

PURDUE EXTENSION

Building Vibrant Communities Together

2019 Annual Report

..... One thing I know about the people of Indiana: We come together to make good things happen. Within our families, our communities, and our state, our lives are intertwined.

At Purdue Extension, we work alongside you to help build vibrant communities, strong families and profitable businesses — on Main Streets, in neighborhoods or on farms.

Because we know an Indiana 4-H member who gains cooking skills today will grow up to buy mushrooms from an urban farm at a farmers market.

A student who learns how to program a robot after school could later fly a drone to pinpoint problems in a cornfield.

Because Mental Health First Aid training will help first responders keep Hoosiers safe and support farmers through economic ups and downs.

And a community member using facilitation skills will help volunteers plan for a town's trail system that promotes healthy lifestyles.

Purdue Extension is committed to engaging, serving and inspiring people across Indiana — reaching your communities in the ways you need us most. We believe that when we all come together to build a better future, there's nothing we can't achieve.



Jason Henderson
Director, Purdue Extension
Senior Associate Dean, Purdue College of Agriculture

Purdue Extension works alongside you to create vibrant communities.

Over the past several years, Logansport has invested in new parks, trails and plazas. But when 110 people gathered at a local coffee shop in April 2018 as part of Logansport's **Hometown Collaboration Initiative** (HCI), they were challenged to think past the projects and toward the future.

"We have all these wonderful assets, but there's no cohesive story around where our community is heading," explains Michelle Dials, co-chair of Logansport's HCI efforts. "People will rally around a project. But if you ask, 'What do we want to be 20 years from now?' we're not sure whose job it is to answer that."

The group ultimately created Logansport Re-Imagined as its HCI capstone project to envision the answer. HCI helps Indiana communities of 25,000 people or fewer build on their strengths. Logansport's "coach," Tamara Ogle, Extension Community Development Regional

Educator, is one of 14 Purdue Extension community coaches providing technical assistance to 19 HCI cities, towns and counties.

The idea is to guide a diverse group of residents in fostering community-led, sustainable change. They study a Purdue-generated data snapshot before moving through a prescribed process toward their capstone project in such areas as developing local leadership, bolstering small businesses or investing in public spaces or facilities.

In addition to **Purdue Extension's Community Development** program and the **Purdue Center for Regional Development** (PCRD), the HCI partnership includes Indiana's Office of Community and Rural Affairs and Ball State University. Says PCRD Program Coordinator Maria Wiltse, "We're honing in on these small communities and helping them thrive."



Logansport residents discuss how to build on the community's assets. (Photo by Rich Voorhees.)

..... HCI engaged over **16,000** Indiana residents through surveys and 1,200
through forums — and generated more than 12,000 volunteer hours.

Indiana 4-H encourages youth to serve as

Imagine living in a shack, deciding whether you should trade your limited resources for milk for your baby or food and firewood for your entire family.

In April, 43 members of **Indiana 4-H Youth Development** clubs faced decisions like this as part of Heifer International's **Global Gateway** program. The charity works to alleviate hunger and poverty through community building and sustainable development. Global Gateway allows 4-H members to experience the struggles those living in poverty face every day.

Students spent the night in structures mimicking conditions in various parts of the world: some with indoor fireplaces and running water, others in mud huts or refugee camps. Youths and chaperones were split into families with different resources. Each family had a water balloon baby and someone assigned with an infection or without sight.

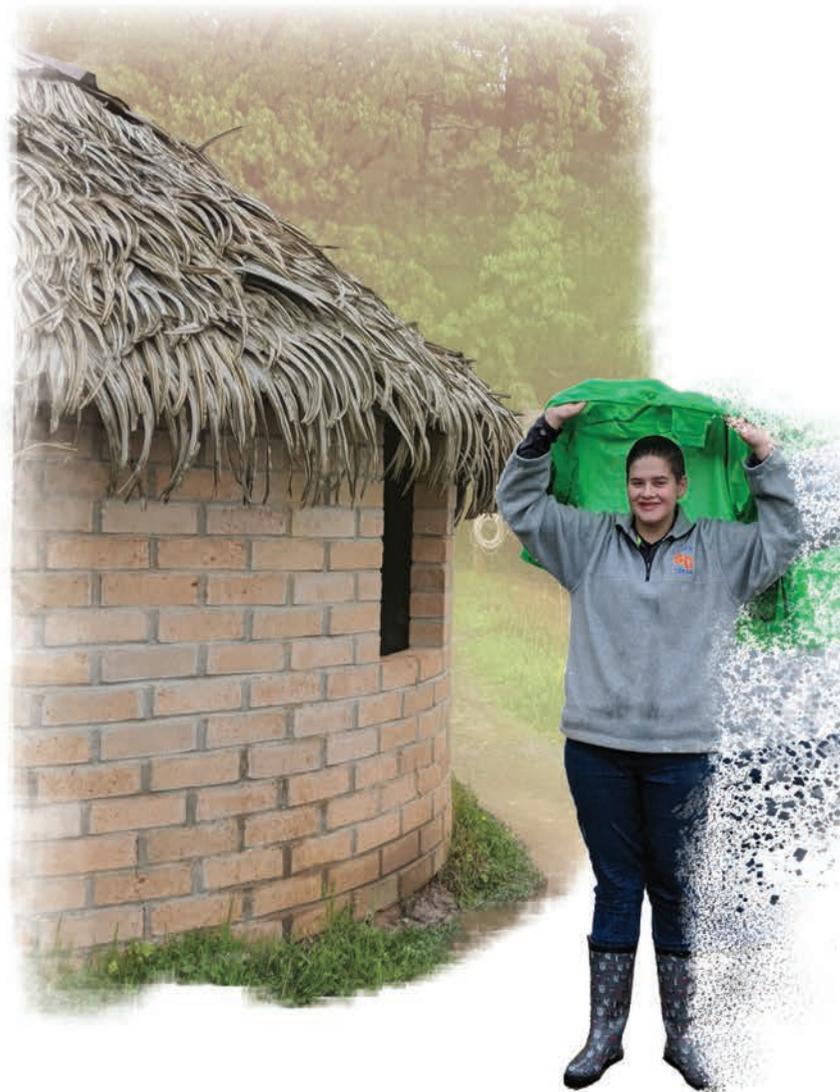
Wade, a Martin County 4-H member, realizes people live in difficult conditions, but says a rainy night offered necessary perspective. "There were many times I woke up in the middle of the night with my sleeping bag full of water and I was completely soaked. It's almost impossible to work well and be healthy and productive when you're living in conditions like that."

