



Grand Traverse County

2017–2018 ANNUAL REPORT

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> FROM THE DISTRICT COORDINATOR:

Over the past year, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension partnered with Grand Traverse County to continue strengthening youth, families, businesses and communities. Your MSU Extension staff members, grounded in local relationships, serve by bringing the university’s research and resources to provide outreach and education in the areas Grand Traverse County residents need it most.



In this report, we’re excited to share about the people and programs that are improving the lives of Grand Traverse County residents in many ways, including helping grow Michigan’s agriculture economy, encouraging sustainable use of our natural resources, controlling health care costs by giving individuals the information they need to manage chronic illness and preparing tomorrow’s leaders. From an in-person workshop to online education, MSU Extension professionals work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure their success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

We’re passionate about serving Grand Traverse County and are looking forward to a new year of serving. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Jennifer Berkey
Jennifer Berkey
District 3 Coordinator

> MEASURING IMPACT:

CONNECTING WITH RESIDENTS

4-H: Developing Youth & Communities	3,195
Keeping People Healthy	4,410
Supporting Agriculture & Agribusiness	1,253
Fostering Strong Communities & Businesses, and Enhancing Our Natural Assets	446
TOTAL PARTICIPANTS IN GRAND TRAVERSE	9,304

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DEVELOPING YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES

When you support MSU Extension 4-H programs, youth participants learn life skills that prepare them for the workforce – especially for highly sought after jobs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Extension programs help children develop early literacy skills that support school readiness. They learn leadership and decision-making skills in 4-H that increase their likelihood of becoming civically active.



4-Her's give back to the community!

- Community service is an important aspect of 4-H. This year our 4-H members, leaders and families spent a Saturday in April picking up garbage, leaves, twigs, branches and other debris at the Traverse City State Park beach. It was great to help beautify one of our wonderful parks open to residents and visitors alike.
- Our 4-H members, leaders and families also donated ready-made food items and personal care products to food pantries at TBAISD and Traverse City High School.
- Two 4-H clubs organized a “Cloverbud Fun Day” for children ages 5-9 in our community so they could learn about 4-H animal projects with horses, goats, rabbits and planted a biodegradable seed project. It was a fun day and many children were excited about participating in 4-H.
- In July our Grand Traverse County 4-H Leader's Assn. sponsored a 4-H Water Safety Event held at Acme Bayside Park. It was open to the community, visitors and 4-H members. Participants included the American Red Cross, Grand Traverse Metro Fire, Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Office, DNR, Safe Kids, and the US Coast Guard. A few of our 4-H clubs and volunteers provided games, food, and other fun activities. The US Coast Guard provided a fly-over and water safety demonstration. We had a great turn out and everyone who attended felt it was an important event for our community.



4-H youth experience awesome hands-on learning!



- 35 youth and 5 adults attended 4-H Exploration Days at Michigan State University in June to experience college life – making friends, taking classes, living in the dorms. One youth said it “gave them more confidence in being independent and going to college.”

- 4-H offered science learning over the past year in new venues! We introduced youth in Kingsley, through their summer lunch program, to fun science activities including water and bug science.



Developing Youth and Communities, continued



- We also taught science with 28 students through the TEACH Homeschool program weekly on Mondays. Some of the programming included chemistry, engineering, Newton's law of motion, bugs, earth science and other fun hands-on learning!
- "Show Me the Money" 4-H Retreat was open to teens 11-19 and provided a simulation on money management. Youth had to make decisions on personal wants and needs by visiting different vendors to purchase a home, car, childcare, etc. all while staying within their monthly budget. They had chances to experiment, make decisions and mistakes and deal with the consequences in a realistic but safe environment. Youth said this experience was fun but somewhat difficult. They had more respect for all the money management responsibilities their parents had to juggle!

Animal Science Learning Through 4-H Projects

- We provided an opportunity for youth to learn about swine health, nutrition and digestive system through a swine dissection. 65 4-H youth were able to get hand-on learning as they touched, explored and asked questions about a swine's health and internal organs. It was an awesome experience for many students!
- Grand Traverse and Leelanau County 4-H and the Northwestern Michigan 4-H Livestock Council held monthly hands-on learning experiences for youth in species specific learning as well as general education on positive sportsmanship, financial management, animal health and nutrition, marketing an animal, and problem solving. All valuable life skills for their future!



