EXTENSION IN ACTION

Serving Clark, Crawford, and Edgar Counties

ILLINOIS EXTENSION 2022





Stacy Woodyard County Director



2022 reminded us that life's journey is about learning, growing, and living

We credit poet Ralph Waldo Emerson with the phrase, "Life is a journey, not a destination." Illinois Extension offers countless opportunities for us to personally and professionally learn, grow, and teach throughout our journeys.

Our 4-H members learn skills from dedicated volunteers and peers that prepare them for all they encounter on their life journeys: relationships, careers, community engagement, travel, compassion, disappointments, and celebrations.

Our volunteers and partners embrace the opportunity to share knowledge and resources gained in their life journeys with others who need encouragement, advice, and empathy.

Community leaders connect businesses, organizations, and citizens to the abundant resources available through Illinois Extension to advance and improve our communities.

No year is without its challenges. While we have all felt them, we must remember that none of us walk these journeys alone. Our youth, adults, businesses, organizations, and schools are all working together, improving their journeys, and Illinois Extension is here to help.

I am grateful for the Illinois Extension staff and County Board members who choose to blend their professional and personal experiences, offering research-based, unbiased educational programs that help make our journeys more rewarding, enjoyable, and profitable.

Stacy Woodyard County Extension Director

Illinois Extension Makes an Impact

The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's land grant mission thrives each day through Extension's programs, resources, knowledge, and dedicated staff that are responsive to five grand challenge themes: Com

Community: Support Strong and Resilient Residents



Economy: Grow a Prosperous Economy

Environment: Sustain Natural Resources at Home and in Public Spaces



Food: Maintain a Safe and Accessible Food Supply

Health: Maximize Physical, Mental, and Emotional Health

2022 Engagement

Extension leaders, staff, and stakeholders define priorities that create meaningful, mission-centered outcomes throughout the state:

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643 Communities Served	<b>720K+</b> Program Attendees	14.5M+ Webpage Views	22.9M+ Social Media Impressions	900K+ YouTube Views
<b>488</b> Educational Sessions/Week (25K+ Annually)	<b>95</b> Online Courses Accessed by 12K+ People	<b>7,062</b> Local Government Education Webinar Reach	<b>1,807</b> 4-H Clubs	178,341 4-H Affiliations

Partnerships			Resource Generation	
<b>5,941</b> Program Volunteers	269 Community Gardens	<b>1,030</b> School Partners	\$15,732,391 Value of Volunteer Contributions	<b>\$223,639</b> Value of Donated Garden Produce

# From paper to practice: How one together for their schools



Pictured left to right: Kami Titus, Jenny Francis, Amy Yargus, Brad Burson, Kelly Livvix, Jennifer Bishop, Tiffany Macke, Greg Keller, Vickie Meehan, and Angie Perry

Tiffany Macke's iDREAM iCREATE Kindergarten through 12thgrade curriculum started as scratches on note paper. As a community and economic development educator for Illinois Extension, Macke writes a lot of ideas on paper, but this idea was different. This idea had the backing of the entire Marshall community.

Unlike much of the curricula available, the iDREAM iCREATE program is not taught by teachers; it is led by local businesspeople, pastors, and school moms. This group of people is called a Dream Team, and the Marshall Dream Team started its eighth year in Marshall Schools in 2022.

"I am not a detail person. I am a big idea person," says Macke. "To make this program successful, I knew I would need a team to help me." She also knew the key to this program's success was the involvement of community members. Macke emphasizes this point when she speaks with other potential school districts.

In 2022, Macke was diagnosed with cancer. To show support during this time, the Marshall Dream Team declared Oct. 12, 2022, as Dream Day. Students in every grade spent class time brainstorming ideas for an ultimate in-school dream day. Each grade level submitted one idea with activities on which the entire school could vote.

Later that day during a scheduled Dream Team meeting, Macke was presented with a big basket of dreams, cards, and photos and was quickly brought to tears. The Marshall school system is unique to Macke because it piloted her curriculum, now operating in four Illinois schools. "Tiffany inspires our students and me," says Vickie Meehan, team member. She was joined by a dozen Dream Team members who each shared why they continue participating in the program.

