UNIT AT A GLANCE

Guiding Principle
Making people and communities better.

Mission
To extend research-based information, technology, and best practices from the university arena into public and private arenas in order to strengthen local communities and improve people's lives.

Vision
To adapt research-based knowledge into accessible forms so that every person we serve will experience and recognize a positive impact from our work.

Process
Education, facilitation, and collaboration.

Scope
Agriculture
Horticulture
Natural Resources
Nutrition & Wellness
4-H Youth Development
Community & Economic Development

Financial Report

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Cover Photos

 t.l. - Tazewell County 4–H Show
 t.r. - Teacher Tuesdays Skills Development Workshop
 b.l. - Fulton Mason Master Gardener Meeting
 b.r. - Havana Health Careers Opportunity

Fiscal Year 2017
A Note from the County Director

Our Extension unit experienced an outstanding 2017. We start 2018 with great optimism for moving forward in our efforts to make people and communities better in the counties we serve.

Reasons for our optimism include: 1) increasing support from campus leadership, 2) great replacements for our steady trickle of staff retirements, and 3) growing energy and enthusiasm within the ranks of our many volunteers.

The increase in campus support for our local work has been especially beneficial and expressed itself in several ways:
1. Illinois Extension Director George Czapar developed temporary revenues for distribution to units to partially offset state of Illinois shortfalls. These funds buy more time for the state to stabilize their support.
2. College of ACES Dean Kim Kidwell, Dr. Czapar, and State Program Leader Anne Silvis toured our unit in April. They learned from staff, volunteers, and partners about the positive local impacts we are having through our work.
3. U of I President Emeritus Bob Easter and College of ACES Director of Academic Programs Prasanta Kalita spoke at our annual unit all-staff meeting, sharing insights about U of I Extension’s future and the importance of our collaboration with research and teaching staff.

Receiving accolades and concrete support from campus for good work in the field inspires us to serve the needs of our local clientele even more. One purpose of this annual report is to make you aware of how we are meeting some of these needs.

I hope you enjoy this review. Thank you for your continued support,

Earl Allen
Horticulture Program Catalyzes Delivery Methods and Volunteers to Expand Our Reach

University of Illinois Extension horticulture programs inspire citizens in local communities to grow their own food and improve their home landscapes. High quality, impactful programs teach homeowners how to create energy-efficient landscapes using sustainable practices that increase property values and help the environment.

By using various delivery methods, we impacted the residents of Fulton, Mason, Peoria, and Tazewell counties as follows.

- 50,000 were made more aware of us and our educational messages using traditional media and social media.
- 24,000 had the interest to dig deeper into various topics through websites, blogs, brochures, and fact sheets.
- 2,800 consider us an important source of quality information, opting to receive more through newsletters and e-blasts.

ILRiverHort YouTube Videos

Videos are the latest social media trend, with estimates that 74% of all Internet traffic in 2017 was video. During 2017, Rhonda Ferree made significant progress on her newest ILRiverHort social media outlet on YouTube.

Rhonda produces short, informational videos that cover a wide variety of gardening topics. Currently, her YouTube channel includes 29 videos that have had 1,217 views this year. According to YouTube analytical data, these videos reach a majority of male viewers, which contrasts her other social media sites. Interaction with viewers occurs mostly when videos are posted on Facebook and Twitter.

http://go.illinois.edu/ILRiverHortVideos

Horticulture Educator Rhonda Ferree and the Peoria City/County Health Department Director of Environmental Health Wil Hayes led a public awareness campaign to explain the serious health risk of lead in soils. The campaign began with the creation of a Lead in Garden Soils fact sheet. A press conference was held on May 11 at Forrest Hill Community Garden in Peoria. The campaign included radio interviews and distribution of the fact sheet in print and online.

Build New Audience
online and in print

Serve Clientele
events, webinars, etc.

