

# 2017 Impact Report

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION  
SERVING HENDERSON, KNOX,  
McDONOUGH, & WARREN COUNTIES

**I ILLINOIS**

Extension

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER  
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



# ILLINOIS

## Extension



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Good Growing  
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### A Note from the Director

What has your local University of Illinois Extension office been busy doing this past year? Well, feel free to take a few minutes and look through this report to see a few highlights!

Extension has not received any funding from the State of Illinois to support local Extension programming since June 2015. However, your local office has continued to provide programming to our residents. How do we do that? Well, in part thanks to the fact that we have local and federal funding sources, and we are forming many partnerships with other local agencies.

Locally we have four educators who provide many different programs. 4-H continues to be a strong part of our programming. We have many youth enrolled in traditional 4-H clubs as well as others in our SPIN (Special Interest) Clubs such as robotics and shooting sports. In addition, the 4-H staff provide youth development opportunities such as Welcome to the Real World and youth leadership. Horticulture has offered a new series on sustainable landscaping and our Master Gardener and Master Naturalist programs are continuing to grow. Community Development has been involved in the formation of a COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster) in Henderson County as well as working on other hazard mitigation projects. Family Life has continued their work in brain health and aging populations.

Extension has been busy and we are happy to share our successes with you. So take a few minutes and look through these pages. Learn what we have done and maybe, more importantly, get some ideas for how we could become involved in the communities we serve in the future. Come by, give us a call, send us an email, check out our web and social media pages...get to know your local U of I Extension office.

Lisa Torrance  
County Extension Director



#### OUR MISSION

**To extend research-based information, technology, and best practices from the university into local communities to strengthen and improve people's lives.**

#### Financial Report

REVENUES	\$1,035,874
County Board, Federation & Foundation	\$504,008
Federal SNAP	\$196,336
Local Donations	\$18,345
Program Fees	\$24,358
Smith Lever	\$52,771
*State Funds/Match	\$181,133
**4-H Premiums	\$58,923
EXPENDITURES	\$1,035,874
Federal SNAP	\$127,739
Materials, Supplies, Utilities & Rent	\$59,390
Program Expenses & Salaries	\$695,144
Smith Lever	\$52,771
Transportation	\$38,410
***Awards	\$62,420

Fiscal Year 2017

\*Did not receive FY17 State of Illinois matching funds.

Used emergency reserves to cover lost revenue.

\*\*Premiums are for FY15 and FY16 4-H Shows.

\*\*\*Awards included premiums paid out for FY15 and FY16 4-H Shows

#### HENDERSON COUNTY

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Mon-Tues, 8 am-2 pm; Thu, 8 am-4:30 pm

(closed 12-1 pm)

#### KNOX COUNTY

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Phone: (309) 342-5108

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Mon-Fri, 8 am-4:30 pm

(closed 12-1 pm)

#### McDONOUGH COUNTY

3022 W Jackson

Macomb, IL 61455

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Mon-Fri, 8 am-4:30 pm

(closed 12-1 pm)

#### WARREN COUNTY

PO Box 227

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Mon-Fri, 8 am-4:30 pm

(closed 12-1 pm)

#### OUR GOAL

**To educate, facilitate, and collaborate in order to enrich individual lives within our communities.**



## Extension Addresses Local Hunger Issues

The Growing Illinois Food Together (GIFT) Garden is a project developed through partnerships with University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners, SNAP-Ed educator Akinwale Akingbule, and the Western Illinois University Horticulture program. GIFT carries the goal of providing freshly grown produce for local food pantries. Students from WIU horticulture club assisted with the design and construction of the garden in 2017. Extension staff pursued the partnerships and funds necessary to construct the GIFT Garden. In 2017, Extension was awarded a grant from a pilot SNAP-Ed program and a donation from the HyVee One Step program totaling \$2,000.

The Carl Sandburg College (CSC) Community Garden in Galesburg, Illinois has been growing fresh fruits and vegetables for local food pantries and shelters since 2011. Managed by University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners, the CSC Community Garden continues to expand in terms of crops grown and education provided to the community.

Highlights from both community food donation gardens in 2017:

A SNAP-Ed survey and consultation with food pantry volunteers revealed that fresh produce is in high demand in our unit's rural food pantries. The combined total of produce donated from both GIFT and CSC is over 4,800 pounds!



Master Gardeners at the Carl Sandberg College Community Garden



Despite growing and donating over 700 pounds of produce, the 2017 GIFT Garden could not keep up with local demand. One food pantry would have a line of recipients with not enough produce for all.

In 2017, the CSC Garden collaborated with Hy-Vee offering nutrition and cooking demonstration classes.

In 2018, the GIFT Garden will add eight more raised beds, and the CSC Garden will build three raised beds.

The GIFT Garden received a \$1,500 donation from Operation Round Up and awarded a \$3,000 SNAP-Ed grant to expand the garden in 2018 to help meet the community need.

In 2018, Galesburg YMCA youth will "adopt-a-bed" to learn how to grow their own fresh vegetables!

Post-harvest best practices promoting the cleanliness of vegetables is a priority. Extension staff developed a peer-reviewed presentation for training volunteers in post-harvest handling of produce. Extension requires volunteers to take this training before working in the GIFT or CSC Community Garden.

CSC Garden supported local businesses at a community health fair. To encourage more community involvement and reach diverse audiences, Extension will be offering three weekend workshops in 2018 for both gardens. The workshops will focus on spring gardening, preparing for summer gardening, and gardening into the fall.





## Building a Sense of Conservation in Today's Youth with Butterflies

Located in Galesburg, Illinois, the third annual Monarch Migration Festival was a celebration of Illinois' state insect and an educational event for improving conservation practices. Planning the festival is an assemblage of University of Illinois Extension staff and volunteers collaborating with multiple local agencies. 2017's Monarch Migration Festival, held on September 9, was featured in the Register-Mail, Galesburg's local newspaper, and regarded as a success from participants and volunteers. Volunteers positioned at the event entrance estimated over 750 people in attendance.