P. 4: A 4-H student tries to stay dry outside her Global Gateway accommodation.

P. 5: Students at Indiana 4-H Round-Up practice flying unmanned aerial vehicles.

Before leaving Heifer Ranch, students from 11 Indiana counties developed action plans to address local poverty. Martin County proposed a food drive at the county fair. Lake County will establish a program to grow and supply fresh produce to a local veterans' home. Scott County decided to encourage composting in nearby schools.

"Poverty isn't always visible, especially in our counties," says Bennett, a Hendricks County 4-H member. "Just because a person isn't living in a hut or a slum, though, doesn't mean they're not suffering."



..... **98%** of students who attended Global Gateway indicated they would help build a plan

for a service project.

leaders in their communities and introduces them to new technologies.



Calhoun Fisher, now a sixth-grader, quickly joined the Benton County 4-H Drone Spark Club, a short-term 4-H experience designed to spark interest among new audiences. “I thought drones were cool, so I wanted to do it,” he says. After two years in the club, he shared what he’s learned at the Rural Caucus meeting of state senators and representatives at the 2019 Indiana State Fair.

He was encouraged by Jon Charlesworth, Benton County Extension Educator in 4-H Youth Development and Agriculture & Natural Resources and the club’s leader. Charlesworth already uses an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV, commonly called a “drone”) to serve farmers in the area.

Over three sessions, Charlesworth covers the concepts required for Federal Aviation Administration certification, including weather and climate, reading aerial maps and flying responsibly. The club’s field trips have included flying drones at Purdue’s Indiana Corn and Soybean Innovation Center, where youth learned about remote sensing and crop health, and attending Purdue Aviation Day.

Charlesworth, who has been licensed for two years and advised his Extension colleagues as they created the **UAV Signature Program**, attended some of the first trial sessions. He says it’s valuable for people who have recently purchased a drone or are considering it and want to be licensed.

He shows producers how remote sensing can be used to monitor crops, and recently added an infrared camera to his drone to produce crop health maps. He is

also experimenting with drone assessment of county-maintained ditches and inspection of Conservation Reserve Program practices.

“The idea is to have ag educators see what works and what doesn’t so that we can help farmers,” he says. “If they want to invest in a drone, we can tell them, ‘Here’s what we’ve learned.’”

..... **18** participants in the UAV Signature Program adopted the technology for agronomic crops.

To go organic, or not to go organic? That is the question.

“It depends on the individual,” says Michael O’Donnell, Purdue Extension’s **Organic and Diversified Agriculture** Educator. O’Donnell oversees workshops on organic farming, including winter transition sessions for farmers converting acreage to organic.

He also plays critical roles as a one-on-one consultant and network builder. “First, I have to understand where the person is in their exploration,” O’Donnell says. “Then I need to learn how they’ve been managing their farm. Are they nutrient cycling? Using cover crops? Those answers tell me how far they have to go before they can be organic.”

While organic farming has become more mainstream than in the past, it’s still the exception. Dale Longworth of Cambridge City in Wayne County wears multiple hats. He sells conventional seeds to other farmers, advises on crops and farms part of his own acreage organically. “My wife likes the organic approach; she likes me not being around chemicals,” he says.

Longworth says events like the 2019 Indiana Organic Grain Farmer Meeting are valuable for the technical information, but just as much for connecting with other

farmers who are farming organically or considering it. He says Extension Field Days, with organic farm visits led by O’Donnell, build community and camaraderie.

“Networking and learning how other people do it — that’s important,” Longworth says. “It’s sort of like going back 20 or 30 years ago in the farming community. It takes the competition out. We’re sharing secrets, helping each other out.”



P. 6: John-Paul Franks of Oak Ridge Farms in Pendleton converted his family farm to organics. (Photo by Nate Chute.)
P. 7: Mark Boyer cold presses hemp seed oil from his hemp crop in Miami County. (Photo by The Stormworks.)

..... 90 people participated in a two-day workshop for organic grain production.

latest information on production methods and new commercial crops.

As Purdue Extension's first **hemp production specialist**, Marguerite Bolt travels Indiana to talk about a crop that few producers know much about, building an Extension program nearly from scratch. "One of the biggest challenges is that people are excited about hemp, but we have so much to learn about production and best management practices," she says.

Mark Boyer knows more than most. Boyer, who farms in Converse in Miami County and launched Healthy Hoosier Oil in 2014, cold presses oils from canola and sunflowers. When he learned that the only way to extract hemp seed oil — culinary oil very different from CBD — was

through cold pressing, he decided to try growing and processing hemp using his current equipment.

In a research project with Purdue Agronomy, Boyer planted 12 acres last year. This year he has 50 acres. Hemp isn't easy to grow, he says, but that hasn't diminished interest in it.

"My phone rings off the hook," Boyer says. "But I'd like to get through to everybody that we have a long time before this will be an Indiana commodity crop."

Boyer is in a unique position because he can process his own crop for his own market. "There's going to be a place for seed oil, but I see fiber hemp as the backbone of the hemp industry in Indiana," he says.

Meanwhile, Bolt is learning from Purdue researchers and producers like Boyer, and educating others. "I'm trying to reach as many people as possible with good information," she says.



..... Purdue Extension's hemp specialist provided information on this emerging crop at 40..... events in 2019.

We encourage Indiana youth to use critical thinking and creativity

Clover Gaming is more than fun and games, although it offers plenty of both. This 4-H program uses board and card games as tools for hands-on learning. Youth design and construct prototype games of their own, and sometimes even invite members of the public to test-play them.

Several Indiana counties offer **4-H Clover Gaming** events or **Spark Clubs**. (Spark Clubs allow new individuals to volunteer for short term experiences that will “spark” an interest in new youth to participate in 4-H.) By exploring game design, participants practice critical thinking, creativity and collaboration.