Develop Leaders
Master Volunteers

Horticulture Educator Rhonda Ferree and the Peoria City/County Health Department Director of Environmental Health Wil Hayes led a public awareness campaign to explain the serious health risk of lead in soils. The campaign began with the creation of a Lead in Garden Soils fact sheet. A press conference was held on May 11 at Forrest Hill Community Garden in Peoria. The campaign included radio interviews and distribution of the fact sheet in print and online.
Outdoor Learning Activities Added to Master Gardener Training

Twenty-one volunteers completed U of I Extension Master Gardener training in 2017. This year’s crop of trainees came from Canton, Peoria, Cuba, Bartonville, Hickory Hills, Washington, Dunlap, Hanna City, Tremont, Bryant, Pekin, Farmington, and Morton. One out-of-state transfer also attended training.

Traditionally held during winter, training was moved to fall to allow for more outdoor learning activities and fewer missed snow days. It was also an opportunity to combine three of the 10 classes with Master Naturalist training occurring at the same time. Combining classes not only brought trainees together to begin future project collaborations but also saved resources.

Classes were held at our branch offices, as well as at Spoon River College, Jubilee historical site, Peoria Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Illinois Central College. This allowed trainees to see a few of our current Master Gardener projects and learn from experts in locations beyond their home county. All in all, trainees received 60 hours of training on a wide variety of topics like botany, soils, food crops, landscape plants, plant health, and pest management.

Master Gardener Stats

- **167** Volunteers
- **10,900** Volunteer Hours Reported
- **2,466** Continuing Education Hours
- **600** Questions to MG Helpline & Hort Educator
- **$263,000** Value of Volunteer Hours
Wildlife Federation Mayor’s Monarch Garden in Pekin

Master Gardeners Susan McCabe, Lisa Ziegenhorn, Pat Alexander, Fran Stroemer, Carol Cihla, Margaret Kelly, Jennifer Bass, and Ellen Rice were awarded an Illinois Master Gardener teamwork award for their Wildlife Federation Mayor’s Monarch Garden project created in Pekin. This team worked collaboratively with the broader community on an issue of common interest – to increase monarch habitat.

The City of Pekin Mayor John McCabe took the National Wildlife Federation’s Mayors’ Monarch Pledge. He also submitted the city garden for Monarch Waystation certification.

By inviting Pekin Saintly Dragons 4-H Club, and Girl Scout Troop 4185 to join them, the team planted seeds of knowledge in young people to develop their love for gardening and improve their understanding of its purpose.

Youth and community members learned what is necessary to preserve monarchs and create a monarch habitat. Together they designed the space, found plants, created the garden, made signs, and maintained the garden.

Master Gardener Ellen Rice works with a Pekin Saintly Dragons 4-H member planting the Wildlife Federation Mayor’s Monarch Garden in Pekin.

Master Gardener State Awards

Kathy Edwards, May Bach, and Jennifer Bass were among 36 Master Gardeners to receive the State Outstanding Master Gardener Award.

Fulton County Master Gardener Kathy Edwards’ volunteer projects include educational gardens at the Canton YMCA, Jones Park, Graham Hospital, Canton’s Lutheran Church, and Heartland Healthcare Center. In keeping with the Master Gardener mission of “Helping Others Learn to Grow,” Kathy makes sure that her projects are educational as well as beautiful. In fact, she loves to teach others about gardening and has given numerous presentations to a variety of audiences.

May’s numerous projects include the Riverfront Farmers Market in Peoria, Bel-Wood and Courtyard Estates of Farmington Nursing Homes, Peoria Home Show, Wildlife Prairie Park Kim St John Butterfly Habitat, and Speaker’s Bureau programs. May’s work has been incredibly beneficial in reaching underserved audiences and recruiting new Master Gardeners.

Jennifer’s volunteer locations include Illinois Central College (ICC) gardens in East Peoria, Wildlife Prairie Park Heritage Garden, and the Peoria Home Show. She is responsible for a recent revitalization of the long-neglected ICC Hosta Garden. The Heritage Garden project is a partnership with 4-H where she teaches youth how to grow fruits and vegetables to be used for the animals at the park.
Horticulture Programs Reach Many Types of Underserved Audiences

**Younger Generations**

In Mason County, a 4–H Junior Master Gardener program teaches youth and their families how to grow their food. Some of the food grown is donated to local food pantries. The gardens are at the fairgrounds in Havana, which has a poverty rate of 12% and is considered a food desert by the USDA.

