

Message from the District Director



Mother Teresa once said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters and create many ripples." MSU Extension is a catalyst for creating a lasting impact that ripples across the Upper Peninsula, the state and beyond. Our programs reach all audiences and age groups. From youth learning essential life skills and farmers exploring ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness, to older adults being able to access healthier foods and local communities discovering ways to increase economic impact. The possibilities of making an impact with Extension are endless.

Through partnerships we can produce exponential ripples to change the lives of our neighbors, family, and friends. For over a century, MSU Extension's goal has been to "bring knowledge to life." By connecting with organizations and agencies across the U.P., we bring the knowledge and research from Michigan State University to our communities and empower them to improve their lives. Alone we can cast a small stone to create ripples. Together our stone grows to produce a larger impact than any one organization can create themselves.

I have been with MSU Extension for nine years. Originally as a health educator focusing on improving the health and nutrition of community members. I now serve as a district director in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. As I continue to work in this role, serving the Eastern U.P., I am looking forward to exploring new ways to work with our partners as we create ripples of impact across Chippewa County and beyond.

Erin Daines
District 2 Director

Chippewa County Staff

- Nick Cassel, U.P. RC & D Extension Educator
- Cody McLaren, Community Nutrition Instructor
- Maggie Merchberger, 4-H Program Coordinator
- Elliot Nelson, Michigan Sea Grant Educator
- Jan Sweet, Office Manager
- Michelle Sweeten, Forage & Livestock Educator

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165

EXTENSION PROGRAMS INCLUDING CHIPPEWA RESIDENTS

1,719

CHIPPEWA RESIDENTS ATTENDED EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Chippewa County's Impact

- **\$18,901** spent on local businesses by MSU
- **Over \$4 million dollars** of total economic impact
- **Over \$1 million dollars** given to local students for financial aid

56

Extension programs held in the county

1,663

people attended programs held in the county



REPORTING

65

Extension educators, specialists and program staff reported data for Chippewa County

59

direct one-to-one contacts in the county

26

"Ask Extension" questions answered in Chippewa County

7,470

questions answered across the state

127

youth enrolled in county 4-H

1,669

youth participants



18 USC 707

Staff Success Stories

What happens at night

This program is a continual, direct education of the Eat Healthy be Active series that takes place at a residential treatment center. The target audience is adults and caregivers of children. This program includes six lessons with one per week. After the six lessons I start over, beginning with the first lesson. The partner for this program is Great Lakes Recovery Centers.

A 2023 participant from the residential treatment center was very pleased with their sleep improvement as a result of eating better and being more physically active. The resulting sleep improvement was quite the surprise to them.

Quote from participant:

"I was expecting the normal benefits from diet and exercise, but I had no idea how much these habits would improve my sleep."



Cody McLaren
Community Nutrition
Instructor



A downy woodpecker is another favorite visitor. Photo: John Diephouse

Since 2021, Michigan Sea Grant has been helping new birders find success by offering four, live online classes covering the basics of bird identification, birding equipment, bird feeding and bird conservation. The class was recorded and is now available online. Participants were able to watch from the comfort of their own home to begin their own birding journey. Each session continues to offer different topics, and can be viewed separately. Elliot Nelson, Michigan Sea Grant and Extension educator, has brought this exciting and informative class to Chippewa County to learn about the birds migrating to and around the county.

312 people participated in the Birding 101 offered by Elliot Nelson out of Chippewa County and surrounding area.

There have been over **460 species of birds recorded across the state**, giving endless opportunities to enjoy viewing these amazing creatures. Birding has long been a hobby many have enjoyed, but in recent years birding has become one of the fastest growing hobbies in North America.



Elliot Nelson
Michigan Sea Grant
Educator

Education on the Farm - "The Dirt on Soil Health"



This program was held August 13 at Hidden Creek Farm in Dafter Township. There were ten participants. They learned the importance of soil health and how to use the 'almighty' soil test. By having your soil tested you can learn which nutrients are present and which ones need to be added depending on the plant(s) you are trying to grow. You can avoid over-application of fertilizers which can waste money, reduce plant quality and pollute streams, lakes and groundwater.

