

# BAY COUNTY ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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## Message from the District Director

Our mission is to improve lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs and opportunities. MSU Extension professionals reach people where they are – in their homes, farms, businesses and communities with evidence-based education. We offer a variety of programs and services to make a positive impact with the residents we serve. On behalf of MSU Extension staff, I would like to thank you for your continued support.

Mark Rankin, District 9 Director

### Impact

 **\$18,938,370**  
total economic impact

 **\$1,986,164**  
spending with local businesses

 **\$3,412,971**  
Financial Aid disbursed

 **3,334** participants attending programs hosted in Bay County

 **190** Bay County students enrolled at Michigan State University

 **3,819** 4-H youth in Bay County

## Impact

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**10,753**

Contacts with Bay County Residents



**2,880**

Volunteer Hours in Bay County



**883**

Programs, Meetings, Consultations



**\$72,000**

Volunteer Value to Bay County

## MSU Extension Farm Management

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Farm Business Management Educators consulted with farmers on tax planning, farm financial analysis, succession planning, and record keeping. Many online and in-person educational events and resources were offered such as accounting workshops and webinars, beginning farmer series, farm bill updates, cost of production and budgets, revenue protection programs and crop insurance, farm labor, land rental values, custom machine rates, and



### City Meeting

Record Farm Income Presented by Cheri Burk

# Public Health, Nutrition, and Youth Programming



**255** of total youth participants



**112** nutrition and physical sessions hosted in-county



**187** adult participants



**378** county residents who participated in health and nutrition programs

## PSE Success Story

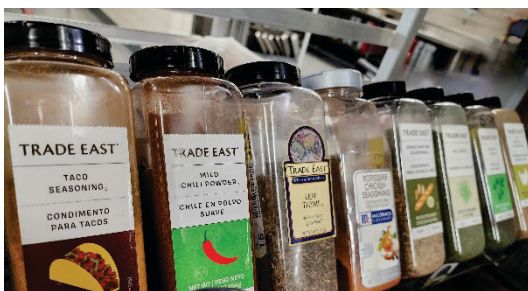
*Policy, System and Environment (PSE) enhancement efforts:*

The Good Samaritan Rescue Mission (GSRM) would like to add shelving to their food pantry / storage area to aid in safety and quality of food products used to prepare on-site meals. Currently, the PSE Mini-Grant does not allow for shelving, so we are revisiting goals and needs together to resubmit for this grant. Reconsiderations include: interview/discussion with food service director; the need for fresh, clean, free water for the guests, ideally infused water offerings as well as moveable display stations for fresh fruits and vegetables; herbs and spices in both dining areas.

Water stations are one part of the environmental and system enhancements to the quality and access of healthy, nutritional foods and beverages at the GSRM as most guests and their children do not drink enough water, which can be harmful to their health. Staying hydrated keeps the mind sharp and offers many health benefits, including helping to prevent digestive problems, regulate bowels, increase vitamin intake- to name a few. Water stations are a cost-effective way to provide a constant, clean water supply to shelter guests, free of charge. The refill station is an easy choice to give guests and their children water without sacrificing taste, convenience or affordability. The increase in the number of guests to this site means more supplies and resources are needed.

An integral environmental and system enhancement we have implemented with GSRM is utilizing rolling utility carts for attractive display and ease of access for all ages to healthier food options, such as fresh vegetables and fruits, condiments and seasonings, as well as meal service essentials such as napkins, silverware, etc. The Good Samaritan Rescue Mission has dining rooms for the male guests as well as a separate dining area for women and children.

Speaking with a few of the guests that the rescue mission serves, they are so appreciative of the new infused water dispensers that allow them to receive FREE water (with a little flavor) and they



self-report that they are choosing the free water more than purchasing sugary drinks. This is a statement that the staff at the shelter vouch for, with their insight of filling and refilling the water dispensers often, throughout the day. This PSE effort has been received with great excitement by both the staff and their guests.

