



ANNUAL REPORT



2024



- 1 TABLE OF CONTENTS**
- 2 WE R.I.S.E**
- 3 MESSAGES FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT & DIRECTOR**
- 4 AWARD RECIPIENTS/VOLUNTEERS**
- 5 2023 REVENUE SOURCES**
- 6 CCE SCHUYLER BOARD**
- 7 2024 WORKSHOP SNAPSHOT**
- 8 CCE SCHUYLER STAFF**
- 9 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**
- 11 PARENTING EDUCATION**
- 13 AGRICULTURE**
- 15 NATURAL RESOURCES**
- 17 HORTICULTURE & MASTER GARDENERS**
- 19 ENERGY**
- 21 MEET THE INTERN**
- 22 REMEMBERING EDWARD GATES**





We are Resilient: As individuals, and as an organization, we are agile and able to adapt; we embrace challenges as an opportunity to learn and continually improve.

We are Innovative: We are committed to unearthing untapped potential by exploring alternatives and constantly seeking and offering new solutions.

We practice Sustainability: Our 100+ year commitment to sustainability is in our DNA. We believe in using what history has taught us while thinking strategically about our future.

We Educate: CCE's foundation: It is what we do. We are committed to providing conventional and alternative ways of educating a cross-generational community of people interested in and committed to learning and putting knowledge to work to enrich their lives.

CCE Schuyler accomplishes so much because of the support of our community. Together, we can make it through challenges and find innovative solutions. Together we will accomplish even more.

Together we RISE!





It is with humility and excitement that I look forward to another productive year at Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Schuyler. The integrity of our Board of Directors and our dedicated CCE Schuyler team has significantly contributed to our continued success alongside our partners and collaborators within the Schuyler County community.

Our outreach platform is evolving in tandem with the needs of our community and the demands of the 21st century. This is an ongoing process that remains aligned with our core values. CCE Schuyler stands at a pivotal moment in a hyper-technology-driven culture. We recognize the importance of adaptation, transformation, and reflection as we continue to provide the diverse programs essential to our community's health and well-being.

Our mission is to foster positive growth amidst the changing landscapes of technology, agriculture, and society. The challenges that lie ahead are indeed opportunities that will strengthen our collective efforts and enhance our resilience. As we embark on 2025, I am grateful to work alongside an incredibly talented Board of Directors and a smart, empathetic and generous team at CCE Schuyler. Together, we will navigate the future and continue to make a meaningful impact in our community.

Thank you.

- Paul Bartow, CCE Schuyler Board President

When I reflect on the past year I am beyond thankful for the resolute and enthusiastic staff that work at Cornell Cooperative Extension Schuyler County (CCE), our Board of Directors for their dedication, caring, and strong leadership, and our programs' gifted volunteers who share their time and expertise with our staff.

Our work in the community is sustained in part through our local county government and we are grateful for the continued partnership. To the people in our community and beyond who support our programs, we appreciate you trusting us as your resource. To the families who send their children to Hidden Valley 4-H camp during the summer, we offer the same generous appreciation.

A few highlights that have contributed to the magic in 2024 include the leadership for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, the Ed Gates Memorial Bird Feeder Dedication in our CCE Demonstration Garden, our Annual Meeting Celebration with special guest, Julie Suarez, Associate Dean, Director of Translational Research, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS), and our new website debut, "Growin' Around the Glen" that supports our Farm Tour events.

I look forward to continuing our collaborative pathways in 2025 as we look to innovative programs while maintaining the traditional education and outreach that has served our community for over 100 years.

- Melissa Schroeder, Executive Director & Association Issue Leader



2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Board Recognition:

Chad Hendrickson
(6 years service)

Chelsea Stamp
(3 years service)

Mark Rondinaro
(3 years service - 2nd Term)

Friend of Extension:

Jeff & Zach Cornell
JC Supply, LLC

Barbara Hubbell
United Way of the Southern Tier

VOLUNTEERS

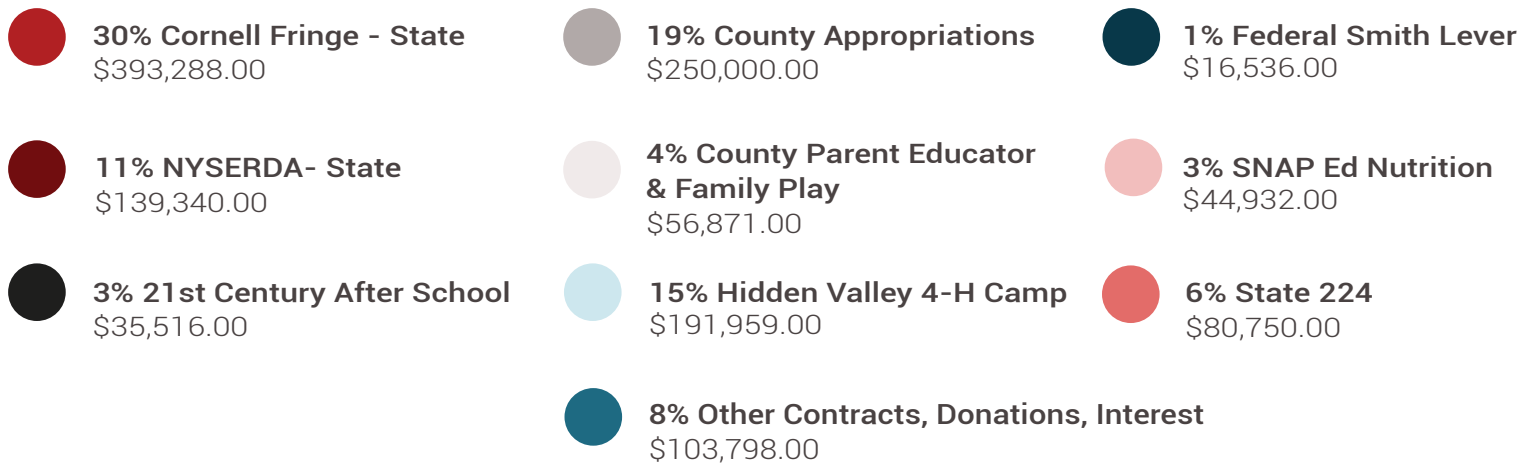
John Antes
Philip Anterlay
John Ball
Debbie Ball
Precious Campbell
Marta Condie

Lisa Fernandez
Jean Gardner
Kari Giles
John Hastetler
Mercedes Jerzak
Joann Kowalski

Cheryl Ann Larson
Andrew Lentner
Alan Lock
Deborah Lovette-Watkins
Deb Reid
Alexander Seaman

Catherine Serrine
Rebecca VanBrunt
Cynthia Terry
Jessica Thorpe
RoseAnne Wincek

2023 REVENUE SOURCES





Paul Bartow
CCE Schuyler
Board President

Chad Hendrickson
CCE Schuyler
Board Vice President

Adam Hughes
State Extension Specialist
Cornell University
Ex-Officio Member

Chelsea Stamp
CCE Schuyler
Board Treasurer

Michael Lausell
CCE Schuyler Board Secretary
& Legislative Representative

Melissa Schroeder
CCE Schuyler Executive Director
Ex-Officio Member

William Hayes
CCE Schuyler
Board Member

Jill Kasprzyk
CCE Schuyler
Board Member

Kristin Van Horn
CCE Schuyler
Board Member

Jim Nolan
CCE Schuyler
Board Member

Riqui Hess
CCE Schuyler
Board Member

Mark Rondinaro
CCE Schuyler
Board Member



At CCE Schuyler, our programs offer numerous workshops, trainings, activities and programs to the community. Below is just a snapshot of our many 2024 events:

AG AND NATURAL RESOURCES

2024 Fruit Tree Growing Workshop
 2024 Berry Growing Workshop
 2024 Growin' Around the Glen: Farm Tour Day
 2024 Silvopasture Workshops
 2024 Plant Sale
 Ag Literacy Day at BC Cate
 Backyard Maple Syrup Workshop
 New Master Gardener Training
 Seed to Supper Program
 Meat Processing Workshop
 Seed Saving Event
 Gardening for Birds Workshop
 Rose Gardening Workshop