Horticulture educator Rhonda Ferree is successfully reaching younger audiences through her ILRiverHort social media outlets: Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube, and blog. Younger generations are a high percentage of the 600,000 reach made by ILRiverHort. Twitter reaches mostly Millennials, while Facebook and Instagram reach Generation X.

**People Living in a Food Desert**

Tazewell County’s Green Valley Community Garden Master Gardener project also serves a food desert area. Master Gardener leaders taught fourteen 4–H members how to plant the garden in May. Since then, this garden has harvested over 570 lbs of produce for local food pantries, with additional produce harvested directly by town residents. Beans, lettuce, okra, tomatoes, peppers, herbs, and sunflowers were all grown there.

**Minorities**

A youth group at Common Place, located in the Peoria South Side neighborhood, built a hoop house to grow food. Led by a Master Gardener, youth and adults learned how to grow, harvest, and eat their food grown in and outside the structure. They donated part of their produce to the food pantry located at Common Place.

These are just a few of the horticulture programs that are working hard to reach underserved audiences, which is a priority for this Extension unit.

**People with Disabilities**

Fulton County Master Gardeners have a long history of doing garden therapy programming in nursing homes. In 2017, a new project began at the Farmington Nursing Home. In addition to beautifying the grounds, special projects and gardens provided hands-on activities for residents. Raised beds were installed to accommodate gardening at wheelchair heights.
Speakers Bureau Local Improvements Adopted Statewide

The Master Gardener Speakers Bureau is a valuable component of the local horticulture program. Since 2012, 25 different volunteers have taught youth and adults at 4-H and scouting clubs, garden clubs, libraries, churches, civic clubs, and more. They spent 972 hours delivering these educational programs, valued at $23,464.

During the past three years, a four-step plan was implemented to improve the Speakers Bureau service. Steps included: 1) assess participation, 2) build a library of resources, 3) develop a how-to guide, and 4) conduct how-to workshops.

Jason Haupt, Anita Wilkinson, and Rhonda Ferree worked to implement the improvement plan. To execute the final step, Rhonda also recruited horticulture educator colleagues Martha Smith and Richard Hentschel to help with 10 workshops. Master Gardeners learned the lessons directly from the educators and were given the teaching aids for future use.

Their work was so well received they were invited to expand their program into a statewide pilot. Total webinar attendance over the 10 sessions was 393, with many individuals attending multiple sessions. Those registering to attend the webinars represented 37 Illinois counties and covered 18 Extension Units. This process resulted in leveraging our Master Gardeners to reach more people than the educators could reach by themselves.

“We are getting great feedback on the Speakers Bureau program. You are inspiring volunteers to be leaders. Way to go!”
CHRIS ENROTH, HORT EDUCATOR
HENDERSON, KNOX, MCDONOUGH WARREN

Master Naturalist Stats

- **87** Master Naturalists
- **4,756** Volunteer Hours Reported
- **1,259** Continuing Education Hours
- **$115,000** Value to Communities
Partner Sites Aided by Master Naturalists’ Expertise

Our Master Naturalists play an important role at many of the local natural areas in our four counties. Peoria Park District’s Forest Park Nature Center in Peoria Heights is one of approximately 40 sites that benefit from the knowledge and time invested by Master Naturalists. In 2017, 27 Master Naturalists reported a total of 312 hours of volunteer service at Peoria Park District, the majority of which were worked at Forest Park Nature Center. Those hours of service translate into $7,644 of economic impact to the park district.

Many of the nature center’s special events and educational programs are made possible by the expertise and service hours the Master Naturalists provide. Those events reached 17,200 people this past year.

