



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

It gives me great pleasure to share the impact of University of Illinois Extension serving Lake and McHenry counties with our stakeholders throughout both counties and the state. The year started out with a bang as the Extension staff delivered an orientation to many Lake County Board members who were beginning their first terms. Additional staff members were added to our unit's team throughout the year in the areas of office support and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed).

In 2019, Extension staff members had a number of fruitful meetings. They travelled to Springfield with the University of Illinois alumni advocacy committee for a face-to-face, introductory meeting with new legislators from Lake County. They assisted with the 4-H robotic awards program. They supported state legislators' requests to assist with local health fairs and attended the University of Illinois President's legislative breakfast in Lake County. We are very grateful to our local legislators, who supported House Bill 2264, amending the County Cooperative Extension Law, and signed on as co-sponsors.

Together, with the help of our federal partner, the United States Department of Agriculture; the State of Illinois; local county governments; local Extension and community foundations; villages and townships; and private donors, our Extension staff will continue to enhance lives and make an impact in our communities. I would like to give a special thanks to the Lake County Board for increasing the Extension's funding to \$99,000, and the McHenry County Community Foundation for a \$20,000 grant in 2019. These increases will assist our unit in hiring an additional staff member to provide education to small farmers, specialty growers, and local food processors.

Overall, it was a good year for Extension in Lake and McHenry counties and Extension as a whole, and I predict the future of Extension in Illinois will look brighter and brighter in 2020, and beyond!

James E. Reaves, County Director





What We Offer

Extension is the flagship outreach effort of the University of Illinois offering unbiased, research-based, practical education to help people, businesses, and communities. Some, but not all, of the programs that the Lake and McHenry County Extension offers include 4-H, Master Gardeners, Home and Community Education, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education, Small Farms Education, and Sea Grant Illinois-Indiana.



The Community Foundation for McHenry County recently presented grant money to assist Illinois Extension in hiring staff to build a strong and sustainable local foods system and provide youth environmental education in McHenry County.



Extension Council

Members of the Extension Council contribute greatly to the effectiveness of the University of Illinois Extension by assisting in the marketing and development of local Extension programs, and securing needed resources. Council member input helps ensure that a planned sequence of educational experiences addresses local issues, or problems.

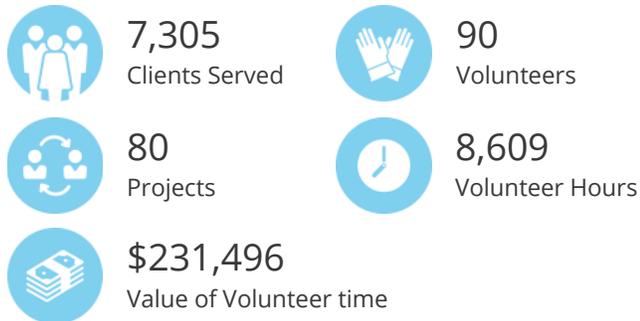
Fiscal Year 2019 Budget	
Local	30%
HCE	
Extension Council	
County Board	
4-H Fed/4-H Foundations	
Township Governments	
Gifts & Donations	
Self-Supporting Fees	
University	1%
State	22%
State Match	
Youth Development (IDOA)	
Federal	47%
Federal Smith-Lever	
SNAP	

Council Members	County
Clinton Bunch	Lake
Denise Eppel	Lake
Megan Eppel (youth)	Lake
Michael Evans	McHenry
Mary Garcia	Lake
Cecil Lampkin	Lake
Brian Malone	Lake
David McDermott	Lake
Linda Sharken	Lake
Simeon Viltz	Lake
Patricia Warren	Lake
Tyler Wilke	McHenry
Sarah Zack	McHenry
Ericka Johnson	Lake
Dawn Scichowski	McHenry
Gina Scichowski	McHenry



The Chapel CARE Garden

Lake County Master Gardeners



The Chapel CARE Garden

Many food pantries exist in Lake County, and they are well stocked with non-perishable foods. The challenge for these pantries is to receive fresh produce in a timely manner so their clients can enjoy the freshness and flavor of the fruit and vegetables. With a large parcel of open land adjacent to the Chapel Church in Libertyville, parishioners decided to use that space to serve those who have less.

