

# Investing in Mackinac County Youth with 4-H

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.



In **Mackinac County 4-H**, we believe in the power of young people. By providing opportunities to learn and lead, 4-H helps youth become informed and engaged community members. While exploring new topics and activities in an experiential way, youth build the skills they need for life.

On September 15<sup>th</sup> the **Life of the Straits** program was held on **Mackinac Island**. Thanks to contributions from the **Mackinac County Child Protection Roundtable and Mackinac County 4-H Council** all attendees were provided **ferry tickets to and from the Island at no cost**. Two students from the **Geology Department at Lake Superior State University** guided youth and their parents through a **geology lesson** while a local teacher from **Mackinac Island Schools** guided youth and their parents through a **history lesson**. Michigan Sea Grant provided snacks and lunch for the day. In total 23 youth and 9 adults were in attendance and participants came from 4 different counties (**Mackinac, Chippewa, Luce, and Cheboygan counties**). The program proved to be a success and plans are in place to make **Life of the Straits a yearly staple program in Mackinac County**. Future plans also include expanding to program to happen over multiple days in multiple counties who have waters in the Straits area.

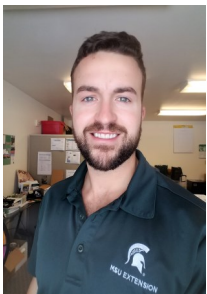
This past year the **Mackinac Island Horse Club** celebrated their **20<sup>th</sup> year as a club**. The Horse Club has a winter and summer component. During the winter months they gather in the gym at Mackinac Island School to review safety and practice their technique. During the summer months they gather at the stables on the Island. **Each youth gets to ride horses** boarded at the stables for the summer season. This club has given many youth the opportunity to **learn how to become skilled riders**. The club has a strong foundation in the community and is an annual program for youth to participate.



Jim Nash, Secretary



Tracie Abram,  
Extension Educator



Cody McLaren,  
Community Nutrition Instructor



Michelle Jarvie,  
Extension Educator



Susan Kirkman,  
4-H Program  
Coordinator

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# Mackinac County 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

## BY THE NUMBERS



3 Extension professionals based in the county and 48 provided educational opportunities



\$1,946,456 total economic impact in Mackinac County



55 youth involved in 4-H youth, early childhood or after school enrichment programs



1 MSU partner hospital



MSU Extension website received 11,972 visits from Mackinac County, 75.9% were first-time visitors



\$12,493 spending with local businesses



MSU disbursed \$590,003 in financial aid to county students



19 enrolled MSU students and 179 alumni



MSU Extension serving Mackinac County over 100 years

## MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Over the past year, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension partnered with Mackinac County to continue strengthening youth, families, businesses and communities. Your MSU Extension staff members, grounded in local relationships, serve by bringing the university's research and resources to provide outreach and education in the areas Mackinac County residents need it most.



In this report, we're excited to share about the people and programs that are improving the lives of Mackinac County residents in many ways, including helping grow Michigan's agriculture economy, encouraging sustainable use of our natural resources, controlling health care costs by giving individuals the information they need to manage chronic illness and preparing tomorrow's leaders. From an in-person workshop to online education, MSU Extension professionals work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure their success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

We're passionate about serving Mackinac County and are looking forward to a new year of serving. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension and for partnering with us to make a difference.

Erin Carter, District Director

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# Program Highlights



100 packets of Senior Project Fresh coupons were distributed at 5 different senior meal sites across Mackinac County.



2018 Seasons of the U.P.



Mindful Laughter—Tracie Abram, Extension educator (center) with some participants.

## Supporting Family Health & Nutrition

**Senior Project Fresh** is a coupon based program from **Michigan State University Extension**. This program is offered to seniors over the age of 65 with a household income at or below 185% poverty level. Seniors may use these coupons like money at farmers markets or roadside stands to receive fresh Michigan grown fruits, vegetables, spices, herbs, and honey. These coupons were offered to all eligible seniors in **Mackinac County**. At one of the Senior Project Fresh dispersal sites **Cody McLaren a MSU Extension program instructor**, received a letter of thanks from a participant in his **Cooking Matters** series at the **Clark Township Community Center** stating the Cooking Matters class and the Senior Project Fresh coupons inspired her to become more healthy because of all she learned from Cody.

This inspiration has impacted Mackinac County with others participating in Cooking Matters, Senior Project Fresh, and **nutrition classes in schools** moving the community toward healthy living. The positive ripple effect of health in Mackinac county will continue to make

## Mindfulness

MSU Extension **Social-Emotional Health educator, Tracie Abram provided Mindful Eating** offered in Mackinac County showing participants the practices of taking time to enjoy and have a stronger awareness while eating to reduce overeating. This concept is part of **Seasons of the UP**, a foraging workshop offered throughout **Mackinac County** created by MSU Extension educator Michelle Jarvie.

Mindfulness is a practice helping reduce stress and improve focus. MSU Extension provides a five-session series introducing participants to the basics of mindfulness showing how easy it is to incorporate it into daily routines and functions.

# Program Highlights

## Mindful Laughter

MSU Extension **Social-Emotional Health educator, Tracie Abram provided Mindful Laughter**, a presentation at the Headstart Annual Conference on Mackinac Island showing professionals ways of reducing stress through laughter. Laughter is the universal language bringing people together and provides stress release instantly having a positive lasting effect on the brain. This calming affect can last hours after the laughing stops.

In addition to the session on laughter, the series provides information and research on the benefits of mindful breathing, walking, eating, thought surfing, and other techniques to be kind to your mind. This program is offered throughout Mackinac county as a series or sessions can be

## Community Development

Over the winter of 2017/2018 a collaboration was born between **MSU Extension, the Mackinac Economic Alliance**, and the **Les Cheneaux Farmer's Market**. The goal: to start a community commercial kitchen in **Mackinac County** for artisans making and selling cottage foods to expand their businesses.

A group was formed including artisans, local farm good producers, representatives from potential kitchen locations, and funders. They investigated and toured the potential kitchen spaces, and **MSU Extension offered ServSafe training** for those interested in learning more about the food safety aspects of a food business.

Eight people took the 8-hour training and passed the certification exam with at least a 75% score. The **cost of the certification was covered by a local foundation**. The Mackinac Economic Alliance is supporting one food business to expand from cottage to commercial as an example to encourage others of the possible successes in this particular business.

**MSU Extension** offers help regarding next steps in food safety, such as giving information regarding further necessary classes, certifications, and discussing working with the local health departments to set up commercial kitchen space.



Life of the Straits group photo.



History walk during Life of the Straits.



4-H youth exploring the geology of Mackinac Island.