

BUILDING A #STRONGIOWA

ISU Extension and Outreach connects the needs of Iowans with Iowa State University research and resources. We are working with the people of Story County for what we all want: a strong Iowa.

Story 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:

- Financial education
- Local foods
- Strengthening families
- Science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education

Economic Development

Women face special challenges in building lifelong financial security. The Money Talk workshop series, in its fourth year in Story County, provides women an opportunity to gain information, ask questions, and build confidence in making the best financial decisions for their needs.

Kate, a participant at the Ames Money Talk site, remarked, "The information I've learned here is



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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.

Doug Sampson
Extension Council Chair

Rich Wrage
Regional Director

knowledge I will keep with me forever. I felt so comfortable in this environment."

Health and Well Being

Sue and her family have not always lived in the United States and are not familiar with every food product at the grocery store. By participating in the Family Nutrition Program, she learned about healthier eating and snacking habits that she can share with her family. During Family Nutrition Program lessons, Sue learned



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K-12 Youth Outreach

A 4-H AmeriCorps Member's Story by Mica Magtoto

Where has the time gone? It's August and the time has come for me to wrap up my AmeriCorps experience. Working with youth has taught me to be engaged in the moment while thinking ahead. Children are so curious and adventurous that it's infectious.

My final AmeriCorps activity was the Tri-County Camp that had 31 kids enrolled. When I arrived at the camp, I noticed a sign that read, "You don't make friends, they are given to you." I was hesitant because, first of all, I was not fond of camping and, secondly, I was exhausted from doing day camps already, so three days of camp didn't sound enticing. However, that changed very quickly. Spending 84 hours in the wilderness with strangers with limited Wi-Fi and no cell reception forced us to engage in meaningful conversations and create strong relationships quickly. It was a great way to disconnect from our hectic schedules and reconnect with nature and healthy relationships. It was a balanced blend of youth work, leadership, communication, self-reflection, relaxation, and appreciation for the relationships I developed with co-workers, youth, and community members.

I didn't expect to change and grow this much during my AmeriCorps service, but I'm thankful for the new insights I have gained. I now feel more of a greater sense of belonging in the Story County community. I was exposed to different work ethics and personalities. Though difficult at times, it was rewarding with experiences I would not have gotten from another job.

about healthier snacking options for her daughter. She showed interest in the food being cooked during demonstrations, as well as in the cooking utensils being used. During lesson five, she used a can opener for the first time — an achievement she was proud of and wanted to share with her family. Sue also learned about using canned food; she was used to buying only fresh produce. And she learned ways to save money at the grocery store.

Food and Environment

The 3rd Annual Local Food Cycle was held in September in Story County. Eighty-five riders enjoyed views of Iowa, delicious local food, and education about agriculture and natural resources. There were 10 stops along the approximately 45-mile ride.

More than half of the riders reported they were more likely to purchase local food after participating in the event. Almost all respondents said they would consider purchasing food from one of the farms on the route and that they had a better understanding of farm practices in Iowa after riding the Local Food Cycle.

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