They also learned about local programs that are available and were able to network with other farmers. MSU Extension collaborated with the Chippewa - Luce - Mackinac Conservation District and MAEAP.



Michelle Sweeten
MSU Extension Educator

4-H 2023 Recap

2023 Hidden in Plain Sight

"I was asked to attend the American Legion Department of Michigan, and American Legion Auxiliary Department of Michigan Winter Conference 2023 to talk about the Hidden in Plain Sight mobile drug prevention trailer. The presentation was approximately 20 minutes in duration with a 10-minute question and answer period. Many of the questions were about what types of drugs are currently being used by youth in our community to how can a trailer be set up in other parts of the state. The impact the training had on those who attended was huge. It opened up the minds and eyes of those who attended the training.

[I received] an email about the training from an American Legion member:

"I just wanted to touch base with you regarding your presentation at the American Legion Winter Meeting in Lansing this past weekend. First of all, I want to thank you for taking your vision and pushing to make it a reality! Furthermore, thank you for all your time, knowledge, and passion that you share at events such as this.

"I have a law enforcement background along with substitute teaching such as yourself, and what you have come up with is such a valuable educational tool! The more we can educate parents, caregivers, teachers, foster parents, and coaches on what our youth are exposed to, and how easily attainable they are, the better we can help them..."



Maggie Merchberger
4-H Program
Coordinator



Constitution Day

Constitution Day was held on September 15 at Lake Superior State University. Whitefish Township Schools, Rudyard Schools, Pickford Schools, Detour and Engadine, Ojibway Charter School, and Brimley School District were in attendance. Sault Ste. Marie City Mayor Don Gerrie and Sault Ste. Marie City Manager Brian Chapman attended Constitution Day to talk with the students about local city government. Constitution Day recognizes the adoption of the United States Constitution and those who have become U.S. citizens. It is normally observed on September 17, the day in 1787 that delegates to the Constitutional Convention signed the document in Philadelphia. Tenth-grade and AP Government students from school districts are in attendance for Constitution Day.

The Keynote speaker for this year's event was Judge Allie Greenleaf Maldonado Michigan Supreme Court of Appeals.



2023 4-H Continued...

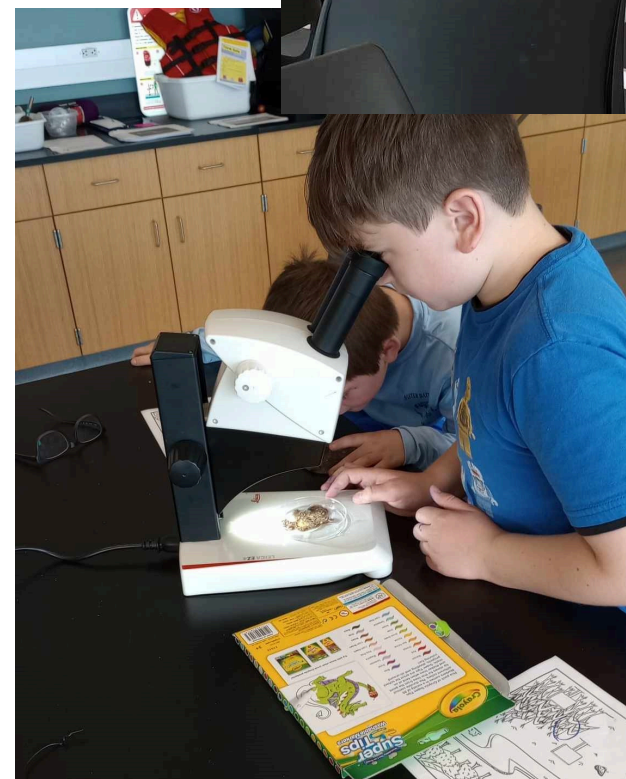
Life of the River

The Life of the River summer mini science camp. Was held as a two-day event. The first day was held at Lake Superior State University Center for Freshwater Research and Education (CFRE) building and the second day was held at Sherman Park. The youth learned about what lies beneath the surface of the water. They were able to look at macro and micro invertebrates under microscopes. There was also a beach clean-up and water olympics. The two-day summer mini camp was led by Elliot Nelson, an educator for Michigan Sea Grant and Extension. Together Elliot Nelson and Maggie Merchberger (Chippewa County 4-H) were able to provide 4-H youth with a fun and educational experience. Superior Roast Coffee donated \$200 to the program. The donation allowed the program to purchase water quality kits to test the lake water and also provided nutritious snacks for the 4-H youth.

