 percent of 12 to 24 year-olds and 37 percent of 25 to 54 year-olds in the United States listened to online radio weekly.

## Nutrition and Wellness Programs

Kristin Bogdonas, nutrition and wellness educator, leads direct health education programs that address chronic disease, worksite wellness, mindful eating, healthy lifestyles, ABCs of School Nutrition training, and food preservation.

Kristin has received a grant to continue her work on the Smarter Lunchrooms program (see page 14). She believes that everyone deserves access to fresh, affordable food, and is committed to helping people improve their health literacy. Here are a couple of 2018 program highlights:

**Food preservation** is a niche area of education for Extension and communities across Illinois look to nutrition and wellness educators for the most up-to-date advice and tested recipes. Kristin answers calls and emails and delivers in-person workshops across the four-county area.

**Food Rescue at Home** was developed in collaboration with the Food Rescue Partnership, to give consumers practical tips, resources, and ideas to divert food from the landfill while saving money and making the most of leftovers. Food waste is a social, environmental, and economic issue. Consumers throw away nearly 25% of all foods purchased, costing on average \$1,600 per family of four annually. Kristin developed an interactive two-part series for participants to explore food waste issues, strategies for food rescue at home, creative uses for food scraps, composting, and local food donation sites. As part of the program, Kristin arranged for participants to visit the Quad Cities Landfill and River Bend Foodbank for an in-depth look at the flow of food and waste in the community. As a result of the program, 100% of the participants said they intend to make at least one change to reduce their food waste.



Listen to the “Wellness Wake Up Call” podcast [wvik.org/programs/wellness-wake-call](http://wvik.org/programs/wellness-wake-call)



SNAP-Education community workers Gale Vyncke and Brent McRae.

### SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION (SNAP-EDUCATION)

SNAP-Education staff work with Illinois families in need to make the healthier choice an easier choice where they eat, shop, live, play, and learn. Through classes and workshops, and by collaborating with community partners to adopt research-based solutions to encourage healthier nutrition and activity choices, SNAP-Education positively impacts the families and communities we serve.

### Serving Local Families



12,555  
Total SNAP-Education Participants



34.3%  
Adults



65.7%  
Youth



12.2% Identified as Hispanic  
42.8% Identified as Non-Hispanic  
45% Unknown



### Our Community Partners



25  
K-12 Schools



5  
Youth Centers



28  
Early Childhood Centers



6  
Stores and Markets



28  
Community Centers



17  
Food Pantries and Food Banks



Teresa Hockaday, SNAP-Ed community worker, leads a nutrition lesson for Denkmann Elementary School students.

SNAP-Education serves a variety of partners in our four counties to positively affect the overall health of our public.

Extension reaches SNAP-Ed eligible audiences through partnerships with K-12 schools, childcare centers, youth centers, community centers, food distribution sites, farmers markets, grocery stores, and faith-based sites. Through our programs, SNAP-Ed eligible audiences learn about healthy lifestyle topics. Throughout the summer, SNAP-Ed staff bring the Illinois Jr. Chefs curriculum to ten different sites to educate hundreds of youth on healthy and safe eating and cooking practices through hands-on lessons. We also participate in the National School Lunch Taste Test, visiting nine Rock Island/Milan schools each month to expose thousands of youth to a variety of foods and provide feedback to the school lunch staff in order to reduce food waste and increase consumption of healthier foods. Food taste samples are provided by Milan/Rock Island Hy-Vee.

Alongside our community workers, Tayler Wheatley, who was recently promoted to SNAP-Ed educator, will be collaborating with community partners to develop policy, system, and environmental interventions within our four counties to help make the healthy choice the easy choice for limited resource families.



SNAP-Ed staff Darcy Eggimann and Tayler Wheatley share samples of a healthy fruit-based "nice-cream" at a free community event in Galva.



Get recipes and ideas from Eat Move Save: [eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/eat/recipes](http://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/eat/recipes)



## Teaching Others to Learn to Grow

University of Illinois Extension connects people and their local horticulture and environmental concerns with the tools they need to pursue meaningful change. Whether it's landscape aesthetics, sustainable practices, food production, pollinators, or a myriad of other topics, Illinois Extension has the resources people need.

Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark counties Extension is served by Martha Smith, horticulture educator. She shares her 28 years of experience through a wide range of horticulture education, programs, training and research to benefit the environmental health and sustainability of our state's ecosystems.

Martha's focus is on both home and commercial horticulture. She arranges and teaches Master Gardener classes, provides continuing education and advanced training for Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists, plans and implements several seasonal educational events focusing on the home gardener, and assists with horticulture requests as needed.