Northwestern Michigan Fair 4-H Auction:



- 406 local 4-H youth (ages 9-18) participated in the auction for 2017.



- Gross sales from the auction totaled \$654,430



- 1,100 local 4-H youth registered and participated in the 4-H Livestock Council program in 2017.



- Animals Donated to Local Food Pantries/Charities: 18 Swine, 1 Steer. Live weight of animals donated totaled 5,762 pounds.

KEEPING PEOPLE HEALTHY & ENSURING SAFE FOOD

When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn safe food handling practices, increase their physical activity and improve the quality of their diets. Extension programming also helps decrease incidents of violence and bullying. Encouraging these healthy behaviors helps reduce food and health care costs by helping prevent chronic health conditions and providing safe environments throughout a person's life span.

Fostering Health through Nutrition and Physical Activity

Our Challenge

Obesity has important consequences on our nation's health and economy. It is linked to a number of chronic diseases including coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers. Among adults, the medical costs associated with obesity are estimated at 147 billion dollars. According to The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America released in 2017, Michigan has the 10th highest adult obesity rate in the nation. Michigan's adult obesity rate is currently 32.5 percent, up from 22.1 percent in 2000 and from 13.2 percent in 1990.

Healthier Lives through Nutrition Education

Michigan State University Extension supports individual and community level, or public health approaches, to prevent obesity. Through the United States Department of Agriculture Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed), we provide exemplary nutrition and physical activity education for limited resource participants where they eat, learn, live, work, play, and shop. Program and outreach efforts aim to increase the likelihood that limited resource youth, adults and seniors can make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

For youth and adults who took part in series-based classes, increases were reported in areas of behavior.

There have been notable successes as a result of our direct education in the community. Program Instructor Michelle Smith draws from evidence-based curricula to reinforce healthy eating and physical activity promotion among youth, adults and seniors throughout Grand Traverse County. One noteworthy success has been a recent partnership with Munson Community Health Center to provide

Nutrition Education Participants:



640
Adults

2,477
Youth

\$1 = \$10



**EVERY \$1 SPENT ON NUTRITION EDUCATION SAVES
AS MUCH AS \$10 IN LONG-TERM HEALTH CARE COSTS.**

ADULT BEHAVIOR CHANGE



24 % more physically active



33 % eat more vegetables



78% improved nutrition
practices



YOUTH BEHAVIOR CHANGE



38% more physically active



45% improved food safety
practices



82% made healthier food choices



Keeping People Healthy, continued

education to recipients of the Fruit and Veggie Prescription Program. The Fruit and Veggie Prescription Program participants engage in regular nutrition education and cooking demonstrations at the farmers market on the grounds of the Grand Traverse Commons and then receive market coupons to purchase produce from market vendors.

"Since coming to this program, I have lost weight and my blood pressure is much better."

~ Fruit and Veggie Prescription Program Participant

"It is nice to see patients acquire coupons to be used on local produce. MSU Extension is able to help with educating patients on ways to prepare their fruits and vegetables and how these foods can help improve their health and ultimately their life."

- Nutrition Instructor Michelle Smith

Making the healthy choice easier - Supporting Changes to the Policies, Systems, and Environment

MSU Extension works to create a culture of health and wellness by providing coaching at the organization level. We provide technical assistance in assessing the environment, including policies and the physical space, creating an action plan, and implementing the action plan to work towards best practices related to nutrition and physical activity.

The school environment has shown to be a ripe opportunity to make meaningful impact. As the places where children spend much of their time and often eat at least half of their calories, schools are a primary driver in young people's knowledge of, attitudes about, and access to food.

Through the implementation of Smarter Lunchrooms assessment, MSU Extension partners with school stakeholders to identify free or low-cost solutions that nudge students to voluntarily select the healthiest food in the lunchroom. Caitlin Lorenc supports Blair Elementary in the Smarter Lunchroom process. The Blair team has made great progress towards enhancing the health of their school cafeteria environment. Some examples include:

- Addition of student artwork and a "healthy activities quilt" created by 5th grade students
- Purchase of an attractive menu board
- Created and conducted a school-wide cafeteria survey about favorite and least favorite fruits and vegetables they wanted to try

The student team presented their efforts to the Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS) Food Service Director, Blair Elementary kitchen staff, and TCAPS nutrition educator.