The University of Illinois Extension Lake County Master Gardeners were asked to present a series of vegetable gardening programs to interested volunteers, and from that, a partnership of shared knowledge and the desire to serve others was born. One dedicated Extension Master Gardener volunteer, also a church member, assisted the enthusiastic church volunteers in building their "Garden of Eatin'." These devoted volunteers learned new and successful gardening practices, which, over a few years, has increased the yields tremendously. The Extension Master Gardeners wrote and received grants to trial plant-support and mulching methods. These trials allowed them to select the most successful methods for future plantings.

Helping Others
Learn to Grow.
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER MISSION

Mother Nature was not always kind in 2019, and some crops had to be replanted after spring rains brought flooding. Despite some trials and tribulations, the core volunteer team continues to use Extension’s research-based knowledge to assist in growing much-needed produce for the Chapel Community CARE Center food pantry.

As the garden grew and produced food, many hands were needed to manage it. Extension Master Gardeners educated the community volunteers who came to assist. The First Presbyterian Church of Libertyville sent volunteers to partner with the Chapel Church contingent. Some of the harvested produce was then shared with the First Presbyterian Mobile Food Pantry.

In a prime week of harvesting, the garden had more than 40 volunteers of all ages working to pick vegetables. The result was a harvest of more than 1,500 pounds of fresh produce delivered to the Community CARE Center. The volunteers ended the growing season (June through October 2019) with a contribution of more than 8,000 pounds of fresh produce to the Community CARE Center and the Mobile Pantry. This is just one of the ways Extension Master Gardeners made a difference in 2019.



McHenry County Master Gardeners



3,019
Clients Served



147
Volunteers



27
Projects



9,185
Volunteer Hours



\$233,574
Value of Volunteer time

The University of Illinois Extension McHenry County Master Gardeners are available to homeowners looking for guidance in lawn care, landscaping, ornamental and vegetable gardening, tree and shrub care, and even houseplant care.

In McHenry County, Extension Master Gardeners host four main events throughout the year: GardenFest, which is a full day of gardening seminars geared to the general public, in early April; the Plant Sale in late May, featuring plants grown from volunteers' own gardens; a county-wide Garden Walk in July, showcasing home gardens and our demonstration garden; and Farm Stroll, which is also county-wide, in September. Farm Stroll is a partnership between Extension and the McHenry County Farm Bureau that invites families and individuals to visit actual working farms throughout the county, at no charge, to see what goes on behind the fences of dairy



Extension Master Gardeners help tend the Harvard Growing Together Garden, which donates produce to local food pantries.



Homeowners can attend several public events where U of I Extension McHenry Co. Master Gardeners are on hand to answer questions and provide research-based advice.

farms, pig farms, hydroponic farms, market farms, tree farms, and orchards. This year, Farm Stroll attracted more than 400 people at each of the 12 sites.

Frequently, local organizations ask for our support in starting up food pantry donation gardens, but not all of these gardens are for donation purposes. One such partnership is with the McHenry County Health Department. As part of their diabetes awareness program, they seek out local food pantry clients and give them the opportunity to learn to grow their own vegetables under the guidance of Extension Master Gardeners. There are more than 30 families who are learning to grow their own food at sites such as St. Ann Episcopal Church in Woodstock, Casa De Vita in McHenry, and the Nunda Township office in Crystal Lake.

We continue to partner with Mainstay Therapeutic Riding Stable in Richmond, providing gardening therapy to some of their clients. Our Extension Master Gardeners also research and maintain the Gannon Garden at the McHenry County Historical Society, which is a destination for hundreds of school group tours, as well as the society's annual festivals. Extension Master Gardeners also garden with youth at Canterbury School in Crystal Lake, Hoffman Park in Cary, Brown Bear Preschool in Harvard, and the Goddard School in Lake in the Hills.

