

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

STAKEHOLDER REPORT 2022

2022 IN STORY COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach provides research-based education and engages Iowans in solving today's problems and preparing for a thriving future. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Story County for a **#STRONGIOWA**.



The Story County Extension Council has been elected by the people of the county to guide local educational programming by partnering with extension staff. From needs assessment through program implementation and evaluation of outcomes, the council represents you and your issues. We are always serving Iowans and we are here for you. Now. Always.

Thank you for your support.

Doug Sampson
Council Member

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Leonard Foley
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Barbara Woods
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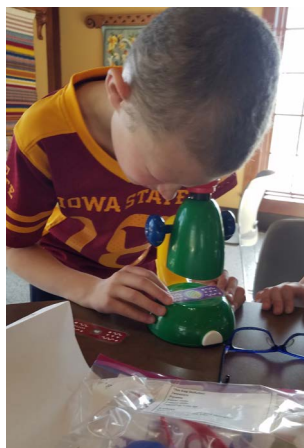
MaryAnn Gardner
Council Member

Ben Smith
Council Member

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF STORY COUNTY

In 2022, ISU Extension and Outreach Story County continued to engage Iowans in addressing mental health and to provide access to research-based training and education on mental health literacy and suicide prevention.

In August 2021, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship was awarded a \$500,000 grant to expand farmer mental health support programs in Iowa. Over the last year, IDALS has partnered with ISU Extension and Outreach to help raise awareness about mental health and wellness



STORY COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL CAREER FAIR

Over **100** youth and adults participated in the Story County Career Fair held Oct. 24 at the Ames Public Library. The career fair was planned for middle school students and was hosted by the Story County College Access Network (SCCAN). Mary Wilkins, youth outreach coordinator, is a member of the SCCAN team and played a vital role in organizing and facilitating the career fair.

SCCAN is a collaborative network that supports outcomes for career readiness and post-secondary opportunities. SCCAN received a Theisen's Grant to support the career fair, which provided learners and caregivers early access to information to help them start envisioning their postsecondary future.

Participating businesses communicated various roles within their industry, encouraged teens to explore interests and passions leading to career pathways, and identified potential steps teens can take now to support goals for their future.

A youth said, "I enjoyed the middle school career fair. It was a very cool experience and I especially enjoyed getting to try on the tactical gear from the FBI. I liked visiting each of the tables and learning about different careers." Participating youth represented five school districts in Story County. A parent said, "The career fair was a great experience for my 8th grader! There was a nice variety of career options represented, great information, and helpful people. We learned she can apply at Fareway and hopefully have her first work experience in the near future. Thank you for putting on this event."



resources and make them more accessible to farmers and rural communities.

As part of that partnership, extension staff in Story County have provided **50** direct, one-on-one local consultations and nearly **40** group consultations across the county, sharing key farm stress resources. Individual contacts have been made throughout Story County with cooperatives, banks and credit unions, crop production services, Farm Service Agency offices, Farm Credit Service offices, local seed companies, farm implement dealers, and many others. Group consultations have been offered at Private and Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training, Farmland Leasing, and Master Woodland Stewards programs, as well as many others.

In 2022, Story County 4-H Youth Coordinator Mary Wilkins facilitated the Mindful Teen program series at Colo-NESCO Middle School with **30** seventh-grade students during their regular English class. Mindful Teen is a six-lesson workshop series for youth in grades 7-12 based on the book, "The Mindful Teen: Powerful Skills to Help You Handle Stress One Moment at a Time" by Dzung Vo, MD. The program empowers youth and equips them with practical strategies and mindful practices to manage stress and difficult emotions and improve and support their overall well-being, relationships, and performance in school, sports, arts, and other daily activities.

This is the second class of seventh graders to complete the six-hour workshop series at Colo-NESCO. Students reported that they learned new ways to handle their stress, as well as ways to relax and slow down to enjoy life in the present moment. The favorite activity was making calming glitter jars. Students were excited to take home an activity that they could use daily themselves and with their family members.

