

Investing in Roscommon County Youth with 4-H & MSU Extension

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 Roscommon County 4-H, 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 2017, Roscommon County 4-H had a total of **12 screened adult volunteers**, **588 youth enrolled as 4-H club members** and **five youth who attended summer camps** from around the county. Youth develop essential skills while participating in 4-H such as 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 2,500 youth stay in MSU residence halls, take a variety of action-packed classes and experience other aspects of a major university. In 2017, **three youth and two adults from Roscommon 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 experiences 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. According to a five year study by Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada, children with mentors were more confident and had fewer behavioral problems. Girls in the study were four times less likely to become bullies than those without a mentor and boys were two times less likely. In general, young people showed increased belief in their abilities to succeed in school and felt less anxiety related to peer pressure. We believe our leaders change lives.

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Roscommon County 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS

100+ Over 100 years of serving Roscommon County



672+ youth involved in 4-H and other youth development programs



350+ Roscommon adults and youth in SNAP-Ed programs



197+ Roscommon County youth learned about vernal pools through field education



341 MSU alumni live in Roscommon County



MSU Extension website received 3,682 visits from Roscommon County; 81% were first-time visitors



8,000 gardening questions answered statewide



MSU disbursed \$665,673 in financial aid to Roscommon students



\$3,458,590 total economic impact in Roscommon County

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Over the past year, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension partnered with Roscommon 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 Roscommon County residents need it most.



From lake education to governmental policy education to 4-H to personal finance programs and from youth to senior audiences, MSU Extension provides education to help Roscommon County residents improve their lives. This report highlights just some of the work done last year.

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

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Program Highlights



MSU Extension offers SNAP-Ed programming to help people who qualify for benefits to establish healthy eating habits on a limited budget and increase their physical activity. **Over 350 Roscommon residents participated** in 2017.



In 2017 the 4-H Winter Workshops held at the CRAF Center in Roscommon offered youth Pickleball (pictured), Robotics, Cooking, Slime, Roommates + more. Along with the subject matter, youth are mentored by area volunteers.



Lake education offerings from MSU Extension cover a wide variety of topics such as ecology, shoreline information, aquatic plants, invasive species, lake management, stakeholder communication and more. We know the value of lakes to Roscommon County and we are here to help by educating you and your constituents.

Program Highlights

Supporting Family Health & Nutrition

According to the 2018 County Health Rankings Report, Roscommon County ranks 72 of 83 in life expectancy and health. Obesity also continues to be a health concern because 34 percent of Roscommon adult residents are obese. MSU Extension provides health and nutrition workshops, webinars and more to help residents improve their health. We offer programs that promote health like Dining with Diabetes, Eat Healthy Be Active, Cooking Matters, Chronic Pain & Mindfulness and Food.

Empowering Roscommon Youth

From 4-H to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) programs to babysitting clubs and robotics, MSU Extension provides learning opportunities that help prepare youth for work, especially for jobs in science, technology, engineering and math.

In 2017, Roscommon youth enjoyed club activities including vegetarian cooking, baking, workforce prep, electronics, outdoor recreation, healthy choices and more!

Agriculture & Agribusiness

During the past year in Roscommon County, MSU Extension provided gardening support and education through individual consultation, workshops, research opportunities, evaluation of practices, articles and more. Topics included beginning farming, hoop house management education, soil testing, lake ecology, forestry education, pest management, outreach, etc. **One hundred twenty Roscommon residents** attended, participated or consulted in these programs over the past year.

Program Highlights

MSU Extension & Natural Resource Education

In 2017, our natural resource educator, Julie Crick, worked closely with Roscommon County school districts to provide classroom education and outdoor field excursions that include research, observation, data analysis and more. The education she offered directly engaged students in natural resource environments and helped to increase their environmental literacy and stewardship. Julie also offered training to educators on sustainable forestry in Michigan.

Supporting Youth in Poverty

The Backpack Program is an undertaking of the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan which attempts to reduce child hunger, educate students and families on proper nutrition and promote healthy lifestyles. MSU Extension partners to provide a newsletter titled Making Healthy Choices. The program began in 2004 with 50 backpacks in two elementary schools. Currently, this program serves nearly 7,000 children in more than 160 schools throughout 22 counties in northeast Michigan. **Roscommon County** received support in two schools and assists hundreds of youth.

Leadership & Engagement

MSU Extension offers leadership programs, civic engagement education, governmental policy training and more. For example, Communicating Through Conflict, Citizen Planning, Planning & Zoning for Solar in Michigan, Parliamentary Procedure, Township Government Training, Home Ownership & Retirement webinars, workshops on marijuana regulation and more. Over **60 residents of Roscommon County** participated in programs like these over the last year.



Through MSU Extension, **268 Roscommon County youth from Roscommon and Houghton Lake schools** received education around natural resources.



In Roscommon County, 33 percent of youth live in poverty. MSU Extension provides educational resources to partner agencies in areas of health, social and emotional well-being and more.



MSU Extension works to teach citizens how to implement best practices in good governance that keeps communities solvent, productive and engaged.