In 2019, McHenry County Extension Master Gardeners recorded more than 9,000 volunteer hours, which equates to more than \$233,000 dollars of service, according to independentsector.org.



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



8,590

Total SNAP-Education Participants



51%
Adults



49%
Youth



52% Identified as Hispanic
47% Identified as Non-Hispanic
1% Unknown



Our Community Partners



42
K-12 Schools



11
Youth Centers



4
Store or Markets



19
Early Childhood



31
Community Centers



11
Food Pantries and Food Banks



The Hyde Park Elementary School garden was created under the School Garden Workshops Series and a partnership between Illinois Extension's SNAP-Ed and Horticulture/Master Gardeners.

The School Garden Workshops Series

There are 687,000 people living below the poverty line in Lake County and 306,000 in McHenry County. To meet this potential food insecurity, there are more than 55 food pantries in Lake County and 21 in McHenry County. In addition, our unit offers Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) to various populations receiving assistance. However, quality produce is always in need, and in many low-income areas, fresh vegetables and fruits can be hard to acquire.

Three years ago, Extension Horticulture Program Coordinators Kim Isaacson and Brenda Dahlfors, and SNAP-Ed Educator Dale Kehr collaborated to create the School Garden Workshop Series to address this need for fresh produce. Last year (2019), was the third year of the workshop series, and so far, it has been the most successful. Lake and McHenry counties offered nine sessions within the School Garden Workshop Series. A total of 11 teachers and seven Extension Master Gardeners attended the series. Seven schools implemented a garden under this program: Canterbury Elementary, Westwood Elementary, Hyde Park Elementary, P.J. Palombi Middle School, Round Lake Early Childhood Center, DaVinci Waldorf School, and McHenry Middle School. Five of the schools are using the subsequent produce to feed their students, and two are giving the vegetables to a local food pantry.



The workshop series provided topics on grant writing, parent engagement, nutrition from the garden, food safety, how to start a school garden, classroom activities, and more. The McHenry schools were fortunate to have financial support from the McHenry Farm Bureau Women’s Group and the Meemic Foundation. The Lake County group also received financial support from the Lake County Farm Bureau, Liberty Prairie Foundation, and the Meemic Foundation. Our Extension staff members assisted in securing these donations, for a total of \$3,000, from the various foundations.

After the workshop series, many teachers said they liked the variety of topics, as well as the thoroughness of the material presented.

In the 2019-20 school year, 18 participants signed up for the workshop series in Lake County alone, with 11 teachers attending from various school districts, and other attendees coming from community organizations.

The School Garden Workshop Series is a great example of Extension’s efforts to improve food access for low-income communities in our counties, and it marks a synergistic cooperation between two University of Illinois Extension branches—SNAP-Ed and Horticulture.



School Garden Workshops Series volunteers worked together to address the need for fresh produce available to SNAP and food pantry clients.



Waukegan School District 60 Partnership

Waukegan has a high poverty rate (according to the census tract), and many areas within the city are food deserts due to the lack of grocery stores. So healthy eating can be a challenge for some families. To combat this issue, Waukegan School District 60 offers free breakfast and lunch for all students.

The school district and Extension SNAP-Ed staff members created a partnership to help the students become healthier through nutrition education and physical activity. Over the past year, 15 elementary schools and five middle schools have participated in the Smarter Lunchroom assessment. The Smarter Lunchroom assessment evaluates the environment of the lunchroom to see if it encourages the students to choose and eat healthy food. Colorful displays with nutrition messages are visible in the lunchrooms as reminders to the students. There were also changes in menus that allowed the students to have more choices in their meals, especially with fruits and vegetables. The SNAP-Ed Educator provided a workshop on “Offer vs. Serve” to 100 food service staff last summer before the students returned to school in August. The workshop taught staff to recognize a reimbursable, nutritious meal.

Many students in the Waukegan school district also participate in the Organwise Guys curriculum presented by SNAP-Ed Community Workers. The curriculum provides a fun way to learn about their bodies’ nutritional and physical activity needs.

SNAP-Ed’s partnership with Waukegan School District 60 will continue to make the healthy choice the easy choice for students.



