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# VANTAGE

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## MICROSOFT GRANT HELPS MICHIGAN 4-H'ERS ADDRESS CRITICAL ISSUES

*Michigan 4-H'ers are addressing major issues within their community with digital solutions thanks to a new National 4-H Council partnership with Microsoft.*

**W**ashtenaw and Wayne counties were among eight 4-H communities to receive a 4-H Tech Changemakers grant from Microsoft to equip young people with the digital skills and resources they need to make a positive impact in their communities through grassroots strategies.

Last fall, 4-H teens representing these communities were invited by National 4-H Council and Microsoft to Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond, Washington. During the three-day 4-H Tech Changemaker orientation, Microsoft's employees guided youth through an intensive community issues identification process to identify areas where 4-H members could make the best better in their local communities.

The teens were asked, "What if you were in charge of deciding which issue in your community should be addressed?" and, "What if technology could be a solution to that issue?"

4-H'ers in Wayne County are tackling the issue of rising substance abuse across the nation and within their own communities. Pursuing the development of a website or application, the youth plan on making substance abuse-related resources more easily accessible to those in their area.

"The Microsoft grant is important because Michigan 4-H has the very big job of supporting and nurturing youth leaders with comparatively very little resources to do that," said Mark Cowan Jr., Wayne County Michigan State University (MSU) Extension 4-H program coordinator.

"This grant will help us connect young people with technology that will empower them to make a difference in the communities that they live in. Young people will be most affected by the systemic issues in their communities, and we have the responsibility to partner with them and amplify their voices and actions to make positive change," Cowan said.

"I am looking forward to building close relationships with my community and the resources that I want to offer," said Ronell Austin, Wayne County 4-H member. "With the help of Microsoft, I believe that I can guide my community towards the right direction and give them easy access to any help that they desire. Technology is the future, so it is imperative for me to have as many people as I can on the web, searching for the help or resources they need."

In Washtenaw County, 4-H members are looking to support teens facing mental health challenges by using technology.

"We all seem to know that technology is the future for this teen generation, but we haven't yet created all the needed tools to utilize it while staying physically and emotionally safe," said Sheri Montoye, Washtenaw County MSU Extension 4-H program coordinator.

**See Microsoft Tech Changemakers, page 11**



Photo credit: National 4-H Council

Last fall, 4-H teens from Washtenaw and Wayne counties as well as six additional 4-H communities attended an orientation at Microsoft's headquarters in Redmond, Washington, where Microsoft's employees guided youth through an intensive community issues identification process to identify areas in which 4-H members could make the best better in their local communities.

## NEW TRUSTEES JOIN MICHIGAN 4-H FOUNDATION BOARD

**M**ichigan 4-H Foundation trustees are volunteers who manage foundation policies and operations, and are community advocates for ongoing and increasing support for 4-H. They are also charged with overseeing the activities of foundation staff members and working on committees to facilitate foundation operations.

Melissa Humphrey and Julie Chapin were each elected to three-year terms on the Michigan 4-H Foundation board. Effective Feb. 1, 2018, Jacob DeDecker is the acting state 4-H leader and in that role serves as Michigan 4-H Foundation trustee. Roxanne Turner was appointed as the Michigan Council of Extension Associations representative on the board.



**Melissa Humphrey**

**Melissa Humphrey**, of Fowler, was elected to a three-year term as a Michigan 4-H Foundation trustee at the winter board of trustees meeting. Humphrey currently serves as regional vice president of sales and customer relations for GreenStone Farm Credit Services. In this role, she is the leader of the financial services officers, crop insurance agents and financial services staff in the Charlotte, Grand Rapids, Hart, Hastings and Ionia offices. Humphrey began her career at GreenStone in 2004 as a credit trainee. She soon transferred to the position of financial services officer, and later to senior financial services officer at the St. Johns branch. A Berrien County 4-H alumna, she grew up on a dairy and cash crop farm and currently serves on the Michigan Farm Bureau State Promotion and Education Committee. A graduate of Michigan State University (MSU), Humphrey earned a bachelor's degree in agribusiness management and graduated from the Great Lakes Leadership Academy at MSU in 2015.



**Julie A. Chapin**

**Julie Chapin**, of Portland, was also elected to a three-year term at the winter board meeting. Chapin, who has served as a permanent trustee since 2010, retired as state 4-H leader and director of the MSU Extension Children and Youth Institute Jan. 31. Her election to the board allows her to continue in her roles as both trustee and secretary to the board following her retirement. In 1981, Chapin began her career as an MSU Extension 4-H youth agent, then became a youth animal science specialist before serving as state 4-H program leader for volunteer development. Chapin is recognized nationally for her leadership in convening and directing the National Center for Action in Science and Technology and the National Network for Science and Technology, both dedicated to expanding youth opportunities to explore science and technology through formal

and nonformal learning opportunities. She also helped launch the 4-H Club Read youth literacy initiative in response to Michigan's commitment to have every child reading by third grade. She has been honored for her Extension service with the Michigan and National Distinguished Service awards.