She also serves on the planning committee for the new Bi-State Conservation Action Network (BI-CAN). Their mission is to plan bi-annual meetings to bring together the various conservation groups in the Quad Cities, creating and building a viable network. Martha is the horticulture liaison between Illinois Extension and Iowa State University Extension, and is involved with planning cooperative educational programs for fruit and vegetable growers, which attract people from a four state radius.

Martha sets up the pesticide safety education programs for our four counties, providing testing and training for private license applicators, commercial general standards, and turf and ornamental crops.

She currently provides leadership for a the 4-Seasons horticulture webinars. This distance learning opportunity enables every Extension office across the state the opportunity to present relevant horticulture programs.



Watch "Four Seasons of Gardening" webinars:  
[web.extension.illinois.edu/hmrs/4seasons/](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/hmrs/4seasons/)



Martha Smith, horticulture educator, offers a wide range of horticulture education, programs, trainings and research.

## Extending Pollinator Knowledge

In 2018, Martha Smith and four other Illinois Extension educators partnered with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to re-purpose display kiosks at 53 Illinois interstate rest areas. With pollinators in peril, the new design highlights all types of pollinators. This theme also blended well with IDOT's "Don't mow it – Grow it" campaign where they have cut back mowing and are allowing native flowers and prairie grasses to flourish – which is great for pollinators. In the last 5 years the number of mowed acres by IDOT dropped from 280,000 to 100,000. Habitat loss is one of the primary reasons we are experiencing a decline of pollinators. According to IDOT, annually, on average, 36 million people visit our rest areas, thus increasing Illinois Extension's outreach to all who stop at a rest area.



Illinois Extension helped to re-purpose display kiosks at 53 Illinois interstate rest areas. With pollinators in peril, the new design highlights all types of pollinators and blends in well with the IDOT's "Don't mow it—Grow it" campaign.



## Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists Make a Difference

2018 marked the 48th anniversary of the Illinois Master Gardener program. With over 3,000 members today, Illinois Master Gardeners have dedicated more than 2,309,348 volunteer hours, a value of over \$46 million, to the state. Our unit, serving Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark Counties, boasts 96 active Master Gardeners who provided a wide variety of horticultural education enrichment programs across our region.

In addition, we manage 31 Master Naturalist volunteers who focus on environmental health and sustainability projects. Both of these essential programs provided over 6,000 volunteer hours. They are led by Martha Smith, horticulture educator, and Tracy Jo Mulliken, program coordinator.



Henry County Master Gardeners installed a sensory garden at the non-profit Liberty Village of Geneseo retirement community. Martha Smith, horticulture educator, drew up a sensory garden design, selecting plants with features that specifically target all five senses.



Illinois Extension Master Naturalists assisted with insect-related activity stations inside the Nahant Marsh Education Center for their Monarch Release Party in September.



The team includes Julia Martin, Judy White, Judy Hartley, Linda Clewell, Deb O'Brien and Deb Durnal-Corso.

## MonArc Garden—2018 State Master Gardener Teamwork Award Winner!

The MonArc Pollinator Patch garden is located at The Arc of the Quad Cities—an independent non-profit organization in Rock Island, IL. The mission of The Arc is to provide services and support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities so that they can achieve the lives they want to live. The Arc had requested assistance from University of Illinois Extension to develop a garden. Master Gardener Julia Martin stepped up to the plate. The concept for the garden was developed by Julia in memory of her brother, who was a client of The Arc. She always had fond memories of The Arc, its staff, and the other clients. After receiving her master gardener certification, she realized an opportunity to create a new educational activity for the clients and create something pleasant for the facility and its staff. She and her team of master gardeners bring monthly horticultural educational programs to the clients and work in the gardens alongside them.

Their “MonArc Garden Teamwork Award” received recognition from the State of Illinois House of Representatives on behalf of State Representative Michael Halpin who joined in commemorating the effort with a certificate.

## Master Gardener & Master Naturalist Volunteers



127  
Volunteers



6,257  
Volunteer Hours



1,162  
Continuing Education Hours



## Illinois Extension's Watershed Outreach Associates Help Educate Landowners on Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategies

In 2018, University of Illinois Extension hired two watershed outreach associates through a grant provided by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to serve as educators and technical advisers on the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy, a framework developed to assess and reduce nutrient loss from Illinois sources. Haley Haverback, located in the Henry-Stark Extension office, works within two nitrogen priority watersheds: the Mississippi Central/Henderson Creek Watershed and the Lower Rock River Watersheds. Currently, the targeted best management practices for nitrate-nitrogen include nutrient stewardship management (nitrogen rate and application timing), cover crops, woodchip bioreactors, wetlands, buffers, and conversion to perennial/energy crops. Haley's goals are to heighten awareness of the best management practices that protect water quality and increase soil health.