Miguel Palacios, SNAP-Ed Community Worker, Waukegan

In 2019, the poverty rate in Waukegan was 17.8 % — higher than Illinois' rate of 13.5 %. To reduce the poverty rate, and the cases of diabetes, obesity, and other diseases related to the consumption of unhealthy processed foods high in sugar, sodium, and saturated fats, various SNAP-Ed programs were provided in the Waukegan community.

The Organ Wise Guys program was provided at seven schools in the Waukegan school district during the 2018-19 school year: Andrew Cooke Magnet Elementary, Clearview Elementary, Hyde Park Elementary, John S. Clark Elementary, Little Fort Elementary, Oakdale Elementary, and Glen Flora Elementary. During weekly sessions, students in kindergarten through second grade engaged in fun, interactive lessons about the importance of our organs and their functions, making healthy food choices, drinking water, and developing positive physical activity habits.

During the summer, 66 sessions of the Illinois Junior Chef curriculum were provided at four locations, including Andrew Cooke Magnet Elementary, Beacon Place, First Baptist Church of Waukegan, and Waukegan Housing Authority Barwell Manor Homes. The kids learned how to read and prepare easy-to-make recipes, the importance of washing their hands before cooking, how to stay safe in the kitchen, and various cooking terms. They also learned the importance of using the My Plate food groups when preparing a meal. This program was extremely popular with the children who participated.

To educate the adult members of participants' families, 87 activity station lessons; 52 Eating Smart, Being Active lessons; and four My Plate for My Family lessons were taught at 18 locations.



Monica Marr, SNAP-Ed Community Worker, Zion

Children have so many choices when it comes to food in their daily lives. Unfortunately, for many low-income, SNAP-eligible families, the affordable food options are not always the healthiest. Although young children do not typically purchase their foods, the choices they learn to make will affect their lifelong eating habits.

Through the SNAP-Ed program, we offer It's Fun to be Healthy programs for preschool-aged children. One of the main concepts in this program are the terms, "Whoa Foods" and "Go Foods." "Go Foods" are healthful foods that we tell children they should choose to eat most of the time in order to grow big and strong. "Whoa Foods" will not help them grow up healthy, so we encourage them to eat those occasionally.

One of SNAP-Ed's ongoing partner organizations is Head Start. The Head Start programs are designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing preschool children of low-income families with a comprehensive program that includes nutritional needs. During my weekly program at the Newport Head Start program, the children are so open to learning about "Whoa Foods" and "Go Foods." During one of our many activities, little hands shot up and they were excited when they chose the healthy foods over the not-so-healthy foods. They clapped for each other, and I saw those wonderful smiles as they made the healthy selections.

The Head Start teacher noted, "After the students started learning about healthy food choices with your program, at lunchtime and snack time, they are always calling out if a food is a 'Whoa,' or 'Go Food.' They really grasp these concepts."

I also presented the It's Fun to be Healthy program at Lakeview and East Elementary Preschools for at-risk children. In total during 2019, more than 424 preschool kids benefited from this program.



Mary Jo Napolitano, SNAP-Ed Community Worker, Woodstock

Throughout the year, I work with McHenry County youths within the Illinois Junior Chef program, as well as adults and youths at

Woodstock's Turning Point Domestic Abuse Shelter.

As part of the MyPlate for My Family classes at the Turning Point Domestic Abuse Shelter, I had the opportunity to introduce various recipes. Recently, participants particularly liked our pumpkin and white bean soup, made with ingredients that are highly nutritious and readily available at food pantries. Many of the participants had not used these ingredients before, and they were excited to have a new recipe that was quick and easy to make. One woman mentioned she was going to make the soup and put it in her husband's thermos for his lunch. Another said her children would enjoy making this with her.

Ofelia Delgado, SNAP-Ed Community Worker, Round Lake

Many schools offer a variety of athletic, scholarly, or fine arts programs to the upper elementary grades, but younger school children also need a place to expand their math, science, and artistic skills. Hands-on nutrition and culinary classes taught these students several new skills.

