



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



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A Message from the Chancellor

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

Robert J. Jones
 Chancellor, University of Illinois



A Note from the County Director

Greetings from University of Illinois Extension serving Boone, DeKalb, and Ogle counties!

Extension programming is broad in scope and difficult to briefly summarize. However, within these pages you will find a sampling of local programs and read a few stories. As you read, I hope Extension becomes more familiar and opportunities to participate, volunteer, or partner more recognizable.

As we celebrate a successful programming year, it is important to thank our local Extension Council, county boards, program and funding partners who help provide the foundational infrastructure for operations. We also recognize volunteers, who have given time and talent to community service and youth development: 105 Master Gardeners, 46 Master Naturalists, 348 4-H volunteers, 161 4-H club leaders, and those who serve in various, unnumbered capacities.

Your Extension office, in cooperation with local partners and volunteers, provides the research and practical education you can trust to develop skills, solve problems, and build better communities.

It has been a pleasure to serve.
 Heather Coyle,
 County Extension Director

Our Mission

To enable people to improve their lives and communities through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work.



2019 Northern Illinois 4-H Camp Counselors

4-H Camp Counselors Grow Leadership Skills

Summer camp is a big deal for youth participating each year, but it's a bigger deal for the 4-H teen camp counselors. A key factor in creating a successful week for the young participants is the support role provided by volunteer, teen 4-H members.

The highly competitive application process for counselor team positions begins eight months prior to camp; and building a team of 25 counselors starts with their first training in January.

Teen counselors dedicate more than 24 hours preparing for their week with the young campers. They learn teamwork and how to promote positive behaviors. Training topics include understanding the ages and stages of youth development, risk management, activity planning, and program development.

"Being a camp counselor has helped me realize my self worth and increased my leadership abilities," noted one counselor.

A total of 155 youth, ages eight to 15, participated in 4-H summer camp at Rock River Christian Camp in Polo, in June of 2019. That same week, 14 new counselors-in-training (CITs) participated in hands-on workshops to learn about opportunities and expectations as potential future camp counselors.



<https://extension.illinois.edu/bdo/northern-illinois-4-h-camp>

Being a camp counselor made me realize that my actions can impact numerous people even in the smallest ways. It showed me how 4-H brings people together to learn by doing.

COLLIN CONDERMAN, OGLE CO. COUNSELOR





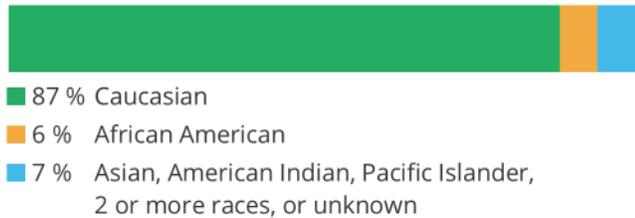
Serving Youth in Boone, DeKalb, and Ogle Counties

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

Program Reach



RACE



ETHNICITY



RESIDENCE



Teen leaders in Boone County were trained to deliver cooking lessons during summer school and summer feeding programs.

4-H Flexes to Meet the Needs of Members

It's rare that a century-old organization flexes and stretches to fit the interests of current members, but that's what 4-H has been doing for decades.

Kids, ages eight to 18, get their hands dirty with in- and after-school programming, as well as clubs and camps that hone skills in agriculture, creative arts, environment, STEM, healthy living, leadership, and citizenship. The best part is that they can craft the programs to follow their individual interests and desires.

"Youth get the opportunity to grow in leadership, develop life skills, and give back to their community in ways that fit them personally," said Johnna Jennings, Extension Educator 4-H Youth Development.

Kids can concentrate on one area, or they can try a variety of programs during their 4-H experience. The focus of all 4-H programs is the development of youth as individuals and as responsible and productive citizens.

"Through hands-on learning, kids build not only confidence, creativity and curiosity, but also life skills such as leadership and resiliency to help them thrive today and tomorrow," said Melissa Irwin, 4-H youth development program coordinator.