Over the past six months, Haley has worked with campus-based staff and farm owners and operators to develop the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Podcast. Each episode of the NLR Strategy Podcast highlights a different best management practice as outlined in the strategy. The podcast features perspectives of Extension educators, University of Illinois researchers/professors, and the watershed outreach associates. Each episode averages over 160 reaches.



All podcasts can be found on [willag.org](http://willag.org)



Haley Haverback, watershed outreach associate, shared information during the 2018 Upper Mississippi River Conservation Conference in Moline, IL.

## Mercer County Ag Literacy Program

From farm safety camps to wind energy, embryology to Illinois map reading, University of Illinois Extension, in partnership with both the Farm Bureau and the Soil and Water Conservation District in Mercer County, is able to bring agriculture to life for hundreds of youth and families through school and community outreach. Utilizing funding from partners and local businesses who contribute to the program's mission, Extension program coordinator Teresa Kirwan plans the programs and shares lessons at public events like the "Farm in the Park" held in June in Aledo, by helping to organize the Summer Ag Institute for educators, and by bringing agriculture lessons to classrooms across Mercer County.



Mercer County youth enjoy learning about the important role agriculture plays in their everyday lives from Illinois Extension.

## Commercial Agriculture Research

Extension is the local link to sharing the cutting edge agricultural, food, animal, and crop science research information of the University of Illinois College of ACES. ACES research is used by local commercial producers, agri-business, small farms, and urban farms to help increase profitability, safety, and sustainability. By educating farmers on environmentally sustainable practices, we are also helping people preserve our land for future generations.

Our local Extension is also served by the Northwestern Illinois Agriculture Research and Demonstration Center in Monmouth, Illinois. This 320 acre University of Illinois facility has approximately 50 different applied small-plot research projects conducted by campus-based project leaders and center personnel.

Find Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy podcasts online: [soundcloud.com/narrowrow/sets/the-illinois-nutrient-loss](https://soundcloud.com/narrowrow/sets/the-illinois-nutrient-loss)



## Community Partnerships

Strong partnerships with community leaders, local government officials, and economic development professionals are key to good Extension work in Illinois. Community and Economic Development educator Russell Medley establishes these partnerships through outreach, networking, and collaboration. His projects and coordination efforts impact his service area now and in the long term. Here are recent examples of Extension partners that Russell collaborates with:

**Mercer County:** Looser Flake Charitable Foundation; Mercer County: Better Together; Mercer County YMCA; Mercer Foundation for Health; City of Aledo.

**Rock Island County:** Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce; Bi-State Regional Commission; Western Illinois University Small Business Development Center; Global Communities—John Deere Foundation; Community Foundation of the Great River Bend; Quad Cities Community Organizations Active in Disaster; Quad Cities Emergency Planning Committee; Midwest Writing Center; WVIK Public Radio, America's Job Center—Henry, Mercer, Rock Island Counties Workforce Investment Center.

**Henry & Stark Counties:** OFS Saint Luke Medical Center; Kewanee YMCA; Kewanee Life Skills Re-entry Center; City of Galva; Village of Alpha; Bureau, Henry, and Stark Counties Regional Office of Education; Annawan Community School District; Marshall, Putnam and Stark Counties SET (Strong Economics Together) Region.



Illinois State Treasurer Mike Frerichs addresses the UCCI/ UI Extension Leadership Academy in June 2018. Dr. Rodney Simmer, from Rock Island County, was selected to join a group of 23 local government officials from throughout Illinois to participate in the 2018 Leadership Academy.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
EDUCATION

► **Solar Energy (Part I):**  
Municipal approaches to funding and solar farm implementation

Presented by Scott Tess, Environmental Sustainability Manager, City of Urbana, IL

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OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**ILLINOIS** Extension  
University of Illinois, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Local Extension Councils Cooperating, University of Illinois Extension

► To register, visit [go.illinois.edu/LGE](http://go.illinois.edu/LGE)

## Local Government Education

Each year, elected and appointed local government officials and administrators from across the state improve their knowledge and skills through professional development opportunities provided by Illinois Extension. Russell Medley, community and economic development educator, works with his statewide colleagues to plan and market these monthly webinars.

Over the past year, the webinars have reached over 1,500 participants through live and recorded sessions. Topics included The Opioid Crisis; State and Federal Legislative Updates; Strategies for Attracting and Retaining Youth in Rural Communities; and Disaster Preparedness.