**Jacob M. DeDecker**

**Jacob M. DeDecker**, of St. Johns, was appointed to the board as the acting state 4-H leader for Michigan 4-H Youth Development and co-director of the MSU Extension Children and Youth Institute effective Feb. 1. DeDecker joined MSU Extension in 2006 as 4-H program leader responsible for 4-H STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), small animal and agriculture programs. He has served as MSU Extension associate state 4-H leader since 2014 and associate director of the MSU Extension Children and Youth Institute since 2017. He works closely with 4-H supervisors and county-based 4-H program coordinators in 4-H policy, partnerships, risk management and evaluation systems to advance the 4-H program statewide. DeDecker is a member of the Michigan Association of Extension 4-H Youth Staff (MAE4-HYS) and received the MAE4-HYS Team Effort Award in 2011 and 2015. An Illinois 4-H alumna, DeDecker was raised on his family's swine and grain farm in Illinois. He received his bachelor's, masters and doctoral degrees in animal sciences, along with a certificate in business administration, from the University of Illinois.



**Roxanne S. Turner**

**Roxanne S. Turner**, of Fowlerville, was appointed as the Michigan Council of Extension Associations (MCEA) representative on the board. Turner is an MSU Extension educator on the leadership civic engagement work team in the Children and Youth Institute. Her program specialty areas include communication, conflict resolution, parliamentary procedure, facilitation, youth/adult partnerships, youth voice empowerment, and leadership and civic engagement development. She provides and facilitates trainings to both external and internal audiences in these areas across Michigan. Turner is a member of the MAE4-HYS, serving as president in 2014-15. She was recognized with the MAE4-HYS Distinguished Service Award in 2009 and received the National 4-H Distinguished Service Award in 2015. Turner holds a bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in social work and a master's in criminology, all from Eastern Michigan University. Additionally, she is a graduate of the Great Lakes Leadership Academy-Emerging Leader Program.

## MSU EXTENSION CHILDREN & YOUTH INSTITUTE INTERIM LEADERSHIP TEAM APPOINTED

**W**ith Julie Chapin’s retirement, MSU Extension has engaged in a nationwide search to fill the Children and Youth Institute (CYI) director position. An interim leadership team has been identified for the period of time in which the CYI director position is vacant with a shared leadership model to provide direction and oversight for the institute. The leadership team comprises Jacob DeDecker, Kendra Moyses and Lisa Bottomley as co-directors of the institute.

DeDecker will continue to provide leadership to Michigan 4-H Youth Development and will assume the role of acting state 4-H leader and in that role will also serve as Michigan 4-H Foundation trustee. In addition, he will provide leadership for 4-H marketing and alumni relations and monitor reporting.

Bottomley began her career with MSU Extension in 2000 as a 4-H educator in Ottawa County. She became a specialist in 4-H Youth Development in 2006 and achieved senior status in 2012. She earned a bachelor’s degree in sociology from Central Michigan University and a master’s in youth development from MSU. She will focus on staff development, provide leadership for academic staff and specialists, represent CYI on committees and task forces that focus on youth development, and provide support for work teams.

Moyes joined MSU Extension in 2003 and is now a senior Extension educator. She holds a bachelor’s degree in education from Ferris State University, and a master’s in leadership and administration from Central Michigan University. She will focus on overall business office issues including institute budgets and communication efforts; represent CYI on committees and task forces that focus on early childhood development and families; and provide work team support.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Apr. 1 – Outdoor Michigan 4-H Children’s Gardens opened.** The outdoor gardens are open dawn to dusk until Oct. 31. Learn more at: [4hgarden.msu.edu](http://4hgarden.msu.edu).

**June 30 – Donation deadline for FY2017-18 gift credit.**

**Oct. 3-14 – TSC 4-H Paper Clover Promotion.** Visit your local Tractor Supply Company store to purchase a paper clover to support your county 4-H program. For details visit, [www.tractorsupply.com/4H](http://www.tractorsupply.com/4H).

**Oct. 5 – Michigan 4-H Foundation Annual Membership Meeting and 4-H Emerald Awards Ceremony** at Michigan State University.

## CAMPAIGN UPDATE



As of Mar. 31, 2018, total giving for the Campaign for Michigan 4-H’s Future totaled \$11.02 million – 88 percent of the \$12.5 million campaign goal.

With just over 6 months of the campaign left and nearly \$1 million to go, 4-H needs you.

### Featured Focus: 4-H Volunteer Development

At the core of Michigan 4-H, and critical to the success of its youth, are more than 17,000 volunteers who give their time and talents to grow 4-H’ers. These volunteers serve in a number of capacities: some choose to help at camp, teach a workshop or lead a club, while others chaperone an event, lend their professional skills or help at the fair. As they provide hands-on guidance and real-world experience, these volunteers also offer young people another crucially important element: a healthy adult role model who helps to grow their confidence and ignite their dreams for the future.