The Teen Teacher Cooking School program, funded by Extension and the Walmart Healthy Living Grant, provided opportunities for 4-H teens to develop their teaching skills, while serving as role models to youth in underserved populations. In 2019, nine teen leaders in Boone and DeKalb counties were trained to deliver cooking lessons during summer school and summer feeding programs.

"The positive youth development is the most rewarding aspect of programs like these. The teenagers and participants each gain from their program experiences," explains Jennings.



<https://extension.illinois.edu/bdo/4-h-youth-development>

Embryology – The Fascination of Living Animals

“Children are excited to see a fully developed baby chick emerge from an egg,” said Johnna Jennings, Extension educator in 4-H youth development.

“Three weeks of incubation transforms seemingly lifeless chicken eggs into active, living beings. Students in the classroom develop an understanding of biology concepts through direct experience with living things, their life cycles and habitats. It’s an exciting and satisfying program to present in area schools,” Jennings explains.

In 2019, the embryology program was delivered in 82 classrooms in Boone, DeKalb, and Ogle counties. A total of 1,758 eggs were distributed.

During the 21-day incubation period, students learn incubator operation, how to turn eggs, candle eggs for fertility, and record data. Lessons are aligned with state learning standards and the level of difficulty varies depending on the age of the students, ranging from pre-kindergarten to seventh grade.

“Sometimes the chicks hatch and sometimes they don’t; each egg is an opportunity to learn about and experience life issues,” said Jennings.



A classroom participant enjoys meeting a newly hatched chick for the first time. The Embryology program was delivered in 82 classrooms in Boone, DeKalb, and Ogle.



Science Siesta – A Real Life Night at the Museum

Science Siesta, an exciting program for fourth through sixth grade boys and girls, combines hands-on career learning with a real-life overnight experience at the Discovery Center Museum in Rockford.

The program provides opportunities for youth to learn about careers in science from professional scientists, participate in hands-on activities, make new friends, explore and play in the museum, and sleep among the exhibits.

Two events are scheduled each year, one for boys and one for girls. Participants attend from a nine-county area, open to the first 100 youth registered.





Ag in the Classroom is on the Move

A day at the office for Melinda Charbonneau is really a day in the classroom. Travelling between schools in every district in Ogle and Carroll counties keeps Charbonneau on the move.

As the ag literacy coordinator for Ogle and Carroll counties, Charbonneau works in collaboration with the Illinois Farm Bureau and is tasked with providing programming that paints a cohesive picture of agriculture for students.

Teaching programs for students in kindergarten through sixth grade, Charbonneau works with individual teachers to pair her presentations with lessons in their classes. "The number of sessions depends on the program and the grade level of the students," explains Charbonneau. "Older kids have longer, more in-depth sessions, compared to kindergarten through second grade when the information is more general, but still geared at making those connections."

In 2019, Charbonneau presented 982 programs and made 19,982 contacts. On average, she presents to students about four times per school year. "I like seeing them many times over the course of a school year, so they experience many different aspects of agriculture," said Charbonneau.

She develops a rapport with the teachers and students that encourages an excitement for learning. In one program, she taught second graders at Forrester Elementary School how wheat is turned into flour. Then they made their own loaves of bread.

"I work hard to ensure kids understand where their food and fiber comes from and help them realize it affects our lives every day. I hope that I'm helping make that connection."

My passion is teaching kids how agriculture is intimately connected to their life.

MELINDA CHARBONNEAU,
EXTENSION PROGRAM COORDINATOR



K-12 teachers participate in the annual Summer Ag Institute where they learn first-hand about agriculture and how to present ag lessons in their classrooms.

School's Out for Summer

When Charbonneau is in her off-season (summer break), she coordinates the annual Summer Ag Institute. The week-long training affords K-12 teachers graduate credit hours and continuing education credits.

Teachers learn first-hand about agriculture and how to incorporate agricultural lesson plans into their classroom curriculum. Program participants travel to area farms and agri-businesses and listen to classroom presentations from industry experts. Tours take place in Stephenson, Ogle, Winnebago, and Boone counties.