The purpose of Community and Economic Development programming is to help community leaders, residents, and their communities build capacity to make timely and effective decisions, use information wisely, engage the entire community, and work better together. Extension educators offer educational programs and technical assistance in a variety of settings, including workshops, small group consultations, and online tools and resources.

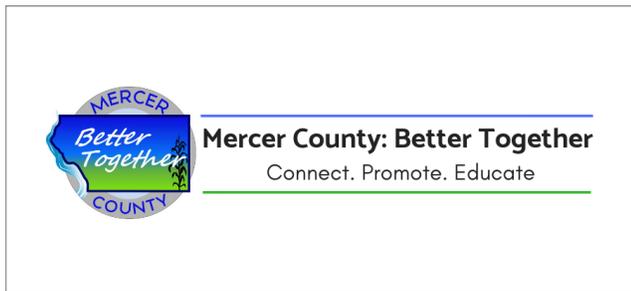


View Local Government Education webinars at: [web.extension.illinois.edu/lge](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/lge)



## Illinois Extension's Planning Creates Mercer County: Better Together

In 2015, Russell Medley, UI Extension community and economic development educator, assisted the Looser Flake Charitable Foundation in identifying community needs to advance their funding goals for Mercer County. These goals were to promote education, economic development and quality of life. He helped to lead a countywide planning process that encompassed 11 community forums and surveys, receiving input from nearly 800 residents. Results were included in a countywide strategic plan completed in 2018. To implement the strategic plan, "Mercer County: Better Together," a 501 c(3) non-profit organization was formed, and Kyle McEwen was hired as the organization's first executive director. Russell serves as a mentor to McEwen to provide feedback and assist in the implementation of the strategic plan.



Thanks to the assistance of the Looser Flake Charitable Foundation and the hard work and vision of Mercer County residents, the collaboration exemplified by Mercer County: Better Together is paying dividends. Using the strategic plan as a guide, the Looser Flake Charitable Foundation awarded \$100,000 to fund technology needs at Mercer County's two main school districts. Additionally, eleven communities and organizations came together under the Mercer County: Better Together umbrella and submitted a grant proposal for improvements for public parks and recreational facilities across the county. The Foundation provided \$150,000 to the project.

Mercer County's experience with countywide planning has been noticed nationwide. Mercer County was the first to use the Orton Family Foundation's Community Heart & Soul planning model on a countywide basis. Counties in Colorado and Pennsylvania are interested in learning more about how Mercer County: Better Together accomplished this feat.

## Preparing Communities for Disasters

Through the Quad Cities Community Foundation and the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, a grant of \$45,000 was awarded to the Disaster Ready Nonprofit Program. This was the result of a collaboration between the Quad Cities Community Foundation and Illinois Extension. Funding will be used to expand the Quad Cities COAD (Community Organizations Assisting in Disasters) through organizational development and planning assistance and also to offer disaster preparedness workshops for non-profit organizations in the Quad Cities region. Meetings with the Quad Cities COAD committees have begun, with a focus on building committee plans and recruiting new members to participate in the COAD.

## Assisting Entrepreneurs



Illinois Extension helped to organize the 6 County Fast Pitch Competition, held March 14, 2018 at the United Methodist Church in Alpha. This business competition targeted entrepreneurs in Henderson, Henry, Knox, Mercer, Stark and Warren counties. The winners (pictured above) included Linda Putnam, owner of Linda's Salsas, Monmouth; Shawn Kendall, owner of Trademark Vacations, Galva, and Andrea Konie, owner of Dinners On Me, Cambridge. The winners represented three categories: Manufacturing/Distribution, Existing Business Expansion, and Retail/Services. Each winner received \$2,500 in cash, \$40,000 in radio/online/media advertising, and approximately \$5,000 in in-kind services, including business counseling, accounting, and customer service training.



Read more about the 6 County Fast Pitch: [www.6countyfastpitch.org](http://www.6countyfastpitch.org)



### 4-H Youth Build Leadership Skills

We are proud to have provided 4-H programs to over 8,000 youth in Henry, Mercer, Rock Island and Stark counties in 2018. You have probably seen many of them at fairs, leading their animals, answering judges' questions, or sharing knowledge and skills they have gained as 4-H teen teachers or citizen scientists. By combining project activities with opportunities to publicly show their work, 4-H provides a framework on which young people build self-confidence, responsibility, and generosity.