Forest Park Nature Center Program Coordinator Susie Ingram explained, “Extension staff also serve my organization by communicating our volunteer needs and special projects. Master Naturalists are volunteers that we trust above and beyond. They often will lead small groups of nature program participants on their own. Sometimes, one might lead a presentation, lecture, or hike about a topic in which they are particularly knowledgeable. They provide assistance with ecological restoration work, exhibit work, and special event management.”

“Master Naturalists are volunteers who are not only helpful in programming and conservation tasks but also have a solid knowledge of Illinois ecology and can communicate their knowledge in a friendly, exciting way.”

SUSIE INGRAM
FOREST PARK NATURE CENTER

Farm Tour Explores Conservation Practices

Master Naturalist Coordinator Christine Belless worked with USDA Natural Resources Conservationist Kim Smail to offer a farm tour to observe conservation practices in place on the farm of Steve and Dianne White in southern Fulton County.

Master Naturalists and Annie’s Project participants attended the tour along with U of I Extension, USDA, and Soil and Water Conservation District staff.

The Whites purchased the 84-acre property in 2006 with the sole purpose of creating a songbird habitat. But first, they needed to address the major erosion issue.

The Whites added 12 dry dams, one pond, two wetland features, native prairie plantings, trees and shrubs, in addition to commercial agriculture crops. Steve explained the restoration projects on his farm have been beneficial to the health of his property, attracting birds and wildlife, but have also proven beneficial to neighboring landowners, by reducing erosion runoff.

The tour is one example of “in the field” training that enriches U of I Extension programming.
4-H Shooting Sports Program Excels in Positive Youth Development

4-H Shooting Sports is designed to provide a safe, fun environment for youth to learn life skills while learning respect of firearms and bows. “The real sense of our 4-H Shooting Sports program, besides the obvious safety training, is the sense of camaraderie and fellowship they have when together,” explained Janis Blout, Fulton 4-H program coordinator.

That sense of belonging is just one of the key traits our 4-H Shooting Sports program provides. Participants also grow in leadership independence, are inspired to be generous, and master the skills in their chosen outdoor sportsmanship projects.

The national 4-H Shooting Sports program began in the 1970s, with Illinois joining in 2009. In our unit, the success of the program is demonstrated through the steady increase in the number of youth and volunteers enrolled, community assistance with space and finances, and the personal growth of our members.

The primary focus of the program is the positive character development of the members – the outdoor sportsmanship skills development is just an added bonus.

### Belonging

4-H Shooting Sports t-shirts are popular attire in Fulton and Mason Counties. The members wear them to school, club meetings, competitions, and 4-H events. It is just one way youth develop a sense of belonging.

### Independence

The Tazewell 4-H Archery Club encourages confidence and leadership in older, long-term members by allowing them to teach basic skills, such as parts of the bow, to younger, new members.

### Generosity

For the past few years, Fulton County 4-H Shooting Sports members have participated in the Shoot for the Cure event that benefits breast cancer research.

### Mastery

For the past three years, Mason County has sent youth to the state 4-H Shooting Sports competitions. During the past year, 14 youth participated in three disciplines and earned two individual awards and one team award.

### Shooting Sports Enrollment Since Start

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Shooting Sports Volunteers are the Heart of the Program

Shooting Sports has the strictest regulations of any Illinois 4-H project. In addition to the normal 4-H volunteer requirements, Shooting Sports instructors go through a three-day intensive training taught by nationally certified Shooting Sports instructors and Illinois 4-H staff.

Of the 39 volunteers in our unit, there are seven instructors trained in multiple disciplines. Seventeen volunteers have five or more years invested in the 4-H Shooting Sports program.

LeeRoy Knuppel of Canton is just one example of the quality volunteers invested in our Shooting Sports program. He assisted with starting both the Tazewell and Fulton County Shotgun Clubs. He became a certified shotgun instructor in 2010 and returned in 2014 to be certified in rifle. To help launch the Fulton County .22 rifle program, he provided a location and built a shooting range for the youth. In 2017, he added air pistol certification with plans to add that to the Fulton County line up in Spring 2018.