Educational activities during the Monarch Migration Festival included:

- › Master Gardeners/Naturalists answered questions and handed out education materials
- › Master Gardener Rhonda Brady gave tours of the Miss Mariposa, a school bus converted to be a mobile learning station on the life cycle of the monarch butterfly
- › Master Naturalists demonstrated materials for beekeepers and had a butterfly dancing activity



- › Guided tours of the Galesburg Nature Center Prairie
- › Children could draw sidewalk art of butterflies
- › Make paper monarchs to send to Mexican school children in the symbolic migration
- › Create seed balls to plant in their yards
- › Monarch butterfly tagging
- › Several 30-minute workshops were held in the prairie for adults, along with story time for kids.

All these activities, plus more than could be listed here, concluded with festivalgoers parading into the prairie to release the tagged monarchs. Master Gardener Rhonda Brady, dubbed the "Butterfly Lady", placed monarch butterflies into participants' hands as a final sendoff to the butterflies who would make their way south for the winter. The fourth annual Monarch Migration Festival is scheduled for September 8, 2018.





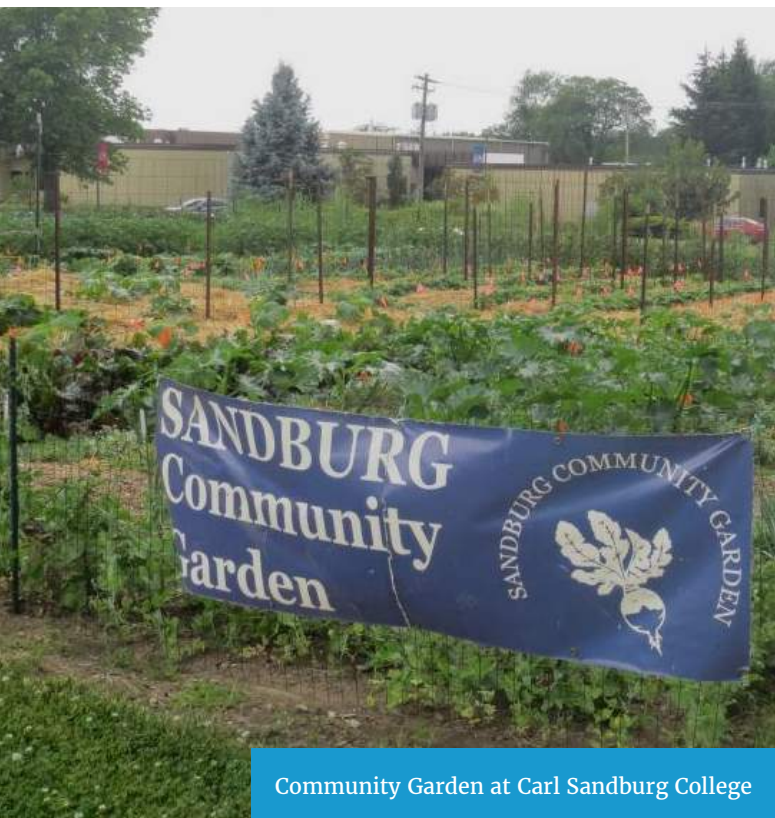


## Two Groups, One Mission

Three Rivers Master Gardeners are made up of two distinct groups of Master Gardeners. One group is based in McDonough County and the other is based in Knox County. They have all had the same training and share the same mission, but each group and individual express the mission a little differently.

### GARDENER'S DAY

The McDonough County Master Gardeners are the engine behind our annual spring educational event, Gardener's Day. In 2017, Master Gardeners pooled their resources to identify and connect with 13 speakers, 10 vendors, and 100 participants. They helped organize catering, set up the venue, and facilitated the event on a gorgeous day in April. Participants received their choice of four classes taught by local experts on topics ranging from growing lavender to tree selection to building bluebird houses. They were able to meet local vendors who make brooms out of broomcorn, a new local lavender farm with their bath and body products and a variety of local plant nurseries, among many others. Participants left with new knowledge, a sense of community, a birdhouse they built themselves, and for some, a brand new shovel to start the season off right.



Community Garden at Carl Sandburg College

## NEW FOOD DONATION GARDEN

Once Gardener's Day was over, the McDonough County Master Gardeners kicked things into high gear for the growing season. Later in April, the Master Gardeners, along with horticultural students from Western Illinois University, came together to build raised beds for the brand new Growing Illinois Food Together (GIFT) Garden. The GIFT Garden was built as a food donation garden for local food pantries. This garden was inspired by the Sandburg Community Garden, which is now in its eighth year in Knox County. The GIFT Garden was a welcome addition to the beautiful Discovery Garden located at the McDonough County Office and 4-H Fairgrounds.



## PLANT SALES

In May, McDonough County Master Gardeners hosted their annual garden sale where they sold plants and gently used garden supplies. At this and other events, Master Gardeners helped answer questions and gave advice to community members as they gathered supplies for their home gardens. They also may have been seen helping with the Big Brothers and Big Sisters plant sale, or when they set up a help desk at the local Hy-Vee. The Knox County Master Gardeners shared many of these activities with the McDonough Master Gardeners. For starters, the Knox County group also hosted an annual plant sale in May, supporting their project at the Knox County Nursing Home Garden. At the plant sale, and any other event or workday, Master Gardeners pride themselves in sharing their knowledge with community members who visit or volunteer.



