



Muskegon County 2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



Over 4,000 Muskegon County adults and youth participated in MSU Extension programs



2,291 youth participated in 4-H and school enrichment programs



826 youth and adults participated in health and nutrition programs



MSU Extension helped 342 community members with economic development, natural resources and local government education



359 Muskegon County residents participated in SNAP education programs



614 Muskegon County residents participated in agricultural and gardening services



More than \$6,217,000 was spent with local businesses



\$28,423,132 total economic impact in Muskegon County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I'm delighted to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Muskegon County and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension. Because of your continued support, we've been able to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, businesses, and communities.



MSU Extension offers a broad range of research-based educational services to county residents. Over this past year, we've empowered families and individuals to live healthier lives, supported new and local businesses, created opportunities for youth leadership development and career exploration, helped farmers with business management and mental health, and much more. Our staff live and work alongside county residents, are rooted in community relationships and are responsive to community needs.

This year, we've also welcomed Muskegon County residents into our online community: we've offered online educational courses, answered questions on topics ranging from gardening to food safety, raised program awareness through social media and provided a library of research-based resources they've browsed on our website.

Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving Muskegon County, thank you for another great year. We look forward to your continued support and hope you'll be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.

James Kelly, District Director

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MSU Extension District 5



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Program Highlights



4-H Tech Wizards participants in Muskegon County.



One of the many plant disease samples brought into the Extension office for identification.



Mentor training being put in to practice.

S.T.E.A.M. PROGRAMS

Multiple schools in Muskegon County took advantage of the 4-H Tech Wizards after-school program designed to foster bonds between mentor and mentees while developing an interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Architecture, and Math (S.T.E.A.M.) fields. Funded by a federal grant, programs ranged from geocaching and technology tear-downs to a herpetology hike.

GARDENING & CONSUMER HORTICULTURE

Homeowners often have insect infestations or plant diseases that they are unfamiliar with and need help addressing. MSU Extension provides soil testing, plant and insect identification, disease identification and treatment, Smart Gardening resources, and a toll-free Lawn and Garden hotline. The Muskegon County MSU Extension office provides assistance to many customers with basic home gardening concerns.

LEADERSHIP & MENTOR EDUCATION

MSU Extension's team of knowledgeable leadership and mentor educators share best practices with university-backed, research-based programs and resources to help Michigan youth navigate through whatever challenges life throws their way. In 2018, the team provided lessons from the Ready to Go Mentor training kit to multiple groups within Muskegon County, resulting in improved leadership/mentor skills and improved confidence levels amongst participants.

Program Highlights

PRODUCT CENTER COUNSELLING

Strong counties provide resources to assist entrepreneurial activity within the region. MSU's Product Center helps Michigan entrepreneurs and businesses to develop and launch new product and service ideas into the food, agriculture, and bioenergy markets. In Muskegon County 73 client counselling sessions have helped guide multiple clients through business planning to market analysis and research. MSU delivers what entrepreneurs need directly or from our statewide network of university, business and governmental partners.



Helping businesses plan for future success.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

MSU Extension's Eat Smart Live Strong Program provides basic nutrition education and hands-on activities for all ages. Core curricula are designed to help low-income families stretch their food dollars while maintaining good nutrition. Some instruction includes physical activity and cooking techniques that help instill life-long skills. It is estimated that every \$1 spent on nutrition education saves as much as \$10 in long-term health costs.



Seniors learn the importance of healthy foods during the Eat Smart Live Strong program.

FOOD SAFETY

Providing assistance to help residents and businesses keep food safe is a hallmark of cooperative extension services across the country. In Muskegon County, we provided ServSafe education for restaurant staff, classes in home food preservation (canning, freezing and drying), assistance to food pantries, and "Safe Food Healthy Kids" classes for childcare providers.



Learning to can using up-to-date, safe methods reduces the risk of food-borne illnesses.

Investing in Muskegon County Youth with 4-H

*According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University 4-H'ers are **4X** more likely to make contributions to their communities, **2X** more likely to be civically active, and **2X** more likely to make healthier choices.*



In Muskegon County, we believe in the power of young people. By providing opportunities to learn and lead, 4-H helps youth become informed and engaged community members. While exploring new topics and activities in an experiential way, youth build the skills they need for life.

In 2018, Muskegon County 4-H had a total of 95 screened adult volunteers and 425 youth enrolled as 4-H club members. In addition, 2,291 children aged 5 to 19 took part in learning opportunities with MSU Extension. Essential skills youth develop while participating in 4-H include problem solving, decision making, leadership, resiliency and communication.

4-H is unique in that it offers experiences to young people who live in cities or rural areas by providing the opportunity to participate in community 4-H clubs, learning experiences in school classrooms, day and overnight camps and other special interest events. One example includes MSU 4-H Exploration Days, a pre-college program where over 2500 youth stay in MSU residence halls, take a variety of action packed classes and experience other aspects of a major university. In 2018, 27 youth from Muskegon County attended MSU 4-H Exploration Days.

“Exploration days was fun because I got to see a university and what it is like to stay there and attend classes. It makes me want to go to college.” - 4-H youth member

Beyond the excitement of learning something new through a project, youth have the opportunity to participate in leadership conferences, travel the world, become involved in their community through service, and meet new friends in a safe and comfortable setting. A young person's experience in 4-H makes a difference for a lifetime by allowing them to grow and appreciate the importance of being a good citizen, strong leader and person of character.

Leaders also help youth achieve their personal goals and provide encouragement and a support system. The relationships built among adult volunteer leaders and youth also have lasting effects. From 4-H experiences, youth gain important leadership, citizenship and life skills that can be applied to daily living, used in their community, in future jobs or when they continue their education. Although it may be years before a youth realizes and truly appreciates the influence of the 4-H leader, that served as positive adult

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MISSION:

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