

THE 2023

# MSU EXTENSION

## ANNUAL REPORT

### NOTE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Like many of you, I grew up singing the iconic lyrics of “This Land is Your Land.” As we recall, it begins, “This land is your land, this land is my land.” With that melody echoing in your mind, I am pleased to present not just your annual report, but also mine. Stepping into this role not too long ago, this annual report has been instrumental in deepening my understanding of the profound impact MSU Extension has had on our county over the past year. It is my sincere hope that this document serves a similar purpose for you.



In the forthcoming year, I eagerly anticipate actively supporting the educators, instructors, and coordinators of MSU Extension. By doing so, I will gain first-hand experience of the projects, programs, and initiatives that will be detailed in next year’s annual report.

In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me via phone or email with any questions about this annual report of MSU Extension. While I may not have all the answers, I am quickly learning that someone within MSU Extension likely does.

*M. Scott Korpak, District 7 Director*

### BY THE NUMBERS:



# 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

## From Allegan to Tanzania



### Global 4-H Network Summit 2023 Arusha Tanzania

Our very own 4-H educator, [Janis Brinn](#) traveled to Tanzania to present, “4-H Global Visual Letters Art Exchange: 2017 Global 4-H Network Summit partner pilot global and cultural success” and blended “[Backpack to Adventure: Youth Leaders in a Global World](#)” curriculum into the session. The session was also very well-received, with possible future pilot programs already in the works with other countries. Jan was honored that she was able to hand deliver artwork created by children and youth from Michigan and Manitoba Canada 4-H to [Taiwan 4-H](#) as part of the 2023 pilot art exchange program



Jan Brinn presenting pillowcase dresses made by Michigan 4-H'ers at the Aston Vision Support Children School and Orphanage.



A clover was hand-stitched to the hem of each little dress to symbolize it was sent by 4-H.



Another highlight of the trip was the presentation of pillowcase dresses made by Michigan 4-H'ers to children at the Aston Vision Support Children School and Orphanage. Jan Brinn presented the clothing to the children – she threw them into the air and watched the children gleefully catch them – and then she and other participants and the teachers helped put them on the children to enjoy. The lead of the sewing community service project, [Wayne County 4-H](#) Program Instructor [Kathy Henderson](#) stated, "I thought the idea of children and adults helping children who live in a different country would be awesome! The fact that they would probably never meet one another and received nothing in return was just phenomenal! This project means the world to me...pun intended! And to think it all happened at MSU Extension Michigan 4-H!"

# 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



## Dian Lieve 4-H Outstanding Alumna

The Michigan 4-H Emerald Clover Society honors former Michigan 4-H members whose professional leadership and community service reflect the ultimate outcome of 4-H membership – extraordinary use of an individual's head, heart, hands and health to make communities, the country and the world better places in which to live. This recognition is provided by Michigan 4-H Youth Development with support from the Michigan 4-H Foundation.

Dian has devoted her life to the Michigan 4-H program, participating as a 4-H member, volunteer leader, and employee. Since 2012, she has been the 4-H program coordinator for MSU Extension in Allegan County, the county in which she had once been a 4-H'er herself. Before becoming the Allegan County 4-H program coordinator, Dian served as a 4-H program assistant in the county for 27 years & as a Cheboygan County 4-H program assistant for six years.

Over the years, she has generously lent her expertise to the Michigan Association of Extension 4-H Youth Staff, serving as regional vice chair and chair of the north and west central regions, and as association vice president, president, and past president. Dian recently completed two terms as the association treasurer. She also served two years as secretary/treasurer of the Michigan Council of Extension Agents and as a member of many statewide 4-H staff committees. She has received the MAE4-HYS Presidential Citation and Distinguished Staff awards, as well as the National Distinguished Service Award from the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents.

As she anticipates retirement in January of 2024, there is no doubt this community will miss her!



## New 4-H Program Supervisor For District 7

In 2023, MSU Extension brought on a new 4-H Program Supervisor, Kellie Kieren! Kellie began her 4-H experience at the age of 5 when she showed animals at the Newaygo County Free Fair. She continued her engagement in 4-H until she aged out of the program. Over the years she engaged in a variety of project areas including goats, rabbits, chickens, horses, pigs, and lambs. Kellie has experience building community partnerships and gaining support for programs. Please welcome Kellie to MSU Extension!





# HEALTH AND NUTRITION

## Success Story - Cooking For One

*When we go out into the community, we have a purpose: we help people live their best lives through health and well-being. But I have learned that oftentimes, we fulfill needs we're unaware of. As we work to educate, we are also forming connections that can be invaluable to people who may feel on the fringes of their communities or lonely for other reasons. In a post-pandemic community, our ability to connect with our learners is more important than ever as our "new normal" continues to take shape. - Abbey Stroop, Community Nutrition Instructor*

I was getting more comfortable with my group and learning several of their names. During the third week of Cooking for One, Dottie came early, and met me at the front door.

