

Spring2023



# Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

*Bond.  
Clinton.  
Jefferson.  
Marion.  
Washington.*



### 03. Growing New Volunteers

Master Gardeners train to provide gardening education to their local communities.

### 04. Welcome to the Real World

4-H and Finance staff take adult life skills to local high schools. Income, expenses and everything in between.

### 05. Let's Talk Money

Gain financial knowledge and the confidence to talk about money with family and financial professionals.

# Spring2023

Dear Community,

This spring, we have taken a deep dive into the results of the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) study we conducted fall and winter 2022. There were two resounding needs' themes: 1) Financial literacy education for both youth and adults, and 2) Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) standards support for youth and public-school educators.

Through this lens, we refined existing programs and launched new, innovative ones as well. This quarterly report showcases the many ways we are addressing financial literacy and providing ISBE standards support throughout the five counties we serve. These strategic efforts will take us through the next academic year in a meaningful, impactful way.

While you may know Illinois Extension best for our legacy 4-H projects like sewing, raising animals, or developing cooking skills, those are only a few of the projects our youth enjoy. To support ISBE standards in our community, we've shifted 4-H programming to have a more STEM-centric direction with a strong emphasis on career and college readiness as well.

Additionally, in partnership with our local ROE's, this summer we will provide professional development to our community teachers at no cost. This fall, we'll be in schools providing professional development to our teachers during the 2023-2024 academic year. With our team of experts in youth development, consumer economics, and horticulture, we are uniquely equipped to supplement teacher's work and support mathematics, science, and social science ISBE standards.

Extension exists to be a resource and partner to its community. We are all working to overcome many of the same challenges to help build stronger, healthier communities that thrive; let's do it together. Please be in touch to discuss the ways you can play an active role in Extension's work.

Many thanks,

*Jordee Koehler*

County Extension Director

## our leadership



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## Livestock Youth *Ready to Take to the Ring*

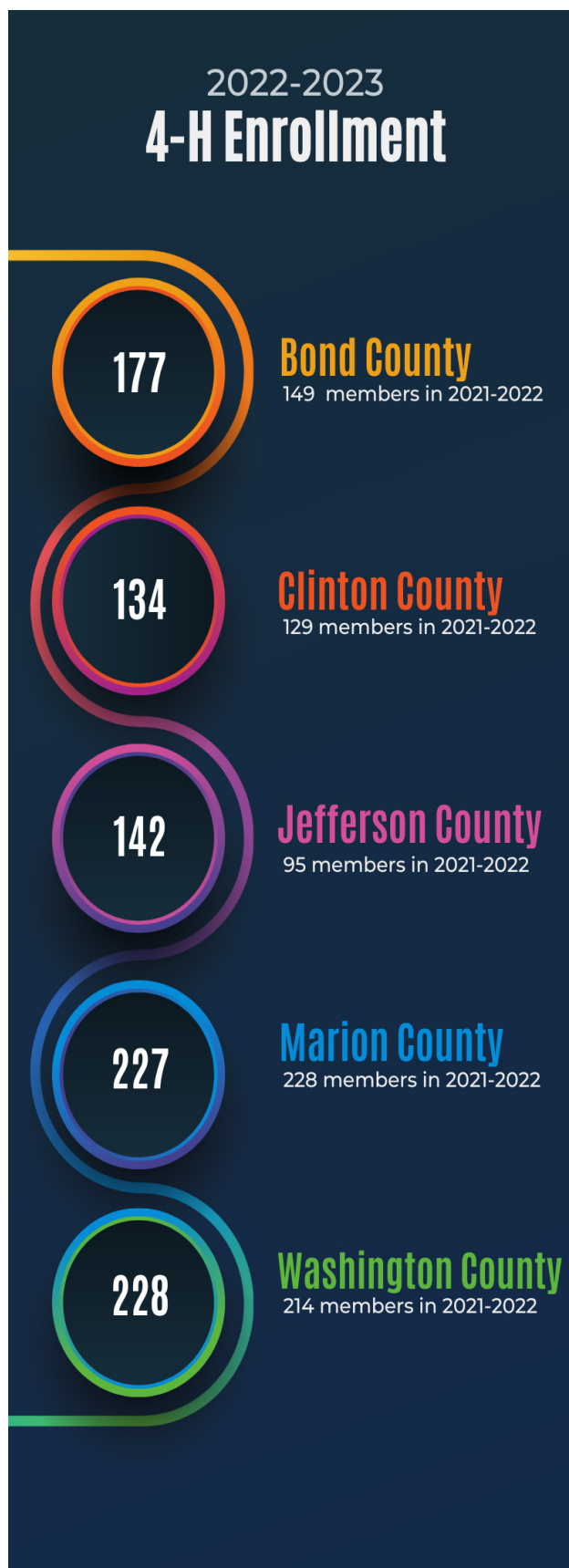
Fifty-three 4-H members from across the five county area participated in our annual 4-H Livestock Showmanship Clinic on Saturday, May 13. Members who attended this clinic are better equipped to prepare their animals for 4-H shows, share their knowledge with a judge, and demonstrate their learned skills. Because of this workshop, youth have also practiced good sportsmanship. In addition, youth learned about basic nutrition and general care in addition to quality assurance and ethics, ensuring that they are not only treating their animals in a humane way, but are preparing their market animals for public consumption.