There are opportunities to support 4-H volunteers through volunteer recruitment, training, development and recognition.

For more information on the Campaign for Michigan 4-H’s Future and ways to support 4-H, contact Amanda Masters at (517) 884-4691 or [amasters@msu.edu](mailto:amasters@msu.edu).



**I am 4-H. You are 4-H.**  
**TOGETHER**  
**We are**   
**THE CAMPAIGN FOR**  
**MICHIGAN 4-H'S FUTURE**



## 4-H ENDOWMENTS – THE GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

### *Eleanor Miller creates endowment for Leelanau County 4-H*

Leelanau County 4-H volunteer **Eleanor Miller**, of Cedar, believes so strongly in 4-H that she created an endowment to provide support for future generations of 4-H'ers in her county. "I've been involved with 4-H for a long time," Miller said. "4-H has always been a passion of mine."

The **Leelanau County 4-H Endowment Fund** is a perpetual endowed fund and will provide an annual source of unrestricted revenue for everything from special 4-H projects to scholarships for 4-H Exploration Days and other 4-H trips and events.

"Leelanau County has had a strong 4-H presence for many years, and this endowment will ensure that there is continued support for our local youth to take part in local clubs and programming, as well as events across the state and the country," said Rosali Collier, Leelanau County MSU Extension 4-H program coordinator. "We have many families who need financial assistance in order to send their children to these opportunities.

"This endowment will ensure that youth and their families receive local scholarships and have the chance to benefit from all that we offer through 4-H. Our youth numbers are small, and in order to promote our 4-H programming and grow our numbers of involved youth, we will need to be able to offer financial assistance to our local families, clubs and programs."

This is why Miller established the endowment – to provide annual funding for the Leelanau County 4-H learning opportunities.

"Some kids are not able to afford to attend clinics and other 4-H educational opportunities," Miller said. "I wanted to provide a fund to allow kids to be involved. Hopefully others will also contribute."

Miller moved to Michigan from Wisconsin where she was a social worker. She wanted to work with horses in Michigan and found a natural fit with therapeutic horseback riding programs. She became a 4-H certified therapeutic riding instructor and worked at the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center in Augusta. Over time, she was able to open her own arena and 4-H therapeutic riding program in Cedar, which serves the five-county area.

Through the 4-H Proud Equestrians Program, Michigan's 4-H therapeutic riding program, riders can improve balance, coordination, posture and muscle tone with the help of trained and caring volunteers. Horseback riding has also been shown to increase self-esteem, self-confidence, discipline and social growth.

"Horses mean a lot to me – they're animals that have so much to offer. They are so responsive and such a great vehicle for youth to express themselves."



**Leelanau County 4-H volunteer Eleanor Miller, of Cedar, believes so strongly in 4-H that she created an endowment to provide support for future generations of 4-H'ers in her county. Miller leads the Hidden Beach 4-H Club, pictured above.**

Miller has served as a 4-H volunteer leader for over 40 years. She currently leads the Hidden Beach Equestrians, a 4-H club of 16 youth members ranging in ages from 9 to 19. Additionally, she has coached 4-H Horse Bowl Teams – a game similar to quiz bowl, but with only horse science and industry-related questions – and had several teams compete at the national level.

"I really like the programs. I had a lot of members that went on to veterinary school and medical professions because of the science learned in 4-H."

With Miller's guidance, the Hidden Beach Equestrians also learn the value of community service. The club has fundraised and volunteered for horse rescue organizations and collected riding helmets to donate to youth in Mongolia.

"What I really like about 4-H, from a leader's point of view, is that I can do what I feel works for the kids and what the kids want to learn about. We can feel free to expand and explore."

In addition to her 4-H volunteer service, Miller also serves on the MSU Extension District 3 Advisory Council and several local boards.

"Eleanor is an exemplary 4-H volunteer: she is patient, calm, and kind, and her greatest focus is to help the youth in her club succeed," Collier said.

"If youth in her club can't afford to have their own horses, Eleanor encourages them to use the horses on her property; if a youth shows leadership potential, Eleanor puts that young person in charge in some way. Eleanor puts kids first and is very modest about her own role in the success of her club members. She truly is a wonderful 4-H leader for Leelanau County!"

## JOANN AND 4-H TEAM UP TO INSPIRE CREATIVITY & GROW 4-H PROGRAMS

**J**OANN Fabrics and National 4-H Council have teamed up to empower the next generation of makers by connecting more Michigan young people to experiences where they can learn by doing, creating and making. By providing local 4-H clubs with resources and tools to run impactful programs, JOANN will bring the 4-H experience to more kids in need.

