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 Dallas County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

**Dallas 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.

We have identified these local issues as priority topics for current and future programming:

- Community and Economic Development
- Food and the Environment
- Health and Well-being
- K-12 Youth Outreach

Nicki Stajcar  
Jeff Jackson

**K-12 Outreach Participants**

- **2,081 Youth**

**Health and Wellbeing Participants**

- **800+**

**Food and the Environment Participants**

- **Over 1,000**

**Community and Economic Development**

- **24 Communities Served**

**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.

Nicki Stajcar  
Extension Council Chair

Jeff Jackson  
Executive Director

Jerry Chizek (Interim)  
Regional Director

Chris Brocka  
Council Member

Matthew Ellerman  
Council Member

Craig Fleishman  
Council Member

Julie Kiley  
Council Member

Lorinda Inman  
Council Member

Caitlyn Lamm  
Council Member

Brent Schwenneker  
Council Member

Katie Spellman  
Council Member
Community and Economic Development

Our goal is to reach deep into Dallas County and serve as many communities as we can. Dallas County is unique as we are rural yet becoming very urban. The population has increased in diversity and the needs are constantly changing. We have reached 24 Different Communities throughout Dallas County and beyond with our programming in 2018. We have helped to offer programs such as Grant Writing 101 in Waukee and Perry. We are also working to offer Fundraising 101 in the near future. We provide ServSafe in Spanish and provide Translation services in partnership with State Extension.

Community and Economic Development State Specialists Jon Wolseth, Kameron Middlebrooks, and Ross Wilburn have provided programming on Cultural Communications and Diversity.
Health and Well-Being

Dallas County Extension knows that to build a strong community you need to focus on building a healthy family. We strive to meet this through programming such as Strengthening Families which supports families with pre-teens, Great Beginnings which supports families expecting a baby, as well as many others.

Dallas County implemented the Abriendo Caminos research project from State Extension for the second time. The goal of the program is to prove how participating in the workshops and conversations about health increases the good health of the participants.

Dallas County Extension is the only County Office in the State with a staff that is a Certified Proctor for Spanish ServSafe, which is a program designed to support businesses with proper food handling procedures and practices.

(Photo top left) Human Science Specialist Rosa Gonzales teaching healthy cooking. (Top right) Megan Will and Aleta Cochran with Dallas County Master Gardeners and Hy-Vee (Bottom Left) 4-H Youth serving in the Food Stand during the County Fair (Bottom Right)- Dallas County Master Gardener Class Field Trip

Spanish ServSafe- Several individuals from a recent training expressed their gratitude of having someone they can relate to lead the ServSafe Workshop. They felt a connection was built through the efforts of the staff to call in advance and inquire about their studying and also have someone help prepare them for the exam.

This summer Dallas County staff helped support the Farm to Summer Program in Waukee reaching almost 140 youth encouraging them to try new vegetables such as radishes.

374 youth, have been educated in babysitting practices and techniques to help provide better care and awareness through the Babysitting Basics Program and related trainings. This provides trained babysitter’s in the community which helps families meet their needs.

Food and the Environment

Dallas County Extension and Outreach for the second year in a row has had one of the largest Master Gardener Classes in the State. 18 Master Gardeners have successfully completed the fall class. Over 2,100 volunteer hours have been logged by the Master Gardeners.

Dallas County Master Gardeners led by Megan Will– Master Gardener Coordinator and Aleta Cochran– Ag Coordinator and County Youth Coordinator were one of 10 locations to receive a grant from Hy-Vee for the One Step Community Garden Project. They received $15,000 to develop a High Tunnel which will be used to extend the growing season for vegetables that are used by residents of Dallas County and donated to the Fruitful Vine Food Pantry. 5 Dallas County Master Gardeners have attended training on Iowa State University’s Campus about High Tunnels so that they can help volunteer and coordinate the efforts. This is just one example of many as to how Dallas County Extension is working to eliminate food deserts and provide healthy foods throughout the County.

Joe Hannan, Commercial Horticulturalist with ISU Extension, whose office is in Dallas County, also works through many grant funded programs to provide support to local growers and commercial vegetable and fruit growers throughout the community to increase quality and food output.
K-12 Youth Outreach

Our goal is to reach into every corner of Dallas County. We want all youth to have access to the leadership development and skill-building programs that we offer.

- 16 of 18 communities reached
- 25 new adult volunteers
- ~200 new 4H/Clover Kid members
- 1500 exhibits were shown at Fair

We continue to develop partnerships with like-minded organizations in the community to enhance our ability to reach youth that have never been reached. We are laying the foundation for the future to reach more youth through the development of our County Youth Council. We are also adding new programs, workshops, and clubs that meet the needs of the youth.

Early Childhood

Through Grants provided by Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) and the United Way of Central Iowa we provide opportunities to all age groups. Our work through the grants reaches out to preschools, childhood development homes, and child care centers throughout Dallas, Adair, Madison, and Warren Counties.

Early Childhood Programming Facts

- 155 children received preschool tuition assistance
- 300 students received dental screenings
- 35 Professional Development Trainings Provided
- Almost 450 participants to those trainings
- 37 Quality Improvement grants given ($81,153)
- 5 Mini Grants provided to Latino Providers in Perry
- 28 preschools met a quality initiative to help low income families.

Diversity and Inclusion

As the fastest growing county in the State of Iowa, Dallas County is quickly becoming more urbanized yet still has deep rural roots. The population of Dallas County continues to diversify as our population grows. We strive to be inclusive and faithfully serve all individuals represented in Dallas County including all races and ethnic backgrounds, people of all abilities, any gender and gender identity, any religion, any marital status, any financial status, any age, any sexual orientation, etc. This is why we make extra efforts to provide programming and partnerships designed to reach all individuals. **Dallas County Extension and Outreach was a proud Nominee for the 2018 Greater Des Moines Partnership’s Annual Inclusion Award.**

County Extension Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Jackson</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aleta Cochran</td>
<td>County Youth Coordinator</td>
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<td>Juan Ramirez</td>
<td>Extension Educator</td>
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<td>Angela Ayala</td>
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<td>Myra Willms</td>
<td>Early Childhood Quality Enhancement Educator</td>
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<td>Val Cameron</td>
<td>ECI Preschool Intake and Enrichment Coordinator</td>
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<td>Megan Will</td>
<td>Master Gardener Coordinator</td>
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<td>Kathy Beni</td>
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ISU Extension and Outreach

Dallas County

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