Attendees participated in two morning sessions to learn about nutrition, wellness, grooming, and showing. The species represented included Dairy Cattle, Beef Cattle, Sheep, Swine, and Goats. During the afternoon, 4-H members could attend a small animal session focusing on poultry and rabbits.

Following lunch participants attended YQCA training led by Youth Development Educator Kara Boozer. Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) is an annual training required for 4-H members exhibiting Dairy, Beef, Sheep, Swine, and Goat projects. Members must complete the training in order to participate at their local and state 4-H shows. The goal of the YQCA program is to ensure safety, quality care, and educate youth on agriculture industry issues.

This annual workshop rotates counties among Bond, Clinton, Jefferson, Marion and Washington each year. Tentative plans include it being held in Bond County in 2024.

Animal science 4-H projects encourage youth to develop skills like responsibility for living things, perseverance to stick with a task until completed, initiative to start projects and get them done, attention to detail, organization, and decision-making. Important life skills for young adults entering the workforce!



## Hands to Larger Service

### Youth Programs Highlight the Importance of Natural Resources

#### Marion County Conservation Days

Four hundred and fifty-three youth attended our 44th annual Marion County Conservation Days. This two-day event takes place at the Marion County Fairgrounds in Salem, IL. Youth visited 10 different stations throughout the day to learn from local organizations and volunteers about conservation, and its importance in our everyday life. Conservation activities like this one encourage youth to take an interest in nature and the world around them.

#### Oak Savanna reforestation projects

A partnership with Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts Forestry Committee provided oak seedlings to Bond, Washington, and Jefferson counties. Oak Savannas are one of the most threatened plant communities in the Midwest and among the most threatened in the world. Less than 0.01% of the original savanna community remains. Bond County's new Oak Savanna was planted at Governor Bond Lake. Washington County 4-H club, the Oakdale 4-Leaf Clovers worked with the city of Oakdale to plant their Oak Savanna at the community park. Jefferson County's trees were installed at Lincoln Park in Mt. Vernon. This hands-on community service project taught our youth and adult volunteers about the threatened oak savanna environments in Illinois and highlighted public land preservation.

The survival of our planet depends on the quality of our water, land, energy, and air. Resources must be managed through sustainable practices that support ecological balance.

## Connect with us on Social Media

Are you on social media?  
We are! Let's connect.



/bcjmwu23



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## Financial Literacy for the Classroom

### Welcome to the Real World, Life Skills for Teens

Welcome to the Real World is a life skills simulation offered to our area middle and high school students. Kara Boozer and Amber

Heern, 4-H Youth Development Educators, and Jamie Mahlandt, Finance Educator, lead students through the program. Considering



## feature

### Let's Talk Money

Join Financial Educator, Jamie Mahlandt for our free Let's Talk Money series at noon on Tuesdays through the end of July. Money is a sensitive issue that people struggle to discuss with family and friends. But, those discussions are important for your fiscal health.

We can help you take proactive steps to improve your financial well-being. Register at [go.illinois.edu/LTM](https://go.illinois.edu/LTM) today.

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potential future careers, college, financial decision-making, and managing money are just a few topics covered in the Welcome to the Real-World program recently completed by Woodlawn High School and Webber High School juniors and seniors.

During the simulation, students pick a career and make adult decisions. Housing, pets, children, vehicles, insurance, food, and recreation are all included.

Our recent Community Needs Assessment research indicated a high interest in Financial Literacy

for Youth programs in our area. More than 200 respondents indicated this to be a need in local communities.

Further research showed that according to the State Board of Education, the percentage of youth lacking math proficiency in Illinois is high. That percentage ranges from 67% to 85% in Bond, Clinton, Jefferson, Marion and Washington counties. Welcome to the Real World includes basic math and can help schools bridge learning gaps. Equipping youth with an understanding of basic household finance is vital.