Mason 4-H Member Competes at National 4-H Shooting Sports

Steve R. Hilgers, son of Janell and Steve of Mason City, earned the honor of participating in the 4-H Shooting Sports National Championships in Nebraska in June. Over 700 youth from 36 states competed. Steve was one of 103 youth that competed in the compound archery division with scoring on Fédération Internationale de Tir à l’Arc (FITA) targets, field targets, and 3-D targets.

Throughout his four years in Mason 4-H Shooting Sports, he has learned from instructors Jennifer Dye, Mitch Dye, Seth Lane, Ted Snider, and Ben Schakat.

Steve qualified in 4th place at the Illinois 4-H Archery Competition in September 2016. He then trained extensively with Coach Bill Mohn and three other members of the Illinois 4-H State compound archery team through June 2017. The Illinois 4-H compound archery team competed in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, and Ohio to prepare for the 4-H National Championships.

Steve is enrolled at Lincoln College and plans to study criminal justice. His long-term goal is to become a conservation officer.
**Fair Highlight:**
**Peoria County 4-H**

A favorite 4-H event for members, volunteers, and 4-H families is the annual 4-H Show, traditionally referred to as “the fair.” In Peoria County, it is held at the Exposition Gardens, Peoria. The fair provides a variety of opportunities for youth to develop responsibility, confidence, communication skills, and build special friendships with youth of all ages. This year’s fair results included:

- 162 youth exhibitors
- 1,030 projects exhibited
- 64 trophies awarded
- 79 State Fair honors
- 107 State Fair alternates
- 65 4-H volunteers
- 15 4-H teens in leadership roles
- 8 club spirit displays
- 10 clubs worked in the food stand
- 24 projects sold in the auction
- Edelstein Eager Beavers 4-H Club won the annual Barnyard Games

**Peoria County 4-H Youth at Illinois State Fair**
- 49 general projects with 12 Superior ratings
- 25 livestock projects with 2 selling in Governor’s Sale of Champions

“I absolutely loved the time I got to spend with the kids and seeing them learn and grow throughout the week. As a Teen Teacher, I learned how to talk to the kids and keep them engaged and ready to learn, while also having fun.”

MIRELLA ELDREDGE
TEEN TEACHER

**4-H Teen Teachers Program**

Metro 4-H Youth Development Educator Judy Schmidt oversees a 4-H Teen Teacher program in our unit. Benefits of the 4-H Teen Teacher program include increased participation in 4-H by older youth, more opportunities for role modeling and leadership for older youth, and increased enthusiasm in younger participants as they interact with the 4-H Teen Teachers.

4-H Teen Teachers meet year-round, with more intensive training during the summer months. During 2016–2017, 15 teens received training in positive youth development, STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) subjects, and nutrition lessons. Their training prepared them to assist with summer camps held at 18 different sites reaching 320 youth.

The 4-H Teen Teachers worked alongside Extension staff and partner staff at STEM Academy, 4G STEM Camp, and Jr. Chef Schools. Their responsibilities included teaching lessons, leading team building games, assisting youth with hands-on-activities, and assisting staff with program logistics.

The teens reported learning new skills right alongside the younger participants in addition to building confidence, developing communication skills, and improving leadership skills.
4-H Clubs
54 Multi-project Clubs
34 Special Interest Clubs

6,259 Youth Reached
1,521 in 4-H Clubs
2,225 in Extended Programs
769 in One-day Programs
1,744 in Short Programs

4-H Programs
81 Extended Programs
5 One-day Programs
15 Short Programs

647 4-H Volunteers
147 Multi-project Club Leaders
63 Special Interest Club Leaders
128 Fair Superintendents
309 Program Volunteers
Health Career Exploration

By 2022, careers in the healthcare sector are projected to grow by an additional 100,000 jobs. In addition, Mason and Fulton Counties have been designated a Health Professional Shortage Area by the Health Resources and Services Administration. To address this issue, U of I Extension engaged community partners to pilot two health career opportunities to high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

The two programs connected young people to the broader healthcare system. Through presentations from health professionals, tours of medical facilities, hands-on learning activities, and soft-skill development, teens expanded their knowledge of career options, heard critical steps required for those careers, and developed their local network of health professionals.