"I have seen the program's impact because I have been doing it for several years." says Marshall insurance agent Greg Keller. "You never know if telling one kid not to give up will make a difference. I have seen that it does."

This sentiment is echoed by Jenny Francis. "Kids still come up to me in public because they remember me from activities I have done with them."

Dream Team member Alyson Thompson is the library director at Marshall Public Library. She says her role in this program complements her job because it takes place during the day and helps her meet teens entering the library. She admits working with high schoolers was intimidating initially, but she has learned "they aren't so scary."

Many Dream Team members like the program because it allows them to share the skills and passion they have for their career. Kelly Livvix has a graphic design background and works with ninth graders during the branding yourself section, helping youth create a brochure about themselves.



Tiffany Macke holds a large basket full of well wishes from staff and students.



Tiffany Macke becomes emotional when she sees the Marshall school planner already filled with of Dream Team lesson plans.

Other Dream Team members say they receive personal enjoyment from it. Pastor Bob Sabos participates in the sixthgrade interview process of the curriculum and says he always comes away feeling "energized by their youthfulness."

Indiana State University junior Kami Titus says she is majoring in elementary education, and the experience of being on the Dream Team is invaluable. "This curriculum has influenced me as well," she says.

Angie Perry, a 23-year teaching veteran, summarizes it best: "We teach math, science, and English, but nobody is putting it all together. The iDREAM iCREATE curriculum does that."

Macke's curriculum is in the final stages of becoming an official campus publication, says Stacy Woodyard, Extension county director. She is thankful to the Marshall Dream Team for piloting the program.

As for Macke, she says it's all about planting seeds.

Though she'll miss some of the school year this year, Macke is incredibly impressed with the customized Marshall Schools planner already filled with dates and lessons for her curriculum in each classroom.

This Dream Team is ready. They are the real deal so Tiffany Macke can focus her efforts on getting well.



Learn more at go.illinois.edu/cce

### Partnerships help Extension reach more youth



Partnering with libraries and other community organizations helps Illinois Extension reach more young people because it meets them where they gather to learn, grow, and play.

One engaging program offered through the Marshall Public Library was Camp Planet Energy, where participants explored topics on renewable energy. They built windmills and waterwheels to learn about wind and water energy. They even harnessed the sun's power and made s'mores in a solar pizza box oven.



A Camp Planet Energy participant is eager to make s'mores using the solar pizza box oven.

Health Jam has a fun name, and its participants have a fun time, too. Martinsville Elementary students in grades 4 though 6 participated in six weekly sessions with staff from Illinois Extension. Youth learn about healthy lifestyles, good nutrition, physical fitness, and health-related careers. They also participate in a virtual Walk Across Illinois and log minutes for miles to earn a 4-H drawstring backpack.



Hope Dennis leads a group of Health Jam participants through nutrition lesson from MyPlate.gov.



### Extension roadmap guides families for weeknight togetherness

How often do parents say, "I wish we had more time to sit down to supper together," or "We'd cook more if someone would plan the meals for us." Illinois Extension used the Food, Fun, 4-H program developed by Oklahoma State University Extension to address these needs.

Over fifty households across the state completed the Food, Fun, 4-H cooking program hosted by Susan Sloop, 4-H youth development educator during July, August, and September.

"Anytime you have more than one generation cooking together, it's a win," says Sloop.

Food, Fun, 4-H is a free program that unites families in the kitchen and at the dinner table. Families receive recipes, educational information, nutritional facts, conversation starters, and ideas for a family physical activity. They prepare their recipes, answer a few questions about their cooking and mealtime experience, and share photos.

"We are enjoying the simple and easy-to-follow recipes that create food the whole family can enjoy," says one participant. Another family said they implemented the communication ideas and after-dinner walks a few times a week. Pictured left to right: Ellie Davis, Ryder Davis, Haddie Davis, Sawyer Davis, Larry Carlson, Brian Davis, and Katie Davis.