The four H's (head, heart, hands and health) represent four basic human needs: independence, belonging, generosity and mastery. Research indicates that youth whose basic needs are met in positive ways are likely to grow into active citizens and contributing members of their families and communities. Members of 4-H clubs establish long-term relationships with caring adults who help them learn new skills and grow as young people. The 4-H program continues to build our community's future leaders through its hands-on, volunteer-led approach.



Master Showmanship contestants at the Henry County Fair are, L to R: Carsen Curry, Taylor Burke, Carter Lambert, Cameron Meyer, Cole Ellerbrock, Tyson McVicker.



Left: Tyson Gillespie showing his horse in Stark County. Right: Livia Dodd, winner of state dog obedience junior showmanship, from Henry County.



Left: Master Showmanship judge Sarah DeSchepper talks to contestant Hunter Johnson in Rock Island County. Right: Cassie Bohnert, of Rock Island, receives a ribbon for her Jersey dairy cow.

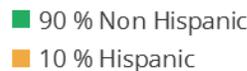
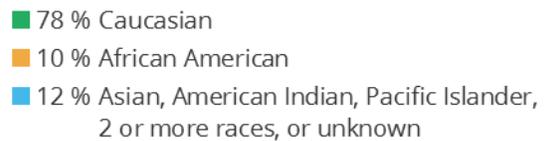
### Serving Youth in Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, and Stark Counties

Wherever you live, 4-H is there. Whoever you are, 4-H is the place where you belong and are part of the club, where you serve in the world where you live, where you act on matters important to you, and where you learn to accomplish the dreams you strive to achieve. Illinois 4-H empowers and prepares youth for success — for today, tomorrow, and a lifetime.

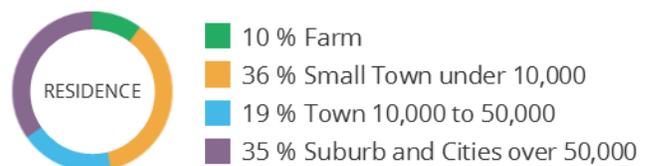
### Program Reach



### RACE



### ETHNICITY





## 4-H Extends Across the Spectrum

Illinois Extension brings 4-H to afterschool programs throughout Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, and Stark counties. At each school, we provide six 4-H sessions, allowing us to reach 554 youth in 2018. For example, over 150 kids at varying grade levels learned about the incubation process, the chick life-cycle, and the poultry industry when 6 different schools participated in our embryology 4-H program. Each classroom received eggs to hatch. Our 4-H metro and military program led afterschool programs targeting military youth at the Rock Island Arsenal, while 4-H helped teens practice leadership skills at the Edison Leadership Squad program in Rock Island, IL.



Special interest clubs help youth hone particular skills including a sewing club (pictured) in Stark County, and the Mercer County Citizen Scientists, whose members continue their work monitoring the Edwards River. Shooting sports also continues to be a very popular part of 4-H, with members enrolling in archery, rifle, shotgun, pistol, and wildlife/hunting clubs across our unit.



Stark County 4-H shooting sports members posed for a picture before their exhibition for the pistol discipline.



## Juntos 4-H Program Inspires Latino Families to Achieve Academic Success

Illinois Extension's Juntos 4-H clubs help Latino family members support youth by providing seminars that bringing the families together for activities that prepare youth to achieve success through high school graduation, pursuit of post-secondary education, and sustained employment. In 2018, Rock Island County Juntos 4-H offered two series of programs that included five different workshops, outside presenters, and college visits to help show the teens and their families that high school graduation and higher education are attainable goals.

The program was organized by Juntos 4-H coordinator Monse Magallon-Perez. "By including their parents, we were able to heighten family awareness of the value of school success, high school graduation, and setting goals for higher education." Magallon-Perez said Juntos 4-H is succeeding. Thirty percent of attendees said they have changed their future goals, while others gained important insights to help their plans to attend college. This includes Diego Gonzalez, age 15, who wants to become an aerospace engineer. Gonzalez said, "I've always wanted to go to college but I didn't know anything about registering or filling out scholarships. I've learned all that from this program."

The majority of participants also said they feel more knowledgeable about their college and career options, and understand the importance of success in high school and continuing education.

Offered in partnership with the Boys and Girls Teen Center in Moline, IL, the Rock Island County Juntos 4-H workshops were funded by a grant from Global Communities, an international non-profit organization that works closely with communities worldwide to bring about sustainable changes that improve the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable people. Because of its success, Global Communities extended the Juntos 4-H program grant into 2019.



## Local 4-H Youth Excel at State-level Leadership

Several 4-H members from our four county Extension unit were honored for their accomplishments at the State Award Ceremony held in October in Champaign.