## 4-H of Bay County

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**3,819**

4-H Youth in Bay County



**1,500**

individual connections made



## 4-H Partnerships

Our county's 4-H program has partnered with *Project Red*, *Garber – Back on the Block*, *Eggstravaganza* at the YMCA, *Handy's 100<sup>th</sup> Celebration* and Michigan Sea Grant.

## 4-H Chicken Embryology Program

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**140**

chicken eggs incubated in Bay County



**279**

youth participated in embryology

Embryology programs were performed in five area schools and inside Bay County Library Systems. Our 4-H educator provided lessons once a week to every location. Lessons included how to care for them, how the hatching takes place, how the chick grows inside, different breeds of chickens and how different breeds lay a different number of eggs each year, along with different colored eggs they lay and size. Participants also looked at how farm-fresh eggs look compared to a store-bought egg. At its conclusion, the students, teachers and families took home the baby chicks.



## 4-H Financial Literacy Education Program

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**902**

Bay County students participated

4-H facilitates financial literacy education by providing youth in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade with career opportunities that the students may be interested in pursuing. Then each student gets their real-life scenario- just like the board game LIFE. The simulation begins with the real-life scenario where the student has graduated from college and is starting a new job. They visit vendors to help them choose housing, transportation, clothing, food, etc. Students try to stay within their budget and keep \$200 left in their account.

## 4-H Summer Camp

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**50**

students participated

4-H has provided workshops such as swimming, kayaking, fishing, outdoor survival, arts & crafts, and much more during summer camp which lasts three days and two nights. Students engage in a team-building activity where youth are in groups, and they have to compete in 'Minute to Win It' games.

*"It was very remarkable to watch all the youth participating together"* –4-H Program Coordinator Holly Mueller

## 4-H Family STEM Nights

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**280**

participants in program

4-H provides family engagement nights. Activities and equipment are all provided by 4-H of Bay County. This program has a different theme each week, which includes a Health Night, STEM Night, Literacy Night and Slime Night that bring families and learning together.

## 4-H Mindfulness Curriculum

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**475**

students participated



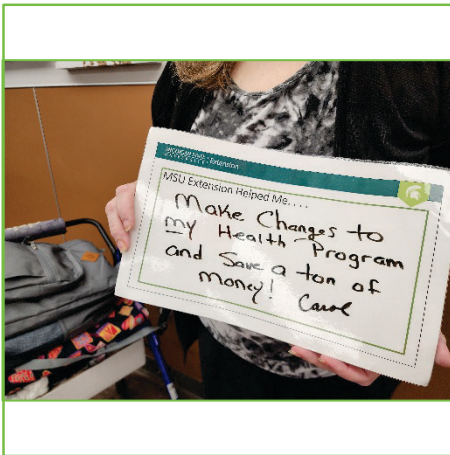
**4**

Elementary schools & high schools

Our 4-H educator reads a story to elementary students and then facilitates an activity that complements the story. During the Mindful Eating lesson, students learn to engage their five senses while eating. After the story concludes, the children bite into an apple. For some students, it is their first time trying an apple, and they declare it the best apple they have ever had. Another lesson is Mood Management, which focuses on practicing concentration. In this activity, students create a calming jar each. Whenever they are feeling stressed or angry, they can shake their calming jar and watch the glitter fall, helping them to collect and manage their emotions.

## 2024 Community Nutrition:

- Serving Children, Youth and Adults
- Michigan State University (MSU) Extension offers a variety of free nutrition education programs, including online programs, workshops and classes. These programs are intended to help people make healthy choices and improve their overall health.



## Success Story

### Food Access / Community Workshop

*This workshop series focuses on healthy eating, food security, budgeting, reducing sedentary behaviors, and improving overall diet quality.*

Participants in this six-week program have greatly benefited and retained valuable information about nutrition and food preparation. Food plays a crucial role in our lives, not only for essential nutrients but also for fostering social connections through cooking and sharing meals. However, various circumstances can become barriers to accessing, preparing, and consuming nutritious foods. These challenges may include financial constraints, transportation issues, distance to food sources and health-related factors. By implementing evidence-based programs and utilizing pre- and post-surveys, we continuously aim to improve and tailor the workshops to meet the specific goals of each group or site we partner with. For instance, in Bay County, we've seen remarkable outcomes:

**83% of program workshop participants have reported that they are now eating more fruit and vegetables.**

**85% state they are cutting back on sugary drinks. And 92% are reporting that they are cooking more meals at home.**

*"You inspire me to make better decisions and help change my situation. Great and easy ways to save money and budget food costs, while making nutritious meals and snacks for myself." – programming participant*



## Food Safety Educators



2024 saw the addition of a food safety educator covering Shiawassee, Genesee, Saginaw, Bay and Midland Counties.