Since we have done this, my kids are in the kitchen helping prepare meals and excited about trying new recipes. Food, Fun, 4-H participant

Although a little extra time might be needed, the benefits of cooking with children are worth it. The kitchen is a great learning environment where youth can hone skills in language, math, and science. In addition, they practice creativity, learn about healthy eating, and spend quality time with family members.

"Since we have done this, my kids are in the kitchen and helping prepare meals and excited about trying new recipes," says one parent. The families received a 4-H kitchen utensil kit at the end of their three months of participation.

The program was free and funded through the 4-H Healthy Habits grant by National 4-H Council and the Walmart Foundation.

#### Drones lead ag future

Unmanned aerial vehicles, often called drones, help farmers observe crops and save steps through the fields. Drone video footage can highlight potential issues with water, fertilizer, or disease.

Anna Shupe, Paris Cooperative High School agriculture teacher, knows the role drones will play in the future of farming. Shupe uses the *Quads Away* 4-H curriculum and a drone from the local Illinois Extension office to teach critical skills in ag science.

"I am teaching the students the importance of drones in the ag industry and the regulations they must follow," says Shupe. "Additionally, they become certified to operate a recreational drone legally and obtain a TRUST certificate."

The curriculum teaches aerospace principles, such as weight, lift, drag, and thrust, and allows students access to online resources such as University of Illinois and NASA experiments. Students also study how the different components of a drone work together to make it fly and practice making maneuver predictions based on specific scenarios.

"The curriculum was written to teach youth the basics of being a safe recreational flyer, while also sparking their interest in the potentially lucrative career pathways provided by this technology," says Keith Jacobs, Illinois Extension 4-H STEM specialist.



Teacher Anna Shupe holds the drone loaned to her classroom by Illinois Extension.



A student in Shupe's class practices flying the drone outside.

The 4-H curriculum offers great guidance on how to fly the drone. The students fly in different patterns as part of their unit grade. Anna Shupe

Once the students understand the flight basics and the rules that govern drone use, they are ready to take to the sky.

"The 4-H curriculum offers excellent instruction on how to fly the drone," says Shupe, "plus we watch online videos." The students practice flying forward, backward, up, and down and even learn to program the drone to fly different patterns.

Shupe spends about three to four weeks on drone instruction during the spring semester. This year, students will map fields and interpret data.

"I also hope to have speakers come into the classroom to talk about drones in agriculture," Shupe says. As part of a final project, students will create a video using the drone.

Shupe says she looks forward to working with Illinois Extension in the future and learning about additional resources she can use in her classes.



### 4-H alum encourage success of next generation livestock exhibitors

Giving back to a program that has given them so much comes naturally to 4-H alumni Ashtin Guyer and Kyle Webster. Guyer, Crawford County, and Webster, Edgar County, were both involved in their local 4-H clubs from eight years old until they aged out of the program ten years later. Now, Guyer and Webster find themselves back in the show ring, this time on the opposite side of the scorecard.

Guyer and Webster judged the 2022 Crawford County 4-H Master Showmanship Contest.

"Having Ashtin and Kyle judge, who are both 4-H alumni from our unit, made this the show's highlight," says April Knoblett, Crawford County 4-H program coordinator. "Ashtin was the primary judge, and Kyle did most of the talking. He gave a wonderful speech about 4-H and what it means to him."

Webster showed goats and pigs as part of the C & S Ag 4-H Club in Chrisman, where his mom is the club leader and both parents are swine superintendents for the Edgar County 4-H Fair.

"County fair judges are hard to come by nowadays, so this is my small way of giving back to the people and organization that have given me so much," says Webster. "4-H showed me how to chase my passion for the pig industry and led to my current job." Webster is a 2022 graduate of Western Illinois University with a bachelor's degree in farm and ranch management.

Guyer and Webster chose Cody York as the Champion Master Showman of the Crawford County 4-H Show.