691

Grand Traverse adults and youth reached through policy, systems, and environmental change strategies



8,685

Value of grant funds and resources to Grand Traverse County Schools through Smarter Lunchrooms and Fuel Up to Play 60



Blair Elementary School received a Silver Wellness Award for excellence in creating a culture of wellness in their school. L-R: Sam Walter, teacher and School Wellness Team member; Caitlin Lorenc, MSU Extension; Larry Inman, 104th District Representative

Keeping People Healthy, continued

Due to a partnership with the United Dairy Industry of Michigan, MSU Extension facilitates **Fuel Up to Play 60**. This initiative is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program launched by National Dairy Council and NFL, in collaboration with the USDA, to help encourage today's youth to lead healthier lives. MSU Extension staff engaged students and teachers at Blair Elementary and have been working to assess and identify areas within the school to enhance nutrition and promote physical activity.



Connecting kids to healthy food in schools – FoodCorps service

MSU Extension serves as one of six FoodCorps service sites in Michigan. FoodCorps is a national organization working to connect kids to healthy food in school, so they can lead healthier lives and reach their full potential. Through this program, MSU Extension staff member Sarah Eichberger provides leadership and support to a FoodCorps service member. Service members support Farm to School strategies through delivery of hands-on nutrition and food systems education in classrooms, support healthy school meal, and work with the whole school community to support a school wide culture of health. Throughout the last year MSU Extension's FoodCorps service member Sarah Perez-Sanz has served Traverse Heights Elementary school. From September 1, 2017 – early April, Sarah has taught 27 engaging, hands-on lessons to 60 student in 3 classrooms and exposed all school students and staff to 7 cafeteria taste tests. MSU Extension Grand Traverse County continues to rely on the strong partnership with school staff to ensure successful and meaningful FoodCorps service.

"This lesson gave our students an opportunity to share. A few students have never shared in front of a class – I was so impressed!"
- 5th grade Teacher Traverse Heights Elementary

"I ate the whole thing!" - Traverse Height Elementary student after trying beets during a cafeteria taste test.



Workplace

Healthy employees are proven to be happier and more productive. MSU Extension health and nutrition staff work with employers to create a culture of health and wellness within the workplace. To have the most profound impact on individual health behavior is to make the healthy choice the default or easy choice in all environments. Focusing on healthier worksite environments as opposed to only one time programs is recognized as best practice. The Designing Healthy Environments at works (DHEW) assessment and process is considered a policy, systems and environmental (PSE) change strategy. PSE is used to improve the health of the workforce through long-lasting, sustainable change. Beginning this spring, MSU Extension staff are facilitating the healthy worksite process with a small team of Grand Traverse County employees identified and interested in working to enhance wellness.





Keeping People Healthy, continued

Childcare

MSU Extension provides childcare providers with health and wellness education and environmental coaching. Whether it's a family-care home-based or center-based provider, MSU Extension nutrition programs help incorporate the best practices for feeding children and creating place that support healthy living.

Partners

Local partnerships are critical to the success of our work. Relationships with BrickWays, Grand Traverse County Commission on Aging, Forest Area Public Schools, Traverse City and Kingsley Area Public Schools, Shape Up North, Grand Traverse Bay YMCA, and Traverse City High School are some of the many partners that help support and host our effort to reach Grand Traverse individuals and families.

Reducing anger, bullying and stress

Stress Less with Mindfulness

Mindfulness means paying attention to the present moment without judgement. Research has shown that practicing mindfulness is effective in reducing stress-related symptoms such as worry, depression and physical tension, and may be helpful in managing chronic conditions such as cardiac disease and diabetes.

By offering teens, adults, and seniors alternative ways of relating to everyday life experiences, including thoughts, emotions, physical sensations and events, Stress Less with Mindfulness teaches and encourages the use of mindfulness self-care skills to help one feel better and enjoy life more.