AG AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ag and Natural Resources programming during the 2022 calendar year included over **70** different events and reached over **4,000** youth and adults combined. Examples of Ag and Natural Resources programs include commercial and private pesticide continuing education, Beef Cow Clinic, Farmland



Leasing, Roland Library Youth Garden Club, Master Conservationists, Master Woodland Stewards, Water Rocks, and Master Gardeners.

This fall we had **18** Master Gardener trainees become Master Gardener interns. Within the next calendar year, each one of them will record **40** volunteer hours in Story County and become Master Gardeners. Master Gardeners volunteers are individuals who are passionate about gardening and serving their community. Story County's Master Gardeners have logged over **2,400** hours this year, working on projects like the Grow Together Iowa Donation Garden, Main Street Beautification in Ames, and building a sensory garden at the Israel Family Hospice House. The list could go on. While volunteering, the Master Gardeners have made over **8,500** contacts with youth and adults.

SERVSAFE® PRODUCES CERTIFIED MANAGERS

Extension Human Sciences Food and Health Specialist Holly VanHeel provided ServSafe® food safety training to **50** individuals in Story County during 2022. Food safety education is a priority to reduce food-borne illness outbreaks, which can lead to severe illness and even death.

The ServSafe® training includes a certification exam for participants to attain their manager certification.



Top: 4-H youth with awards won for participating in the Rabbit Hopping Event at the Story County Fair.

Bottom left: Mary Wilkins, youth outreach coordinator, programming with youth at Colo-Nesco Schools.

Bottom right: Youth participating in a day program in Story City.

Benefits of food safety training influence not only a safer dining environment, but also the potential for fewer hospitalizations, less disruption to communities, and increased health for guests.

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The Story County Fair provides an opportunity for enrolled 4-H and FFA members to showcase accomplishments from their learning experiences during the 2021-22 program year. In the 2022 county fair, **440** youth entered over **1,800** exhibits, both livestock and non-livestock. Example exhibit areas include food and nutrition, visual art and photography, and livestock such as rabbits and sheep. Through the county fair experience, exhibitors continued to practice skills in leadership, communication, and civic engagement as they interacted with their peers, judges, volunteers, and fair attendees.

In the 2021-22 Story County 4-H program year, membership included over **400** youth members in grades 4-12 and nearly **200** Clover Kids in grades K-3. These members participate in a monthly club experience exploring projects, developing



leadership skills, giving back to their communities, and more!

The 4-H program is for youth in grades K-12 and is implemented through club programs, camp programs, school enrichment experiences, and special interest programs. Each program focuses on one of five program priorities, including ag and natural resources, civic engagement, communication and the arts, healthy living, and STEM. In the 2021-22 program year, over **4,400 youth** were reached through programs hosted at the Story County Extension Office and at programs held in partnership with other organizations.

NEW YOUTH INTERNSHIP INITIATIVE

Story County is blessed with a valuable and renewable resource - Iowa State University college students! To take advantage of this valuable and renewable resource, ISU Extension and Outreach Story County began offering internships to ISU students this fall. The internship initiative is designed to allow students to take the skills they are learning in the classroom and apply them as part of educational programs offered in

the community. ISU Extension and Outreach benefits from having more staff to deliver research based educational programming. Students benefit from getting an opportunity to apply what they are learning in a real-world setting. The hope is to continue the initiative in the spring and summer of 2023.

Under this initiative, Story County hired four interns in the fall to work on a variety of projects, including directly with 4-H youth by assisting with the delivery of youth education programs. Working under the supervision of a county youth coordinator, daily activities included preparing for and delivering programs to youth in clubs or organizations and at schools or libraries.

Interns are selected based on their academic discipline, experience, and interests. In some cases, the internship may meet the requirements of a work-study program. The internship is paid, and the hours are flexible based on programmatic needs and student schedules. The term is per semester with the possibility of extending the term depending on funding and programmatic needs. For more information, please contact ISU Extension and Outreach Story County at xstory@iastate.edu.

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