“Studies show many students lose their natural love of learning between kindergarten and their senior year of high school,” said Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO, National 4-H Council. “4-H programming allows students to participate in projects where they can design, create and make for themselves. These hands-on experiences are proven to rekindle a love of learning, strengthen creativity and imaginative thinking, and improve motor skills, coordination and self-esteem. Our partnership with JOANN will allow us to expand those experiences and help more students across the nation continue to learn and grow.”

This new partnership included several components: an in-store service activity, a paper clover campaign, an everyday 4-H reward card discount and a style review contest.

To kick-off the new partnership, JOANN hosted **in-store events** nationwide on Feb. 3 where local 4-H’ers made custom Valentine’s Day cards to deliver to local charities or organizations. JOANN stores provided the supplies and space to create the cards to brighten someone’s day.

A number of in-store events were held across Michigan, including at the Grand Rapids JOANN store where the cards were donated to the Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital in Grand Rapids.



**To kick-off the new partnership with JOANN, in-store service events were held at stores nationwide, including at the Grand Rapids JOANN store. Kent County 4-H youth and volunteers made custom Valentine’s Day cards which were donated to the Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital in Grand Rapids.**

The **JOANN Paper Clover campaign** took place Feb. 1 to Mar. 31 across JOANN’s nearly 900 locations nationwide, including the 43 stores in Michigan. 4-H supporters were able to share their hearts and show their support of 4-H by purchasing \$1 and \$4 Paper Clovers at checkout to equip Michigan 4-H with resources to reach more kids in need.

Michigan ranked third in the nation raising a total of \$22,795 to support Michigan 4-H programs. Each Paper Clover included instructions for a special Valentine’s Day craft idea for customers to create and share with someone special. With the \$4 Paper Clover, customers also received a coupon for \$4 off their next purchase.

As part of the 4-H and JOANN partnership, a **4-H reward card** is available for current and lifetime 4-H members, parents of members, volunteers and 4-H staff to save 15 percent off total in-store and online purchases every day. JOANN will give a minimum of 2.5 percent of every eligible transaction to 4-H.

Additionally, 4-H members aged 15 to 19 participated in an online **style review contest** in February in which 4-H’ers submitted their clothing construction projects. Rhea Chiawa, of Hill County, Georgia, was selected as the winner and toured the JOANN Fabric and Crafts Stores headquarters and attended the Kent State Fashion Show April 27-29.

“We know every child is unique, and we all think, learn and grow differently,” said Jill Soltau, president and CEO of JOANN. “We’re glad to be partnering with 4-H to give more young people the opportunity to learn by using their hearts, hands and minds. The programming 4-H provides offers invaluable skills that members can use throughout their lives, and we are committed to helping future generations embrace creativity and learning.”

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## ESTATE GIFT HELPS MAKE THE MATCH

### *Lana Dart leaves estate gift to 4-H*

**A**s an Ingham County 4-H alumna and former Calhoun County 4-H staff person, Lana Dart knew the impact that 4-H can have on young people’s lives. She made it her tradition to give to the Michigan 4-H Foundation each year since 1989.



Lana Dart

Over the years, Dart gave to a variety of 4-H programs, including Kettunen Center, the Michigan 4-H Children’s Gardens, the Michigan 4-H Legacy Fund and most recently, the County 4-H Endowment Match Pool and the Ingham County 4-H Endowment. The match pool provides a 1:1 match for gifts from 4-H clubs, volunteers, parents, members, staff members and friends to build county 4-H endowments.

Before Dart passed away last fall, she had made a planned gift for a portion of her estate to support the area of greatest need for 4-H. The Michigan 4-H Foundation Board of Trustees has allocated the gift to help match gifts to the Make the Match County 4-H Endowment Campaign to honor where Dart’s most recent gifts were given.

In an interview several years ago, Dart shared why she felt it was important to give back to 4-H.

“It’s a program that I think has value,” she said. “While I’m not an active participant in the program at this time, it goes back to the wonderful experiences that I had as a 4-H member. You remember you were in 4-H and the experiences that came along for you, and it triggers the thought of giving.

“I think you get into a pattern of giving,” she said. “Certain organizations are on your pattern of giving each year. It may not be the same amount, but it’s important that you give every year.”

Dart, of Lansing, passed away on Nov. 30, 2017. She graduated from Mason High School and earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Michigan State University (MSU) where she was a member of the Mortar Board Honor Society. She began her career as an MSU Extension home economist and 4-H agent in Calhoun County. She was employed with MSU for 33 years before retiring in 1992. She was an elder, deacon and a clerk of the Session for Mason First Presbyterian Church. Dart also served as a board member of the Ingham County Fair. She was a member of the Lansing Women’s Club, and a member and officer of the Mason College Club.