ENVIRONMENT

Tri-County Compost Bin Sale
 Chainsaw Safety Workshop

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

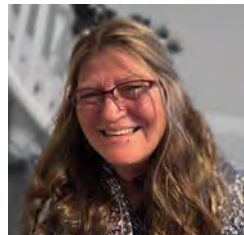
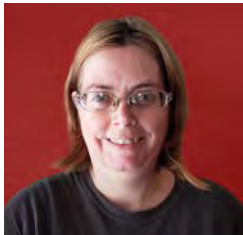
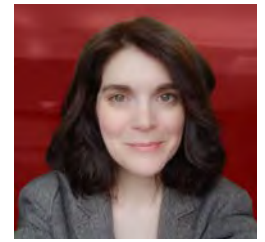
4-H Winter Hike
 Parenting Kits by Paula
 Candy Canes and Trees Event
 Holiday Fun Event
 FPRC Turkey Trot Scavenger Hunt
 FPRC Community Cafe and Play
 Odessa Montour Ag Literacy Day
 School Farm Field Day
 Movement Games at BC Cate
 Polar Bear Swim Club

SNAP-ED NY

Kids Cooking for the New Year
 Cooking Matters for Families
 February & March Family Cooking Class
 Food Smart Series

CLEAN ENERGY

Power House at the Montour Falls Harvest Festival



Row 1

Row 2

Row 3

Row 4

Michael Brown
Clean Energy
Communities Coordinator

Brett Chedzoy
Sr. Resource Educator
in Agriculture

Bruce Condie
Hidden Valley 4-H
Camp Manager

Danielle Cook
Communications
Coordinator

Ceridwen Dickerson-Stermer
OM REACH After School
Program Coordinator

Paula Goodrich
Parenting Educator

Dayna Karius
Program Assistant - 4-H
Camp Registrar

Virginia Montopoli
Administrative Assistant

Alec Moore
Commercial Agriculture
Educator

Susan Neal
Finance Manager

Brooke Shaffer
SNAP-Ed Nutritionist for
Schuyler & Yates CCE

Melissa Schroeder
Executive Director &
Association Issue Leader

Ryan Staychock
Environmental/Natural Resources
Educator Schuyler, Seneca, & Cayuga

Kim Seaman
4-H Program Coordinator

Carrienne Tribe-Filhart
Smart Energy Choices
Community Energy Advisor

Shawn Tubridy
Garden & Horticulture
Coordinator

Hans Walter-Peterson
Viticulture Extension Specialist,
Finger Lakes Grape Program

“ Growing positive, supportive and empowering relationships between youth and adults and youth and their peers is what 4-H is all about. ”
- Anonymous



4-H PROVIDES PROGRAMMING THAT SUPPORTS BELONGING, TEAMWORK, AND RELATIONSHIPS

This year 4-H engaged youth in the Reach Afterschool program with a zombie apocalypse event. Over the course of 6 weeks, participants engaged in thrilling challenges designed to promote teamwork, creativity, strategic thinking, and resilience. For each challenge, groups had to use these skills, as well as engage their leadership and communication skills, to not only avoid becoming zombies, but to provide food and water for the entire group.

This event was then adapted to be done at camp, where 37 campers participated in a three-day zombie invasion event, which included finding food and supplies, making a telegraph machine, coding and decoding messages with Morse code, making their way through a Zombie infested obstacle course, and building a shelter.

Each challenge progressed the story, but it also decreased the availability of food, water, and

supplies while increasing the dangers that the youth faced.

There were less than ten human survivors at the end of both events, highlighting their ingenuity, creativity, and just plain luck. These unforgettable experiences not only entertained but also equipped participants with essential life skills for any challenge they may face.

Within the REACH 4-H 21st Century Afterschool program both Odessa Montour and Watkins Glen Central school districts met and exceeded program outcome goals in the STEM area and in program attendance. Engaging with families is a key component of the 21st Century program. This year Odessa Montour had seven events and Watkins Glen held two events supporting family engagement. Odessa Montour had 54 students complete more than 30 hours and Watkins Glen had 49 students cross the 30 hour mark.



Campers at Hidden Valley 4H Camp work on fine motor skills and enjoy the time honored tradition of crochet.



Members of the 4-H e-Sports Club take part in a Fall Mario Kart Tournament.



Stream Ecology Exploration is just one of many activities that campers can enjoy at Hidden Valley 4-H Camp.

THE IMPACT OF 4-H YOUTH PROGRAMMING IN SCHUYLER:



5047 Individuals Reached

in 4-H with promotional materials for the Open House, Winter Walk, and Cooking with Carly series most viewed.