21 youths participated in this program.

Favorite Quote:

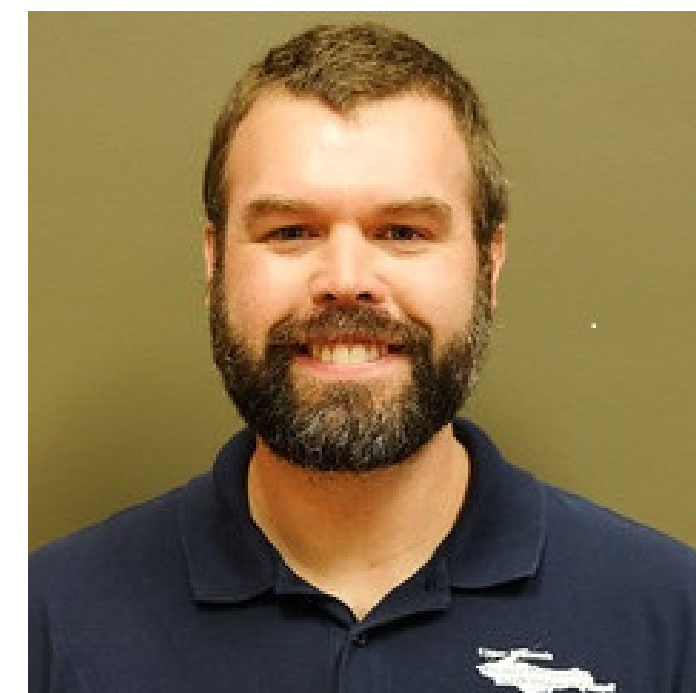
“I wanted to thank you so much for the opportunity for my son to participate in your 4-H Life of the River session. My son was literally bubbling with excitement, stories, and interesting facts he had learned each day when I picked him up from your camp. He has also mentioned an interest in working in the Fisheries field after having an opportunity to use the lab facilities at the CFRE center. Several times since your camp he has brought up information from or shared his experiences at the Life of the River sessions when we are out on the river as a family. My son really enjoyed this interactive and educational experience. He and his friends are already talking about going to Life of the River or other 4-H sponsored events next summer. Thank you for providing such fun and educational experiences to the children of our community.”



According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, 4-H'ers are 4X more likely to make contributions to their communities, 2X more likely to be civically active, and 2X more likely to make healthier choices.

Go Green! Go White!

When a partnership comes along and seems to check all the necessary boxes for both party's involved, the proper course of action is to naturally let it happen. In October 2022, the UP RC&D entered into formal partnership with Michigan State University Extension. Both organizations have worked together over the years, and when the opportunity arose, Executive Director Nick Cassel, along with all of the Executive Board Members, worked diligently to make it official. What does this partnership mean? For the UP RC&D, this means stability and support for its staff who historically have lived off grant funds (soft money). In addition, the network of resources MSU Extension provides will help the UP RC&D grow and diversify. The benefits obtained by MSU Extension is a greater conservation footprint across the UP, and strengthened partnerships across the region. The partnership is still in its infancy and we're all excited to see what great opportunities come from it in the coming years.