## MONARCH BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION

What Gardener's Day is to McDonough County Master Gardeners, the Monarch Migration Festival is to the Knox County Master Gardeners. The Master Gardeners have a passion for protecting and educating folks about monarch butterflies and their migration. Each year, committee members spend many hours coordinating publicity, activities, speakers, vendors, music, and food for this all-day educational event. 2017 was the third year that they hosted the event and they counted hundreds of visitors from all over the state. At the event, Master Gardeners advocate for folks to plant and protect their very own patch of pollinator habitat through the Monarch Waystation program. They show kids and adults how they can help out the beloved pollinator by providing habitat safe from mowers and sprays. Not only do Master Gardeners advocate that citizens plant their own Monarch Waystations, they have added them to all of their worksites in order to show how to incorporate pollinator habitat into home gardens. Their monarch conservation project leader has set a goal for Master Gardeners: she hopes to increase the number of Monarch Waystations within a fifty-mile radius of Galesburg so that Knox County can truly be the Monarch Waystation Capital of Illinois.



Monarch Migration Festival



## PUBLIC OUTREACH

Community outreach is fundamental to programs and the Master Gardeners have fully embraced it. Knox and McDonough County Master Gardeners as well as our local horticulture educator and program coordinator can be found at Farmers' Markets, First Friday events, Railroad Days, Heritage Days, Knox County Scenic Drive, Earth Day, YMCA events, the NAACP Annual Picnic, and public workdays at the Discovery Garden, Knox County Nursing Home, Sandburg Birthplace, and Sandburg Community Garden. They are out in the community making sure that passerby and event participants know that they can ask for advice from their local Master Gardeners and Extension office. They reinforce community outreach with the help of one of the most impactful committees, the brochure committee. This small but mighty group has researched and published brochures monthly for years, and now they have almost a hundred different brochures to distribute at events. These brochures can be found at any of the events as well as online; they have been picked up and distributed statewide and in some cases nationwide!

## REACHING OUT

Master Gardeners have strong and established groups in McDonough and Knox counties, but their work is far from over. The goal for 2018 is to reach more citizens in Warren and Henderson counties with Master Gardener and Horticulture programs. In 2017 they started reaching out when a couple of Warren County Master Gardeners began a new partnership with the Warren County Public Library. They helped to start the Warren County Seed Library, a free service that enables folks to check out seeds from the library. They hosted a series of beginning gardening classes, including the Mother's Day planting class for kids. Master Gardeners hope to keep programs like this going every year and to recruit more Warren and Henderson County Master Gardeners.



## Sustainability in the Home Landscape

Sustainability in the Home Landscape was a six-part series created by University of Illinois Extension Horticulture Educator Chris Enroth, which instructed participants on sustainable landscape practices along with a hands-on "lab" component that simulated a design studio. By the end of the series, each participant had a landscape plan following sustainable principles. The program debuted on January 27 and concluded on March 4. Enroth instructed a class in Macomb on Friday evenings and then repeated the session on Saturday mornings in Galesburg. In total, Enroth taught twelve sessions. Forty people signed up and attended the series.

A pre-assessment survey was administered to determine the sustainable landscaping practices knowledge level of the participants. This survey informed Enroth on what topics required further exploration than his initial program provided. The pre-assessment survey also revealed that many think of sustainable landscaping as a trick for low- or no-maintenance landscaping. By revealing this misconception, Enroth knew introducing sustainable landscapes correctly was critical at the outset of the program so that participants knew what subject matter lay before them during the series.

A post-assessment program evaluation surveyed participants on the strengths and weaknesses of the sustainable landscapes series. Feedback on the post-program evaluation was very positive. Forty-seven percent reported the class far exceeded their expectations. Ninety-four percent said they would recommend this course to others. All participants agreed this class prepared them to be better environmental stewards.

Many participants requested a part two sustainable landscaping series. Enroth is planning to repeat this series in 2018 and develop a second sustainable landscaping series focusing on particular topics covered in the first class.



Master Naturalists learning about prairies.

## Master Naturalist

The Master Naturalist program came to the unit for the first time in 2014. Back then, 16 members made their way through training to become the founding members. In the fall of 2016, the second cohort of members took the Master Naturalist training and entered the group. In 2017, Master Naturalists focused on solidifying the group identity and building up opportunities to learn and volunteer. In an effort to practice their teaching and coordination abilities, Master Naturalists signed up to host field trips throughout the year. First, they went and visited Conservation Icon, Aldo Leopold's childhood home in Burlington, IA, to learn about his life and contributions to wildlife conservation. Then they took a trip to the Mississippi River, observed the protected trumpeter swans, and birdwatched with Western Prairie Audubon Society President Dan Moorehouse. Over the year, they learned about foraging in the woods, monitoring birdhouses, raising monarch caterpillars, collecting prairie seed, and studying ticks. The Master Naturalist learned about Native American life through archeological remains and about wildlife through trail cameras. With the support and volunteer efforts of the Master Naturalist, they were able to build a strong base of active members who are ready to take on another year of volunteer-driven programming. Their goal for next year is to begin developing a speaker's bureau that will serve as a teaching resource in the community. In 2018, expect to see a new class of Master Naturalists graduate and bring the group up to about 35 members.









Cara Allen, Family Life educator, provides information on brain health.

## Brain Health Programming Strengthened and Expanded Through Partnerships

Most of us are aware of a family dealing with the effects of Alzheimer's disease or other types of dementia. We also know how devastating the disease can be, both for the person with the diagnosis and their families.

Family Life educators for the University of Illinois Extension have provided information on healthy aging, especially healthy brain aging, for over 10 years, and the Alzheimer's Association is a prime resource about the disease for families.

In 2017, these two entities collaborated for the first time to provide programs to the communities of Henderson, Knox, McDonough, and Warren counties.

Susan Johnson of the Alzheimer's Association Central Illinois Chapter (Quincy location) and Cara Allen, Family Life educator provided three multiple-session workshops on brain health and dementia. Each session had three components.



Susan Johnson of the Alzheimer's Association trains on characteristics of dementia versus normal aging.