Hamilton County 4-H volunteers Christopher Conrad and Melissa Stout-Conrad led a five-week class that included their sons Cooper, 15, and Quinn, 13, veterans of two earlier Clover Gaming events. “We talked about how people think games are for playing, but there’s a lot of learning involved, too,” Stout-Conrad says.

Detailed lesson plans and multimedia support materials introduce game mechanics and logic, narrative and storytelling strategy, production, marketing and careers in gaming. Cooper says he especially enjoyed a video tour inside a game manufacturing operation.

But the best — and most challenging — part of the class was brainstorming their own games. Cooper’s game pits two cops against two robbers who try to steal a diamond without crossing the cops’ spaces. In Quinn’s game, rat superheroes protect a city against bad guys with unique powers. “Sometimes it’s hard to come up with the characters,” Quinn says. “A lot of work goes into that.”

But with the hard work come some important takeaways, Stout-Conrad says: “Strategy plays out in any game, and in life in general.”



P. 8: Quinn Conrad (left) and Cooper Conrad (right) test Quinn’s game at the Hamilton County Fair. P. 9: Judge Nathan Verkamp explains the judicial process to students in Dubois County. (Photo by Sarah Ann Jump/Dubois County Herald.)

..... Spark Club 4-H Clover Gaming events were completed in **13** Indiana counties during 2019.

and support parents in building strong and positive family environments.

Divorce is tough. Tough on couples, and tough on the children of parents who split up.

Judge Nathan Verkamp, Dubois County Circuit Court in Indiana, knows how difficult it can be from firsthand experience presiding over divorce cases. “The most important thing parents have to understand is to put the kids first, ahead of their differences,” Verkamp says.

In Indiana, a couple with children must wait at least 60 days after filing before obtaining a divorce. In Verkamp’s court, they must also complete Purdue Extension’s **Co-Parenting for Successful Kids** program during that time. Couples can take the four-hour program online or attend in-class sessions, which are offered statewide.

Dubois County Extension Director Janice Dougan leads the program, which was developed from a

curriculum originally created in Nebraska. “The class is all about keeping kids out of the middle,” she says. “We also cover how divorce affects kids at different ages and stages of development, the grief process and what to look out for.”

She says the class also helps parents identify techniques to resolve conflict and strengthen a sense of family.

Dougan says that because it’s mandated, not all parents come to class happy to be there. “So many parents walk into the classroom and sit down with their arms folded, as if they’re here only because they have to be.”

But in the end, they’re invariably grateful. “I had one parent say, ‘If I would’ve had this class before, I might not have gotten a divorce,’” Dougan says.



..... Co-Parenting for Successful Kids made an impact in **924** parent-child relationships
in the past year.

With Extension training, community members

The skills it takes to be a good leader depend on the situation. “The literature shows that if you’re working on complex issues where the group has the ability to make the decision, and also with volunteers and coalitions, then facilitative leadership is the most effective style for those situations,” explains Kris Parker, Community Development Regional Extension Educator.

Jalen Roseberry, program coordinator for Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow, an initiative of the Indiana Philanthropy Alliance, works in just that environment. She attended Extension’s **Facilitative Leadership course** with colleagues from community foundations, which she assists in all 92 counties.

The course begins with a webinar that introduces several models used in the class and explains how facilitative leadership is unique. Participants then gather for a three-day workshop. They learn over 20 tools that facilitators can use to guide a collaborative process, as well as communication skills to manage group conversation. Then they practice, with each person leading a 45-minute facilitation using at least two tools from the workshop. Trainers and



peers give feedback on what went well and what they might want to try differently next time.

Preparation is key, says Roseberry, who asks herself, “How are you going to organize this information so that everyone is going to be with you, following along this entire process and coming out with an actionable result or action step?” She now has more confidence that she can select the right tools to help her colleagues and community arrive at solutions that work for them. Her new network of other facilitators is an additional perk.

P. 10: Jalen Roseberry of the Indiana Philanthropy Alliance uses facilitative leadership in meetings with colleagues.

P. 11: The Oasis serves as a gathering place and community demonstration garden in Connversville.

..... **100%** of participants in the Facilitative Leadership course reported value
to their work, community and/or volunteer efforts.

discover new ways to gain consensus and create healthy communities.



When Carolyn Bunzendahl, vice president of the community development nonprofit Discover Connersville, heard about a Purdue Extension program that linked public spaces with environmental, health and wellness benefits, she knew her town would be an ideal pilot. “We needed help to be a healthier community and help to get Discover Connersville organized,” she says.

Enter Becky Marvel, Purdue Extension Community Wellness Coordinator and local facilitator of **Enhancing the Value of Public Spaces: Creating Healthy Communities** (EVPS: CHC), a strategic planning process to capitalize on those connections between public spaces and community health.

With guidance from Purdue Extension and buy-in from city and county leaders, one issue Connersville addressed was its downtown food desert, where residents lacked access to nutritious food. A diverse group of citizens generated an action plan for active living and healthy eating downtown.

On a vacant lot across from City Hall, Discover Connersville, the nonprofit Community Voices and Extension led the construction of a permanent green space and educational garden. It uses containers and small spaces, so residents can see firsthand that growing nutritious food doesn’t require acreage.

The Oasis is evolving to include not just the educational garden but also walking trails, picnic tables and concert space. Volunteers invested time and energy, local businesses donated materials and a local chef has offered cooking demonstrations. The harvest will benefit the county’s food banks.

The action plan is positioning Connersville to further promote healthy eating and active living by uniting community partners. Before its implementation, “a lot of good people were doing good things, but it had not been coordinated,” Bunzendahl says. EVPS: CHC brought them together for greater impact, confidence and pride.

..... Because of the EVPS: CHC program, city government in Connersville secured **\$100,000**
to support additional healthy eating and active living efforts.

Our programs help develop small businesses, increase

Urban agriculture can help communities increase food security, develop small businesses and reduce neighborhood blight. To help train the latest wave of urban farmers, Purdue Extension developed the **Urban Agriculture Certificate (UAC)** program.

The yearlong commitment starts with a flipped classroom, where learners complete online sessions at their convenience. Follow-up class time features activities related to the online concepts, helping students apply them to their own projects. Site visits to a variety of successful urban farming operations make up the third portion of the UAC program.