Nick Cassel
UP RC&D Extension
Educator

2023 UP RC&D/ MSUE Partnership grant dollars and programming spread across the U.P.

- Wrote, developed, and successfully obtained a collaborative grant through the Michigan Invasive Species Grant program for **\$194,200**, to carry out survey, treatment, and education on Michigan Watch List species, Himalayan Balsam, across the Central and Eastern UP.
- Wrote, developed and acquired **\$40k** wildflower enhancement project with the Hiawatha National Forest, geared towards educating and enhancing pollinator habitat in the Eastern and Central U.P.
- Wrote, developed, and successfully acquired a grant through the Great Lakes Commission for **\$8,323.69**, to carry out education efforts focusing on aquatic invasive species awareness across **9 U.P. counties** and in partnership with **8 different partners**.
- Successfully completed all required tasks, reports, and final requirements on **3 separate grants**, including a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (2020-2023) SOGL grant (**\$150,000**), a Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program project (2021-2023) (**\$239,100**), and our Great Lakes Commission AIS awareness project (2023) (**\$8,323.69**).
- Developed and submitted a proposal to MISGP for **\$337,800** for a U.P.-wide regional forest pest detection and education project. Proposal was approved.
- Developed and submitted a proposal to NOAA for **\$1,971,159.12** for a U.P.-wide regional coastal restoration project with collaboration and partnerships with over 10 partners, to assess, take management action, and restore over **400 acres**.

Chippewa County - Bay Mills Indian Community Facilitative Leadership

In early 2023, a unique program was completed at the governmental headquarters of the Bay Mills Indian Community in Brimley, MI. Three members of the MSU Extension Government and Community Vitality Team- Emily Proctor, Harmony Gmazel and Will Cronin - presented a morning of Tribal Extension programming, including an overview of Facilitative Leadership Skills with interactive discussions and a facilitation exercise.

The attendees included officials and policymakers at Bay Mills including the tribal clerk, the land office director, the director of health services and the local Boys and Girls Club. All attendees completed program evaluations.

Of the respondents:

- 75 percent reported that the overall content of the session was 'very good.'
- 100 percent reported that they had 'some understanding' of the topics before attending the session.
- 100 percent reported 'quite a bit of understanding' after attending the session.
- 100 percent of respondents 'agreed or strongly agreed' that they have enhanced skills to be more effective in their role and increased confidence in their abilities as a result of the session.
- 100 percent said that the session was either 'valuable or very valuable' for their growth and development.



Feedback about the session included the following comments:

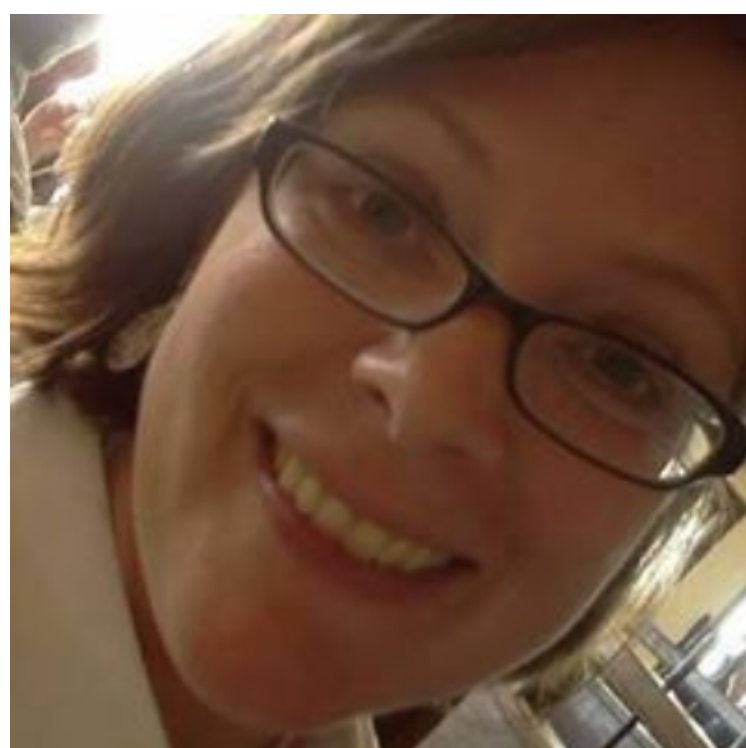
"It was great. I would love to learn more."

"I will be better prepared for meetings in the future, Thank you!"

"Great team presenting!"

"I love the Fishbowl (activity)."

"Great group of facilitators. They work well together."



Harmony Fierke-Gmazel



Emily Proctor



Will Cronin