Ashlie Boysen-Ledbetter  
Rock Island County, Emerald Award in Leadership



Shelby Boysen-Ledbetter  
Rock Island County, retiring member of the State Youth Leadership Team



Joshua Cole-Brodnax  
Rock Island County, retiring member of the State Youth Leadership Team



Lindy Couch  
Henry County, State 4-H Award in Community Service



Gwendolyn Fowler  
Mercer County, State 4-H Award in Personal Growth



Paw Kaw Ku  
Rock Island County, Emerald Award in Leadership



Kaley Rouse  
Stark County, member of the Illinois Farm Bureau Youth Education Committee



### Unit 4-H members excel at nationals!

Congratulations to Nicole Haverback of Henry County and Jake Bohnsack of Rock Island County on being part of the Illinois 4-H State Livestock Judging Team that WON Nationals in Louisville!

## 4-H Members Build Leadership Skills as they Plan and Teach



4-H offers a variety of special events and opportunities where members practice leadership skills. These events are open to all community youth ages 8 to 18. In February, 2018 we held the first annual **4-H Academy** at Western Illinois University in Moline. Seventy-five participants attended sessions on everything from coding and drones to improv and string art, with 4-H teens assisting. The popular event will be offered again February 23, 2019.

In November, we held a 4-H Expo where 4-H teens showcased a variety of projects at interactive booths, sharing information about monarch butterfly migration, entomology, electricity, robotics, coding, visual arts, agriculture, and food science.

Also in 2018, we started a new **4-H Ag Ambassadors** club in which members plan ag related activities for the unit. The first activities were livestock judging clinics. Each session was held at a local farm featuring a workshop and hands-on lesson. The first session on sheep was held in December at the Ellerbrock farm in Atkinson. Ag Ambassadors members share their knowledge at community events and county fairs.



4-H offered after-school and summer programs at the Rock Island Arsenal, reaching 183 youth from military families.



Learn all about 4-H:  
[4h.extension.illinois.edu](http://4h.extension.illinois.edu)



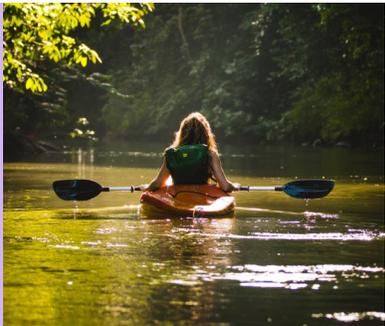
### **NCRCRD Grant: Rural Quality of Life Indicators**

A team of Extension professionals from Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, and South Dakota received word from the North Central Region Council on Rural Development in November 2018 that their planning grant proposal focused on the development of a rural quality of life indicators pilot study had been approved for nearly \$24,000 in funding. Russell Medley, community and economic development educator with Illinois Extension is serving as the principal investigator on the project with Dr. Elizabeth Kiss, family resource management professor and Extension specialist at Kansas State University serving a co-principal investigator.

As rural communities and counties throughout the United States continue to lose population, local leaders are often at a loss as to how to not only address the needs of their current population, but also retain young people and attract new residents to their communities. A new grass roots economic development strategy, community placemaking, is becoming an important, strategically relevant strategy in rural areas.

Inherent to community placemaking is a focus on quality of life issues that impact the satisfaction and comfort of local residents and foster a community that is a great place to reside and work. An increasingly important component of quality of life measures, especially in rural areas, is the connection to health. This goes beyond access to health care facilities and includes the ability of communities to provide access and opportunities for residents to pursue integrated and healthy lifestyles. The planning grant will be used to prepare a proposal to develop and pilot a survey tool that scores a community or region on various “quality of life indicators” and recommends projects, programs, and activities to improve the score on each indicator, tailored to the community in question. The planned approach will simulate individual case management, where the individual (in this case community or region) helps identify where they are on a particular indicator, through conversation and stage “markers”.

Placemaking is the process of focusing on quality of life issues that impact the satisfaction and comfort of local residents.



### **Unit Receives Two Interdisciplinary Collaboration with Extension Grants**

The Henry, Mercer, Rock Island & Stark counties Extension unit received two Interdisciplinary Collaboration Extension (ICE) grants, which fund partnerships between Extension personnel and faculty in the University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. ICE projects use campus-based research to enhance the quality of life of people in communities across Illinois. Each project will receive up to \$60,000 that can be spent over two years to enact their projects.

Haley Haverback, watershed outreach associate, is part of the team to receive an ICE Grant, “Targeting natural lawn care communications to homeowners in Illinois.” Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant and the College of ACES Agricultural Communications investigators will address lawn care-related pollution in watersheds by developing, piloting, and assessing a natural lawn care communications campaign in three Illinois communities. Haley will conduct educational programming on sustainable lawn care practices in Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, and Stark counties.