In 2017, Patty Roth, Social Emotional Educator collaborated with the Traverse Bay Area ISD to offer two Stress Less with Mindfulness Series. From January to March, 50 students from the Life Skills Center participated in weekly Stress Less classes held weekly at the Traverse Bay Area Credit Union. The Life Skills Center serves students age 16-26 with moderate to severe cognitive impairments, emotional impairments or autism. The students in this class often work with outside agencies to gain skills that will assist them with independent living. Simultaneously, 15 teachers from the Life Skills participated in their own the Stress Less with Mindfulness series to gain new self-care skills as well as techniques to incorporate into their classrooms. At the conclusion of the year, a final Mindfulness presentation was conducted with the TBAISD for 65 adult participants. As a result of the trainings in 2017, participants showed improvement on these key outcomes:

- 98% can identify three mindfulness tools to help them manage stress
- 95% are more positive about dealing with stress in their lives by using mindful tools
- 96% now use mindful breathing to calm themselves in the face of stress
- 93% practice mindful movement as a way of calming the mind and body
- 96% describe how a mindfulness perspective can change reactions to daily stressors

Keeping People Healthy, continued

RELAX: Alternatives to Anger is an educational program that actively engages participants to gain knowledge and skills to constructively deal with anger. The core concepts include recognizing anger signals, empathizing, listening, accepting that others' anger is not about you, and letting go of the past in order to maintain a present perspective. Participants learn to better manage their anger and stress at home, in the workplace and in school. In 2017 the RELAX Alternatives to Anger for Parents and Caregivers was presented to 18 parents at a Traverse City elementary school "Parents Go To School" event.

Participants left with improved knowledge or new skills designed to promote social and emotional well-being with others in their lives and immediate social environments. As a result of the RELAX program:

- 64% reduced their frequency in yelling and screaming
- 64% now work hard to be calm and talk things through
- 63% talk things through until they reach a solution

Early Childhood Development

Northwest Michigan is focusing a lot of professional development on the area of infants and toddlers and Grand Traverse County is no different. In 2017, providers attended presentations on Developing Early Literacy Skills, Understanding a Toddler's World, and Mathematics for Infants and Toddlers. Over 45 providers attended these 3 sessions. The first 1,000 days of a child's life are the most important to their development. From conception to age three, the brain is actively making the connections, both positive and negative, that a child will use for the rest of their lives. During this period of time a child's brain can form 1,000 neural connections every second. A child who is read to, talked to, sung to, played with, is not only happier but will have better cognitive capacity and a more productive life. Through high quality trainings provided to area providers and parents we are ensuring that our youngest members of society are developing a strong foundation of learning when they enter a formal education setting. In addition, through a partnership with Detroit Public TV, MSU Extension was able to provide a 6 hour training (3 two hour sessions) at the Grand Traverse Library to 9 parents on the importance of having their young children ready for school. This hands on training provided families with useful tools and activities to use at home with their children.





SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE & AGRIBUSINESS

When you support MSU Extension, you help participants learn profitable and efficient business and production practices.

Supporting Fruit Production

MSU Extension hosted the 2018 Northwest Michigan Orchard and Vineyard Show on January 16-17 at the Grand Traverse Resort. This meeting is an annual collaborative effort among the Grand Traverse Fruit Growers' Council, Parallel 45, the Cherry Marketing Institute, and MSU Extension and AgBioResearch. The 2018 show drew in more than 300 attendees from across the state and country. Tree fruit, grape, and saskatoon educational sessions provided key information to address recent challenges experienced by fruit producers in our region.

Recent years have been particularly challenging for cherry growers with the introduction of spotted wing drosophila, and the show provided growers with practical orchard management strategies to help minimize production risks posed by this pest. The grape session welcomed two out-of-state guest speakers, Dr. Stephan Sommer and Dr. Joe Fiola with expertise in fermentation and production methods to improve qualities of red wine – these speakers shared their knowledge to help grape and wine producers enhance Michigan wines. Lastly, attracting and maintaining an adequate agricultural workforce in the northwest region has also been a concern. A joint session to explore opportunities for agricultural labor in northwest Michigan featured input from growers and contractors that had first-hand experience with H2A and contract labor programs.

Tree Fruits

Tree fruit integrated pest management (IPM) works toward optimizing economic and environmental sustainability for orchard growers. The seminar series, “IPM Updates,” led by MSU Extension Educator Emily Pochubay provided tree fruit producers and crop consultants in northwestern lower Michigan with timely pest and disease information related to fruit production during the 2017 growing season. Seven, two-hour long meetings were held in Grand Traverse County in 2017 and these meetings reached 167 tree fruit growers. Fruit Educators also hosted 135 participants at the bi-annual Tree Fruit IPM School in Traverse City that attracted growers from across the county.