Ellen Bauman, market manager for Windrose Urban Farm in downtown Fort Wayne, completed her certificate in 2019. Windrose operates an indoor farm that's part of a broader mission: to train and employ people with developmental and other disabilities.

The farm produces shitake, oyster and lion's mane mushroom varieties and thrives by selling at local farmers markets and restaurants. "We decided we wanted to expand to outdoor garden boxes," Bauman says. That's when the Windrose board sponsored her taking the UAC.

The program covers all aspects of an urban operation, including site selection and soil testing, business practices and navigating regulatory issues. For Baumann, the

marketing guidance she got from the lead instructor, Allen County Extension Educator Terri Theisen, a member of the **Diversified Food and Farming Systems** team, has been especially valuable. "She'd come to the farmers market every weekend," Bauman says. "We looked at what we could do with our booth to make it flow better and at our pricing."

Extension offers many resources besides just classes, Bauman says. "I've learned so much from Terri in and out of the program; I've made so many connections."



P. 12: Lyss Hockema harvests oyster mushrooms at Windrose Urban Farm in Fort Wayne. P. 13: Indiana 4-H Ambassador Saniia Hunt (third from left) works with teammates Katy Atayde, Jessica Arroyo and Dariana Rodriguez from Girls Scouts of Central Indiana at the IndYouth Food Challenge.

..... **92%** of participants in the Urban Agriculture Certificate program last year
learned design tactics for their growing space.

community food security and improve the life skills of Indiana's youth.

The **IndYouth Food Challenge's** main ingredients are proper food handling, nutrition guidelines and cooking techniques, but for the youth who participate, the final dish is a boost in confidence. "Before the competition, I was pretty scared, because I cannot cook at all," says Saniaa Hunt, sophomore at Pike High School in Indianapolis and a member of the 2019 senior division winning team.

Indiana 4-H Youth Development partnered to host this year's competition at the Indiana Latino Expo to share the event with a wider community, inviting youth outside of Indiana 4-H to participate.

Teams consist of three to five people who combine mystery ingredients to create a main

dish. They are evaluated primarily on nutrition knowledge, food handling and preparation, and public speaking, with the remaining assessment for the execution of the dish.

"Maybe we are assuming that our youth know how to prepare food, but with things changing in our society and with technology and the composition of our families, they are not getting those basic skills on how to make a good selection of foods and how to combine ingredients to have a healthy meal," says Xiomara Diaz-Vargas, 4-H Youth Development Extension Specialist - New Audience Initiatives.

Hunt, a 4-H Ambassador who works to welcome diverse youth to Indiana 4-H programs, says

she also gained leadership skills from working with a team of Girl Scouts for the competition. "As we went on, I was confident in our dish. We had fun putting it all together and working together — and it came out really great."



Competitors in the IndYouth Food Challenge increased from 35 students on 7 teams in 2018 to 62 students on 16 teams in 2019. **39%** of students came from underrepresented minority groups and **64%** were participating in a 4-H experience for the first time.



If you head to Roka Farms, don't expect to see a barn, silo or farmhouse. And if you want to see crops, you'll have to go inside the 15,700-square-foot former Aldi store.

Two-and-a-half years ago, Chad Brandenburg took a big leap, left his career in law and banking, and bought the building with indoor farming in mind. Today it houses a thriving vertical farm. Roka supplies local restaurants and stores with fresh produce grown in the Indianapolis facility.

And thanks to Purdue Extension's **Safe Produce Indiana** training, Brandenburg and his customers can rest assured that the produce is clean and safe to eat. In 2016, the federal Food Safety Modernization Act mandated that produce growers — even smaller-scale businesses — had to meet minimum safety requirements. To do so, producers like Brandenburg have leaned on Extension Specialist Amanda Deering, clinical assistant professor of food science, for training.

"Her guidance was awesome," says Brandenburg, who took the eight-hour program. "She goes the extra mile."

Deering and her colleague Scott Monroe, food safety Extension Educator, are the lead instructors in the program. "The curriculum was developed by Cornell Produce Safety Alliance and approved by the FDA," Deering says. In November, she and Monroe helped open the new **Purdue Extension Food Safety Training Hub** in Vincennes, which will serve as a primary training ground for producers.

The value of the program extends beyond classrooms, Brandenburg says. "Amanda came out to our facility. She pointed out four critical potential access points for contamination. She gave us all the knowledge we need to be successful."

..... **451** people have received Safe Produce training since 2016, and 100% of participants surveyed made changes on their farms to improve food safety.

food supply and assist regional economic development across the state.

His long career at Ivy Tech Community College taught Jeff Plasterer that county boundaries don't serve workforce development in Indiana well. "Our economy is not solely contained within the borders of a city or a county," says Plasterer, now executive director of the Richmond-based Eastern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (EIRPC), which encompasses six eastern Indiana counties. "We need to think more globally than just our own little corner of the world."

Purdue Extension Community Development and the **Purdue Center for Regional Development** are helping rural communities do just that. Beginning in 2010,

Purdue partnered with other land-grant universities, the Southern Rural Development Center and USDA Rural Development on the national **Stronger Economies Together** (SET) program to help counties collaborate regionally. Plasterer's EIRPC grew from that program and is making progress toward the goals it established using data from Purdue and guidance from Extension educators.

The SET program also impacted Indiana 15 Regional Planning Commission, a collaboration of Crawford, Dubois, Orange, Perry, Pike and Spencer counties. Executive Director Lisa Gehlhausen says Purdue helped

the board members and SET committee understand the region's strengths and build on them — not just in economic development, but also in infrastructure, transportation, historic preservation, tourism and public safety. Altogether, four regional economic development plans were created, covering 23 Indiana counties.

USDA funding for SET ended in 2018, but an evolution of sorts exists in the new **Rural Economic Development Innovation** (REDI) program. While SET is an Extension-driven approach, REDI supports recommendations from a White House Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity report to promote rural economic development driven by innovation.

Through REDI, Purdue is partnering with the University of Kentucky's Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky to provide information, technical assistance and strategic planning support to nine rural areas that applied to build and implement regional (multi-county) development plans.