SNAP-Ed offered the Illinois Junior Chefs program at various elementary schools in Round Lake. This 10-week series of kid-friendly cooking classes was held right after school. Sessions ran consecutively through the school year. There was even a waiting list!

All students who participated learned several important skills: reading recipes; understanding cooking terms; measuring ingredients; mixing, whipping, and folding ingredients; using knives and other kitchen utensils safely; and social etiquette in the kitchen. Ninety percent of parents signed up on Classroom Dojo, a digital school classroom app, to receive updates, recipes, student pictures, and to provide feedback. Students took photos of each other during their daily cooking adventures.



All of the students presented a cooking demonstration to parents and teachers after participating in Illinois Junior Chefs. One mother wrote, "My son now makes sure that safe practices are being used while cooking. He always makes sure to wash his hands, too —something that I normally was reminding him to do before the classes. He is also now more inclined to help with new recipes, such as cheesy potato soup."

Mary Flores, SNAP-Ed Community Worker, Harvard

Single parents working long hours, and grandparents raising their grandchildren are a common occurrence in Harvard. The town has about 1,250 people living at, or below the poverty level.

Many children come to my cooking classes to learn how to prepare a healthy meal or snack. Several teenagers hoped to learn how to prepare a meal for themselves and their siblings. "It embarrasses me that I am 15 years old and have never used a knife or a can opener," said Alondra.

More than 80 children were registered to participate in the Summer Illinois Junior Chef cooking programs in Harvard. Last-minute changes with the original site threatened to cancel all programming; luckily, the Harvard Diggins Library came to the rescue!

Children and teenagers from poverty-stricken areas learned basic cooking techniques, such as measuring, chopping, and using a grater and can opener. They cooked chili, scrambled eggs, and made healthy sandwiches using rye bread, pumpernickel, and whole wheat wraps.



The results — the bakery clerk at the Harvard Walmart stopped me one day and said, "My rye bread is suddenly disappearing. Seems as though it suddenly became popular. I told my boss, 'Mary must have introduced it to the kids at cooking class.'"



Another time, a grandfather saw me at church. His grandson, Nicholas, had been cooking scrambled eggs for him every morning since he took my class.

He said, "I told Nicholas I'm an old man. He is going to have to cook for the both of us soon. I'm glad he took this class."



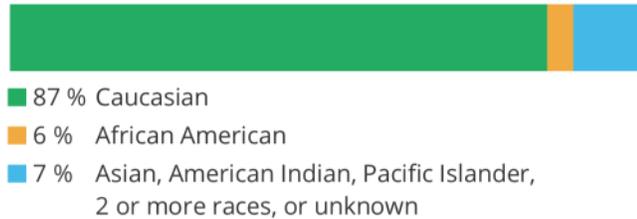
Serving Youth in Lake and McHenry Counties

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



4-H Ambassador Emma Behrens and Joshua Douglas discuss how the Earth's structure is similar to that of an apple at the Petersen Farm Days in McHenry.

Lake County 4-H / Community Partnership

The Lake County 4-H program was serving less than one percent of the total minority population in Lake County. So, 4-H Program Coordinator Sabrina Agee decided to work with Glenwood Elementary School Principal Cabrina Williams-Leneau, teachers, and parents in Waukegan to bring new opportunities in this urban area. Utilizing Illinois Extension, 4-H, and Glenwood Elementary School resources, this partnership hosted a Family Fun Night. The event reached more than 100 families through agriculture activities.

Ultimately, this collaboration between 4-H and the community yielded two, new 4-H Special Interest (SPIN) Clubs, and increased participation in the 4-H Embryology program. Youth and parents have been able to engage in an empowering 4-H partnership experience, ultimately changing their lives.



Perry Plescia teaches bee keeping, one of the 4-H SPIN clubs offered.



Tackling Tough Skills

Tackling Tough Skills is a 4-H curriculum about people — who they are, where they want to go, and how to get there successfully. It is about recognizing strengths and realizing potential. In 2019, utilizing the Tackling Tough Skills curriculum, Extension, in collaboration with a local community college, piloted the Life Skills for Leadership (LSFL) program. The program served students in two urban, underserved high schools in Round Lake and Waukegan.