## Community Partnerships

**Simple Room** 4-H Programming is a part of their Summer Program (Project 24), which will lead to fall special interest clubs in the Fall.

**Greenville Garden Club** hosted a cut flower workshop for their members led by Horticulture Educator Chris Lueking.

**DeMoulin Museum** offered a sewing workshop for 4-H members. As a result of the workshop, the museum won an Illinois Association of Museums Award of Merit.

**Bond County Community Unit 1 School District** agreed to be a host site for a Little Free Pantry that will serve the Mulberry Grove area.

# Staff Update

## Welcome New Staff!

Cheralee Vohlken joined the 4-H team this Spring and is excited about her first show season in Bond County. She had the opportunity to be involved in STEM night at Greenville Elementary School, help with a livestock showmanship clinic, and coordinate dog obedience classes. Stop by the Bond County Extension Office, or introduce yourself at one of the Bond County 4-H Shows this summer. You can reach her by phone at 618-664-3665 or via email at vohlken@illinois.edu.



*Cheralee Vohlken,  
Bond County 4-H  
Youth Development  
Program Coordinator  
Coordinator*



*Mariah Smith,  
Jefferson County  
Office Support*

We would also like to welcome Mariah Smith who has joined us as Office Support in Jefferson County. She and her husband, Haden Smith, just welcomed a little girl in April. Their family grain farms and also raises hogs, sheep, and cattle. She leads the worship team and teaches Sunday School at her church. Some of Mariah's hobbies are baking, cooking, and taking photos. If you are in the Mt. Vernon area, be sure to stop by and say hello. You can reach Mariah by phone at 618-242-0780 or by email at mariahs@illinois.edu.

## Find Your Financial Balance

Local educator, Jamie Mahlandt launched the Finding Financial Balance blog to provide financial education to the community. The monthly posts focus on the five principles of money: Earn, Save & Invest, Spend, Borrow, and Protect. Illinois Extension provides financial well-being resources for all ages and life stages which helps improve self-sufficiency, reduces the need for communities to provide support services, and creates opportunities for individuals to protect and build wealth.

Find this blog at [go.illinois.edu/FFB](https://go.illinois.edu/FFB).  
Subscribe to be notified when new entries are posted each month.



## Master Gardeners *Growing Green Communities*

Ten new Master Gardener interns joined the ranks of our 43 active Master Gardeners this Spring. Local Master Gardeners provide gardening education and outreach in their home communities. Ongoing training provides participants with research-based education that enables them to

share their love for gardening with others.

Becoming a Master Gardener can be a perfect fit for someone interested in gardening with a passion for helping the local community. For more information, call Chris at 618-548-1446.



## at a glance here's what's next

### June

- 24 Clinton County 4-H General Projects Show
- 28 Washington County 4-H General Projects Show

### July

- 4 Fourth of July, Illinois Extension Offices Closed
- 9 Washington County 4-H Show Week Starts
- 10 Back to Basics, Canning
- 15 Jefferson County 4-H General Projects Show
- 15 Marion County 4-H General Projects Show
- 16 Jefferson County 4-H Show Week Starts
- 17 Clinton County 4-H Show Week Starts
- 29 Marion County 4-H Show Week Starts

### August

- 1 Back to Basics, Beekeeping
- 2 Bond County 4-H Show Week Starts
- 12 4-H General Projects at the State Fair
- 23 4-H Show of Champions, General Projects
- 27 4-H Show of Champions, Animal Projects
- 31 Back to Basics, Backyard Chicken

### See our full calendar online

Find details on these programs, plus new events being added and online opportunities at [extension.illinois.edu/bcjmw/events](https://extension.illinois.edu/bcjmw/events).

You can also call 618-327-8881 for information or registration.



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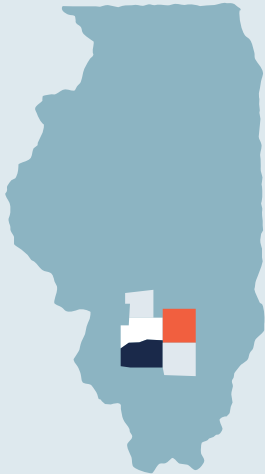
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YouTubeBCJMW](https://go.illinois.edu/YouTubeBCJMW)

## BUSINESS HOURS

Monday through Friday  
8 AM - 12 PM & 1 - 4:30 PM



**Illinois Extension**  
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## Find us online.



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College of Agriculture, Consumer & Environmental Sciences

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If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, please call the Extension Office at 618-327-8881.