Bread making day in Ms. Giedd's second grade class at Forrester Elementary School



982

Ag in the Classroom Programs in 2019



Natural Resource Education Center a Hidden Gem in DeKalb County

Next to Genoa High School, there is a nondescript, partially paved road leading to a tree-lined lane. The road runs alongside the Kishwaukee River and meanders through the Russell Woods Forest Preserve. As one travels deeper into the trees, the road widens to reveal a hidden gem that is the Natural Resource Education Center (NREC), housed by the DeKalb County Forest Preserve.

Through the NREC, Extension provides environmental educational experiences for area school children and adults. An abundance of learning, exploring, and fun happens there.

Upon arrival at the center, visitors are welcomed by a tree stump sporting an artfully carved black bear, aptly named Forrest Stump. Upon entering the quaint, one-story building, guests are sometimes met by the resident tortoise, TJ, lazily napping in the entrance hall.

The University of Illinois Extension, along with three other entities, created a joint natural resources education program in 1993. The groups included the DeKalb County Forest Preserve, DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District, and later Solid Waste Management.



Visitors are welcomed by a tree stump sporting an artfully carved black bear, aptly named Forrest Stump.



Guests are sometimes met by the resident tortoise, TJ. Follow TJ on Instagram @tj_tortoise.

The NREC is staffed by Peggy Doty and Connie Handel, University of Illinois Extension staff. Peggy Doty is the Extension educator tasked with energy and environmental stewardship, who creates curriculum and manages activity at the NREC. Doty has worked for Extension for 21 years developing programs and educating students and visitors.

Annual programming includes field studies, classroom recycling, family events, and adult education. Programs are often designed to address current issues such as coyotes, large predators, backyard wildlife, invasive species, recycling, and watershed management.

Summer day camp is one of the most-loved programs at the center, offering five weeks of environmental education for students, seven to 11 years old. "Parents tell us how their child has become a good steward of the environment, or how their child has been changed by the program," reports Doty.

We are not creating environmentalists. We are raising community members who understand their sustainability is based on our relationship with natural resources.

PEGGY DOTY, EDUCATOR
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION (SNAP-EDUCATION)

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

Serving Local Families



4,929

Total SNAP-Education Participants



54%
Adults



46%
Youth



26% Identified as Hispanic
54% Identified as Non-Hispanic
20% Unknown



- 90% White (2,955)
- 7% Black (245)
- 3% American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (89)

Our Community Partners



15
K-12 Schools



12
Youth Centers



2
Store or Markets



9
Early Childhood



17
Community Centers



16
Food Pantries and Food Banks

Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

Talking with Veronica Skaradzinski, one immediately sees the passion she has for her work as a SNAP-Ed Extension educator. She exhibits a positive tone and genuinely cares about the people she works with, whether through partnering with school lunch programs, supporting school wellness committees, or sharing creative ways to promote nutritious foods with food pantry volunteers.

Skaradzinski believes small changes can make big differences over time and that healthy habits can fit any lifestyle. She explains, "We work on building trust in the community with our clients and partners. We are then able to lead, educate, and implement change related to healthy lifestyles in at-risk populations."

Working at a site level, she travels to Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties. Her biggest goal is focusing on diet quality and physical activity, healthy food access, and community collaboration. At food pantries, Skaradzinski uses the Nutrition Environment Food Pantry Assessment Tool (NEFPAT) to suggest the best possible options for food pantry set up and display of foods identified as healthy. Skaradzinski emphasizes that simple changes make the healthy choice the easy choice.

"When a food pantry is able to take on more of these NEFPAT strategies, we are confident that community members have support and access to what they need to create a healthy lifestyle," Skaradzinski said.

We work on building trust in the community with clients and partners. We are then able to lead, educate, and implement change related to healthy lifestyles in at-risk populations.