The LSFL program is designed to help youth identify and hone their leadership skills, to provide youth with necessary tools to successfully navigate situations and circumstances, to get youth to think in new ways about concepts that affect their everyday lives, and to encourage the changes needed to reach their full potential.

Twenty-four students participated in the pilot program, and educators recognized them as leaders among their peers. After completing the program, eight of the participating students earned scholarships to attend a seven-day experience at University of Illinois Extension’s Illini Summer Academies.

Due to the success of the LSFL pilot, more than 100 youth have signed up to participate in the program for the 2020 school year.



4-H, the nation’s largest youth development organization, grows confident young people who are empowered for life today and prepared for a career tomorrow. 4-H programs empower nearly six million young people across the U.S., through experiences that develop critical life skills. 4-H is the youth development program of our nation’s Cooperative Extension System and USDA, and serves every county and parish in the U.S., through a network of 110 public universities and more than 3,000 local Extension offices. Globally, 4-H empowers one million youth in 50 countries.

4-H Robotics

4-H Robotics is an after-school program that also serves home-schooled and youth library patrons. With an adult 4-H volunteer leader, middle school youth meet weekly to work with their peers, building and programming LEGO robots in preparation for the annual 4-H Showcase.

4-H Robotics marks its seventh year in Lake and McHenry counties, empowering middle-school, 4-H youth to use science and technology to solve problems. Youth work cooperatively to innovate, build, solve problems, and imagine new possibilities.

A vital STEM workforce is needed to drive innovation in today’s globally-connected world. Employers are looking for people with skills in problem-solving, design, programming, scientific inquiry, investigation, independent thinking, and teamwork.

During the weekly meetings, students lead their own activities implementing the 4-H motto: “Learn by doing.” Beyond increasing their knowledge in science and technology, youths also practice the skills they need for problem-solving, innovative thinking, and teamwork.

Across Lake and McHenry Counties:

- ▶ 130 youth in fifth through ninth grade participated in 4-H Robotics and the 4-H Robotics Showcase.
- ▶ In this group, 30% described themselves as Latino; 35% identified as non-white; and 29% were female.
- ▶ 4-H Robotics mean scores placed in the High/Very High Quality Experience categories for its outcomes in “challenging growth” and “strong youth-adult partnerships.”
- ▶ 90% of youth responded “true” or “very true” to “Adults in this program help me see future possibilities for myself.”





“McHenry County is a place I couldn't imagine without 4-H. Our 4-H programs have shown me exciting possibilities within myself, as well as given me a dedication to the grand opportunities there are for community service/involvement wherever I go.”
4-H MEMBER

McHenry County 4-H Teen Leadership Team

The McHenry County 4-H Youth Leadership program has a combined membership of 78 teens within the Ambassador, Federation, and Teen Teacher programs. Each of these programs gives youth, ages 12 to 18, an opportunity to find a leadership role that is best suited to them. These youths are developing important life skills, such as planning, promoting, and teaching. One of the leadership team members explained their experience by saying, “There's a lot to be proud of in the McHenry County 4-H leadership programs. Kids like me, and like so many others, have a place to channel their energy in a productive and constructive way that not only benefits them, but benefits the community.”



4-H Ambassador Marlee Anderson attended Petersen Farm Days in McHenry and demonstrated soil erosion.



The 4-H Just Wing It SPIN Club in McHenry County planted a 400 sq. ft. pollinator garden on the McHenry County Fair Grounds this past summer.

Just Wing It Pollinator 4-H SPIN Club

In January 2019, the 4-H Just Wing It Pollinator Club was formed in McHenry County to increase pollinator knowledge among 4-H members and the community. The Just Wing It Pollinator Club members are aware that worldwide, pollinator populations are shrinking and several factors are contributing to this disturbing global trend. With one in every three bites of food dependent on pollinators, the survival of the world's pollinators is vital to our existence, and most youth do not understand how to help the survival of the pollinator.