Jerry Kruse, Dean and Provost of SIU School of Medicine, perhaps provided the best justification for programming in this arena. “We have a great deal of talent in our rural communities. We want to be sure to encourage that talent to flourish in every way possible.”

Havana Health Careers Opportunity

After 10 sessions held over the course of eight months, 24 Havana High School students were recognized for completing the first Havana Health Career Opportunities program. Our program partners included Mason District Hospital, Havana High School, City of Havana, SIU School of Medicine Office of Regional Programs, UI College of Medicine Peoria, and Spoon River College. The program goal was to expose youth to health careers, both locally and regionally.

Throughout the program, students met more than 75 different health professionals in Havana, Canton, Peoria, and Springfield. Nurses, doctors, medical students, and paramedics were the expected health professionals that the students met. Less common career paths to which the students were exposed included hospital operations staff, Saints Flight nurses and EMT’s, physical and occupational therapy assistants, bioengineers, and anatomical lab coordinators.

Fulton County Health Careers Opportunity

Graham Health Systems and SIU School of Medicine Office of Regional Programs joined our unit to provide programming for 15 Fulton County high school youth exploring health career opportunities. Students representing six different school districts participated in the programming series. They included Spoon River Valley, Farmington, Canton, Lewistown, VIT, and Cuba schools.

The program was designed to empower youth for self-directed learning and encourage them to develop habits that contribute towards success in college and beyond. Students developed networking and interviewing skills, acquired tools for job shadowing, completed practice job applications, developed a resume, and learned the importance of service.
Teacher Tuesdays Network Synergizes Local Learning and Collaboration

Teacher Tuesdays is an ongoing program that is allowing professional educators from all types of organizations to network and learn more about the amazing science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) resources and careers available in Central Illinois.

Kathie Brown, community and economic development educator, and Judy Schmidt, metro 4-H educator, are collaborating with River City Labs, Caterpillar, Inc., Greater Peoria Economic Development Council, Peoria Riverfront Museum, Bradley University Center for STEM Education, Peoria PlayHouse Children’s Museum, Morton and East Peoria School Districts, and ICE-HOI (Illinois Computing Educators – Heart of Illinois) to provide engaging and interactive events and dialog focused around STEM education and how educators and out-of-school education providers can implement new ideas in their classrooms and programs.

This professional development programming is designed to foster peer-to-peer support, introduce new resources, and provide networking with businesses and organizations promoting STEM education.

Additionally, an online network named Tech Teachers GP was created to expand the impact of Teacher Tuesdays objectives.

www.facebook.com/groups/TECHTeacherGP

Teacher Tuesdays Impact

- **273** Professional Educators from 9 Counties
- **112** Schools and Out-of-School Organizations
- **33,000** Potential Youth Reached by Participants
CED PARTNERSHIPS
Establishing strong partnerships is key to successfully conducting effective Extension community and economic development (CED) work. CED Educator Kathie Brown’s role in these partnerships is a mix of education, facilitation, and collaboration. Many of these projects are multi-year in nature and the benefits play out over a longer term.

LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
Carolyn (Cari) Blodgett from Fulton County participated in the 2017 Leadership Academy. It was developed by U of I Extension in partnership with United Council of Illinois (UCCI) to provide leadership training on issues important to elected and appointed county officials.

This year’s academy consisted of six sessions, five interactive sessions held in Champaign, plus a graduation ceremony at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield. Examples of the 10 topics covered included Fundamentals of Economic Development, Data-Driven Decision Making, Change Management, and Leadership and Crisis Communications.

“The academy provides an opportunity for county officials to learn and practice leadership skills, and develop a network of peers they can call upon,” explained Anne H. Silvis, Extension CED program leader and assistant dean. “It is always impressive to see the level of commitment and competence among participants. I really enjoy working with this group.”