Cara provided Hold That Thought, which taught types of memory as well as six lifestyle choices that contribute to brain health. She also provided FIT WITS to give information on things that can help with everyday forgetfulness and reviewed lifestyle choices that can be detrimental to brain health. Susan added expertise about dementia with the program Know the Ten Signs: Early Detection Matters, which included an overview of Alzheimer's disease, risk factors, diagnosis and the benefits of early detection.





## Family Life Programs Measure Impact on Participants

In 2017, Family Life Educator Cara Allen provided 75 programs to 1,290 participants in the communities of Henderson, Knox, McDonough, and Warren counties.

The majority of these programs were on healthy social and emotional living for adults, with a significant subset of programs aimed at childcare providers to assist them with maintaining their licensure.

In order to measure the efficacy of programs, the participants completed evaluations at the end of each. All evaluations ask the same information.

First participants were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 to 5, how much they learned from the program overall. Also on a scale of 1 to 5, participants were asked to gauge their understanding, knowledge, awareness, skill level, and ability regarding the program topic before and after the presentation.



Cara's results for programs provided in 2017:

	Before	After
Understanding the topic	3.2	4.45
Knowledge of topic	3.02	4.52
Awareness of topic	3.21	4.48
Skill Level	2.92	4.33
Ability	3.29	4.29

Percent increase from before to after	
Understanding the topic	39.1%
Knowledge of topic	49.7%
Awareness of topic	39.6%
Skill Level	48.3%
Ability	30.4%

Overall, how much did the participant learn from this program?

Average score: 4.29 (out of 5)

Participants in Family Life programming reported a positive change from their attendance of the offerings. Impact for all programs will continue to be measured throughout the upcoming year.





## In the face of disaster, EDEN provides enduring support

Many areas throughout the country at some point will experience a disaster—manmade, natural or both. Once the news crews and emergency responders move on to the next crisis, communities often face the prospect of long-term recovery with few remaining resources.

Just such a catastrophe occurred in 1993 when Mississippi and Missouri were ravaged by brutal flooding resulting in at least 32 deaths and billions of dollars in damage. The land-grant universities that responded to the disaster took stock of the experience and realized the important role Extension had—and will continue to have—in national and local disaster preparedness and recovery. By 1998, the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN) was formed.

The organization partners with local, state, and national agencies and by 2005, the entire nation, including three territories, had an EDEN member. University of Illinois Extension, a founding member of EDEN, currently has nine delegates across the state that participate in EDEN.

In September, the University of Illinois Extension hosted the annual EDEN meeting in Moline, Illinois. Seventy-six delegates from land-grant universities all across the United States, including six 1890 institutions, attended this year's conference. George Czapar, director of University of Illinois Extension, kicked off the event by welcoming everyone on behalf of the university.

Carrie McKillip, University of Illinois Extension community and economic development educator, explained why EDEN has been essential in Illinois.

"Extension is one of the few organizations that still has local offices throughout the state, even in the most rural areas. Our ability to deliver disaster preparedness, mitigation, and recovery education is crucial to community resiliency," McKillip said.

"Participation of field staff in professional development activities and networks such as EDEN not only enhances our programming, but directly



Madeleine Russell, University of Georgia, examines the sandbag material.

contributes to our ability to serve communities in disaster situations."

EDEN has been involved after national disasters throughout the country for almost 25 years. Its first high-profile involvement after its formation was after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

It provided tools and strategies for teachers to be able to talk to students and parents about the attacks. It also created web pages to inform Americans about terrorism.

In 2003, EDEN sprang into action after a cow in Washington tested positive for bovine spongiform encephalopathy or mad cow disease. The organization provided research-based information to various audiences about mad cow disease.

After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, EDEN supported relief agencies by networking them to local organizations. They also provided information on safety and survival to the local residents. These natural and manmade disasters allowed delegates to put plans into action and follow them through to recovery of the communities.

This year's annual meeting brought together delegates from all over the country to discuss disasters that have happened in each of their states throughout the year as well as preparation efforts.



As part of the conference, delegates were able to spend a day touring areas of the Quad Cities to see the region's ability to mitigate, prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from flooding along the Mississippi River.

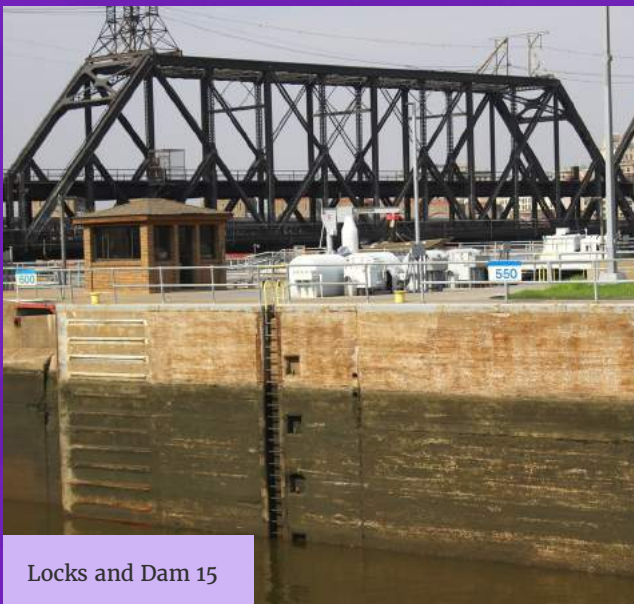
"The flood of 1993, which devastated Quad Cities region, was the impetus for starting EDEN," recalled Rick Atterberry, University of Illinois Extension media communications specialist.

"Extension organizations in the states bordering the Upper Mississippi River realized there had to be a more efficient way to gather information and get it into the hands of those who needed it in a timely fashion."

"Today, when an area is flooded, as in Texas as a result of Hurricane Harvey, Extension resources and personnel are ready to assist in recovery from the earliest moments. There's been a remarkable transformation in the way Extension can help our communities mitigate, plan, respond, and recover."