Over the course of the year, the club's members increased their knowledge about pollination, pollinators, and pollinator habitats. With the mentors from the Northern Illinois Bee Association and Extension Master Gardeners, the youth built, installed, and managed two beehives at the McHenry County Fairgrounds. As part of the Just Wing It project, the club planted a 400 square foot, pollinator wildflower garden; 12 pollinator pots for the butterfly house; and a 320 square foot, pollinator rock garden. 4-H members also educated the public on the importance of a healthy bee population and ways we can protect and enhance their habitats.



Sarah Zack explains water runoff to students.

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant (IISG), one of 34 Sea Grant programs nationwide, uses research, education, and outreach to bring the latest science to Great Lakes communities and their residents. By connecting decision-makers with science, we help strengthen and preserve ecosystems and communities in southern Lake Michigan and beyond. A bi-state program, IISG is funded through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Purdue University, and University of Illinois Extension.

Two of IISG's Illinois Extension-based staff are located at the McHenry County office. Margaret Schneemann, IISG's water resource economist, works to support the development and implementation of sustainable water supply plans for communities in the Chicago region, based on up-to-date predictions of regional water demand. Sarah Zack, IISG's pollution prevention extension specialist, raises awareness about contaminants of emerging concern (CEC) on water quality, human health, and aquatic ecosystems. She works with U.S. EPA's Great Lakes National Program Office to make CEC research data available to the public, and educates communities about practices that help ensure sustainable water resources.



McHenry Co. HCE members made 122 mini stockings to give to Valley Hi Nursing Home residents in 2019. Left to right: Linda Barrett, Christel Mueller, and Flo Spesard.

Home and Community Education (HCE)

University of Illinois Extension has partnered with Lake and McHenry County Associations for Home and Community Education (HCE) for more than 100 years, providing its membership with research-based, educational lessons. The mission of HCE is to enhance the lives of individuals and families through quality educational programs and experiences, and to encourage responsible leadership and service to the community. HCE supports Extension in each county through annual financial donations that assist in the overall local budget. Members also serve as 4-H volunteers and on Extension boards.



Lake Co. HCE members hosted an International Day. Left to right: Pat Weitzmann and Angela Hicks.



Each year elected and appointed local government officials and administrators from across the state improve their knowledge and skills through professional development webinars provided by U of I Extension. Community and Economic Development Educators work with their statewide colleagues to plan and market these monthly webinars. Over the past year, webinars have reached more than 1,589 participants through live and recorded sessions. The most popular topics included *adapting to and understanding increases to the minimum wage in Illinois, economic diversification for communities dependent on coal revenue, developing energy from renewable sources for communities transitioning from coal,* and more. These webinars are available for view at <https://go.illinois.edu/LGEarchives>.

Statewide Webinar Reach

- 
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 mission of University of Illinois Extension Community and Economic Development is to help communities build capacity for creative and informed decision-making to enhance the quality of life.





James E. Reeves
County Director



Dr. Michelle Cox
4-H Educator



Dale Kehr
SNAP-Ed Educator



Sandra Prez
4-H Metro Educator



Michele Aavang
4-H Program Coord.
McHenry



Mary Flores
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Brenda Dahlfors
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Kim Isaacson
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Sabrina Huley
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Lee Kouski
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Monica Marr
SNAP-Ed Comm. Worker
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Miguel Palacios
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Dianne Glozier
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Office Support
Lake



Quincy Sadowski
Office Support
McHenry



Michelle Walsh
Office Support Fiscal
McHenry



Sarah Zack
Sea Grant, Indiana-
Illinois



Margaret Schneemann
Sea Grant, Indiana-
Illinois

Our Mission:

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

OFFICE LOCATIONS

Lake County Main Office

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ewm.extension.illinois.edu/lm



[/unit3lakemchenry](https://www.facebook.com/unit3lakemchenry)



[/servinglakeandmchenry](https://www.instagram.com/servinglakeandmchenry)

Cover photos: (top left) Joy Holian walked the show ring and presented her steer at the 2019 McHenry County Fair in August.

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.