Wine Grapes

In August of 2017 Extension hired a new, full-time Viticulture Extension Educator for the Grand Traverse region, Thomas Todaro. Duke Elsner has since been able to direct a greater portion of his time to working with growers of other small fruits, primarily saskatoon berries, raspberries and strawberries. Todaro and Elsner collaborated on the Wine Grape Vineyard Establishment Conference held at the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center in February.

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Saskatoon Berries

Duke Elsner coordinated the establishment of a new block of saskatoons at the Northwest Michigan Horticultural Research Center in 2017. Part of this planting is a variety trial to help determine the best varieties for northern Michigan. Over 500 plants of two varieties were also established to serve as a site for testing cultural practices and pesticide efficacy trials. Pesticide recommendations for Michigan Saskatoon growers were added to the 2018 edition of the Michigan Fruit Management Guide, Extension Bulletin E154.

Native Pollinator & Monarch Butterfly Conservation

Duke Elsner was part of a team of MSU Extension Educators who planned and hosted a conference titled “Protecting Pollinators in Urban Landscapes” which was held on October 9-11, 2017 at the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City. This meeting attracted 142 participants from the United States, Canada, France and Nigeria. Duke spoke on the role of butterflies and moths in the urban landscape, presented a poster on the nectar plants used by Michigan butterflies, and pointed out area highlights during a bus tour that followed the meeting.

Duke continued his programming on the conservation of native pollinators and the monarch butterfly in 2017. He gave eight presentations on native bees, monarchs, and other Michigan butterflies to various groups and organizations in the county. As a member of a Michigan Department of Natural Resources committee, he worked toward the completion of a monarch butterfly conservation plan for the entire state, which should be completed in 2018.

Home Horticulture

2017 was a landmark year for the Consumer Horticulture Program in Grand Traverse County. Through volunteer outreach, Extension Master Gardeners share science-based gardening knowledge and engages citizens and empowers communities in environmentally responsible gardening practices, improving food security, improving community, and developing youth through gardening.

This past year, Master Gardeners volunteered for more than 2,200 hours on various projects in Grand Traverse County valued at over \$53,000. The bulk of the hours were in projects benefiting the community like environmental stewardship, youth gardening, community beautification and food, security and hunger support. In Grand Traverse County there are 17 designated Master Gardener projects that are maintained by 61 active Master Gardener volunteers.

Grand Traverse Plant & Pest Diagnostic Services

Although county residents are always welcome to call or visit the office for assistance with horticultural issues, the office held plant health diagnostic clinics every



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Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Wednesday, June through September of 2017. Residents were welcomed to bring in samples of plants, insects, diseases and other problems; MSU Extension staff, county employees and Master Gardener volunteers provided the expertise to diagnose problems and provide management recommendations. In 2017, over 250 Grand Traverse County residents had their plant or household pest problems addressed during our free clinics.

Other Consumer Horticulture programming and services available for residents of Grand Traverse County include:

- Gardening Hotline
- Gardening in Michigan website
- Ask an Expert system
- Smart Gardening programming
- Soil tests for home gardens, yards and landscape plants



Grand Traverse County currently boasts more hop acreage than any other county in Michigan.

Supporting Hops Production

Tremendous growth in the craft beer sector over the past few years has resulted in increasing demand for hops. Hops provide aroma, as well as bitterness to offset the sweetness of malt. In 2017, craft beer volume increased by 5% while overall beer volume declined by 1.2%. In the U.S., craft beer represents 12.7% of overall volume and 23% of overall retail dollar sales. In recent years, hop producers across the U.S. have increased acreage. Michigan is currently ranked 4th in hop acreage after Washington, Idaho, and Oregon. Northwest Michigan's Grand Traverse, Leelanau, and Benzie Counties collectively boast more acres of hops than anywhere else in the state. Northwest Michigan producers have invested tens of millions of dollars in hopyard, harvest, and processing infrastructure over the last several years.

MSU Extension Educator Rob Sirrine gave a presentation on the state of Michigan hops at Frankfort Beer Week.