Estate gifts, such as this gift from Dart, are considered a type of planned gift. Documenting and planning a future gift to support 4-H can leave a legacy for years to come. Planned gift donors are recognized as members of the A.G. Kettunen Society to provide lifetime recognition to donors who have made documented future gifts to 4-H. Documenting a planned gift allows donors to share

## COUNTY 4-H ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN PROGRESS

County	Goal	Total Committed	% to Goal
Allegan	\$50,000	\$29,886	60%
<b>Arenac</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$10,785</b>	<b>108%</b>
Branch	\$50,000	\$26,223	52%
<b>Calhoun</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$36,867</b>	<b>184%</b>
Chippewa	\$50,000	\$18,317	37%
<b>Clare</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$4,403</b>	<b>110%</b>
<b>Clinton</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$50,287</b>	<b>101%</b>
<b>Eaton</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,290</b>	<b>101%</b>
Grand Traverse	\$50,000	\$11,345	23%
<b>Gratiot</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$52,030</b>	<b>104%</b>
Hillsdale	\$20,000	\$16,360	82%
Houghton-Keweenaw	\$25,000	\$15,250	61%
<b>Ingham</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$53,499</b>	<b>107%</b>
Ionia	\$50,000	\$45,342	91%
<b>Kalkaska</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$11,192</b>	<b>112%</b>
<b>Kent</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$54,172</b>	<b>108%</b>
Lapeer	\$50,000	\$24,693	49%
<b>Lenawee</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Macomb</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$16,585</b>	<b>111%</b>
<b>Mason</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>\$48,010</b>	<b>160%</b>
<b>Midland</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$18,300</b>	<b>183%</b>
<b>Montcalm</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$51,045</b>	<b>102%</b>
Muskegon	\$50,000	\$32,811	66%
Oakland	\$50,000	\$12,804	26%
<b>Osceola</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
Ottawa	\$50,000	\$21,126	42%
<b>Sanilac</b>	<b>\$12,000</b>	<b>\$12,040</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Shiawassee</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$50,175</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>St. Joseph</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	<b>\$52,650</b>	<b>150%</b>
<b>Washtenaw</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$56,373</b>	<b>113%</b>
<b>Wayne</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$13,658</b>	<b>137%</b>

The chart above shows Make the Match County 4-H Endowment campaign progress by county through Mar. 31, 2018, for the 31 counties participating in the match campaign. Counties in bold type have met or exceeded their goal.

their wishes and the impact they would like to see their gifts make to benefit Michigan’s youth. A.G. Kettunen Society members receive a recognition certificate, permanent acknowledgment as legacy donors in the annual report, and, for gifts that exceed \$25,000 at maturity, recognition as Cornerstone Society members.

Any donor considering a planned gift may contact Amanda Masters at 517-884-4691 or by email at amasters@msu.edu to verify that your gift intent can be met.



## 4-H'ERS LEARN WINTER LIFE SKILLS AT KETTUNEN CENTER

Since 1956, the Kettunen Center has served Michigan 4-H teens and adults as a location for educational workshops. Through this time, it has become cherished by those who attend because of its impressive outdoor features, its beautiful facilities and its welcoming staff. Although the Kettunen Center is commonly used to host teen and adult leader workshops and conferences, more workshops are being organized that engage a younger crowd. The Michigan 4-H Winterfest event is one of the most influential of this type.

4-H Winterfest is one of Michigan 4-H's most popular workshops with attendance of over 150 4-H youth between the ages of 8 and 12. The overnight event takes place during early February and allows youth to learn about exciting project areas, have fun doing wintertime activities and meet youth from across the state.

"Winterfest is a great learning experience and encourages youth to be independent while meeting others from all over the state," said Beverly Przystas, MSU Extension 4-H educator and 4-H Winterfest planning committee member. "Offering youth an overnight experience in a dorm setting with their friends allows them to try something new and take it back to their individual counties."

Participants have the opportunity to engage in hands-on sessions with topics including animal science, cooking, arts and crafts, food science, money management, healthy living and basic science. With an array of possible activities, young 4-H members explore everything the Kettunen Center has to offer from learning to cook in the kitchen to snowshoeing on the trails.

"4-H Winterfest is a great opportunity to come and explore the Kettunen Center and do things that normally you're not taught about or you don't have the chance to do," said Veronica Lofquist, Osceola County 4-H member. "Winterfest is just a great way to get to know people."

Initially designed as an East Central Region event, Winterfest quickly gained interest with a lengthy waiting list of youth who



**4-H Winterfest is one of Michigan 4-H's most popular workshops with attendance of over 150 4-H youth between the ages of 8 and 12. The overnight event takes place during early February and allows youth to learn about exciting project areas, have fun doing wintertime activities and meet youth from across the state.**

wanted to attend, but couldn't due to the limited space and volunteer capacity. Since its move to the Kettunen Center, the workshop has grown to one of the largest statewide 4-H workshops, filling the center to its capacity, still with a waitlist of youth wishing to attend.

Winterfest builds an early love of the Kettunen Center that will persist through adulthood and encourage lifelong learning as Winterfest attendees continue to return to the center for teen and volunteer workshops in the future. The Kettunen Center holds a special place in many people's hearts. Adults must pass this adoration on to their children at an early age for them to understand the power the Kettunen Center and 4-H has.

