



# BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

## 2019 IN DALLAS COUNTY

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State research and resources. We listen, learn, and work with the people of Dallas County for a #STRONGIOWA.

### 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:

- Economic Development
- Food and the Environment
- Health and Well-being
- K12 Youth Outreach



### Dallas County Celebrates 100 Years of Service

Dallas County was the last of Iowa's 99 counties to celebrate 100 years of service. During the 2019 Adel Sweet Corn Festival, we were presented plaques from four Chambers of Commerce; Adel, Grimes, Perry and Waukee (Photo Left). To celebrate, Dallas County Extension had booths from our four program areas with giveaways including 4-H clover tattoos (Photo Right), activities, and plenty of information to share with the community.

To view highlights of our 100 year celebration visit <https://bit.ly/2FuMHCQ>



### 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.

**Brent Schwenneker**  
Extension Council Chair

**Jerry Chizek**  
Regional Director

**Tony Collins**  
Council Member

**Matthew Ellerman**  
Council Member

**Beth Griffin**  
Council Member

**Lorinda Inman**  
Council Member

**Doug Pfeiffer**  
Council Member

**Julie Russell**  
Council Member

**Nicki Stajcar**  
Council Member

**Joshua Williams**  
Council Member



## Employee Spotlight:

### Maddie Mardesen

Maddie grew up on a farm near Elliott, Iowa. Maddie has a Bachelor's Degree in English and Theater from Morningside College and earned her Master's Degree in Experiential Education from Minnesota State University (MSU) in Mankato. Her experiences include working as a MSU graduate assistant with Educator Partnerships and as a Program Coordinator at the Science Center of Iowa. Maddie is trained in Mental Health First Aid for both youth and adults.

As a Human Sciences Educator, Maddie's areas of focus are health and nutrition, finance, family life, and youth programs.

#### Get In Contact:

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## Health and Well-Being

Impacted: 1,121 people

Dallas County Extension knows that to build a strong community you need to focus on building a healthy family. We strive to meet this goal through programs designed to engage participants of all ages.

For the third year, Dallas County implemented the **Abriendo Caminos** program in Perry for Latino families. The goal of the program was to prove how engaging in workshops and conversations



(Photo Left) Teen Babysitting Training participating in a team building activity. (Photo Center) Strengthening Families participants created a family shield. (Photo Right) Strengthening Families participants playing a family card game.

about health increases the overall good health of the participants.

Rated as the #1 drug prevention program by the World Health Organization, **Strengthening Families 10-14** program was facilitated by Dallas County Human Sciences Extension staff. Families learned to build on their strengths, use new skills, and improve their relationships to decrease family conflict and risky adolescent behaviors.

Dallas County Extension provided a literacy program in the spring for preschoolers and their parents/caregivers, entitled **Raising School Ready Readers**. Exposure to early literacy development on a daily basis provides children with the skills needed for school readiness and early elementary success. Of the surveyed participants 100% indicated that the strategies learned in the program helped better equip them to build on their child's literacy skills.

We had 88 youth participate in our **Teen Babysitting** program where they learned how to safely care for younger children in their care.

## Pesticide Trainings

**Two hundred and sixty adults received continuing education** on current rules and regulations for applying pesticides. These are the people who take care of your parks, cities and may even come to your homes to help control issues with pests. Some of the participants are involved in Dallas County farming operations. All learned the proper ways to apply and handle insecticides while protecting the environment.



(Photo Right) The Thistle caterpillar is the larval form of the Painted Lady Butterfly which caused problems in soybean fields this year.



(Photo above) Master Gardeners worked with ADM Middle School STEM Excellence and Leadership (SEAL) students to spruce up their school garden. To watch a video about this project visit <https://bit.ly/37NYOa7>

## Master Gardeners

There are **90 active Master Gardeners in Dallas County**. This year, 19 new people attended the 40-hour class and will become certified as Master Gardeners after completing 40 volunteer hours. Dallas County Master Gardeners volunteered 2,500 hours reaching many communities. They offered workshops, helped with school gardens, planted and maintained the demonstration garden at the Dallas County Fairgrounds, and helped to bring the flower beds around the Dallas County Courthouse back to life. They also worked in the Fruitful Vine Garden, where they harvested 3,000 pounds of produce which was given to the food pantry in Waukee.

## Master Conservation Program

Dallas County was one of nine counties that offered the Master Conservationist program in the spring of 2019. We partnered with **Dallas County Conservation, Dallas County Soil and Water District, and Brenton Arboretum** to “Plant the Seeds of Conservation.” Fourteen Dallas County residents became passionate stewards who will be engaged in local communities advocating for conservation practices that will ensure a sustainable future for Iowa’s landscape. We explored different locations in Dallas County each week, providing hands-on activities as we studied the environment, wildlife, woodlands, prairies, wetlands, sustainable agriculture, and urban conservation.



(Photo Top) Master Conservationist watch as presenter demonstrate electrofishing for fish counts to determine water quality. (Bottom Left) Master Conservationist participants looking at diversity of water invertebrates after running a sift through the stream bottom. (Bottom Right) Master Conservationist participants looking through binoculars at the variety of birds in a wetland located in Dallas County. See more about the program at our Instagram Highlight at <https://bit.ly/36xFGNn>

*“Having recently become a landowner, I could not have found a more helpful way to learn where and who to connect with on properly taking care of my property, setting up a safe haven for wildlife, and learning more about what programs exist for help and guidance here in Iowa. We learned about things we could do ourselves, visited different locations where conservation initiatives were underway, spoke with different groups leading conservation efforts in Central Iowa, and learned where else we could connect if we had other questions. From soil health to rainwater management to native plantings to agricultural practices - I only wish the program was longer because I had such a great time and cannot believe how much I learned in just a six-week window!”*

**Missy Fiesler, 2019  
Master Conservationist participant**



(Photo above) Vet Camp participants during the Dallas County Fair. (Bottom Left) Legos Robotics Club at a competition. (Bottom Right) Kids at the Dallas County Fair.

## K-12 Youth Outreach

ISU Extension and Outreach offered programming to K-12 youth to help them reach their full potential. This year we reached over 1,000 youth with the help of 74 adult volunteers who shared their skills and knowledge. We have many traditional 4-H clubs, Clover Kids, as well as specialized clubs for Robotics and Shooting Sports. We also offered opportunities to participate in camping, workshops, trips, and the county and state fairs. Three youth were awarded scholarship money at the state fair for their outstanding projects. Many of the 4-H clubs learn about citizenship through activities such as volunteering at Ronald McDonald House, helping at A-Heinz rescue, adopting families at Christmas, visiting with residents in a care facility, and sprucing up school playgrounds and parks.

## 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 reached out to preschools, child development homes, and child care centers throughout Dallas, Adair, Madison, and Warren counties.

## Early Childhood Programming Facts

- 39 child care training activities provided.
- 474 child care providers participated in professional development.
- 59 early learning programs participated in quality improvement.
- 138 children received preschool tuition assistance.
- 329 children received dental screenings.
- 5 children received preschool transportation assistance.
- 9 high risk families were connected with family support services.

## County Extension Staff



**Maddie Mardesen**  
Educator



**Kathy Beni**  
Project Assistant



**Aleta Cochran**  
County Youth  
Coordinator  
Ag Coordinator



**Angela Ayala**  
Clover Kids  
Coordinator



**Megan Will**  
Master Gardener  
Coordinator



**Myra Willms**  
Early Childhood  
Quality  
Enhancement  
Educator



**Kali Downs**  
Office Assistant



**Val Cameron**  
ECI Preschool Intake  
and Enrichment  
Coordinator

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