Jason Warren of MI LOCAL HOPS discussed hop pelletizing for MDARD representatives.



MSU Extension provides valuable education on hop production throughout the state of Michigan and 2017 was no exception. MSU Extension Educators, Dr. Rob Sirrine and Dr. Dean Baas presented on the State of Michigan Hops and Barley at Frankfort Beer Week in October 2017. Dr. Sirrine also presented on "Craft Beer and Hop Production" to the Kiwanis Club in Traverse City, and at Grow Benzie with Brian Confer, Head Brewer at Stormcloud Brewing Company in Frankfort, MI.

MSU Extension also helped coordinate a tour of MI LOCAL hops in Williamsburg, MI for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Michigan Agriculture Commission.

In summer 2017, MSU and the Michigan Brewers Guild held their 10th annual summer hop field day and tour. While the 2016 tour was held on farms in Benzie County, the 2017 tour featured several

Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Leelanau County farms as well as a visit to Hop Lot in Suttons Bay. Potential hop producers and others interested in hops learned directly from current producers as well as MSU Extension experts.

In March of 2018, MSU held its annual Great Lakes Hop & Barley Conference in Kalamazoo, MI. The conference features hop, barley, and craft beer experts from around the world, and generally attracts 200-300 participants annually from multiple states and countries.

MSU Extension has taken a leadership role across the North Central and North East U.S. by providing valuable research and outreach to current and prospective growers on best practices for planting, harvesting, and pest management. In 2017, MSU Extension organized on-farm audits with members of the Hop Quality Group, a national organization dedicated to improving hop quality for the craft beer industry. The Hop Quality Group and MSU Extension toured multiple hop harvest and processing facilities offering recommendations to improve quality.

Assistance to support beginning farmers across MI

The MSU Product Center Food-Ag-Bio assists county residents in developing products and businesses in the areas of food, agriculture, natural resources and the bio economy. The MSU Extension Educator has special training as an innovation counselor to deliver these services. Business counseling is conducted on a one-on-one basis and may take place at the MSU Extension office or the client's home or business location. The assistance provided is tailored to meet the needs of the client and may include things like developing a business plan, navigating the regulatory maze, accessing the supply chain or seeking funding options. The Educator also assists clients in accessing specialized services they may need that are offered through Michigan State University like feasibility studies, nutritional labeling and packaging assistance.

One hundred thirteen counseling sessions took place in Grand Traverse County to assist 28 entrepreneurs. Businesses represented included food processors, wineries, and value-added agriculture producers. Three producers received MDARD Value-Added Producer Grants. Several businesses participated in the Product Center's Making It In Michigan Trade Show where they showcased their products to retail buyers. Businesses reported \$2.5 million in new sales and \$899,000 of new investment. Sixteen new jobs were created and thirteen jobs were retained.

2017-18 MSU Product Center Impacts in Grand Traverse County:



113 Counseling Sessions



Increased Annual Sales: \$2,500,000



16 New Jobs Created



Value of Increased Investment: \$899,000



MSU Extension Senior Educator Erin Lizotte discusses pest management options during the 10th annual summer hop tour.



FOSTERING STRONG COMMUNITIES

When you support MSU Extension, participants learn how to implement best practices in good governance that keeps communities solvent, productive and engaged; learn effective conflict management skills that help leaders and residents work collaboratively on complex issues; and engage youth leaders in decision-making. In the personal finance area, MSU Extension helps youth and adults alike learn the skills they need to increase their savings, manage their spending avoid predatory lending and reduce mortgage defaults. All of these outcomes help lower the cost of governmental services and lead to personal and community stability, strong neighborhoods and safe communities.

Northern Michigan Counties Association, organized by MSU Extension, county commissioners from 34 counties in northern lower Michigan meet 8 times per year to share information and learn from the experiences of others.

Building Strong Sovereign Nations is a leadership building program developed by MSU Extension in cooperation with leaders of Tribal Nations in Michigan and delivered annually in conjunction with the United Tribes of Michigan fall meeting. The program is open to leaders from all Tribal Nations in Michigan and is also available to leadership and staff of individual tribes. Onsite workshops are also available.

Open Meetings Act/Freedom of Information Act (OMA/FOIA) Workshops were presented by MSU Extension for local government leaders in 2017.