7119 Individuals Reached

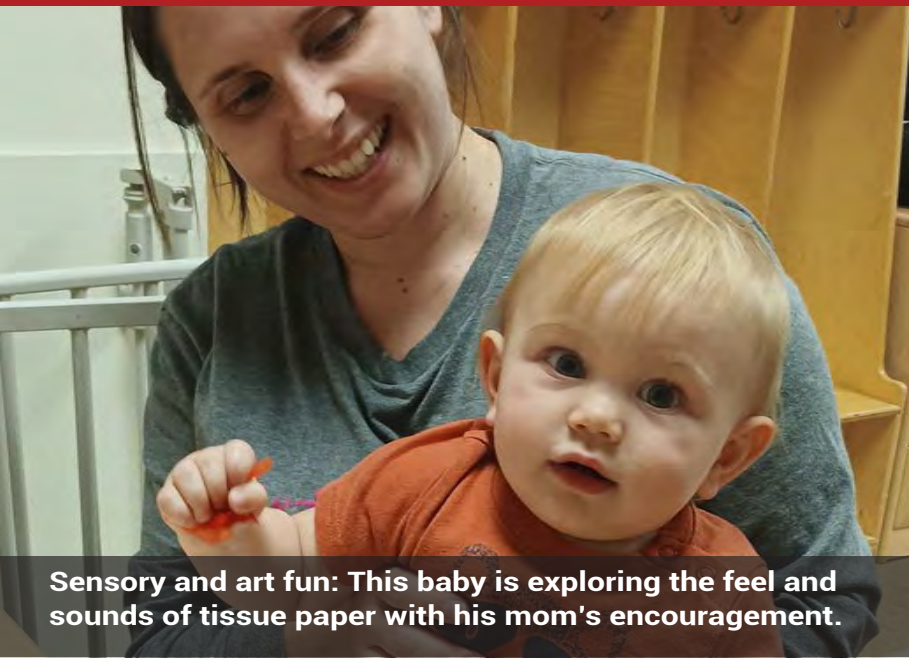
with Hidden Valley 4-H Camp materials.



1470 Youth Directly Reached

through staff led 4-H programming, Hidden Valley 4-H Camp, and the 21st Century Afterschool program. The majority of youth were involved in a minimum of 12 to 90 program hours.

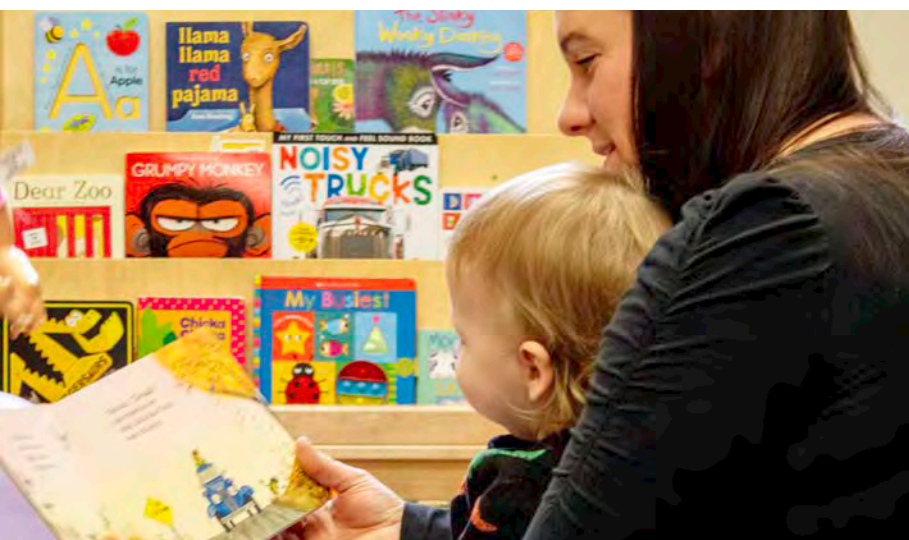




Sensory and art fun: This baby is exploring the feel and sounds of tissue paper with his mom's encouragement.



Art is encouraged to be about the process, not the product. This child chooses what she wants to paint.



Literacy is important at every stage of life. Reading to children develops the interest and joy of reading.



PARENTING EDUCATION IMPACT IN 2024:



5095 Individuals Reached



1016 Individual Followers

showed high interest in the fall Turkey Trot Scavenger Hunt.

Addition high interest was recorded for events held in the Family Play and Resource Center.



