



# BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

## LINN COUNTY

For over 100 years, Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach, Linn County has been connecting the needs of Iowans with Iowa State research and resources. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Linn County for a #STRONGIOWA.

### AG and Natural Resource

- ◆ In 2019, Linn County provided over 10 Continuing Education Classes for commercial and private pesticide applicators in the community. Extension welcomed over 100 private and 300 commercial pesticide applicators as they completed required training. That's over 700 hours of training provided to the community!
- ◆ 2019 Farm Bill meeting provided information to farmers and ag supporters about stress management, farmer suicide prevention and community resources available.

Master Gardener Volunteers are a dedicated group of professional volunteers trained to share research based horticulture knowledge, a love of gardening, an enthusiasm for learning, and a commitment to helping others.

- ◆ In 2019, more than 130 Master Gardeners contributed 14,500 hours of service to the community in 2019. That's an economic contribution to Linn County of at least \$339,445!
- ◆ 14 new Master Gardeners completed training in 2019 and joined the ranks of our volunteers.
- ◆ The Linn County Master Gardener Program is 1 of the top five to contribute the most hours in Iowa!
- ◆ Linn County manages at least 20 ongoing community projects where Master Gardeners volunteer.

- ◆ The annual **Winter Gardening Fair** offered over 60 educational breakout sessions about different horticultural topics and welcomed almost 400 participants from across the state of Iowa.
- ◆ The **Community Outreach Garden** project, supporting 13 community donation gardens, partnered with several local farmers as part of Connect-Grow-Share a Row. Over 20,000 pounds of produce harvested and donated to local food pantries.
- ◆ Several gardens are also used as demonstration gardens, including raised beds at New Bo City Market, 6th District Department of Corrections, Tanager Place, and Olivet Neighborhood Mission.
- ◆ The Linn County Master Gardeners also received the **David Gibby Search for Excellence Award** for their Planting for Pollinators project at the International Master Gardener conference that was held in Philadelphia in 2019



## K-12 Youth Outreach

- ◆ The Linn County 4-H Program has 400 plus involved members who are part of 16 clubs and 5 Lego teams.
- ◆ 4-H members learn how to live healthy, become leaders, engage in their communities, and use science and technology to make good decisions. Exercising problem solving for their own future and the future of their communities by being part of the 4-H program in Linn County.



- ◆ Our fair, which is held in Central City, had over 15,000 projects that were made by the 4-H youth in Linn County.
- ◆ Following Iowa State University 4-H **Mission:** 4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential through youth-adult partnerships and research-based experiences.
- ◆ Linn County held 30 day and summer camps in 2019.



- ◆ Over 200 youth were served during day camps like: Kids in the Kitchen, On My Own and Ok, STEM, and robotics.
- ◆ The Linn County 4-H program hosted 30 immigrant / refugee to attend the Connect Leadership retreat. The 4-H Connect Retreat provides multicultural youth in grades 8-11 the opportunity to connect their culture with Iowa 4-H and Iowa State University while making connections with youth from other cultures across Iowa. Youth participants will gather to experience 4-H Healthy Living, STEM, Leadership & Civic Engagement, and Communication & the Arts workshops through a cultural perspective.

### Event Spotlight: Share-A-Lamb Program

The Share-A-Lamb program was started this year to give youth the opportunity to experience the joy and personal growth that comes from caring for livestock, who would not otherwise be able to.

The program pairs a caring adult farmer with one or two youth interested in participating in the program.

The youth write an essay describing their interest in participating. If selected, the youth meet with the farmer to learn how to care for the lamb and also how to make sure that it is show ready for the culminating event of County Fair.

One local farmer and two youth participated this year. This farmer donated two lambs, feed, supplies, and countless hours to this program and the education of our local youth.

This project paid off in many ways. One participant was able to demonstrate her skills and knowledge to win Reserve Champion Junior Showmanship.

We are excited to continue this program again by increasing the number of youth and farmers to the program and to bring "hands on Ag Education" to more youth in Linn County!



**Parent Education Consortium (PEC)** is a grant funded program that offers free group-based parent education workshops for caregivers with children ages 0-5 years of age.

- ◆ Workshops include a family meal, childcare, program materials, transportation, and interpretation upon request.



- ◆ Workshops vary in topic but may include, positive discipline, brain development, temperament, co-parenting, communication, and ages and stages.
- ◆ In 2019, the PEC program reached 381 children and over 289 parents.