"Showing livestock is all I know," says Guyer. "During my years as a Prairie Pals 4-H Club member in Palestine, I showed pigs, cattle, and sheep." Her parents grew up around livestock and passed on their passion to Ashtin and her sister Nalaney. Pictured left to right: Judge Ashtin Guyer, Wyatt Draper, Lanee Cooper, Rylee Wells, Morgan Knoblett, Mallorie Dart, Cody York, Bailey Draper, and Judge Kyle Webster.

"The motto in our barn is 'This is a family thing,' and we live by it. It's never just one of us; it's our family."

Guyer says judging at her county fair allowed her to teach the next generation of 4-H youth about exhibiting livestock.

"I encourage anyone who wants to show livestock to do it. It's hard work, but it is also very rewarding," she says.

The two siblings had success in the recent Illinois State Fair where they both earned championships and sold in the auction. Nalaney Guyer showed the Land of Lincoln Grand Champion Market Lamb. Ashtin showed the Grand Champion Steer which was purchased during the Governor's Sale of Champions by Illinois First Lady MK Pritzker for \$105,000.

Guyer will graduate from Western Illinois University in 2023 with a bachelor's in ag business and a minor in animal science. She encourages youth to set high goals within reach and work hard.

"I promise you will achieve them!"



Kyle Webster judging the Beef contest.

I cannot wait to see the next generation succeed and achieve their goals. Ashtin Guyer

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Ashtin Guyer with her Grand Champion, King. (Photo by Todd Gleason)

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# Making bread brings generations together

Baking bread uses all senses: the smooth dough, the burping bubbles, the smell coming from the oven, the crusty brown top, and the wholesome taste all bring about good feelings of togetherness.

Intergenerational participants experienced these senses during Illinois Extension's For the Love of Food and Family event. Four families, including parents, children, grandparents, and grandchildren, learned from the lost art of breadmaking from Mary Liz Wright, nutrition and wellness educator. While the dough was rising and baking, participants discussed personality traits, interacted with others, and shared personal and family dreams with Tiffany Macke, community and economic development educator.

(front, pictured left to right) Eva Smith, Bev Strow, and Kallie Stults; (back) River Haddix and Holly Haddix

When we bring multi-generations together, something special happens. You can see it in their eyes. Mary Liz Wright

Wright told the group how her grandmother and aunt taught her to cook, which translated into the job she enjoys today. Participants learned about reading recipes, measuring flour, reading food thermometers, and kneading dough. The family shared the table while they made bread.

Macke led discussion, helping people work together based on their unique traits. Then, they divided into partners and answered a series of questions about dreams. Finally, families were asked to come up with 100 dreams when they returned home and work on finding people to encourage them to achieve those dreams.

Each group received recipes to try on their own and was encouraged to take photos while completing the activities to share on social media.

#### VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF THE PROGRAM

We can easily take for granted a beautifully landscaped flowerbed. Yet, behind the scenes, someone must do the work. Often, those people are the Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. They volunteer many hours and complete continuing education regularly. They respond to questions on garden or landscape issues, lead programs in schools, create pollinator habitats, and provide general public education on choosing plant varieties, conserving water, pest management, fruits and vegetables, tree care, and composting. Master Gardener Ron George, right, answers gardening questions at a local nursery.



Learn more about volunteering go.illinois.edu/volunteerCCE





#### CONTEST CHALLENGES YOUTH FOOD PREP SKILLS

Learning to prepare safe and nutritious meals is important and fun. The 4-H Food Challenge is based off cooking shows on the Food Network. Twenty-five youth in Clark and Edgar counties participated as teams. Each team, consisting of at least two 4-H'ers in grades 3-12, participated in a food safety and basic kitchen skills workshop prior to the contest. Teams created a dish using predetermined ingredients and staples from a pantry. Dishes were judged on food appearance, food quality, presentation skills of the group, and knowledge about MyPlate nutritional information. The top teams took home new kitchen small appliances to encourage cooking at home.