She sat on her walker, holding the door for me while I brought in my supplies. Then she brought her walker to our program space, and we chatted while I was getting set up.

Initially, I did not think too much of it.



In the following weeks, Dottie was there early for every class and stuck around at the end. Sometimes she helped me clean up but other times, she just sat and chatted. I enjoyed the company. This continued until our very last week of class when she hung around at the end again and said, "I have to tell you why I stay with you so much. You probably thought it was strange." I assured her that I did not think it odd and that I enjoyed talking to her.

Her smile was genuine but a little sad as she explained to me that she liked coming to be with me because I reminded her of her granddaughter, who used to visit every week, but was now away at college. She missed her terribly but felt like I was a good friend to help fill that absence. Her smile was genuine but a little sad as she explained to me that she liked coming to be with me because I reminded her of her granddaughter, who used to visit every week, but was now away at college. She missed her terribly but felt like I was a good friend to help fill that absence.



# HEALTH AND NUTRITION

145 Allegan County residents participated in 88 Health & Mindfulness Programs

## Health & Mindfulness

In a continued effort to manage our physical and mental health in 2023, residents found resources by taking part in a number of session opportunities. These sessions explored mindfulness basics such as breathing, moving, eating, walking, thought surfing, taming your busy mind, and more. Research has shown that people who are more mindful are generally happier and report less anxiety, symptoms of depression, anger and worries. Some of the session topics were:

- RELAX
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers
- Mindfulness for Stress Reduction
- Stress Less with Mindfulness
- Begin with a Breath
- Changing Negative Self-Talk
- Chronic Disease PATH
- Matter of Balance
- Chronic Disease PATH
- Diabetes PATH
- Mindfully Feeding Infants & Toddlers
- Tai Chi
- Falls Prevention



## Food Safety

In 2023, 50 residents took classes and accessed resources from MSU Extension's Food Safety Team. These classes covered a variety of topics that helped residents gain the knowledge and training to prevent food borne illnesses. Some examples of the classes attended are:

- Food Safety for Food Service Workers
- Michigan Cottage Food Law
- Safe Food = Healthy Kids
- Food Safety Q & A
- ServSafe
- Women of the Wild
- Preserving Summers Gardens Bounty
- Preserving Michigan's Harvest - several topics
- Canning Basics



Food Safety:  
25 programs  
attended by  
Allegan County  
Residents



Food Safety:  
50 Allegan  
County  
residents  
attended  
these  
programs

# SUPPORTING AGRICULTURE & AGRIBUSINESS

## Soybean Production

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State-wide MSU Extension Soybean Educator, Mike Staton, who is housed in Allegan County, conducts on-farm research and educational programs designed to help producers be more profitable. Because soybeans are raised by approximately 245 farmers on 42,000 acres in Allegan County, some of these projects and programs were held here. One of the six Michigan Soybean On-Farm Research Updates was held in Hamilton on January 11. A follow-up survey was conducted to measure the actual financial and educational impacts from the programs. A summary of the impacts from all six meetings is provided below:

- More than 400 producers and agronomists participated.
- 98% of the respondents gained new knowledge by participating in the program.
- 72% said that they utilized the information they learned on their farms during the 2023 growing season.
- Forty-two (42) producers said they actually earned additional money in 2023 by implementing the new information they learned at the program.
- The average amount of additional income was \$17.03 per acre applied to 16,058 acres, producing an actual financial impact of \$273,512 in 2023 alone.

Allegan soybean producers also actively participated in the Michigan Soybean On-Farm Research program again in 2023. Two producers conducted three of the 52 on-farm research trials conducted in 2023. All of which were published in a 32-page research report and mailed to more than 8,000 soybean producers across the state.

One of Staton's most effective methods of disseminating timely and relevant information is through MSU Extension News articles. In 2023, he authored 19 articles which received 9,300 pageviews. The 2023 pageviews for all the articles Staton authored exceeded 65,000. The articles can be easily accessed at: [http://www.canr.msu.edu/people/michael\\_staton?profileDisplayContent=related-work](http://www.canr.msu.edu/people/michael_staton?profileDisplayContent=related-work).

Staton was invited to co-present with Horst Bohner, at the 2023 Ontario Agricultural Conference. More than 550 producers and agronomists participated in the live session at Ridgetown and another 600 participated virtually as the presentation was streamed simultaneously to two remote locations (Kemptville, ON and Waterloo, ON). In addition, 316 people viewed a recording of the live presentation. The conference organizers surveyed participants at the end of the conference and found that 83% strongly agreed or agreed that the information presented increased their knowledge of the topic and that the soybean session was among the top 10 most viewed sessions (out of 50 sessions) of the two-day conference. This international educational opportunity provides evidence that MSU Extension is a recognized and valued source of information regarding soybean production.

# MSU EXTENSION - ALLEGAN COUNTY

Michigan State University Extension is not simply a program MSU offers to communities. It is an extensive network of locally based MSU staff and educators, with access to the university's vast resources. We create networks and collaborate with others to meet community needs.

Thank you for this essential partnership!

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