



## MSU EXTENSION: DEVELOPING CIVICALLY ENGAGED LEADERS



**IMPACT**  
BY THE NUMBERS

**16,000** Michigan 4-H youth engaged in **49,000** experiences related to citizenship, leadership, cultural education and communication

Of those surveyed:

**92%**

said they could stand up for what they think is right, even if their friends disagreed



**94%**

try to change things they think are wrong

**98%**

reported they respect people from different cultures



**95%**

felt everyone on a team was important

**100%**

enjoyed learning about people who were different from them



### THE ISSUE

In today's globally connected world, youth face a number of challenges that will affect their families, communities and future careers. Unfortunately, young people are not often engaged in addressing these critical issues, nor are they taught the skills necessary to make a difference. To prepare youth to be active and informed individuals with the ability and desire to make an impact, they need the opportunity to respond to emerging issues through civic engagement and volunteerism. They also need experiences that equip them with the skills to step up as leaders in a multicultural world.

### MSU EXTENSION ACTION

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension is helping to develop youth as current and future leaders by providing programs that instill young people with the knowledge and skills to become positive agents of change. These programs focus on leadership development, civic education and engagement, global citizenship and developing cultural competency development. In the 2017-18 program year, more than 16,000 Michigan youth participated in nearly 49,000 of these types of Michigan 4-H experiences.

### THE IMPACT

Through experiences and trainings that teach youth how to run a meeting, deal with conflict, understand the public policy process, understand other cultures, work collaboratively with people of various leadership styles and personalities, and more, MSU Extension 4-H is growing current and future leaders who contribute positively to their communities, country and world. In comparison to before their 4-H experiences, youth engaged in leadership and civic engagement 4-H programs showed significant increases in skills related to conflict resolution, facilitation, civic participation, leadership, communication and cultural competencies. This increase in skills allows youth to build a commitment to civic service and responsibility while cultivating their capacity to lead as members of a multicultural world.

## Creating a culture of civic engagement and service

Each spring, Michigan 4-H brings youth to Lansing to experience government first-hand at 4-H Capitol Experience. This four-day event allows young people to develop their leadership skills and prepare for active citizenship by focusing on civic engagement and public policy. In addition to writing their own legislation and simulating the process of how policy is made, youth meet with state agency staff, lobbyists and legislators as they learn how to make their voices heard on issues that matter to them.

After attending the conference, youth are equipped with the skills and knowledge to make a difference in their communities. Beyond their expanded awareness of the democratic process, these young people have grown their understanding of their roles and responsibilities as citizens in today's world and have discovered a multitude of careers in the public sector.

The impact of the program is far-reaching, from youth who plan to use their experience in their everyday lives to those who see it as a launching point for their futures.

"This experience has encouraged me to vote now that I am of age and how to properly choose who or what I vote for," said one attendee.

"It has given me an even greater appreciation for the way our government is run," said another youth. "It also gave me an idea of how I can share ideas with representatives and help with state issues."

"Attending Capitol Experience has encouraged me to reevaluate my impact and the difference I can make."



## MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

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**"The greatest lesson I've learned is that I can relate to anyone of any background. 4-H is very diverse and I've learned that I can be a better co-worker and friend by relating to people very different from me."**

- 4-H leadership and civic engagement participant

**In 2018, the state's \$63.1 million investment in MSU AgBioResearch and MSU Extension generated more than \$1 billion for Michigan residents. Every dollar the state invested in MSU AgBioResearch and MSU Extension resulted in an additional \$2.26 leveraged in federal funds and external contracts, grants and other revenues, as well as \$5.80 in additional community benefits. As a result, MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch are able to serve Michigan residents with a benefit/cost ratio of 16:1.**

**These cost benefits are huge, but they are not the only benefits that MSU Extension brings to the state. Through Michigan 4-H Youth Development, more than 203,000 youth learn compassion, respect, leadership skills, responsibility, the value of hard work and other critical abilities. In addition, MSU Extension early childhood education programs prepare thousands of Michigan's youngest children for school success. Learn how you can contribute to this type of programming at: [msue.msu.edu/giving](https://msue.msu.edu/giving).**