P. 14: Amanda Deering, clinical assistant professor and Extension Specialist for produce food safety talks with Austin Witt of District 6 Farms in Greene County at the opening of Purdue Extension's Food Safety Training Hub.
P. 15: Rushville's Riverside Park Amphitheater draws a regional audience.

..... SET served 101 regions nationally, leveraging a total of **\$779.3** million in regional investments.

Indiana's small and large businesses thrive with our guidance

Existing businesses with fewer than 100 employees create more new jobs in Indiana than any other business category. Many of these small businesses are based in rural areas, and expanding their online presence is crucial to staying competitive. Extending connectivity is one requirement; improving people's digital skills is another.

To that end, **Purdue Extension Community Development** launched **Digital Ready**, with Purdue trainers conducting workshops statewide. They help participants build their technical knowledge and incorporate digital strategies into their workplaces — from planning a website to showing up in web searches to marketing on social media.

Stefanie Griffith, co-owner of Strandz Salon and Threadz Boutique in New Albany, Indiana, wanted to know more about online marketing. "It's a big part of business anymore," she says. So Griffith attended two Digital

Ready Business workshops in Floyd County: the first, an introduction to social media and its platforms, the second on social media planning and content. "I wanted to get that plan of attack," Griffith says.

She left the workshops with a list of action items. With the help of her 20-year-old daughter, she incorporated social media into her monthly marketing calendar to promote her specials and posted videos on YouTube. "We have a long way to go, but at least now we have a plan in place," she says.

According to a recent study, unleashing the digital potential of rural businesses in Indiana could contribute \$3.9 billion per year, 16,000 jobs and almost \$640 million in wages, says Roberto Gallardo, Extension Specialist and assistant director of the **Purdue Center for Regional Development**.



..... Over **75%** of Digital Ready participants reported they were likely or very likely to apply
knowledge learned in the course in their business.

on digital strategies and instruction on meeting federal regulations.



Foodborne illness is a serious issue. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 48 million people get sick and 3,000 die from foodborne diseases each year in the United States.

To mitigate this risk, Indiana and other states require thorough training for employees at retail food establishments. To many businesses, especially smaller ones, complying with Indiana's Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements — based on Food and Drug Administration regulations and totaling more than 100 pages — can seem daunting.

That's why Purdue Extension's **ServSafe** program is so crucial. The ServSafe curriculum was developed by the National Restaurant Association to help retail food businesses comply with food-handling requirements. It teaches safe practices, and participants who complete the program earn the certification required by law.

The daylong workshops are presented throughout the year and across the state. Robin Burkett, who operates the Log House Restaurant in Argos, says she'd want employees to go through the training even if it weren't mandated. "I think ServSafe covers elements that any restaurant concerned with their customers' health should have," she says.

Burkett attended the course, and so have several of her employees. She says they take the food safety information to heart. "You can see when they come back they're correcting or improving things."

Restaurants are required to have one certified food handler on staff, but according to Burkett, "I think the more employees you have who have taken the training, the better."

P. 16: Aly Griffith (left) helps her mom Stefanie Griffith, co-owner of Strandz Salon and Threadz Boutique in New Albany, plan the business's social media. (Photo by Courtney Paris Photography.) P. 17: Amy Burkett, manager of Log House Restaurant in Argos, recommends the ServSafe class, because her customers' health and safety is her most important priority.

..... 964 people have participated in ServSafe training in the last year.

Jim Huter has been managing diabetes since 2008. **Food Prescriptions for Better Health**, a collaborative program offered through Purdue Extension, was exactly the prescription he needed.

“It’s really helped my diet and my choices,” he says. “Even my doctor has mentioned how much better I look.”

He signed up at Wabash Valley Health Center in Terre Haute. The 16-week program is a joint effort by Purdue Extension – Vigo County, the Indiana State University dietetics program, United Way of the Wabash Valley and the health center. The program was also supported by a grant from the Anthem Foundation and produce and kitchen supplies from World Gospel Church and Columbian Home Products.

Allison Finzel, Vigo County’s Nutrition Education Program Community Wellness Coordinator, was the catalyst — assembling the partners, facilitating weekly food demonstrations and providing logistical support. Participants also received a \$15 basket of fresh fruits and vegetables each week.

The program is designed to help people with type 2 diabetes lead a healthier lifestyle. As part of this effort, participants also attended two other Extension programs: **Dining with Diabetes** and **Be Heart Smart**. In the first, led by Vigo County’s Health and Human Sciences Extension Educator Jay Christiansen, participants learned ways to manage diabetes through food choices, meal planning, food preparation and physical activity. The second helps



individuals identify their risk factors for heart disease and make simple, heart-healthy lifestyle changes.

“It’s well worth anybody’s time to go through that course,” says Huter, “because it just educates you tremendously.”

P. 18: Jim Huter has his blood pressure checked during Food Prescriptions for Better Health. P. 19: Lt. Detective Cody Crouse, Chief Scott Mealy and Lt. Joe Allred of the Hartford City Police Department say Mental Health First Aid is one tool informing their work to protect public safety.

..... After Dining with Diabetes, **82%** of participants felt less overwhelmed by the demands of living with diabetes or caring for someone with diabetes.

their physical and mental well-being — and assist others in their community.



For Lieutenant Detective Cody Crouse of the Hartford City Police Department in Blackford County, no day on the job is ever the same. He was glad to have attended **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)**, offered by Purdue Extension, as a tool in a recent encounter with an individual experiencing a substance-related mental health crisis.

This 8-hour, evidence-based program teaches participants how to recognize common mental health signs and symptoms, how to approach someone experiencing a crisis, and where to direct someone for local resources and help. MHFA has proven beneficial for anyone to use, and Extension offers two versions of the program to adult participants: one to assist fellow adults and one to assist adolescents from ages 12 to 18.