VERONICA SKARADZINSKI, EDUCATOR
SNAP-EDUCATION

Helping Families Live Healthier Lives

Helping people lead healthier lives is a team effort. Skaradzinski's efforts at the organizational level compliments work done in the classroom and at partner sites by SNAP-Ed community workers.

In 2019, the SNAP-Ed team provided nutrition education to 2,268 youth at 15 schools and nine preschools.

"Our first goal was to meet members of the family starting at school level," explains Jan Saglier, community worker in Boone. Saglier attends parent-teacher conferences in two districts where she conducts SNAP-Ed activities.

Natalie Coy, community worker for Ogle County, describes how healthy habits are taught in the classroom: "We create games for students that match the curriculum teachers are presenting. For pre-kindergarten through second grade we start with nutrition basics." For example, the alphabet is used to teach nutritious snacking habits: A for apples, B for banana, and C for carrots. "Exercises like these are easy for kids to remember," says Coy.

"Parents have reported that their kids are asking for fruits and vegetables when shopping at the grocery store. That makes our job very rewarding – that kids are internalizing what we teach them," said Brianne Gugerty, community worker for Ogle County.

The goal of activities is to encourage students to experience the joy of variety at mealtime. Activity calendars, recipes, and newsletters are sent home to reinforce the concepts students learn in school. "We encourage parents to join in the activities their children are excited about," said Tracy Marcus, community worker in DeKalb County.

"The most rewarding part of being a SNAP-Ed community worker is the relationships built over the years. We know we are helping families live healthier lives," said Saglier.



<https://extension.illinois.edu/bdo/illinois-nutrition-education-programs>



Statewide Webinar Reach



13
Webinars in 2019



390
Reached in Community Involvement and Leadership Webinars



86
Reached in Food Access Webinars



191
Reached in Economic and Financial Well-being Webinars



922
Reached in Economic Vitality and Community Resiliency

The Leadership Academy for County Officials, developed by U of I Extension provided training to elected and appointed county officials. Wayne Reising (County Board, Ogle County), and Jamey Sulser (County Board, Ogle County) attended five interactive, day-long sessions on fiscal management, leadership in crisis situations, data-driven decision-making, economic development, community asset development, and more.



The process of running for elected office is the same, regardless of your political affiliations. This year, Extension partnered with elected officials from Boone County to educate citizens on how to file and run for elected office.



Master Gardeners Train Others

Author Robert Heinlein declared, "When one teaches, two learn." Barb Wych, a Boone County Master Gardener, is doing just that – leading a project on tree identification for her fellow Master Gardeners.

"The Boone County Master Gardeners were approached by the Village of Poplar Grove to assist in conducting an inventory of trees located on the right-of-way and public properties," said Judy Hodge, Extension program coordinator.

Wych, along with Master Gardeners Gail Giglio and Maddy Paulson, participated in an online urban tree training as part of the Master Gardener program. There is a steady demand for horticultural consumer information statewide and Extension trains Master Gardener volunteers to meet the need.

Certification to be a Master Gardener requires 60 hours of training and 60 hours of volunteer work. Once certified, Master Gardeners are required to serve a minimum of 30 hours a year to remain active, but some serve more. DeKalb County's Lori Brown logged 402 hours in the Master Gardener program this past year!

"Master Gardeners are adults of all ages, who love gardening and have some gardening experience, but aren't exclusively experts," explains Hodge. "These are very dedicated people. We are lucky to have interested, creative, caring individuals in the program."



Master Gardeners learn how to ID and inventory trees.



Students in the Jr. Master Gardener Summer Program created centerpieces for the Farm to Table Event, raising support for the Oregon Park District Youth Scholarship Fund.

Master Naturalists

Master Naturalists are the "boots on the ground" for local conservation partners, providing 2,173 hours of environmental stewardship in 2019. Joe Richardson logged 219 hours in the Master Naturalist program this past year!

Master Naturalist volunteers serve at DeKalb County Forest Preserve, Boone County Conservation District, Byron Forest Preserve, Nachusa Grasslands, and other locations, improving local green spaces and preserving our natural resources.