4-H workshops, including Winterfest, are partially funded through gifts and grants to the Michigan 4-H Foundation, significantly reducing the cost for 4-H participants to attend these educational opportunities at Kettunen Center. To learn more, view the 4-H Winterfest video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nzz89nRSmw>.



**Nearly 150 4-H youth and volunteers attended 4-H Winterfest Feb. 2-3, 2018 at Kettunen Center.**

## 4-H CHILDREN'S GARDENS TO CELEBRATE 25 YEARS!

**T**wenty-five years ago, the Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens opened as a place for children to learn about plants and science while satisfying their innate wonder and curiosity. The outdoor garden opened in 1993 as the first garden in the United States developed specifically for the education of children on a university campus. It has been called the "most creative half-acre in America."

In 2003, the indoor garden opened providing year-round educational access to science-based learning. In 2008, the 2,500-square-foot Pete and Sally Smith Schoolyard Education Garden opened to provide educators with ideas and learning concepts in developing outdoor gardens in schoolyards and community spaces and as a demonstration space for environmentally friendly landscape materials.

The gardens have also received many awards for innovative design as well as for the incorporation of the use of technology, including an online virtual tour, wonderwall (website for students to ask MSU faculty questions) and wonder casts (time-lapse videos of plants growing).

"2018 is the 25th anniversary of the opening of the MSU Horticulture Gardens and the 4-H Children's Gardens. We have a variety of special celebratory events scheduled throughout the year," said Norm Lownds, curator of the Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens.

Today the gardens remain a vitally important educational resource for 4-H youth programs, for local schools, and for the young people and their families who visit the gardens each season.

"More than 2 million people, mostly kids, have walked, ran, touched and often hugged their favorite things in the garden.

"We are working to have the gardens looking as good, or even better than they did when they first opened in 1993," said Lownds.

Projects in process include updates to the Storybook and Train gardens, the Sunflower House, a new shade structure for the Creation Station, and new tables and seats in several locations. Additionally, the Monet Bridge deck and rails will be replaced.

"The wood for this project will come from oak trees that have been harvested from the MSU campus as part of the MSU Shadows program," Lownds said.

New this year will be a story walk installed in the main 4-H Children's Garden in partnership with the Capital Area District Library. Custom story walk sign holders, to be installed in the spring, will provide information to incorporate storybooks with the content of the gardens.

"We have selected our book, the content and the story signs are being made," Lownds said.

Funding is sought for major construction projects to upgrade the Monet Pond, Tree House and twigaloos (house-like structures made from twigs).

### Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens Spring & Summer 2018 Calendar

#### Garden Discovery Days

Garden Geocache Event – June 9, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.  
 Superhero Tea Party – June 19, 10 a.m.- noon  
 Digger Day – June 28, 10 a.m.-noon  
 Garden 25th Birthday Bash – 10 a.m.-noon  
 Train Day – July 19, 10 a.m.-noon  
 Water Day – July 26, 9 a.m.-noon  
 Bug Day – July 31, 10 a.m.-noon  
 Bubble Day – Aug. 16, 10 a.m.-noon  
 Holiday Open House – Dec. 7, 5-7 p.m.

#### Splendid Stories

Stories in the Garden – June 19 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.,  
 July 11 from 7-8:30 p.m. & Aug. 23 from 10-11:30 a.m.  
 Stories for Sprouts & Seedlings – June 20, July 18, Aug.  
 15, Sept. 19, & Oct. 17 from 10-11 a.m.

#### Curiosity Camps

Garden Writers Workshop – July 10-12, 10 a.m.-noon  
 Camp Monet – Aug. 7-9, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  
 Garden Chefs from Garden to Table – Aug. 14 from  
 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

#### Garden Birthday Bash – July 14

Celebrate the gardens' silver birthday with activities throughout the gardens including container gardens, tours and cake and ice cream!

**For more information on how you can make a special birthday gift or provide general support for the Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens, contact the Michigan 4-H Foundation at (517) 353-6692, or donate online at [www.mi4hfdtn.org](http://www.mi4hfdtn.org).**



Download the complete calendar with event descriptions and details at [mi4hfdtn.org](http://mi4hfdtn.org).



## OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE MFB 4-H EXCELLENCE IN AG AWARD

*Three outstanding 4-H leaders were honored with 2017 Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) 4-H Excellence in Agriculture Awards Jan. 19 at MFB's Voice of Agriculture conference in Grand Rapids.*

**M**elanie Barnes, of Iosco County; **Tiffany Spedowski**, of Mecosta County; and **Michelle Barnes**, of Calhoun County; were recipients of \$1,000 grants, funded by the MFB 4-H Excellence in Agriculture Endowment, to designate to a 4-H agricultural program of their choice, for volunteer training, supplies or curricula to enhance 4-H programming locally and statewide. View the award video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEkJf3seeUE>.

