

WHAT WE WANT #STRONGIOWA

2018 IN WEBSTER COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. We are working with the people of Webster County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

Webster County Extension Council

Every Iowa county has an elected extension council that guides local educational programming by partnering with staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents the issues and people of the county.

Economic Development

Small businesses are job creators. Supporting their formation and growth moves our economy forward and makes our communities healthier. The **North Central Iowa Small Business Development Center** located within the Webster County Extension and Outreach office helped businesses obtain \$6,049,337 in capital infusion, create 65 jobs in our region and increase sales by \$3,108,652.

Webster County Leadership 2018 was held at the Gowrie Community Center. The 30 participants learned how to lead effective meetings, communication and listening skills, and how to understand themselves and others.

Women's roles in agriculture continue to expand. In Iowa, one in five principle operators or primary managers of farm businesses are women.

Women Managing Farm Finances was a four-week course in which participants gained an understanding of how to complete a balance sheet and calculate key ratios to help them determine how their business is doing.

Annie's Project was a six-week program designed to help farm women develop their management and decision-making skills. Twenty-one women from around our region completed the



course, which was the 100th in Iowa since its origination. The women become better business partners and owners by learning to manage and organize critical information for their own farms, while establishing networks with other farm women and agriculture business professionals.

Health and Well-Being

Finances of Caregiving covers legal documents, family communication, ways to pay for care, protecting the caregiver's financial future and more. Ten participants complete the five-week series in Webster County, with all reporting an increase in knowledge about caregiving issues. Most participants also reported that they had taken action by gathering needed information, planning with family members, meeting with professionals or through other steps.

Extension Council Members

We want communities and farmers to thrive, and families and children to be healthy. And eventually we want to turn the world over to the next generation better than we found it.

Jeremy Larson
Extension Council Chair

Kevin Barkley
Council Member

Jolene Hays
Council Member

Jan Peterson
Council Vice-Chair

Kellie Blair
Council Member

Peggy Moody
Council Secretary

Jon Flattery
Council Member

LeAnn Lawler
Council Treasurer

Gary Hammitt
Council Member

Jerry Chizek
Regional Director

For 17 years, the **PROSPER** partnership has been working to strengthen the Fort Dodge community by building youth resilience through an evidence-based process of delivering quality programs to middle school youth and their families. Thirty-one sixth graders, along with their parent(s) or significant adult, participated in the seven-week series and it has shown that their family communication skills, along with decision making, had improved. Two hundred seventy-six Fort Dodge Middle School seventh graders participated in a 17-session LifeSkills training that has proven to help reduce risk of substance abuse, violence and other high-risk behaviors. In addition this year, the team added prevention of prescription drug abuse to its goals and began community outreach by working with funeral homes to encourage families to dispose of unused medications safely through the distribution of 250 disposal packets.

Healthy and Homemade was a series of three different workshops about slow cooker meals in which the participants learned what foods are appropriate to cook in a slow cooker, food safety and safe cleaning procedures and how to adjust recipes for slow cookers. Cooking for One or Two taught participants how to adjust or reduce recipes. The grocery store tour of Fareway taught the participants the skills of buying fruit and vegetables on a budget, reading and comparing food labels, identifying whole grains and sticking to their budget.

Food and Environment

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Turfgrass Specialist Adam Thoms held a **Turfgrass Workshop** in June for 18 participants that discussed proper turfgrass fertility and timing, how and when to seed a lawn for best success, weed identification and control, irrigating turfgrass, best management practices for shady areas, mowing do's and don'ts, and identification of turfgrass diseases and insects. Participants planned on implementing the information into their lawn care routines and were open to having another workshop.

K-12 Youth Outreach

AmeriCorp member Katie Allison implemented the **Engineering is Elementary** curriculum into the Fort Dodge Schools' first through fourth grades. Nearly 520 youth engaged in healthy

living, STEM, citizenship, leadership, communication and art activities. This curriculum benefited the school by aligning state standards, developing curriculum and enhancing skill sets.

A **Junior Lego League** started in Gowrie. The STEM-focused club involved second and third graders who met after school from January through May. The group had the opportunity to follow a curriculum focused on water and then built various Lego designs based on the curriculum. The club was a success and will continue in 2019.

The **2018 Citizenship Washington Focus** trip was held in June. The 26 4-H'ers from Webster County learned valuable leadership skills and made life-long friendships from attending this 10-day Washington D.C. trip.

County Extension Staff

Linda Cline
County Program Coordinator
PROSPER Team Leader

Audra Fisher
Office Manager
Bookkeeper

Lindsay Kavanaugh
County Youth Coordinator

Janel Salvatore
Office Assistant

Katie Allison
4-H Outreach Program
AmeriCorps

Carolyn Maschino
Program Assistant,
Buy.Eat.Live Healthy

Kimberly Tiefenthaler
North Central Iowa SBDC
Regional Director

Holly VanHeel
Human Sciences Specialist,
Nutrition and Health

ISU Extension and Outreach Webster County

217 South 25th Street, Suite C12
Fort Dodge, IA 50501
515.576.2119
www.extension.iastate.edu/webster



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