"We enjoyed a wonderful afternoon tour through the Grasslands yesterday, with emphasis on the bison herd. Joe Richardson did a marvelous job leading the tour, providing answers to the many bison questions from our group, plus many more regarding the grasslands themselves. He is a very knowledgeable steward. We couldn't thank him enough for a sharing his knowledge with us." - Program Participant



151
Master Volunteers



9,930
Volunteer Hours



\$263,034
Value to Communities





University of Illinois Extension has been serving Illinois communities since 1914, improving communities through partnerships that put knowledge to work in all 102 Illinois counties. Here in Boone, DeKalb and Ogle counties, we would like to thank those who provided financial support in 2019.

70,667 Program Contacts
 1,616 Programs
 136 Program Locations



To make a donation, contact Jenny Kvamme at (815) 732-2191 or visit our website.

Donations support local programming efforts.



- 34% Federal Funds (including SNAP)
- 22% State Funds (Match, Ag Premium, State Extension)
- 24% Local Government
- 20% Local Partners, Cost Recovery, Grants



- 74% Program & Admin Personnel
- 15% Program Non-Personnel
- 11% Facilities, Utilities, Equipment

University of IL provides all IT equipment & support



Heather Coyle
County Director



Peggy Doty
Energy Environmental
Stewardship Educator



Johnna Jennings
Youth Development
Educator



Veronica Skaradzinski
SNAP-Ed Educator



Natalie Coy
SNAP-Ed



Jodi Baumgartner
4-H Coordinator



Melissa Irwin
4-H Coordinator



Nicole Groezinger
4-H Coordinator



Araceli Lopez
4-H Latino Coordinator



Brianne Gugerty
SNAP-Ed



Judy Hodge
ANR Coordinator



Elizabeth Sosa
ANR Coordinator



Connie Handel
ANR Community Worker



Melinda Charbonneau
AITC Coordinator



Tracy Marcus
SNAP-Ed



Jenny Kvamme
Office Support



Amy Miller
Office Support



Rosa Borjon
Office Support



Kelli Morrow
Office Support



Jan Saglier
SNAP-Ed



Ogle County 4-H Ambassadors

2019 EXTENSION COUNCIL & COUNTY BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Boone County

- Ellen Genrich
- Bill Hall
- Marshall Newhouse
- Brad Stark
- Pam Stock
- Cathy Ward
- Jane Zeien

DeKalb County

- Kris Aves
- Sally DeFauw
- Emily Plapp
- Roy Plote
- John Prendergast
- Toney Xidis

Ogle County

- Dan Dietrich
- Rick Fritz
- Julia Heller
- Lisa Hinrichs
- Lyle Hopkins
- Michelle LaPage
- Marty Typer
- Stephanie Wascher

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Boone County Extension
 205 Cadillac Court, Suite 3
 Belvidere, IL 61008-1733
 (815) 544-3710
 Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4:30 pm
 Closed Noon - 1pm

DeKalb County Extension
 1350 West Prairie Drive
 Sycamore, IL 60178-3166
 (815) 758-8194
 Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4:30 pm
 Closed Noon - 1pm

Natural Resource Education Center
 11750 State Route 72
 Genoa, IL 60135
 (815) 784-2000

Ogle County Extension
 421 West Pines Road, Suite 10
 Oregon, IL 61061-9003
 (815) 732-2191
 Mon - Fri, 8 am - 4:30 pm

ONLINE



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Cover photos: (Top left) Emily Schell, Boone County rabbit showmanship judging, (Top right) Ogle County Master Gardener teaching youth the benefits of gardening, (Bottom left) Miguel Stach, Boone County photography workshop, (Bottom right) Parachute fun with CATCH Club, students learning about nutrition and wellness through activity

University of Illinois ~ U.S. Department of Agriculture ~ Local Extension Councils Cooperating
 University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any program, please contact the county Extension office. The Illinois Nutrition Education Program is funded by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the US Department of Agriculture by the Director, Cooperative Extension Service, and University of Illinois.