### Melanie Barnes, Iosco County

Since the beginning of her involvement with the 4-H program in Iosco County in 2006, Melanie Barnes has worked diligently to help local 4-H members gain skills in their project areas and for themselves. She worked with the 4-H horse program to establish a local 4-H educational camp to allow members to expand their horsemanship and showmanship skills, as well as leadership and teamwork skills. In addition to her guidance with the horse project area, she is also a 4-H livestock club volunteer.

She has been instrumental in establishing youth leadership positions for members, such as a 4-H market steer club that allows members to thrive in both their project areas and personal development. She connects 4-H with her community as well, arranging for youth to speak on the radio, and organizing community service events at the local fairgrounds as well as a youth-led community breakfast to share about the 4-H program.

"Melanie has done an outstanding job encouraging youth to participate in the 4-H awards program both in Iosco County and at the state level," wrote Kelli Rau in her nomination for Melanie. "In addition to supporting youth in various award programs, Melanie also encourages youth to step outside their comfort zone and participate in regional and state leadership experiences. She has a way with making youth feel empowered, and she encourages them to seek new opportunities and live the 4-H motto of making the best better."

### Tiffany Spedowski, Mecosta County

Tiffany Spedowski has been a 4-H volunteer for 20 years, leading the largest 4-H community club in Mecosta County with over 70 youth members, known as the Stanwood Pioneers 4-H Club.

Aside from being a club leader, she is involved in the Junior Livestock Association, Horse Leaders Association and Mecosta County 4-H Council. Through those groups, she holds officer roles and is actively involved in the county program, which influences and benefits the lives of all Mecosta County 4-H members.



Photo credit: Farm News Media

**Michigan Farm Bureau (MFB) recognizes the 2017 4-H Excellence in Agriculture Award recipients at the MFB Voice of Agriculture Conference, Jan. 19, 2018 in Grand Rapids. Left to right: Cathy McCune, Chair of MFB State Promotion & Education Committee; award recipients Michelle Barnes, Melanie Barnes and Tiffany Spedowski; and MFB President Carl Bednarski.**

Community service is a big focus of the Stanwood Pioneers 4-H Club. The club participates in many service projects that contribute to the quality of life in the community. Through these projects, the club stays active and involved during all seasons and helps youth to learn the importance of giving back and advancing their citizenship.

"Tiffany is showing her youth how to recognize, understand and appreciate multiculturalism," stated Jenn Marifo in her nomination for Tiffany. "She also does this by showing through example helping out those individuals that wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to participate in 4-H. The members of her club are always growing and contributing through their service and leadership and help in any area they are needed."

### Michelle Barnes, Calhoun County

Michelle Barnes got her start with 4-H in 1998, and today she volunteers with five clubs: 4-H Dairy Starter Calf Club, 4-H Shooting Sports, Calhoun County 4-H Council, Lucky Starts 4-H Club and the Mini-winnies 4-H Club.

Along with living the life of a small farmer, she works in the veterinary field. She is a shining example of someone who works hard and shows passion for the world of agriculture. She uses the resources available to her through the veterinary clinic and her own knowledge to help teach many concepts in animal husbandry, nutrition and much more.

She leads many community service projects for 4-H council. She represents 4-H at many local events, teaching youth to be involved leaders in their community by example. This past year

**See MFB 4-H Excellence in Ag Awards, page 11**

## MICROSOFT TECH CHANGEMAKERS

continued from cover

"This grant helps put teens and 4-H at the forefront in conversations about teens and technology, and we are learning that although adults express an interest in hearing from teens about this topic, they aren't sure how to include teens in a meaningful way," Montoye said.

Washtenaw 4-H Tech Changemaker teen leaders Joel and Suhjin quickly agreed on teen mental health as their issue. Their goals are to create what they call a "web of peer support," and identify a toolbox of resources for teens dealing with mental health issues in their school community. With a resource to turn to in times of distress, the 4-H'ers aim to provide support to reduce the number of teen suicides and encourage positive mental health activities.

Local teens have a strong sense that their peers are suffering and looking for support. Joel and Suhjin didn't know until they began researching this topic that the county teen suicide rate is currently at a 40-year high. They also didn't know that according to a Common Sense Media and SurveyMonkey survey, 47 percent of parents today think their children are addicted to smart phones. Instead of simply blaming technology and society for teen problems and doing nothing, the teens regularly meet and engage with local stakeholders to tackle this issue in their community.

To begin building that web of peer support as well as increase understanding of new technology, the teens invited additional teens to get involved with planning a 2-hour event that took place on

## MFB 4-H EXCELLENCE IN AG AWARDS

continued from page 11

Calhoun County 4-H offered a tractor and machine operator course for youth. She was instrumental in helping surface instructors and assembling other resources to make the program a success.

"Michelle is always encouraging youth to pursue their dreams," said Andrea Boughton in her nomination. "She even pushes them to look outside their comfort zone and create goals that might require some hard work to achieve. Once youth have set these goals, she is there to support them every step of the way. Whether it is learning how to vaccinate, tag or build a new enclosure, Michelle will support them and usually find others to help as well."