70 Individuals Received Parenting Education

through our in-home parenting education program.

“ We may not be able to prepare the future for our children, but we can at least prepare our children for the future. ”

- Franklin D. Roosevelt



PARENTING EDUCATION: HELPING FAMILIES FIND THEIR CHILD'S "SPARK"

CCE Schyuler's Parent Education program saw an increase in attendance this year, thanks in part to its close relationship with the Family Play and Resource Center.

By planning, implementing, and hosting several events throughout the year at the play center, Parenting Educator Paula Goodrich witnessed family connections being made. Children learned with sensory play, dramatic play, art, music, literature, and interacted with their peers. Due to many families juggling so much throughout the week, Paula made the decision to host an event one Saturday a month at the Family Play and Resource Center - a decision that has paid off and brought many families to the space.

The November, "Little Sparks" Club was a considerable success with an attendance of 8 people. This event focused on discovering an

individual's interest, passion, or curiosity. Topics included animals, nature, science, music, and more. These events gave children ages birth to 8 the freedom to explore their interests and helped parents see what their child's individual "spark" might be.

Paula was on hand for each event, offering parenting resources and her contact information for parents with specific questions. The events offered a variety of themes including a December "Candy Canes and Trees" and "Holiday Fun" - which offered the families a chance to take home a free Christmas tree. Attendance increased from November with 14 residents taking part in the Candy Cane event and 11 appearing for "Holiday Fun".

With such increased interest, we're looking forward to seeing continued growth in 2025 and connecting with more families.



“We had a great day giving Farm Tours (during the Growin’ Around the Glen Schuyler County Farm Tour Day) and did over \$600 in sales!”

- Wixom Farms

CCE SCHUYLER AG WORKSHOPS FOSTER WELL-INFORMED FARMING COMMUNITIES

Each year, numerous classes, consultations, and educational opportunities are organized to benefit home growers, commercial farmers, and those aspiring to enter the field. These serve as invaluable resources for gaining knowledge and practical skills for success in agriculture.

This year CCE Schuyler split its popular fruit tree and berry pruning workshop into two separate events. Each covered a range of topics essential for fruit cultivation. Participants learned about plant selection, planting, establishment, training, and pruning techniques. Additionally, they delved into grafting basics, nutrient management, insects, disease, wildlife control, and demonstrations of best practices perfect for novice and veteran fruit growers.

Another popular event was the Meat Processing and Marketing Workshop, designed to help producers optimize value-added opportunities for livestock operations. Participants gained insights into carcass math break-down and pricing, the value of value-added products, and creating consumer and processor friendly bulk meat sales.

CCE Schuyler’s agricultural education reached beyond traditional workshops and into schools to inspire the next generation in 2024. CCE Educators spoke at “Career Day on Wheels,” day at Watkins Glen Elementary school - a day where students learn about different careers through the vehicles used for various jobs - and took part in the “Conservation Careers Panel” which opened up engagement with 50 high school students at BOCES, informing them about careers in conservation.

This dedication to community education was also put into practice through our partnership with SCOPED. Together we explored the potential for growing chickpeas in Schuyler County through different growing techniques and testing varieties, aimed to diversify and expand agricultural products in the area.

Such events, plus expert consultations with dozens of local farmers and landowners each year, have helped to foster a well-informed farming community, ensuring the sustainability and success of agricultural practices for years to come.



Attendees of the September "Silvopasture Soil Health Field Day" learn about the planting of nut trees.

THE IMPACT OF OUR AGRICULTURE PROGRAM:



897 Individuals followed for details regarding the Farm Tour event.



296 Individuals followed for information about the Meat Processing Workshop with **33 individuals** attending.



28 & 29 Individuals attended the Berry & Tree Fruit Pruning classes, respectively.



CCE Educator, Gabe Smith speaks about Nut Production with attendees of the 2024 Berry Growing Workshop.



Attendees of the 5th Annual Growin' Around the Glen Farm Tour speak with staff at Four Season Alpacas.



Schuyler CCE supports the world-leading Cornell Maple Program and offers regular trainings for beginners through professionals.



Land managers learn about new forest assessment technologies like drones and terrestrial LiDAR as part of the new Cornell Digital Forestry Initiative (CoDiFI) supported by Schuyler CCE.