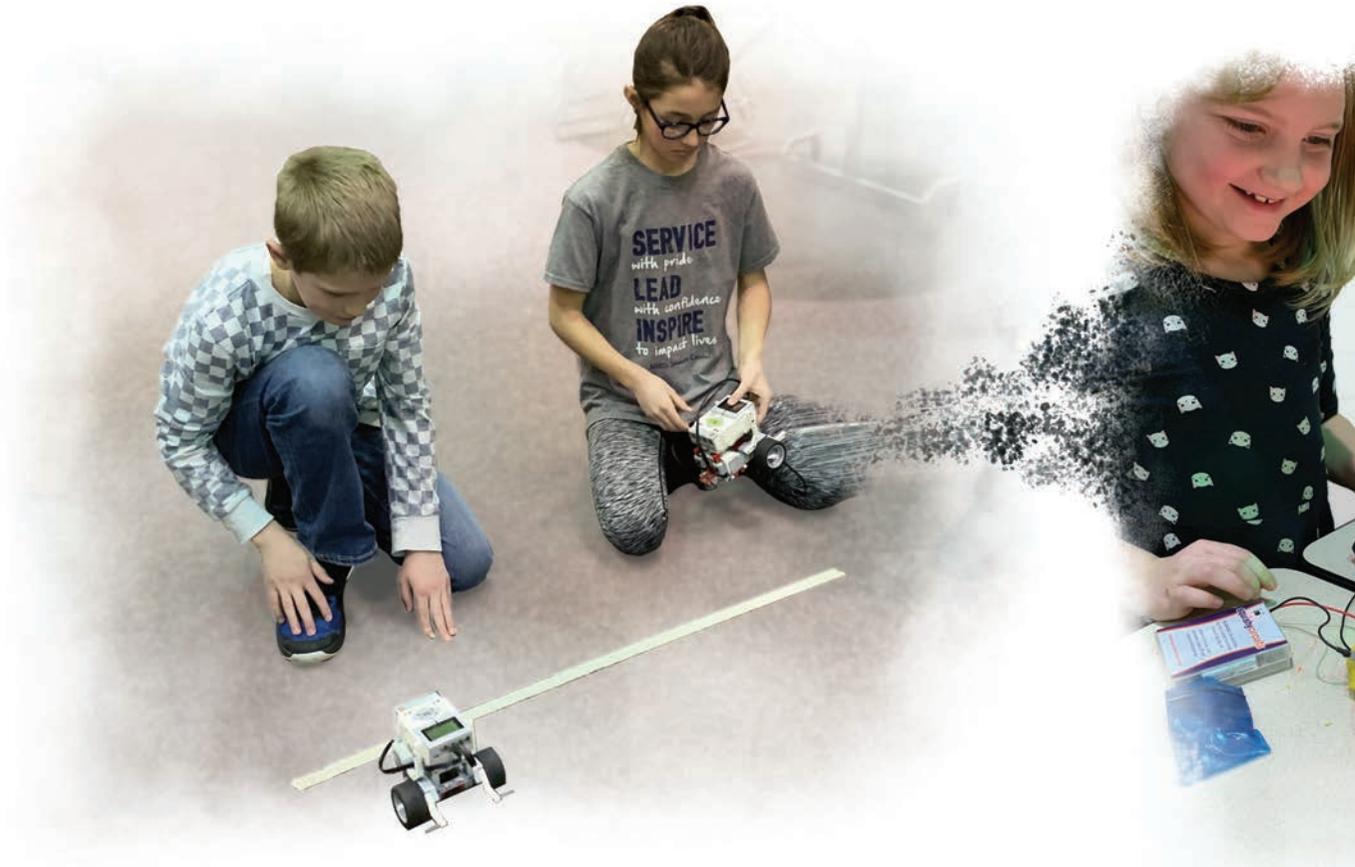
“The key points that I took away from the course would be to be able to stand back and actually listen to somebody — and listen non-judgmentally,” Crouse says.

Lieutenant Joe Allred agreed that the course tools helped him to experience and convey empathy to community members. “It’s shown to help calm them and maybe make me able to get more accurate information so I can properly assess the situation.”

In the past, Crouse would likely have approached an individual presenting with erratic behavior from substance-induced hallucinations more aggressively. After completing MHFA, he instead took more time to talk with the person and successfully mitigated the risk. The tools learned in MHFA are adaptable for anyone to help until the person can connect with professionals.

Crouse says MHFA helped him become a better officer, administrator and trainer. “I would highly recommend it to anyone who is in the public safety profession or anyone who wants to further their education or personal knowledge on the subject.”

..... Over **520** people have participated in Purdue Extension’s Mental Health First Aid courses at 30 locations across the state.



Robotics was the focus of an afterschool STEM **Spark Club** at Northern Heights Elementary School in Columbia City last year. When fifth-grader Alivia Trier's hand-built LEGO robot went off course in a race, she was able to fix the problem herself. "I hooked it up to the computer, changed the wheel speed and programmed its direction," the 12-year-old says proudly.

Meanwhile, Alivia's younger sister Alexa, 9, was making "elephant toothpaste" in a STEM Spark Club for younger students at the school. "We added two things together to make foam," the budding scientist explains. "I like how you figure out things."

Purdue Extension has been bringing STEM activities to Northern Heights Elementary for two years through Extension's **4-H STEM Connection**. The school's principal asked Todd Geiger, Extension Educator – 4-H Youth Development in Whitley County, for a STEM-based afterschool program.

Geiger developed Creators & Explorers for second and third graders, and Makers Fair for fourth and fifth graders. High school students in the county's Teens as Teachers program planned and led each session.

youth to the fun of science, technology, engineering and math skills.



“These programs were a great way to meet a need with this elementary school, provide an opportunity for our **Teens as Teachers** high school youth to help guide younger kids, and bring our 4-H program to kids that may not understand all that 4-H has to offer,” he says.

Of the 30 elementary school participants — eight in the lower grades, and 22 in the upper — 28 were new to 4-H.

Alivia and Alexa’s mother, Nikki Trier, says her daughters enjoyed learning about science after school. “It was a fun way for them to get to do something they don’t do in the classroom.”

P. 20-21: Students at Northern Heights Elementary School in Columbia City make Lego robots and learn circuitry (left and center) in an afterschool STEM program taught by youth in the Indiana 4-H Teens as Teachers program. Younger students in the Creators & Explorers Spark Club, including 9-year-old Alexa Trier (in the middle at right), make foamy “elephant toothpaste” by combining ingredients.

With uncontrollable factors such as weather, crop prices and land availability, farming is a risky business. Purdue Extension recently launched two workshops on managing farm stress to address the strain of that uncertainty.