Robert Olshansky, University of Illinois professor and head of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning was the keynote speaker at the conference.

"Recovery after a disaster is a process not an outcome," said Olshansky. "It requires the ability to adapt to changing circumstances."



Locks and Dam 15



Carrie McKillip assists in building a flood wall for Modern Woodman Park.

Olshansky highlighted the opportunity to create a better, more resilient community after a major disaster, assuming a well thought-out plan is in place.

Nancy Beers, director of Midwest Early Recovery Fund, Center for Disaster Philanthropy, was the capstone speaker for EDEN and she aimed her presentation at how humans are impacted by a disaster.

She highlighted ways Extension and funders could work together to make a real difference in low-attention disasters and closed with five recommendations to help communities recover.

- › Do something. Don't be overwhelmed. Focus on helping one person.
- › It's not about you!
- › Be a blessing not a burden. Ask what do you need? Don't assume that you know what they need, listen to them.
- › Be a peddler of hope. Be their cheerleader and let them know that they will recover.
- › Dreamers vs. Doers. The Thinkers vs. The Workers. You need to be both!

In 2018, USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture will be adding disaster education as a new knowledge area within Extension. This will provide more support and recognition of disaster education within the Extension System.



Henderson County COAD workshop

## Henderson County COAD Training

On May 9, 2017, the Henderson County Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) group held a workshop on setting up Multiple Agency Resource Centers (MARC) for recovery after disasters. Held at the Henderson County Health Department, the meeting was organized by Carrie McKillip, Extension Community Development Educator, through her contacts with the Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN).

Purdue Extension Disaster Specialist and National EDEN Communication Coordinator Abby Hostetler gave the program to over 20 COAD members and agency personnel serving Henderson County. The group learned what agencies should be represented at a MARC, as well as the logistics of setting up a MARC, possible locations, and timing of the services.

According to University of Illinois Extension County Director and Henderson County COAD President Lisa Torrance, programs like this are ways Extension can help communities prepare, mitigate, and respond to disasters. Learning the details of the recovery process will help all of the Henderson County COAD Members know what to do should the COAD be activated in the event of a disaster. Extension is part of the Henderson County community, and we will be here to help no matter what the disaster," said Torrance. She also indicated that Extension has been working with Henderson County officials in disaster mitigation and preparedness since 2008. Extension disaster programming plans in Henderson County for 2018 include the MyPI youth preparedness initiative at West Central High School, updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan and supporting education for the COAD.



Flooding along the Mississippi River in Henderson County





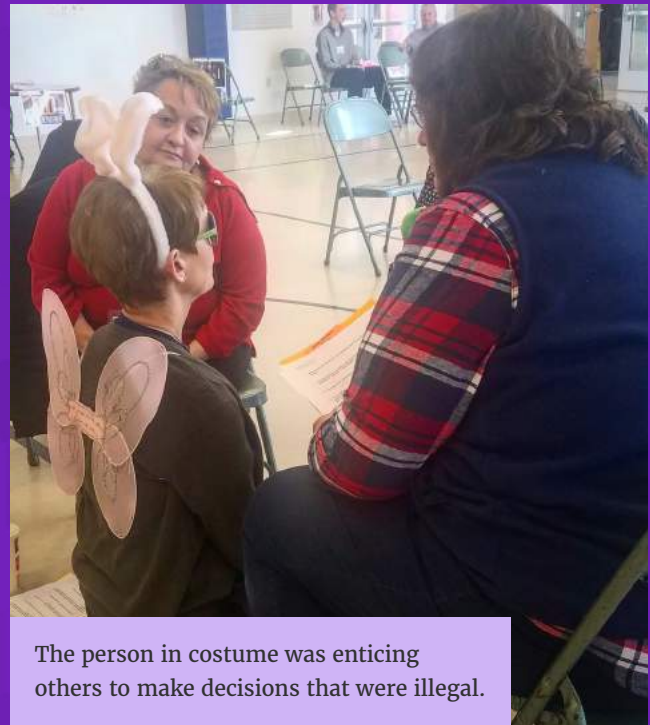
## Poverty Simulations for Area Schools

The University of Illinois Extension Staff from Henderson, Knox, McDonough, and Warren counties facilitated numerous Poverty Simulations both for counties within the unit and throughout the West Central Illinois and Eastern Iowa area. In the program, developed by the Missouri Community Action Agency, a family lives in poverty for a month.

Three unit staff, Lisa Torrance, Tessa Hobbs-Curley, and Carrie McKillip are certified facilitators for the program. The three staff have combined to deliver the program to over 500 participants throughout 2017. The program assigns participants to a family unit, gives them specific characters, job/school assignments, and income information. The simulation also requires 10 to 15 volunteers to serve as agency personnel, business owners, and other community members the participants may need to visit to be able to survive the month.



One family unit during the simulation.



The person in costume was enticing others to make decisions that were illegal.

The program is particularly relevant to public school faculty and administrators struggling to meet the educational needs of children in the community. According to the unit director, Lisa Torrance, the program can really open eyes of participants. "We were doing the debrief at one of the area schools and asked participants if they had any aha moments. One of the faculty raised his hand and said, it just occurred to me that I never once through the simulation asked my kids how their school week had gone." Torrance went on to say that these realizations are part of the intent of the program and have sparked great discussion and awareness throughout the community.

Participants are given situations that could occur during the month.





## Illinois Nutrition Education Program Programs Make “HUGE” Difference at Home!

A teacher at West Central Elementary School in Henderson County, who also happens to be the mother of several children that have participated in It's Fun to be Healthy and the OrganWise Guys, related several changes that have occurred at home as a result of those programs.

"They know the difference between Go and Whoa foods, and having the information come from someone other than me has been HUGE!" she said. "It makes meal time so much easier to get those fruits and vegetables down."