Learn more about MyPlate myplate.gov



#### PROTECT THE POLLINATORS

Why care about pollinators? Flowering plants and their associated pollinators are responsible for one of every four bites of food we eat. Pockets are small gardens scattered throughout towns and neighborhoods that provide a food source for pollinating insects. Cloverbuds in Crawford County celebrated National Pollinator Week by planting a pollinator plot at the fairgrounds. At the end of the summer, the plot was a haven for pollinators. The Master Gardeners in Edgar County have a well-established pollinator pocket outside the office of the Edgar County Farm Bureau.



Learn more about pollinator gardens go.illinois.edu/pocket



#### PRACTICE FOOD SAFETY

Canning is a great way to extend the life of fresh garden foods. Over time, the canner's dial gauge can change and give a false pressure reading. Accurate pressure is critical to safely preserve foods. Illinois Extension recommends testing your dial-gauge pressure canners every year and provides free testing around the state. Nutrition and Wellness Educator Mary Liz Wright tested 19 canner gauges during the summer of 2022 in Clark, Crawford, and Edgar counties.



Learn more about food safety go.illinois.edu/ILfood



#### Fifth graders learn conservation

There will be about 3 billion more people on our planet in 2050 than today, and the demand for natural resources will inevitably rise. Local 4-H programs partner with area agencies each year for Conservation Day to teach youth to make better choices and become better residents.

Conservation is the mindful use of our planet's resources: air, water, energy sources, soil, plants, and animals. It involves protecting the environment and animal populations and preventing waste. During Conservation Day in Clark and Crawford counties, 12 organizations provide learning stations for over 400 fifth graders.

The organizations included local Farm Bureaus, Oblong FFA, WTWO, Murphy Farms, Marathon, Morton Arboretum, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, Illinois Prairies, and Lincoln Trail State Park.

Conservation Day allows us to partner with groups that have expertise in environmental stewardship. Jennifer Bishop Brian Murphy as Corny the Corn and 4-H'er Carson Foley worked with area fifth graders.

We provide this learning opportunity each year to help youth be more aware of the world around them. April Knoblett



WTWO's meteorologist Jesse Walker used an interactive model to explain how tornadoes develop.

#### Teaching lifelong healthy habits

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Clark, Crawford, and Edgar counties serves almost 3,500 households. SNAP provides nutrition benefits to support the food budgets of families in need so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency.

Hope Dennis, Illinois Extension, SNAP-Ed community worker, provides practical, healthy eating, and physical activity solutions for Illinois families through local partnerships with schools and food pantries.

Dennis, a community worker for over 25 years, travels 100 miles a week, serving schools in Clark, Crawford, and Edgar counties. She visits every kindergarten, first, and second grade classroom in Hutsonville, Robinson, Martinsville, Kansas, Chrisman, and Shiloh each week. Virtually, she sees students in an additional five schools in Oblong, Palestine, Marshall, Casey, and Paris.

Dennis and her puppet partner, Bob, teach the importance of play, exercise, healthy foods, and drinking milk and water. Dennis bring other plush characters with silly names from the *Organwise Guys* program to help students learn how their bodies work.

"I answer hundreds of questions daily from curious children," says Dennis. "I have to think fast on my feet."

The *Organwise Guys* program is an evidenced-based nutrition education program that is statistically shown to help children take care of their bodies and reduce obesity and related diseases.

"Children who are overweight as preschoolers are five times more likely to be overweight as adults," Dennis says. Kids who participate in the *Organwise Guys* program show improvement in weight, waist circumference, BMI percentile, test scores, and blood pressure.

In addition to serving young people in schools, Dennis provides nutrition education to adults as she visits food pantries in the counties she serves.

"People often need to know how to use the healthier canned goods available at food pantries," Dennis says. "We provide easy-to-prepare recipes that use these ingredients, and suddenly it doesn't seem so difficult."

Decades of experience has taught Dennis that people can learn to make the healthy choice the easiest choice.



SNAP-Ed Community Worker Hope Dennis talks with students in an elementary school classroom.

### SNAP-Education Community Partnerships



11 K-12 Schools



8 Other Agencies or Community Centers



6 Food Banks and Food Pantries



Hope Dennis goes to classrooms with her partner, Bob, from the *Organwise Guys* program.





