

Extension Connects Youth with Relief Efforts in Iowa

Dickinson County Extension is helping to keep connections alive throughout Iowa. Though the county is located in Northwest Iowa, residents (especially young people) have not lost sight of the many families in Eastern Iowa affected by the severe flooding this year.

The Superior Lakers, a 4-H club of 43 members, conducted a hat and mitten drive to help youth across the state prepare for winter in Iowa. The items were given to their NW area youth field specialist, Karen Byers, and traveled to Extension's Annual Conference in Ames where they were handed off to SE area youth field specialist, Ann Torbert, to distribute. "The donated hats and mittens will be going to an excited group of young people at Taylor Elementary," remarked Torbert.

A second youth-led relief effort that Extension assisted with was a Spirit Lake High School Student Council sponsored trip to eastern Iowa. These 27 young people planned a two-day work experience in the Parkersburg area. They secured dates, transportation, and housing. Byers worked them through a model to plan out additional details of the trip and create committees to report back to the group. As of the second planning session, the students had over 50 young people committed to the two-day community service learning project. "The session re-established the ideas of why character and service are important. It inspired our student council to stay steadfast with our service projects," commented a council member.

Another local service project took place at Dickinson County's Annual Student Council Retreat. More than 50 students from the county's three school districts helped to stuff and donate 48 backpacks with valuable items for CAASA (Center Against Abuse & Sexual Assault). One girl shared that her impression of the retreat was "fun, happy, and citizenshipful!"



"I am impressed by the level of compassion and move to action these young people are demonstrating with their efforts to help other young people in Iowa. It's great to be able to help them make connections throughout the state and to be a part of their citizenship experiences."

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For more information about this program or other Iowa State University Extension resources, contact the Dickinson County Extension Office at 712-336-3488. Information is also available on the Iowa State University Extension website at www.extension.iastate.edu.

November 2008

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