She continued, "One of my sons doesn't even need ranch dressing all over his vegetables anymore. He heard you say that vegetables can be delicious all by themselves and that is how he eats them now. He will sit down in front of the TV with just a plain carrot for his snack."

### I CAN Switch My Milks

Can a taste test between 2% and 1% milk make a difference in the lives of parents? The answer is "Yes!"

A SNAP-Ed activity station called "Choose Low Fat Dairy" was set up at a parent-teacher conference day at West Central Community Services Warren County Head Start in October 2017.

One parent had a very puzzled look on her face as she tasted the two samples. "You know, I USED to drink lower fat milk all the time," she said. "I guess this taste test shows that I can do it again. I can't tell the difference!"

A blank look came upon another parent's face when she tasted the samples. "I really can't taste the difference. I can change to the lower fat milk without a problem!" she explained.



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

SNAP-Education works with limited-resource audiences to make healthier choices where they eat, shop, live, play and learn in their communities. Through classes and workshops, and by working towards policy, systems, and environmental changes, SNAP-Education positively impacts the nutrition and activity choices of people and communities we serve.

### Serving Local Residents



**2,116**

Total SNAP-Ed Participants



**264 (12%)**  
Adults



**1,852 (88%)**  
Youth



**145 (7%)**

Participants Who Identified as Hispanic

#### RACE OF PARTICIPANTS

- 72% White (1,525)
- 23% Black (494)
- 5% American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (97)

### Our Partners



**5**  
K-12 Schools



**1**  
Store or Market



**1**  
Youth Center



**10**  
Community Centers



**12**  
Early Childhood Centers



**2**  
Food Pantries and Food Banks





## Welcome to the Real World

The Welcome to the Real World (WTTRW) program consists of four parts: career exploration, expenditure decision-making, money management, and choice evaluation. The program includes an active, hands-on activity that gives young people the opportunity to explore career opportunities and make lifestyle and spending choices similar to those adults face on a daily basis. In addition, there are a series of fact sheets with activities that expand upon the learning that takes place during the simulation.

In the simulation of the real world, participants assume that they have completed the basic educational requirements for their chosen career, and are single and 25 years of age. They live on their own and are independent with no financial support from family or others.

The participants explore potential careers or occupations that they would like to pursue in the future. After they choose an occupation, they receive a monthly salary for that occupation. They then proceed through the WTTRW simulation, deducting taxes, determining a savings amount, paying a student loan (if applicable), and spending their salary on the necessary and other items that reflect the career and lifestyle they have chosen.

This past year, a total of 789 eighth-grade students from the following schools participated in the simulation: Abingdon-Avon Middle School, Costa Catholic Academy, Churchill Middle School, Knoxville Jr. High School, Lombard Middle School, Monmouth-Roseville Jr. High School, United Jr. High School, West Central Middle School, & Williamsfield Jr. High School.

Seventy-seven percent of the students who completed the survey indicated they learned at least one of the five financial management skills. Specifically of the 426 students who responded to the skills questions:

- 56% learned how to balance income and expenses
- 56% learned how to open a savings account
- 49% learned how to balance a checkbook
- 44% gained skill in keeping track of a savings account

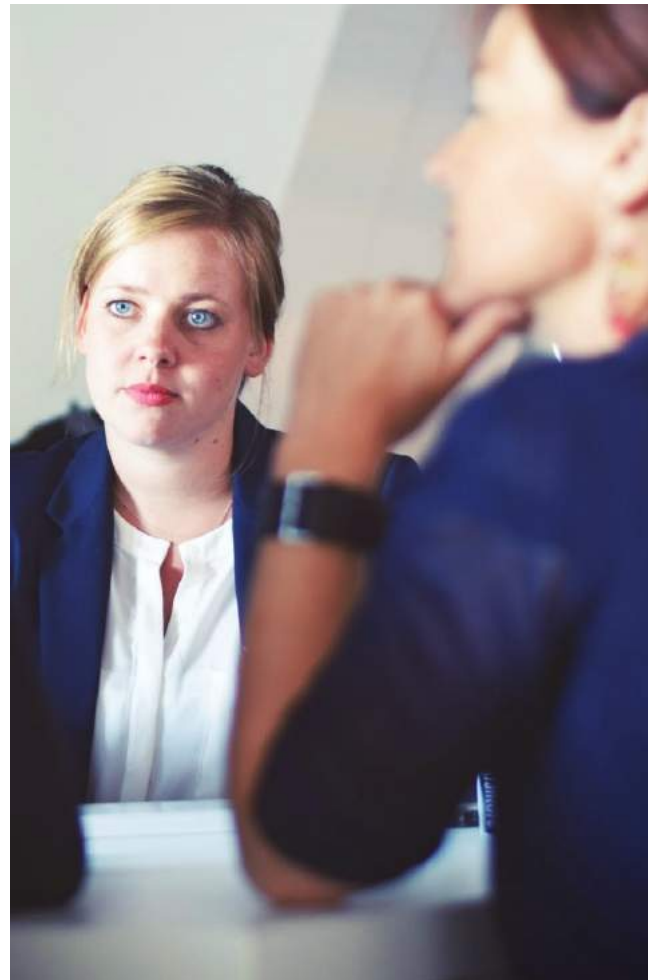
When asked how their view of life in the future changed as a result of participating in the Welcome to the Real World program, 89% indicated that their view had changed. Managing money, getting an education, and spending money wisely were mentioned. A sampling of some of the responses include:

"I've learned a lot about financing my money and about the important skills of balancing a checking account, as well as not overspending."

"It has taught me that things are harder than I thought. I learned how to manage money and that you can't always go all of the time."

"I think my view of the future has changed because it made me realize the importance of choosing a career I enjoy as well as one that can support me."

"I know I need to get a good education and get a good job."





