LISTENING, LEARNING, AND WORKING FOR A #STRONGIOWA

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

In 2018, I visited with Iowans throughout the state – during small group discussions, county extension centennial celebrations, and many other meetings and events. I had a new title, Iowa State University Vice President for Extension and Outreach, but I simply was continuing our tradition of listening to and learning from Iowans.

ISU Extension and Outreach engages Iowans in solving today’s problems and planning for tomorrow. That is why we always have to be aware of their needs. Our researchers look over the horizon, to find innovations and identify emerging issues, so we can help Iowans prepare for the future. We are a 99 county campus with extension staff and extension councils working to meet local needs. We learn about the challenges Iowans are facing, and then we partner with them to address the challenges.

I truly believe ISU Extension and Outreach is an investment to nurture. We connect Iowans with university research and resources, creating more than $897 million of economic impact. Each year more than 1 million Iowans benefit from our educational programs for economic growth, healthy families, thriving communities, and sustainable environments. In addition, we reach millions more through our digital presence. We are committed to the land-grant mission of accessibility and research-based education and information. We are listening, learning, and working together with the people of our state to build a strong Iowa.

John D. Lawrence
ISU Vice President for Extension and Outreach
All Iowans benefit when local people join together to make their communities better places to live and work.

All Iowans benefit from efforts to improve water quality, produce crops and livestock sustainably, and strengthen rural economies.

All Iowans benefit when young people are prepared for college and careers, and are ready to become Iowa’s future workforce and successful, contributing members of society.

All Iowans benefit when individuals, families, and communities become more resilient and are better able to handle any challenges they may face.

Some Highlights from 2018

Throughout Iowa, 900 elected county extension council members bring their understanding of local issues to important decisions about extension educational opportunities.

We are making our digital materials accessible so all Iowans, including those who have visual, auditory, motor, or cognitive disabilities, can easily navigate, understand, and benefit from the educational resources available from our websites, mobile apps, and electronic documents.

Last year our Agriculture and Natural Resources programs reached more than 115,000 direct contacts through meetings and field days on profitability and efficiency, sustainable crop and livestock production, and other agricultural best practices.

Each month nearly 900 early childhood providers, teachers, and directors enroll in our preservice online series to learn more about creating safe and healthy early childhood environments, and improving care for young children.

Our community and economic development specialists are conducting a two-year study of workforce attraction and housing in six northeast Iowa counties.

4-H connects with almost 1 in 5 Iowa K-12 students to improve their college and career readiness, provide them with community service opportunities, and prepare them as future young professionals in Iowa.

We provide information and resources to help Iowans deal with an uncertain farm economy. Every day more than 7,400 visitors consult our Ag Decision Maker website. Our farm financial management associates help Iowans understand their farm’s financial situation. With a toll-free phone number, live chat capabilities, and a website, Iowa Concern provides free, 24/7 access to...
Each year our community and economic development specialists provide skills training for more than 50,000 community leaders, local government officials, business owners, entrepreneurs, and volunteers.

In the past three years, more than 680 youth of color have joined 4-H.

Farmers learn how to improve water quality during field days and workshops. By adopting in-field and edge-of-field management practices and methods for determining nitrogen application rates, farmers can maximize profitability and reduce nitrate loss to Iowa’s water bodies.

Forty-eight Iowa State students have served as Rising Star Interns since 2014. They have raised awareness of local foods and healthy living as they have assisted communities, schools, farmers markets, and economic development entities across the state.

We train volunteer educators who offer our Wellness and Independence through Nutrition curriculum in 30 counties. Since 2013, the program has reached more than 7,700 older Iowans, building awareness about how the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program can improve their nutrition and quality of life.

More than 34,000 youth participate in 4-H STEM programs. The Iowa Governor’s STEM Advisory Council notes that Iowa’s economic growth depends on workers who are skilled in science, engineering, technology, and math.