Kristin Bogdonas, nutrition and wellness educator, was on the team which received an ICE Grant for an interdisciplinary collaboration to improve child diet quality and reduce wasted food in school nutrition programs. Over 29,000 U.S. schools have implemented Smarter Lunchroom strategies, which aim to reduce food waste and encourage students to increase their consumption of vegetables and healthy foods. Recent critiques have questioned whether the program’s effects on consumer behavior are meaningful or overstated. This project will implement and evaluate Smarter Lunchrooms interventions at two schools – Stark County Elementary School and Bethel Grade School District 82 – in order to develop a simulation tool that identifies effective Smarter Lunchroom techniques and addresses food waste.

As part of the research for the Smarter Lunchrooms grant, Kristin Bogdonas conducts a tray waste study at Stark County Grade School.





## Poverty Simulations

A popular training exercise offered through Illinois Extension is the Poverty Simulation. It exposes participants to a month in the life of families in situational poverty. Participants are split into family units, provided with instructions and “basic necessities”, and instructed to pay their bills, work (if employed), take care of their children, and see that they and their children have access to food and healthcare based on pre-constructed scenarios. At the end of the simulation, Extension staff lead a discussion and debriefing.

In 2018, Russell Medley, community and economic development educator, conducted five poverty simulations for organizations throughout the region, including Opportunities Quad Cities; Eastern Iowa Community College District; the Midwest Community Development Institute; the Bureau, Henry and Stark Counties Regional Office of Education; and Annawan Community School District. Nearly 310 education, non-profit, healthcare, and community development professionals participated in these trainings, along with interested residents who wanted to challenge themselves on their thinking about poverty.

The goal of the training is to get participants to understand the realities faced by families in poverty and to understand that sometimes, individuals and families struggling with poverty must make choices that seem out of the ordinary for individuals in comfortable, middle class homes. Besides encouraging individuals to develop empathy, the training exercise serves as a call to action for professionals dealing with families facing poverty to consider ways to assist families in overcoming the very real barriers they face when navigating their daily lives.



Teachers at Annawan High School went through a Poverty Simulation led by Russell Medley in November as part of their continuing education.



## Sharing Horticulture Knowledge at the QCCA Lawn & Garden Show

Each year in March, University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers create an educational display garden to promote the overall social and health benefits of gardening at the QCCA Lawn and Garden Show in Rock Island. The expo features over 250 exhibitors showcasing all the latest gardening techniques, supplies, and equipment; landscaping companies; and DIY projects. UI Extension Master Gardeners and horticulture educator Martha Smith provide educational workshops at the event. Extension also organizes a horticulture information booth to answer visitors’ gardening questions at the expo, which is attended by over 20,000 people each year.

## Become an Agriculture S.T.A.R.



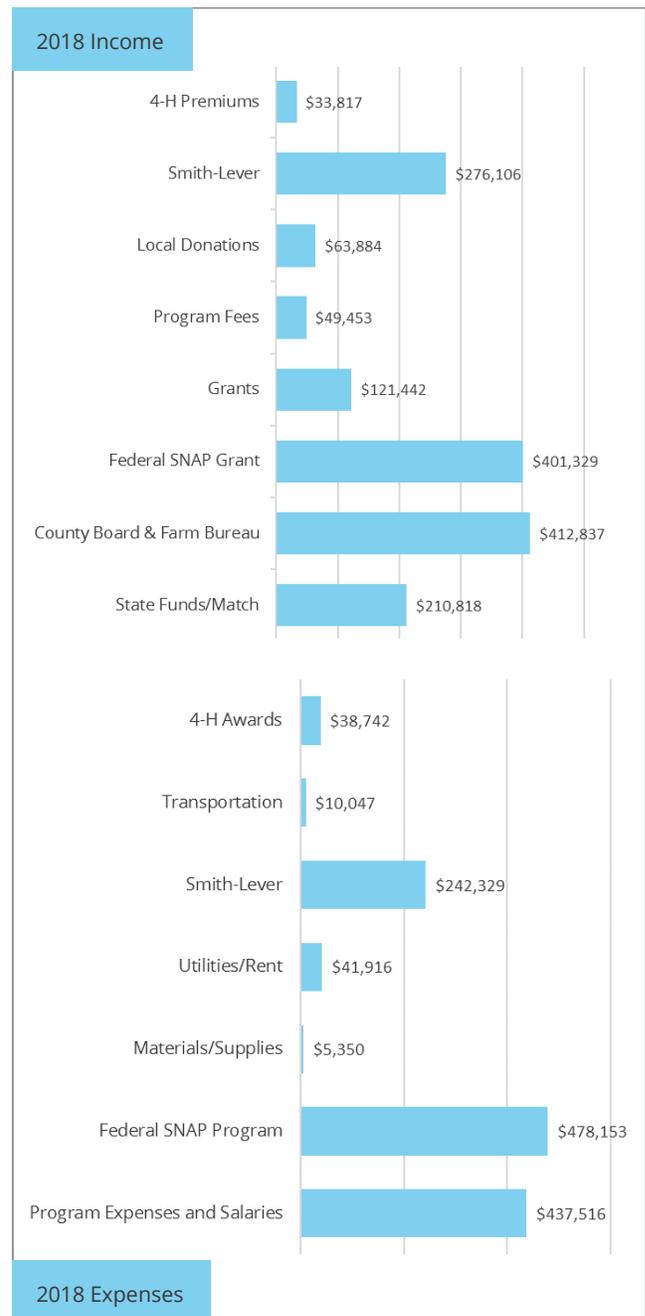
Farmers can make an impact on the environment through their field management practices. Saving Tomorrow’s Agricultural Resources (S.T.A.R.) is a free tool to assist farm operators and landowners

