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 Scott County for a #STRONGIOWA.

The Scott 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.

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Serving the People of Scott County

As Iowans adjusted to life during the COVID-19 pandemic, ISU Extension and Outreach continued to prioritize health and safety as we delivered research-based education to the people of Scott County. During 2021 we focused on efforts around mental health and youth programs, working together with our community partners.

Working toward Recovery

Start the Talk was a conversation between 40 teens who are racial and ethnic minorities, and 40 business leaders in Bettendorf. The event, held at the Waterfront Convention Center, gave the teens and adults the opportunity to discuss frustrations, successes and what life is like. The intent was for both groups to learn about each other and offer youth insights into how these business leaders achieve their goals. The adults were offered the opportunity to listen to the realities of the lives of minority teens in their community. Future plans are being made for more of these conversations as well as some possible sessions for the youth in leadership and communication.
Working toward Recovery

As our state works toward recovery, ISU Extension and Outreach, Scott County has been engaging Iowans in improving food supply, safety, and access.

A summer project for 40 Scott County Extension Master Gardeners was growing food for those who don’t have access to fresh produce. Master Gardeners and community members donated 1616.60 pounds of produce, while 1657.31 pounds of produce was grown and donated from the Extension office garden.

The decorative gardens at the Scott County Extension office in Bettendorf were changed into vegetable gardens for this purpose, but many of the flowers remained to encourage pollinators. So, you might think you’re looking at a beautiful flower garden, only to find peppers or cucumbers in the same space.

Growing Together is the theme of this grant program offered by Iowa State University Extension to Master Gardeners across the state. “It’s been such a team effort, a lot of work from a lot of people. We were happy to have 10 new Master Gardeners get involved in the project.” says Terese TouVelle who provided leadership to the garden committee.

Produce was delivered to 18 places including low income housing for seniors, food pantries, meal sites and group homes.

Produce grown and donated included tomatoes, cucumber, kohlrabi, beans and other vegetables, including the popular jalapenos which are much appreciated by those receiving the produce. Terese says, “we will try to grow more jalapenos next year now that we have learned how much they are desired.”

Working toward Recovery

Many Iowans were financially impacted by COVID-19. To support the financial recovery of vulnerable populations, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Scott County partners with One Eighty, a local organization that focuses on outreach to individuals who are in crisis, poverty, and addiction. Their residential program provides education and a work program (One Eighty Enterprises) to learn skills for entrepreneurship and employment. As part of the educational outreach, Phyllis Zalenski, Family Wellbeing Program Specialist, offered the two-part “Making Ends Meet” program and two sessions of the FDIC Money Smart program (credit reports and scores and managing debt) were delivered in summer and fall of 2021 with a total attendance of 29.

These interactive classes focus on key financial concepts as well as practical application to increase financial empowerment. Participants indicated they learned and planned to explore ways to manage money differently, reduce spending, increase income, review their credit reports, take action to improve their credit score, and make informed decisions about debt. Through this partnership with One Eighty, we are financially empowering individuals with the confidence to effectively use knowledge, skills, and resources to build future financial security.
Helping individuals manage relationships during the stress of COVID-19 was a priority for Scott County’s Mental Health COVID Recovery Plan. Healthy relationships are a key factor in promoting all forms of wellbeing, in both couples and their children.

Scott County Extension offered a 6-hour Healthy Relationship and Marriage Education Training (HRMET) program that assisted direct-service agency staff members in gaining additional tools to help couples build healthy relationships. Using the National Extension Relationship and Marriage Education Model (NERMEM), these programs were co-facilitated by Human Science Extension and Outreach program specialists and County Educators.

Scott County provided a 100% scholarship for 10 participants, representing 7 local agencies. Participants reported that the tools they learned will help them have more direct conversations with clients about the role of healthy relationships in well-being, as well as assisted them in feeling more confident in their ability to provide education and tools to their clients to improve relationship health.

Youth activities that bring families together around reading and math are a primary goal of Davenport's Community School District’s 21st Century Community Learning Center programs—called Stepping Stones. With grant funding through the Iowa State Department of Education, these programs are held at 3 elementary schools in Davenport. Working together to accommodate COVID-related interruptions to programs, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in Scott County assisted in the development of “take home” family nights. These activities consisted of a math or reading activity that families participate in at home. Families receive everything they need to complete the activity, and are asked to send a photo of their family participating. During the summer, families made spaghetti, read Scribble Stones and painted their own scribble stones.

Efforts are ongoing to help businesses owned by individuals who are racial-ethnic minorities receive loans for their small businesses. A local group organized by Scott County Extension is working to help these businesses qualify for microloans. The effort is aimed to give a second chance to those who have not been able to get traditional loans. Technology support as well as assistance in developing business plans are part of the work to assist the business owners. The group is working with some nonprofit organizations to find owners needing this assistance, as well as find resources to fund the loans.
Looking Ahead

ISU Extension and Outreach Scott County will continue our return to face to face programs, cooperating with our community partners and their safety and sanitation processes. Face to face youth programs with our school and community partners will begin in January. We also look toward returning to typical summer programs in June. 4-H Clubs and Clover Kids groups are meeting in person, and Master Gardeners are also returning to in person programming and planning.

We will also continue some of the innovative practices we developed during the pandemic as ways to increase the access to our programs and research-based information. We will continue to provide the Enrichment in a Box kits to our community partners to use within their youth programs. We will also continue use technology to make programs and information accessible, with web-based meetings, classes and programs.