MSU Extension's food safety educators work with local partners to provide educational sessions to the community on a variety of topics to prevent foodborne illnesses, including food preservation, cottage food law, ServSafe®, safe food pantries, emergency preparedness and more.



In 2024, over **15 programs** focusing on food preservation were offered in the Great Lakes Bay region, including three 3-class series on *Back to Basics of Food Preservation* with over **60 participants**. Hosted at local libraries and farmers markets, this series provided an introduction to water bath and pressure canning, freezing and dehydrating.



ServSafe® Manager Certification Training was offered in multiple locations throughout the region. ServSafe® is a nationally recognized program that teaches food service workers how to prevent foodborne illnesses through topics such as cleaning and sanitizing, proper cooking temperatures, pest control and hygiene. **Over 35 people** were certified in **eight trainings** in 2024.



## Michigan Sea Grant

Michigan Sea Grant is a cooperative program of the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Environmental stewardship, sustainable economic development and responsible use of the Great Lakes are crucial components of keeping the lakes and the region vibrant. Through research, education and outreach, Michigan Sea Grant is dedicated to the protection and sustainable use of the Great Lakes and coastal resources. Visit [www.michiganseagrant.org](http://www.michiganseagrant.org)

### Hooked on Adventure: Local Youth Make a Splash at Saginaw Bay 4-H Fish Camp!

**More than 30 eager young anglers** from Bay County had an unforgettable experience at this year's Saginaw Bay 4-H Fish Camp. Hosted at the scenic Bay City State Park, this dynamic collaboration between MSU Extension, Bay County 4-H, Michigan Sea Grant, Project FISH and local partners equipped the next generation with essential skills and knowledge.

Each budding fisher walked away with their very own gear – rod, reel, and tackle box in hand – ready to continue their angling journey long after camp ended. The evaluation results were nothing short of remarkable: **more than 80% of participants mastered the art of making their own fishing tackle**, while **every single camper expanded their aquatic expertise by discovering a new fish species**.

These young environmental champions did not stop at fishing. They rolled up their sleeves alongside Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMA) of the Saginaw Bay to remove invasive European Frog-bit from the park's lagoon. Their dedication to conservation paid off – an impressive **85% of campers now understand how to stop aquatic invasive species, with 60% mastering the critical "clean, drain, dry" technique** to protect our precious waterways. This experience was not just a summer camp – it was the beginning of a lifelong connection to Michigan's magnificent Great Lakes and the art of responsible fishing.