#### Four ways 4-H expands college and career readiness Illinois 4-H wants youth to succeed. College and career

readiness are at the core of 4-H.

**One of the best ways to show teens what is available is to tour local colleges and universities,** says Jennifer Bishop, 4-H program coordinator.

"Every year, our older 4-H'ers complete a college tour," Bishop says. In 2022, they toured the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences at University of Illinois and 4-H House, a cooperative sorority for women.

#### Bringing the learning to the county is another option.

"Nearly 40 youth attended an hour-long physics demonstration by the U of I Physics Van," says Maria Crandell, 4-H program coordinator. The college students engage with fun and interactive methods.

Youth get an introduction to college life at the College of ACES Family Academies. Tiffany Macke, local community and economic development educator, gave the keynote. She lead over 100 youth and adults in her iDREAM iCREATE curriculum activities. Clark County 4-H'ers went on a college visit. (pictured left to right) Rachel Morris, Wade Winnett, Gabe Cervantes, Cali Cervantes, Lane Perry, Lilie Perry, and Dalanee Smith.

Mary Liz Wright, nutrition and wellness educator, modified a bread recipe that allowed attendees of her intergenerational cooking workshop to bake bread.

**4-H clubs also regularly invite local citizens to meetings to share about their careers.** 4-H provides many opportunities for youth to build skills to help them transition to successful careers.



University of Illinois physics students conduct an electricity experiment for local 4-H youth.



### Tri-County Highlights

8,819 Local Website Users

589 Educational Sessions

11,748 Educational Direct Contacts

159 Extension Volunteers

724 4-H Club Memberships

5,072 Estimated Reach SNAP-Education

27 Master Gardener and Master Naturalist Volunteers

1,011 Hours Donated by Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists



Clark, Crawford, and Edgar County Extension is funded through a combination of federal dollars (23%), state dollars (30%), and local dollars (47%), which are returned to the community through educational programming.

#### Today's Illinois Extension

Illinois Extension serves as a regional network with a presence in every Illinois county. We link communities, businesses, and the general population to the research and development and technical resources of the university and its partners. Illinois Extension is also a provider of 4-H youth development and leadership services, helping to provide the next generation of workers, leaders, and responsible citizens.

#### STAFF

Stacy Woodyard County Director

Tiffany Macke Educator, Community and Economic Development

Susan Sloop Educator, 4-H Youth Development

Mary Liz Wright Educator, Nutrition and Wellness Jennifer Bishop Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth Development

Maria Crandell Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth Development

April Knoblett Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth Development Korina Allen Office Support

Tiffany Cervantes Office Support

Rebecca Schiver Office Support

Summer Walker Office Support Hope Dennis Community Worker, SNAP-Ed

Darra Walker Publicity-Promotions

#### **EXTENSION COUNCIL**

Rob Angus	Erica Hatfield	Randy Allen Peterson	Cindy Spencer
Dustin Atkins	Troy Hickey	Dallas Richardson	Reuben Stence
Denise Frey	Bailey Maulding	Haley Sanders	Capi Stone
Abbie Furlong	Taylor Nethery	Mallory Simonton	Alison Williams

#### **OFFICE INFORMATION**

#### **Clark County Extension**

15493 N. State Hwy 1 Marshall, IL 62441 (217) 826-5422 uie-cce@illinois.edu Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### Crawford County Extension 216 S. Cross St. Robinson, IL 62454 (618) 546-1549 uie-cce@illinois.edu Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### **Edgar County Extension**

210 W. Washington St. Paris, IL 61944 (217) 465-8585 uie-cce@illinois.edu Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### ONLINE



/uiextensioncce



@ILExtensionCCE



What's Cooking with Mary Liz Wright

Cover photo: Ashtin Guyer with her Grand Champion, King. (Photo by Todd Gleason)



#### College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences

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, please contact the event coordinator. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time to meet your needs.

Illinois Extension

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The Illinois Nutrition Education Programs are funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). 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.

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