Kelly Heckaman, Kosciusko County Extension Director and Educator – Agriculture & Natural Resources, has taught both, created by Michigan State University Extension.

Weathering the Storm in Agriculture: How to Cultivate a Productive Mindset was developed for producers, while **Communicating with Farmers Under Stress** is targeted to the agribusiness professionals who regularly work with the farming community.

Both workshops discuss stress, its adverse physical and mental effects, and how left unchecked, it can lead to depression or even suicide. Participants learn how to recognize the signs of stress, tools to help deal with it positively, what to do if someone is considering suicide and mental health resources available.

“The key things I learned in the course revolved around stress: how it affects your body, your thoughts and feelings, and what you do,” says Andrew Brown, Fountain County District Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. “Given the current farm economy, stress levels on the farm have gone up, and stress seems to affect everything in a person. Even if the farm economy were in better shape, farming as a profession is stressful, with all the

decisions that need to be made. I learned several recognizable signs of stress and how to deal with a person empathetically rather than just sympathetically.”

Heckaman acknowledges there’s still a stigma associated with mental health issues, especially in rural communities. But she encourages people to be open-minded to the information so that they can help a colleague, friend or family member in the future.

“I think there has always been stress in agriculture,” Heckaman says. “We’re just at a point where we’re finally willing to accept that we can’t continue to ignore it — and that we need to provide options to help farmers.”



..... In the last year, **455** farmers and family members attended Extension programs
to reduce farm stress.

of the farm community to tools and resources they need and connect youth to career possibilities, developing Indiana's workforce.

For youth in Dearborn and Ohio counties interested in health careers, the Purdue Extension **4-H Career Readiness Spark Club** partnered with High Point Health and the Ivy Tech Community College–Riverfront Campus, both in Lawrenceburg, to offer an inside look. During the daylong program, 13 youth in grades 7–12 explored career options and toured hospital facilities. Over lunch, Highpoint Health staff from varied departments answered the students' questions.

"I just wanted to learn more about the medical field," says 18-year-old Allison Ruberg, a 2019 graduate of Lawrenceburg High School who attended Investigation: Health Careers and You. "The 4-H program shows kids

there's more to the medical field than just being a nurse or a doctor."

After learning about the different programs that Ivy Tech offers, she is now enrolled in the 11-month program that will prepare her for a certification exam through the American Association of Medical Assistants.

Ruberg, who has always enjoyed children, also works in a pediatrician's office at the hospital and would like to stay there as a certified medical assistant. From working with high-fidelity mannequins at the Health Careers and You Spark Club, she's now preparing for real-life medical situations.



P. 22: Participants in farm stress management workshops learn to recognize the signs of stress and connect farm families with tools and resources they need. P. 23: After exploring health careers in a 4-H Spark Club, Allison Ruberg works at High Point Health in Lawrenceburg and is studying to finish her medical assistant certificate.

Extension courses educate Indiana's youth on staying healthy

Matt Hunt's teaching proved so effective that it taught him he needed to change his own life. Hunt, Nutrition Education Program Assistant for Johnson, Morgan and Shelby counties, shares the benefits of healthy eating and active living through the **Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH)** Program. CATCH is one offering in Extension's **Nutrition Education Program**, which empowers SNAP-eligible adult and youth audiences to make healthy lifestyle choices through free nutrition education lessons.

The interactive, evidence-based CATCH curriculum meets Indiana academic standards and covers seven basic concepts, including physical activity, balanced food selection, healthy snacking and beverages, and reduced screen time. Each session includes a chance for kids to be active, a nutrition lesson and a healthy snack at the end.

Hunt started a pilot program in one of Shelbyville's elementary schools in 2017, sharing one 30-minute lesson each week for five weeks with every third-grade class. He then received school board approval to expand the program to second through fifth graders in all three Shelbyville

Central elementary schools. The CATCH program now reaches 1,500–2,000 youth each year in Johnson, Morgan and Shelby counties.

"Our students love the CATCH program," says Deryck Ramey, Hendricks Elementary School principal. "Being up and active while learning as well as trying new snack ideas has been a big hit. Students seem to have grasped that healthy foods and staying active are options for everyone."

Hunt gives pre- and post-tests to measure how much students have learned and if their behavior has changed. His certainly did. Three years ago, by living what he teaches, he lost 70 pounds. And he thinks his students can help improve Indiana's health statistics, reminding them, "Your age group can learn this and carry it over, and in the next few years, that will turn us into a healthier generation."



..... The CATCH program reached **27,862** youth throughout Indiana in the past year.

and active so they can flourish as they explore options for their futures.

Across Indiana, Purdue Extension is helping youth of all ages explore areas of interest and potential careers — the first step in preparing up-and-coming workers for an economy that needs them.

Starr McCasland, Seymour High School class of 2019, confidently lays out her future plans: service in the Indiana National Guard, followed by an associate degree in criminal justice funded by her military benefits. Then she'll head to Indiana State University for a bachelor's degree before earning a master's in criminal justice or criminal science online.

But the 18-year-old's path wasn't always so clear. McCasland participated in Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), a national nonprofit program, at Seymour High School. JAG partnered with the Jackson County Educator team, who delivered Extension's **INWork** program, which "definitely helped map out those plans," she says.