The **Stronger Economies Together (SET)** program is a national initiative collaborating with USDA and local partners in Manistee, Benzie, Grand Traverse and Kalkaska, to help identify and develop business sectors that hold the highest growth potential in an effort to help create, attract, and retain jobs.

Pension and OPEB Legislation Breakout Session at the 2018 MAC Legislative Conference to update commissioners about the Michigan Department of Treasury analysis, funding levels that trigger additional action by local units and the waiver request process created in last year's legislation.

The **Get Engaged** local government leadership program was piloted in Grand Traverse County in 2017 with approximately 30 participants.

A **Real Colors** workshop was offered for Grand Traverse County employees during January's staff in-service day. Real Colors is a dynamic workshop experience providing participants with the skills to better understand their own personalities and build appreciation and acceptance of each unique temperament.

MSU Extension also facilitated a joint Board of Commissioners and Parks and Recreation Board meeting and assisted Grand Traverse County with strategic planning.



Supporting Food and Agriculture, continued

Enhancing & protecting our Great Lakes coastal resources

Sea Grant Extension

MSU Extension's Greening Michigan Institute supports efforts to carry out Sea Grant programs throughout Grand Traverse County and the rest of Michigan. Michigan Sea Grant Extension helps apply research, conducts educational activities and is connected to more than 40 coastal counties. Extension Educators provide technology transfer by interpreting scientific knowledge for decision-makers, public officials, community leaders, businesses and industries.

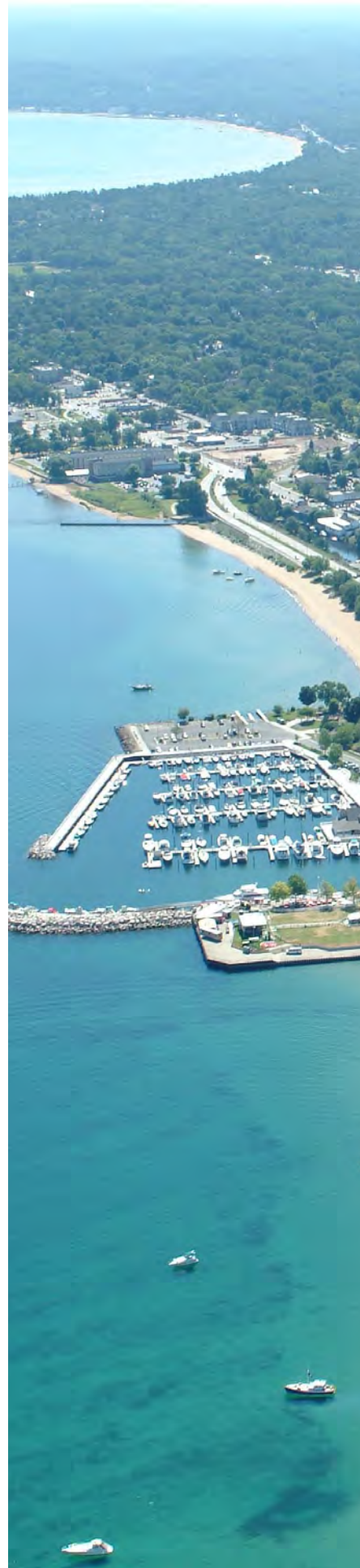
Michigan Sea Grant Extension provides targeted support focusing on marinas and other businesses, restoring coastal habitats and related industries, such as commercial and recreational fishing. In partnership with state and federal agencies, Extension Educators are responsive and proactive in addressing local, regional and national issues relevant to Michigan.

Outreach Topics and Programs:

- Healthy Coastal Ecosystems
- Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Resilient Communities and Economies
- Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development
- Coastal Hazards – Dangerous Currents



Sea Grant Educators are working with the Grand Traverse County Health Department's Water Safety Network on drowning prevention issues, particularly in Lake Michigan. Also, Sea Grant has been active with the Freshwater Roundtable and co-hosted the 10th annual Freshwater Summit in October, 2017. Over 160 people attended and learned about waves caused by storms in the Great Lakes (meteorological tsunamis), the FishPass project in the Boardman River at Union Street Dam, fishery changes to Lake Michigan, and water level updates among other topics.



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