evaluating nutrient and soil loss management practices. S.T.A.R. points are assigned to best management practices for cropping, tillage, nutrient application, and soil conservation that meet the goals of the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy. Producers will receive a field sign featuring their stars. Haley Haverback, watershed outreach associate, is on the workgroup committee. In October 2018, the Decatur-based Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) signed an AgWater Challenge committing to having 25% of the farmers it sources grain from in the surrounding area to earn a three-star rating under S.T.A.R by 2023. By 2028, ADM pledges to have 25% of its farmers be five-star rated, and 50% be three-star rated. S.T.A.R is coming to Rock Island County in 2019.

## Financial Information

University of Illinois Extension is a three-way funding partnership among the State of Illinois, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the county boards in Henry, Mercer, Rock Island, and Stark. Our SNAP-Ed programs are funded by a federal grant from the USDA. These partnerships bring hundreds of thousands of programming dollars into our four counties, matching local contributions with state, national, and federal support.

Many local business, foundations and individuals provide additional support by donating through our local foundation including to the Henry County 4-H Foundation, the Mercer County Extension & 4-H Foundation, the Rock Island County Extension & 4-H Education Foundation, our local Extension Council, and the Illinois 4-H Foundation. These resources are part of the local donation income that helps to sustain our programs. In addition, the unit receives a wide array of local programming grants each year (\$51,622 in 2018). All of these sources are vital in helping us fulfill our educational mission.



## 2018 Grants

\$24,772 Global Communities for Juntos 4-H (an affiliate fund of the John Deere Foundation) • \$7,500 U.S. Dept. of Defense, for 4-H Military Partnership • \$5,000 Amy Helpenstell Foundation for core operating support\* • \$3,000 Exelon for gardens • \$2,500 Mel McKay Charitable Trust for horticulture projects\* • \$2,500 The Moline Foundation for 4-H Ag Ambassadors and 4-H Academy\* • \$2,000 CHS for 4-H Ag Careers • \$1,000 IL 4-H Foundation, Club Innovation Grant • \$1,000 SODEXO Stop hunger Foundation in honor of 4-H Member Clare VanSpeybroeck • \$750 4-H Feeding & Growing Communities for Food Packaging • \$750 IL 4-H Foundation for Embryology Program • \$500 4-H National Youth Summit for Healthy Living • \$350 State Master Gardener Grant for MonArc Garden • In-kind National Rifle Association for 4-H shooting sports equipment • In-kind IL 4-H Foundation for “Monarchs on the Move” curriculum

\*Grants given through the Rock Island County Extension & 4-H Education Foundation

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Cover photos: (top left) Illinois Extension brings 4-H lessons, like embryology, to afterschool programs. (top right) Extension brings horticulture education to local communities, like the annual Fall Harvest of Horticulture workshop in Aledo. (bottom left) Extension SNAP-Ed brings Illinois Jr. Chefs nutrition program to hundreds of youth each summer. (bottom right) Our 4-H Teen Hunger Ambassadors' food packaging events helped Illinois 4-H meet its One Million Meals milestone in 2018.

### University of Illinois ~ U.S. Department of Agriculture ~ Local Extension Councils Cooperating

University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any program, please contact the county Extension Office. The Illinois Nutrition Education Program is funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the US Department of Agriculture by the Director, Cooperative Extension Service, and University of Illinois.