## Henderson and Warren County 4-H Create Stronger Bonds in their Communities

Members of Warren and Henderson County 4-H clubs participated in programs related to community service. Their focus for the year was "hands for larger service" with a goal to participate in at least two community service events. It was important to highlight these events over the year so that the youth would gain a better understanding of poverty-stricken families in their community.

The first event started with the new 4-H year on September 1. Members were educated on how many food pantries do not carry the necessary items to make a birthday cake. Members were asked to imagine celebrating a birthday without a party. They were told many families struggle to make ends meet and are not able to afford a birthday party. Members were asked to participate in a friendly "Birthday in a Box" competition. One box consisted of a cake mix, a container of icing, and vegetable oil. Members who wanted to participate were asked to donate one, or more if they chose, of those items to the contest. The clubs, one from each county, who provided the highest complete sets would win the competition. The event concluded at the 4-H kick-Off event held Saturday, October 21.

In total, 250 "birthday bags" were distributed among the nine food pantries in the two counties. Word spread about the competition through the communities and a local third grade class donated too! The youth were very excited and proud to have collected so many bags. Food pantries were very pleased with the donation and said that the bags were very popular, and many commented on how thoughtful the youth were and what a great idea it was.



Birthday in a Box Donation Bags

The second event was a collaboration with the State 4-H office and Illini Fighting Hunger to package 10,000 meals, which were distributed among the local food pantries in Warren and Henderson counties. Members of Federation spearheaded the event in an effort to help families in their community who face food insecurity. Both counties split the remaining cost after additional funding was made available from the Illinois 4-H Foundation.

Over 60 people (youth and family members) arrived at the Farm Bureau Auditorium in Monmouth on Saturday, December 9. They worked for approximately two hours adding vitamin powder, dried vegetables, soy, and rice to the bags before weighing and sealing them for delivery. During the event, the 900,000th bag was packed since Illinois 4-H started the program in 2014. Food pantries were consulted prior to the event and were provided with the number of boxes they requested. Boxes were delivered December 11 and December 12 to ensure pantries had them available prior to the Christmas season.

In delivering the last four boxes, Tara Chenoweth, University of Illinois Extension 4-H Program Coordinator, had an opportunity to speak with one of the pantry managers. Unfortunately, the manager is cancer patient so the hours of the pantry have been adjusted a bit. She thanked Tara and told her people ask her why she keeps it open since she has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy. The pantry manager told Tara that last year she had a bowl of Christmas candy out for the children that visit and she told one little girl to take some candy with her. The little girl told her that she was so hungry that she would really prefer some carrots. Needless to say, the girl left with both. The manager said that is why she keeps it open...the look in that little girl's eyes.

Through these two service events, a major impact was made in our two counties—an impact on people the 4-H members may or may not even know. Not only are their efforts promoting 4-H, but they are learning that working together can greatly benefit their communities. Youth are, and should be, very proud of their accomplishments this year.





## Rising Legends 4-H

Outreach and expanding programming was the goal for Knox County 4-H in 2017. One way to reach out is by promotion at schools. Lombard Middle School was just the place to look for interested students who wanted to learn leadership, independence, and project mastery.

In September of 2016 Tessa Hobbs-Curley, University of Illinois Extension Youth Development Educator, and Angel Wright, University of Illinois Extension 4-H Program Coordinator, spoke to a group of interested eighth grade students. A 4-H sign up was held during school lunch. Five students enrolled to become the first ever Lombard After School 4-H Club. The members had a great time getting to know each other, electing officers, and learning parliamentary procedure.

A cookout fundraiser was organized and held at the local Tractor Supply Company. Club members felt the fundraiser would be a great way to earn money to open their checking account. They raised \$170 dollars and opened the account under their new name, "Rising Legends 4-H".

They decided to make the club a community club and moved from the school to a nearby church to meet once a month and make it a place to invite and teach other youth about 4-H. They put together a power point presentation to promote the club. Two parents, who had no previous ties to 4-H, stepped forward to lead the club. In the fall of 2017, an additional 4-H after school group was formed to teach other Lombard students about 4-H with the goal to prepare students for membership in the Rising Legends 4-H club.

**My Club**

**My Community**

**My Country**

**My World**



## 4-H Federation and Club Activities

Knox County 4-H Federation promotes activities for the county 4-H clubs. Seven high school-aged members of Knox County 4-H were inducted into Federation in July of 2016 and served until July of 2017. Members of the group serve as representatives in the livestock, general show, and expansion and review committees.

The year started with the promotion of the sixteen Knox County Clubs during National 4-H Week. Members were welcomed into local community schools to promote the National Science Day activity "Drone Discovery".

Supporters of 4-H were surprised with decorated cookie jars full of goodies. Federation provided prizes for clubs that decorated the cookie jars based on the theme "Mission Adventure: Join the Team." Window and yard displays adorned eight towns in Knox County during National 4-H Week. Just one more way for clubs to recruit new members.

In December, Federation members hosted a first-year cookie decoration for new 4-H members. This gave first-year members a chance to meet the Federation and ask any questions they might have about 4-H.

January was a busy month. Any Federation member would say that preparing dinner for the Rescue Mission in Galesburg is their favorite community service event. Preparing and serving a meal is a humbling experience at the mission. Members state that it leaves a lasting impression on the extent of the need in Knox County. Along with dinner, 4-H clubs donated over sixty-four packages of diapers to the mission's littlest residents.

In the spring, clubs had a chance to create a skit and perform at Share the Fun. Finally, in May, clubs painted and cleaned at the Knox County Fairgrounds in preparation for the July show.



## I pledge my heart to greater loyalty...

Every year McDonough County 4-H Federation does an excellent job giving back to their communities. In 2017, Federation members turned their focus to making connections and memories that will last a lifetime.