Supported annually through the Michigan Foundation for Agriculture and funded by the MFB 4-H Excellence in Agriculture Endowment Fund, the 4-H Excellence in Agriculture Awards recognize outstanding achievements of Michigan 4-H volunteers or groups that have exhibited excellence in 4-H youth education and leadership development in the areas of 4-H beef cattle; dairy cattle; goats; horses; horticulture, crops and soils; poultry; rabbits; sheep; swine and veterinary science.

April 10 called "Teen Tech Café." The event was set up in a local high school media center to allow for both the exploration of new technology and provide a safe teen-centric after-school space.

Ten youth participants used Microsoft Surface Pro tablets to explore various technologies including Lego EV3 robotics, 3D graphics programs, Scratch and Python. They also explored some phone-centric activities using "Text, Talk, Act," a Creating Community Conversations initiative led by the National Institute for Civil Discourse, which engages people in impactful conversations on mental health. The local library technology department used the first 15 minutes to demonstrate the many uses of a Surface Pro. Additionally, the president of the senior center (who retired from IT work at The University of Michigan) and the mayor were in attendance to observe the day's events.

"The event for us is only a starting point. We know that we can change this into something much more impactful. This is something to build off of," said Suhjin.

The teens felt this event, made possible with a donation of more than 20 Surface Pro devices from Microsoft, was a success. The donated tablets will be used for technology learning opportunities across the county. Although there is more to do on this project, participants advanced the local conversation around both teen mental health and technology.

4-H Tech Changemakers will explore replicating this idea in other school districts in the county. They are already working closely with a local senior center located near the high school to host an ongoing teen space for cross-collaborative tech education in the future. The teens are also working on an electronic survey of teens and adults in the area to gather ideas on addressing teen mental health issues using technology as a solution.

"We are already thrilled with the conversations this grant has started in our community, and are looking forward to the additional new partnerships between teens and adults that we will build in the coming years from the seeds we have already planted," Montoye said.



**To showcase their initiative, Washtenaw County 4-H teens hosted a Teen Tech Café Apr. 10 to demonstrate several types of technology including Surface Pros, Lego EV3 robotics kits and "Text, Talk, Act." They plan to host additional technology workshops with the help of adult volunteers to create a safe after-school tech space for teens.**

# VANTAGE

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Vantage is published for members of the Michigan 4-H Foundation. The foundation uses funds solicited from individuals and organizations to support 4-H youth and volunteer development programs. The foundation also owns and operates Kettunen Center, the state 4-H leadership training facility in Tustin.

The Michigan 4-H Foundation is licensed to solicit charitable gifts by the state of Michigan (MICS 2751). A report containing percentages of charitable contributions expended on program administration and fundraising is available by request.

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## IN THE NEWS

### Michigan 4-H Foundation trustee selected as 2018 CANR Outstanding Student Leader

Michigan 4-H Foundation trustee **Alondra Alvizo** was selected as the 2018 Outstanding Student Leader for the MSU College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and served as the commencement speaker at the college's graduation ceremony in May.

### MSU Extension educator selected as Informal Science Educator of the Year for second consecutive year

The Michigan Science Teachers Association (MSTA) recognized 4-H science educator **Tracy D'Augustino** at the MSTA annual conference on March 2 as their 2018 honoree because of her unique and extraordinary accomplishments,

active leadership, scholarship contributions and direct improvement of nonschool-based science education. Read the full story at <http://bit.ly/2rNCytN>.

### Engler appointed interim MSU president

**Gov. John Engler**, a Michigan 4-H alumnus and 4-H Emerald Clover Society member, was appointed interim president of Michigan State University Feb. 5.

### Michigan 4-H and MSU alum named Buena Vista University president

Joshua D. Merchant, Ph.D., a Michigan 4-H and MSU alumnus, was inaugurated as the 18th president of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa, on May 4.

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## CORPORATE Clover Club

The Corporate Clover Club is an annual giving program recognizing corporate and business gifts over \$1,000. From July 1, 2017, to Mar. 31, 2018, gifts were received from:

**Chemical Bank Foundation**  
**Chemical Financial Corporation**  
**CME Group**  
**Cooperative Elevator Company**  
**Detroit Tigers, Inc.**  
**Dow Chemical Foundation**  
**Garr Tool Company**  
**General Mills Foundation/Yoplait**  
**GreenStone Farm Credit Services**  
**HomeWorks Tri-County Electric Coop.**  
**Jackson National Life Insurance Co.**  
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**Michigan Horse Council**  
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**Microsoft**  
**Monsanto Fund**  
**National 4-H Council**  
**Tractor Supply Company**  
**United Dairy Industry of Michigan**  
**Walmart Foundation**  
**Whole Cities Foundation**  
**Zingerman's Service Network**