<https://www.parenteducationconsortium.com/>

Another great parenting program in Linn County is the **Kaleidoscope Play & Learn (KPL) program.** Held each week, at the Hiawatha Public Library, KPL is a facilitated playgroup for caregivers that highlights the importance of how children learn through play and how caregivers can support their development.



- ◆ In 2019, The Play & Learn program had over 1,600 participants -children and parent/caregiver.
- ◆ Program outcomes as reported by participants:
  - ⇒ 73% increased awareness in how children develop school-readiness skills through play
  - ⇒ 76% increased awareness understanding their role helping their child be ready for kindergarten.
  - ⇒ 73% report an increased understanding of what to expect from children at different ages.
  - ⇒ 73% report feeling supported as a caregiver in the community



**Pick-A-Better-Snack program** provides food education in elementary classrooms in a fun and interesting manner to motivate children to pick a better snack of fruits and vegetables. As part of the program, kids get to see, touch, smell and taste fruits and vegetables.

- ◆ A grant funded partnership through the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Cedar Rapids Community School District.
- ◆ Serving elementary schools with 60% or higher free and reduced lunch.
- ◆ Our 4 educators teach over 60 hours each month reaching well over 2,000 kids in Linn County elementary schools .

## **Health and Well-Being**

Linn County hosts multiple **ServSafe** classes year round. ServSafe is a food and beverage safety training and certificate program. This program is accredited by ANSI and the Conference for Food Protection. Sanitation certification is required by most restaurants as a basic credential. In these classes, employees of local restaurants learn the proper way of serving and preparing food at work.

- ◆ Over 250 participants from over 150 restaurants from East Central Iowa Counties were trained in the Linn County Location.

**The Juntos: Together for a Better Education** project assists Latino middle school students with the transition to high school. The goal of helping them graduate, while also preparing for their futures by bringing together families and resources. The word “juntos” means “together” in Spanish. In a partnership with YPN, ISU Extension and Outreach of Linn County supported 63 Latinx youth through Juntos!

**County Staff:** This year we celebrate our many Extension Professionals. Linn County hired 8 staff and many other professionals to provide research based education in the community. We celebrated the countless contributions and retirement of Mary Dlouhy. Mary served Linn County customers of all ages for over 20 years, and was truly an example of an Extension professional! We wish Mary all the best!



## Linn County Extension Council

The Ag Extension Council is a nine-member publicly elected council that guides local educational and 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.

### 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.

<b>Patty Webster</b> Council Chair	<b>Dan Abel</b> Council Member
<b>David McDonald</b> Council Vice-Chair	<b>Dennis Jordan</b> Council Member
<b>Michael L. Anderson</b> Treasurer	<b>Dana Nichols</b> Council Member
<b>Leland Freie</b> Secretary	<b>Dan Pickar</b> Council Member
	<b>Claire Smith</b> Council Member

### Linn County Extension Staff

**RaeAnn Gordon**  
County Director

**Janice Savel**  
Office Assistant

**Johanna Rahbusch**  
Bookkeeper/ Office Assistant

**Jean Wilson**  
Master Gardener Coordinator

**JD Waybill**  
County Youth Coordinator

**Amy Schmitt D'Aminco**  
County Youth Outreach Coordinator

**Morgan Bryant**  
Parent Education Consortium (PEC) Program Director

**Missy Drzycimski**  
Parent Education Consortium (PEC) Assistant

**Melissa Blair**  
Pick-A-Better Snack School Education

**Michaela Powell & Dainese Pridegon**  
Food Corp Member with Pick-A-Better Snack Program

**Jim Harken**  
Regional 10 Regional Director

### Iowa State Staff Housed in Linn County

**Julie Fagle**  
CIRIS Program

**Ann Torbert**  
4-H Youth Program Specialist

**Jamie Ngyuen**  
Buy. Eat. Live Healthy! Program Assistant

**Donna Smith**  
Buy. Eat. Live Healthy! Program Assistant

**Paula Wood**  
Buy. Eat. Live Healthy! Program Manager

**Eric Christianson**  
Communities and Economic Development Program



**In Memoriam:**  
**Alan David Beach**  
**November 4, 1946—**  
**October 24, 2019.**

The world lost a great leader, community member, father, spouse and friend. Al's service to the

Linn County Extension Council began January 2017, where he served as Personnel Committee Chair, and most recently as Chair of the Council. Al's enthusiasm for Extension programming was obvious in every interaction, and his contributions will be long lasting!

### ISU Extension and Outreach Linn County

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