Each year Federation members use what little free time they have between exhibiting projects and club responsibilities to provide activities for youth. Their focus is not only on the younger 4-H members who participate at the McDonough County fair, but also siblings of 4-H members and youth from around McDonough County. Each year they provide activity calendars and personally invite youth to local summer programs, daycares, and summer Bible schools. Some of the most attended activities were the stick horse race and face painting during the 4-H Horse show. During the planning meeting, Federation members thought back on times they attended the fair and wanted to create fun memories for this generation similar to the ones they had.

For the first time, Federation members participated in the Festival of Trees event during Macomb's annual Dickens on the Square festival. The Festival of Trees was put on by the McDonough District Hospital as a benefit to raise funds for the Dolores Kator Switzer Women's Center. The Federation members decorated a tree in the theme of "Fun at the Fair" where each of the members donated special 4-H ribbons that they earned during showing at the county and state 4-H fairs, hung livestock-themed decorations, and even wrote a letter to Santa asking for supplies for their projects. During the Festival of Trees, the community was asked to vote on their favorite decorated tree. Sadly, their tree didn't win a prize but the members didn't mind when they learned that this year was the highest attended event in the twelve years that it has been going on and that over \$35,000 was raised for the women's center.

On top of their annual food drive, Federation created "Cookie Bags" for local families in need. After learning that local agencies were experiencing high numbers of families in need of assistance for the holidays, the Federation wanted to make sure that

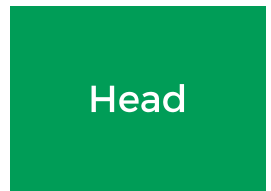
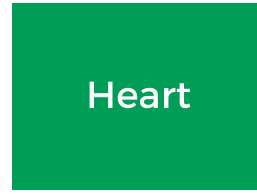
everyone could still make memories as a family. On December 10, 2017, the Federation held their monthly meeting at Macomb Hy-Vee so that they could purchase supplies and assemble the "Cookie Bags" to be distributed. Each green gift bag had one sugar cookie mix, one chocolate chip cookie mix, two cookie cutters, a can of frosting, and sprinkles. After the bags were assembled each Federation member took a moment to hand write a note to the family who would receive the cookie bag. The members wanted to make sure that the families knew that they were being thought of.

The plans for connecting with their communities and making memories show no sign of slowing down. As one of the H's in 4-H stands for "Heart for Greater Loyalty," it is wonderful that our 4-H Federation members desire to make a lasting connection with others and bring the 4-H name to places where it may not have been before.



Donations of Cookie Bags for local families in need.









Livestock Skillathon Team

### Livestock Skillathon Team Takes Third

An Illinois team earned third place at the National 4-H Livestock Skillathon Contest held Monday, November 13 during the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Ky.

The team finished second in the quality assurance division, which included questions related to animal handling, breeding, marketing, feeding, and carcass evaluation. It also placed fifth in evaluation and seventh in meats, breeds, and equipment identification.

Sam Schneider coached the 4-H team. The Illinois 4-H Foundation provided support for the team at the national competition.

Evan Link of Knox County placed 22nd overall with a seventh place finish in quality assurance, 25th place in identification, and 50th place in evaluation. Evan was able to serve on this team since he qualified for the Superior Young Produces (SYP) award at the Illinois State Fair in August of 2017. At that time he was one of ten youth who was awarded the SYP.

### 4-H Robotics

For Inspiration Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) LEGO League and FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) robotics teams had an exciting year.

Knox County 4-H robotics has a long history of success in First Lego League robotics, especially the

RoboStorm team. RoboStorm had a solid performance at their qualifying competition at the University of Bradley in December. The team captured the Core Values award and made it to state.

This was the RoboStorm's fifth consecutive time going to the state competition. They captured two esteemed awards, the Ambassador award, and the Champion's award. RoboStorm was also invited to an invitational at the University of Arkansas.

The 4-H Binary Bullets is an FTC team that practices at Knoxville High School. The team was ranked 7th in the state at the end of the year and will head to the state competition in February in Elgin, Illinois.



4-H Binary Bullets Competition





Shooting Sports Practice

## 4-H Shooting Sports

The Illinois 4-H Shooting Sports is one of the fastest growing project areas in 4-H. In this program, youth learn the safe and responsible use of a firearm. The program in Illinois is in its 7th year and has 97 counties that are eligible for the program, with 950 certified adult instructors. There are 3200 4-H shooting sports members across the state of Illinois.

The program offers an array of different shooting disciplines with different age requirements. Members ages range from 8-18 years old. The members participate in five disciplines: Archery, Air rifle, .22 Small Bore, and Shotgun. A new discipline to Illinois 4-H shooting sports program this year is Air Pistol.

Last year the McDonough County Shooting Sports had a total of 59 members who participated in multi-disciplines. Those members took part in a total of 128 shooting sports projects. That is a growth percentage of 157% for McDonough County. The National Rifle Association (NRA) supported the McDonough County program in 2017 with \$3,445.60 in supplies. The supplies included 5000 rounds of 12 gauge shells, 5000 rounds of 20 gauge shells, 500 rounds of tracker 12 gauge shells, 500 rounds of tracker 20 gauge shells, and 128 cases of clay pigeons.

The donation helped McDonough County 4-H provide youth with continuous learning opportunities in marksmanship, safe and responsible use of firearms, principles of shooting and archery, and much more. Activities of the program provide opportunities to develop life skills, self-worth, and conservation ethics.



General Show project presentation

## 4-H State Fair General Show Exhibits

Nearly 3,100 4-H exhibits from across Illinois were judged and displayed during the Illinois State Fair. They earned the right to exhibit at the State Fair by being selected in the top of their division at their county 4-H Show.

Conference judging was held where youth share their knowledge and skills gained in the project. The judges offer constructive critique, suggestions for improvement, and praise. In addition to the project work, the member's knowledge of the project figured into the final score.

127 projects were exhibited from Henderson, Knox, McDonough, and Warren counties with 40 receiving the Superior Award and 87 receiving the Awards of Excellence on their project.

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