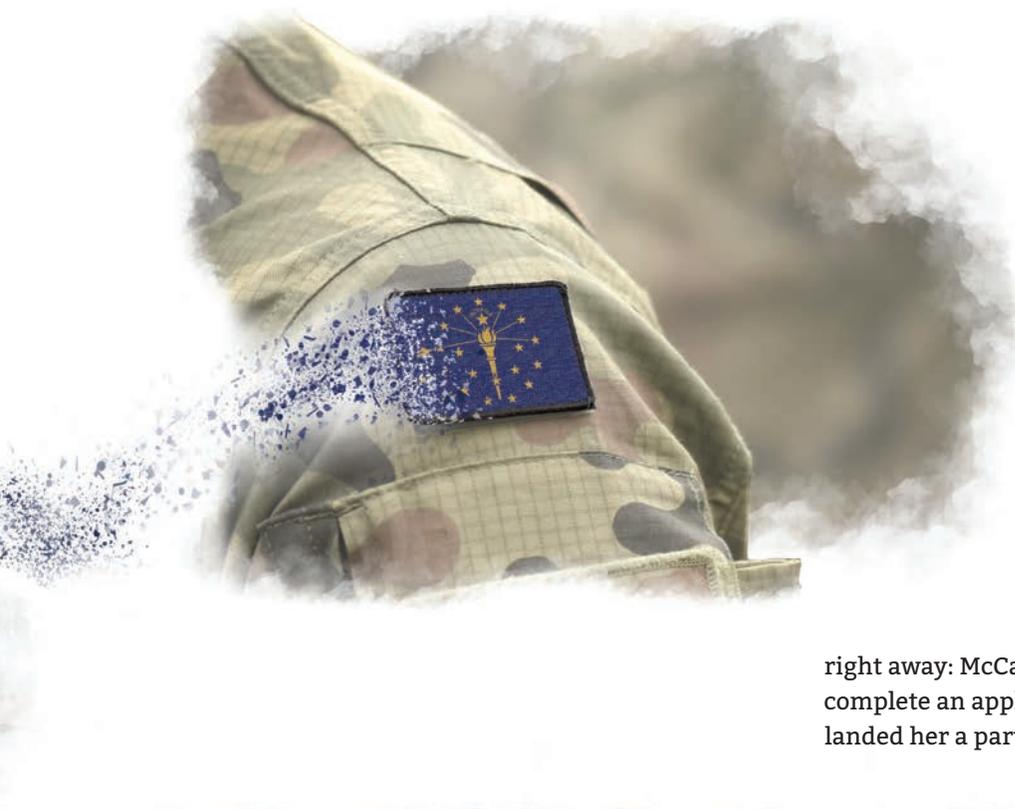
The **INWork – Innovate, Invest, Inspire – Skills for Tomorrow's Workforce** program teaches life skills to increase the number of qualified applicants to fill Indiana's job openings. Jackson County educators Molly Marshall, Richard Beckort and Heather

VonDielingen delivered the INWork program to 52 seniors in four classes, including two classes bilingual in Spanish.

McCasland's teacher, JAG specialist Celeste Bowman, motivated her to raise her GPA, strengthen her communication skills and explore what appealed to her. "I was interested in criminal justice, but the class helped broaden my idea of it," McCasland says. "Miss Bowman covered college, but not just college — she talked about trade schools and the military, too."

The Jackson County Educator team and other guest speakers provided seniors with insights into careers they might not have considered.

But much of the training is useful right away: McCasland used her new knowledge to complete an application, resume and cover letter that landed her a part-time job in high school.



P. 24: Matthew Hunt, Nutrition Education Program assistant, teaches a class at Coulston Elementary School in Shelbyville about healthy food choices and physical activity.

..... Thanks to INWork programs in **18** Indiana counties in 2019, **465** youth made informed decisions about their career options.

See how Purdue Extension has served Indiana in 2019



Direct educational contacts

268,975

Participants in
Extension learning events



Learning event sessions

10,540

Structured educational programs
offered to the public in person
or via technology

BY THE NUMBERS



Website statistics

New and returning users: **530,375**

Page views: **2,422,397**



Social media statistics

Engagements (likes, comments, shares):

19,290

Total followers: **12,936**

Learning event and direct contact statistics reflect county Extension Educators only. Statistics are current as of 1/6/2020. Extension website metrics provided by Google Analytics and Extension social media metrics provided by Hootsuite. Social media statistics represent state-level Purdue Extension accounts and do not reflect accounts for the 92 county offices.

and where it's headed next.



4-H By the Numbers

Indiana 4-H Youth Development

empowers young people to grow into the next generation of leaders and meet the diverse issues our country faces through education and activity in civic engagement; healthy living; and science, technology, engineering and math.

In 2019:

121,227 Indiana 4-H members engaged in 4-H club experiences.

15,949 adults and teens served as 4-H volunteers.

Where Indiana 4-H participants live:

23% on farms/in other rural areas

38% in small towns

33% in cities and suburbs

6% in metropolitan areas

Purdue Extension always looks ahead to understand the changing needs of Indiana's residents. To continue building vibrant communities in 2020 and beyond, you'll see Extension working alongside you to:

- Offer more 4-H materials in Spanish and increase **Indiana 4-H outreach in Spanish-speaking communities**. Xiomara Diaz-Vargas, 4-H Youth Development Extension Specialist – New Audience Initiatives, leads efforts to engage new volunteers and youth in the Latino community and others.
- Continue building the **Computer Science Pathway** partnership among Indiana 4-H, National 4-H Council and Google.org, offering computer science education to Indiana youth to meet our state's workforce needs.
- Help existing businesses grow with the **Indiana Purdue Economic Gardening Program**, providing information and services to businesses poised for their next stage of growth.
- Offer **Where Does Your Money Go?**, a program to help people understand and plan their personal spending habits.
- Provide cultural competency training for Hoosiers who are interested in working more effectively with others through the **Navigating Difference** program.
- Improve the lives of Indiana's military families as a member of Purdue's **Military Supportive Communities Initiative**. This pilot program helps selected counties mobilize teams that increase their communities' engagement with and support of local service members, veterans and their families.

Purdue Extension works alongside you to create vibrant communities. ● **Indiana 4-H encourages youth to serve as leaders in their communities and introduces them to new technologies.** ● Extension provides growers with the latest information on production methods and new commercial crops. ● **We encourage Indiana youth to use critical thinking and creativity and support parents in building strong and positive family environments.** ● With Extension training, community members discover new ways to gain consensus and create healthy communities. ● **Our programs help develop small businesses, increase community food security and improve the life skills of Indiana's youth.** ● We train producers how to maintain a safe food supply and assist regional economic development across the state. ● **Indiana's small and large businesses thrive with our guidance on digital strategies and instruction on meeting federal regulations.** ● We help Indiana residents monitor their physical and mental well-being — and assist others in their community. ● **We introduce Indiana's youth to the fun of science, technology, engineering and math skills.** ● Extension workshops connect members of the farm community to tools and resources they need and connect youth to career possibilities, developing Indiana's workforce. ● **Extension courses educate Indiana's youth on staying healthy and active so they can flourish as they explore options for their futures.**

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