Recent Examples of CED Partners Across the Unit

FULTON COUNTY
- Graham Health System
- Spoon River College
- Spoon River Partnership for Economic Development
- Fulton Village Presidents and Mayors

MASON COUNTY
- Mason District Hospital
- SIU School of Medicine Office of Regional Programs
- Havana High School
- City of Havana

LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION
Each year, elected and appointed local government officials and administrators from across the state improve their knowledge and skills through professional development opportunities provided by U of I Extension. Kathie Brown, CED educator, works with her statewide colleagues to plan these monthly webinars.

In 2017, the webinars reached over 1,000 people through the live and recorded sessions. The most popular topics included: The Opioid Crisis; Social Determinants of Health; Strategies for Attracting and Retaining Youth in Rural Communities; and Freedom of Information Act.
EXTENSION COLLABORATIONS WITH U OF I CAMPUS: A WIN-WIN

Extension’s strong community ties and understanding of local issues puts us in a unique position to facilitate collaborations between U of I campus and local communities.

Campus benefits by being able to apply faculty research to real-world situations and by enriching student learning experiences as they participate in project work. Local communities benefit from tapping into the cutting-edge knowledge and best practices that the university can bring to the problem-solving process.

In our unit, innovative outcomes have consistently resulted from this collaboration process. Faculty and students, along with community leaders have recognized positive impacts and expressed great satisfaction.

The following projects are examples of community engagements with campus facilitated by Kathie Brown. Due to our successes, we continue to receive new requests for programming from both community leaders and faculty.

### PEORIA COUNTY
- Bradley University
- Rural Peoria County Coalition of Municipalities and Townships
- Innovation Team – City of Peoria
- Caterpillar

### TAZEWELL COUNTY
- Illinois Central College
- City of Pekin
- Morton Economic Development Council
- City of Washington

### MULTI-COUNTY
- Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
- Greater Peoria Economic Development Council
- ARTS Partners of Central Illinois

#### Jackson Corners Neighborhood Study
- College of Fine and Applied Art – Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning

Case study of the connection between health and community development looking at housing, neighborhood quality, and community spaces.

#### Peoria Food Commissary Kitchen
- College of Fine and Applied Arts – School of Architecture

Case study analysis of successful commissary kitchens in the Midwest, followed by investigation of desirable properties for similar concept designs in Peoria.

#### Community Digital Literacy Initiatives
- The School of Information Sciences – Center for Digital Inclusion

Doctoral thesis addressing the critical concern of the digital divide in Illinois, especially related to manufacturing, media production, and data analytics.

#### Green Infrastructure Data, Modeling, and Design
- College of Fine and Applied Arts
- College of Engineering

Research proposal to chart a new approach to urban stormwater management that includes less expensive, above ground design.

#### Business Transition Study
- College of Business – Illinois Business Consulting

Student team assisted Peoria property owner in assessing unused building space to increase business opportunities.
Professional Development Provided to Cafeteria Staff

U of I Extension and the Illinois State Board of Education entered into a grant partnership called ABCs of School Nutrition. Kaitlyn Streitmatter, SNAP-Ed educator, works with the ABCs of School Nutrition grant to provide professional development training to school nutrition staff throughout the unit. The training provides staff with information to create sustainable changes regarding nutrition and physical activity within the school and cafeteria.

Kaitlyn has conducted on-site professional development programming, based on the school’s needs, to schools in Cuba, Peoria, East Peoria, Pekin, and Marquette Heights.

Workshop topics include:
- School wellness and physical activity
- Ways to reduce sodium in school meals
- Cashier training
- Quality standards in the school cafeteria

Serving Local Residents

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EDUCATION (SNAP-Education)

SNAP-Education works with limited-resource audiences to make healthier choices where they eat, shop, live, play and learn in their communities. Through classes and workshops, and by working towards policy, systems, and environmental changes, SNAP-Education positively impacts the nutrition and activity choices of people and communities we serve.