## Bay City Educator and Students Supported in Lake Huron Research Exploration with Partners

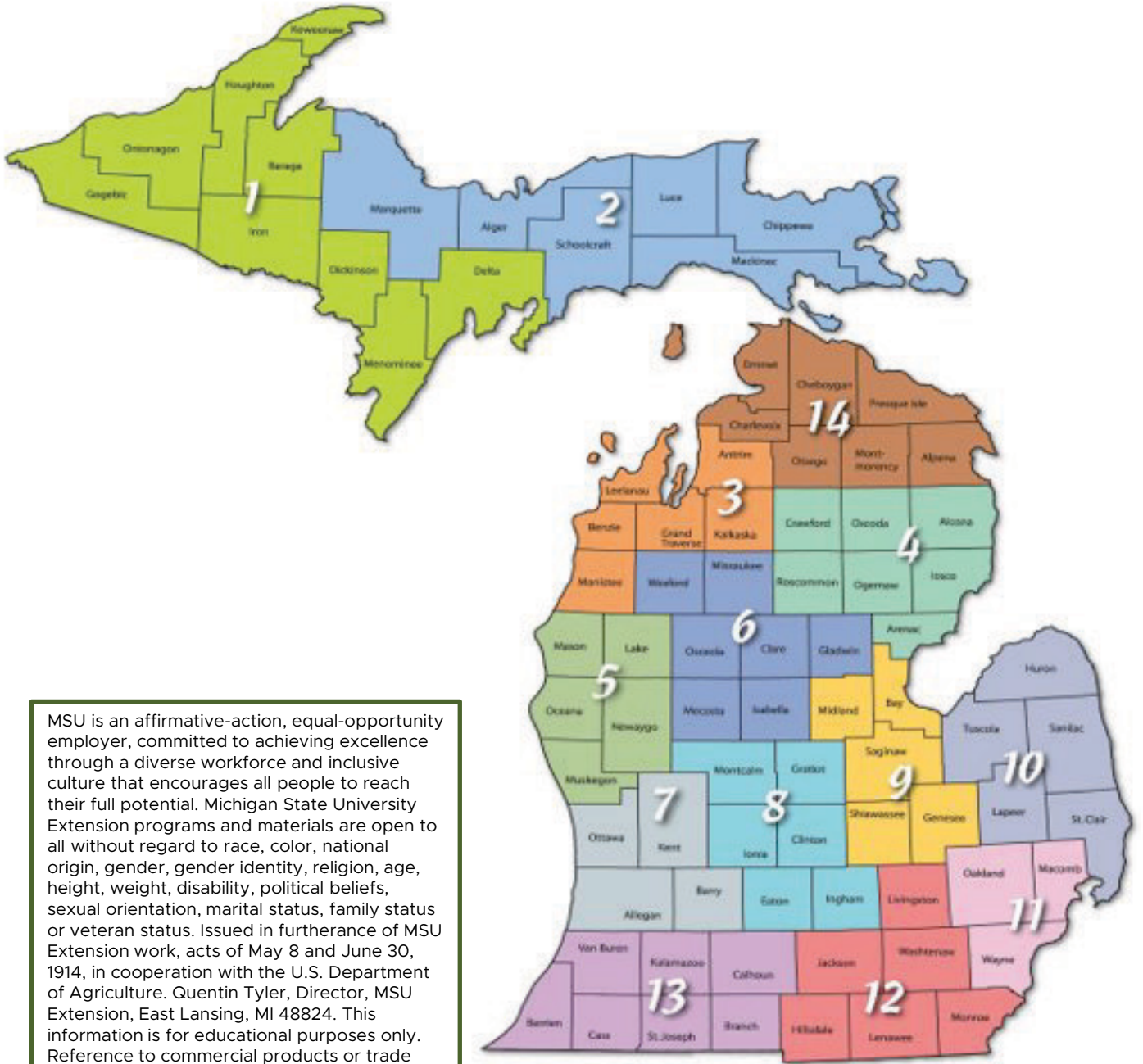
Championing Great Lakes education, three educators from around the state have made waves with their groundbreaking collaboration. Part of an interdisciplinary team, Christa McAuliffe Middle School Educator Aaron Jurek partnered with Michigan State University Department of Fisheries Expert Doug Larson in an exciting year-long journey through the Teaching Great Lakes Literacy program. Extension Educators Meaghan Gass, Angela Scapini, and Brandon Schroeder manage this program.

The dynamic group engaged **150 students** in hands-on exploration of Lake Sturgeon, designing an impactful lesson that brings to life what happened to this fish. Jurek's creative approach to environmental education earned the Bay City classroom a \$1,000 stipend to enrich student-learning experiences, while each teacher received an additional \$1,000 stipend in recognition of their exceptional curriculum development work, generously funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Trust.

The success of this innovative lesson is not staying local - it's set to make a splash across the Great Lakes region when it debuts on the new Center for Great Lakes Literacy website in 2025, inspiring educators and students throughout the basin!

*The Teaching Great Lakes Literacy is a ten-month program. Educators selected work with Great Lakes scientists and experts to co-design and pilot data-driven lessons exploring Great Lakes topics and/or issues.*





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