6,269 Total SNAP-Ed Participants
584 (9%) Adults
5,685 (91%) Youth
201 (3%) Participants Who Identified as Hispanic

RACE OF PARTICIPANTS

- 67% White (4,199)
- 32% Black (1,976)
- 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (94)
New Curriculum Adopted by EFNEP Staff

Our unit is one of only five in the state that has an Expanded Family Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). We have ten EFNEP staff, serving low-income audiences in the metro area of Peoria and Tazewell Counties.

This past year EFNEP added a new curriculum to their offerings, “Eating Smart, Moving More.” This curriculum helps people learn how to eat healthy food and be physically active. Clients are also encouraged to think differently about what they eat and how much they move, and to make choices that will help them feel good and live better.

With this curriculum participants learned to:
- Save money at the grocery store
- Eat more meals at home
- Improve family diet
- Practice food safety
- Use leftovers and cook with foods on hand
HCE/HEA - 100 Years of Collaboration with University of Illinois Extension

**Partnership with U of I Extension**

The partnership U of I Extension and the Association for Home and Community Education (HCE) share is unique. HCE was originally started through the land-grant system, but later became its own organization separate from Extension. HCE has been a supporting partner in our unit for 100 years.

Extension continues to support HCE’s educational efforts by providing research-based lessons for their membership and working closely with their local boards to facilitate their operations. HCE supports Extension through financial donations and donations of their time and talent. HCE members regularly serve as 4-H volunteers, Extension Council members, foundation board members, Master Gardeners, and Master Naturalists.

**History**

The Home and Community Education’s story begins shortly after 1914 when the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) was created by the Smith-Lever Act. CES was to be the public outreach arm of the land-grant universities, which in Illinois was University of Illinois. Eva Benefiel, the Home Advisor in Kankakee County’s CES, had an idea to develop a home improvement association. Kankakee was the first in Illinois to organize a Home Bureau Association.

According to historical articles, Tazewell County joined in 1918, the first in our unit, electing Mrs. Frank Harris as their first president. Fulton and Peoria Counties are reported to have joined sometime in the 1920s. Mason County joined in 1929, with Mrs. J.J. Weyhrich as their first president.

Over the course of time, the organization has gone through many changes to adjust to shifting needs and demographics. Its mission remains to enhance the lives of individuals and families through quality educational programs and experiences encouraging responsible leadership and service to the community.
Community Service

It is hard to imagine the true extent of the reach that HCE members have had over the years. We estimate that the current membership of 286 have shared what they have learned with their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, approximately 3,200 people.

Additionally, local HCE units are very involved in community service projects. In Fulton County, units reported projects such as collecting suitcases of personal care items for the women at the Fulton–Mason Crisis Service, making “Anti-Ouch Pouches” for patients recovering from breast cancer surgery, and making blankets for Children’s Hospital of Illinois.

The members of the Happy Homes HCE unit in Mason City took the lead in starting the Christmas trees in the park project. It was a special way for the community to recognize loved ones who have passed away.

“Fulton County HEA has changed through the years, but our partnership with and support of University of Illinois Extension remains steadfast.”

FULTON COUNTY HOMEMAKERS’ EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (HEA) BOARD

An Aim for the Homemaker

To have the home...
- Economically sound
- Mechanically convenient
- Physically healthful
- Morally wholesome
- Mentally stimulating
- Artistically satisfying
- Socially responsible
- Spiritually inspiring
- Founded upon mutual affection and respect

—Juliet Lita Bane, Home Economist, 1919

Tazewell County HCE coordinates and operates the food stand during the 4-H Show and Jr. Fair. This serves as a fundraiser for the County HCE board, a service to the 4-H families, and a learning experience for the 4-Hers and adults as they work alongside each other in the food stand.

circa 2017

Many Fulton County Homemakers’ Education Association (HEA) members have enjoyed special times of learning and building friendships at the State Conventions they attended over the years.

circa 1983