THE IMPACT OF OUR NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAMMING:

 **26,674** Individuals Reached

 **1800** Individuals participated in workshops.

 **44** Forestry & Agroforestry Events held throughout 2024.



Over 30 woodland owners attended September's inaugural "Portable Sawmilling Intensive" hosted at multiple sites around Schuyler County.

“I found the winter pasture walk very welcoming, informative, and intelligent! A winning combination and time well spent.”

- Bale Grazing Workshop Attendee



NATURAL RESOURCES: BRINGING BEST PRACTICES & NEW IDEAS TO OUR COMMUNITY

In 2024 CCE Schuyler's Natural Resources Educators went above and beyond, presenting at 43 educational events and reaching over 1,800 participants interested in rural land management. These included tours and trainings like Cornell's Master Forest Owner volunteer program, and major conferences by organizations such as NY Beef Producers Association, Society of American Foresters, Northeast Logging Expo, Water Quality Symposium, Northeast Pasture Consortium, and Savanna Institute.

In addition to helping over 100 landowners, farmers, and woodland owners through individual consultations and site visits; the Natural Resources experts have had key roles in seven applied research projects related to emerging technology, reforestation, forest-based enterprise viability, and

woodland stewardship. These projects were frequently featured as part of our educational efforts. Their work has also been featured in major publications like Hay & Forage, The Forest Owner, Northern Woodlands, Graze, and Audubon with circulations exceeding 600,000 readers and subscribers.

Nearly 1,400 people participated in 23 Cornell-supported silvopasturing events over the past year. These practitioner and professional audiences are networking and teaming up to steadily increase silvopasture acreages and the number of operations. This growth, in turn, is benefiting local communities not only through the multitude of ecosystem services generated by silvopastures, but also by increasing and strengthening a local food supply that is resilient, and environmentally responsible.



“To plant a garden is to dream of tomorrow.”
- Audrey Hepburn

UPDATED DEMONSTRATION GARDEN OFFERS NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION

The hard work of revitalizing the CCE Schuyler Demonstration/Teaching Garden has continued in 2024 thanks to CCE Schuyler Garden & Horticulture Coordinator Shawn Tubridy and the Master Gardener Volunteers. Together they replaced 16 decaying wood beds with sustainable steel beds and added additional raised beds to better accommodate the “Seed to Supper Program”, the “Vegetable Variety Trial Garden”, and community use.

This year, Shawn and the Master Gardeners focused their talents on creating a new trail to showcase native plants. A local landscaping company donated their time and boosted the revitalization efforts by graveling the new native plant walk and existing trails, helping to create a new path through a memorial garden area. The improvements to the garden have resulted in an increased number of community members utilizing the garden for lunch, relaxation, and play.

During this project, the Master Gardener

Volunteers were joined by four new volunteers currently enrolled in the Southern Tier Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program, which Shawn co-leads with Tompkins and Broome County CCE Educators.

The spring brought new opportunities for education. Shawn offered multiple gardening events including, “Gardening for the Birds” and “Rose Gardening”. Speakers were invited to share their expertise with the community. Shawn and the Master Gardener volunteers also hosted two 5-week sessions of the “Seed to Supper Program” which teaches basic gardening skills to low-income Schuyler County Residents.

In the fall, the Demonstration Garden was one of 14 stops on the 5th Annual “Growin’ Around the Glen” Schuyler Farm Tour. Visitors could speak to Master Gardener Volunteers, receive a tour of the garden and enjoy a craft with CCE Schuyler’s 4-H Club.



Master Gardeners work to replace rotting wooden beds in the Demonstration Garden with metal raised beds.

HORTICULTURE AND GARDEN PROGRAM 2024 IMPACT:



10,153 Individuals Reached



High Interest Events included **Gardening Tips & Seed Saving.**



175 Participants in CCE Garden & Horticulture workshops & events.



The Master Gardener Plant Sale returned to the Hector Fairgrounds in June 2024.



The Master Gardener Cornell Garden Trials received a major upgrade with the addition of new Vego Garden Raised Beds.



CCE Schuyler's Smart Energy Choices program welcomed Energy Advisor, Carrienne Tribe-Filhart in September 2024.



Mayor James Ryan of Montour Falls speaks at the Clean Energy Communities (CEC) convening session.

THE IMPACT OF OUR ENERGY PROGRAMS:



4230 Individuals Reached



1035 Individuals Reached
in response to promotions around the Smart Energy Power House Demo.



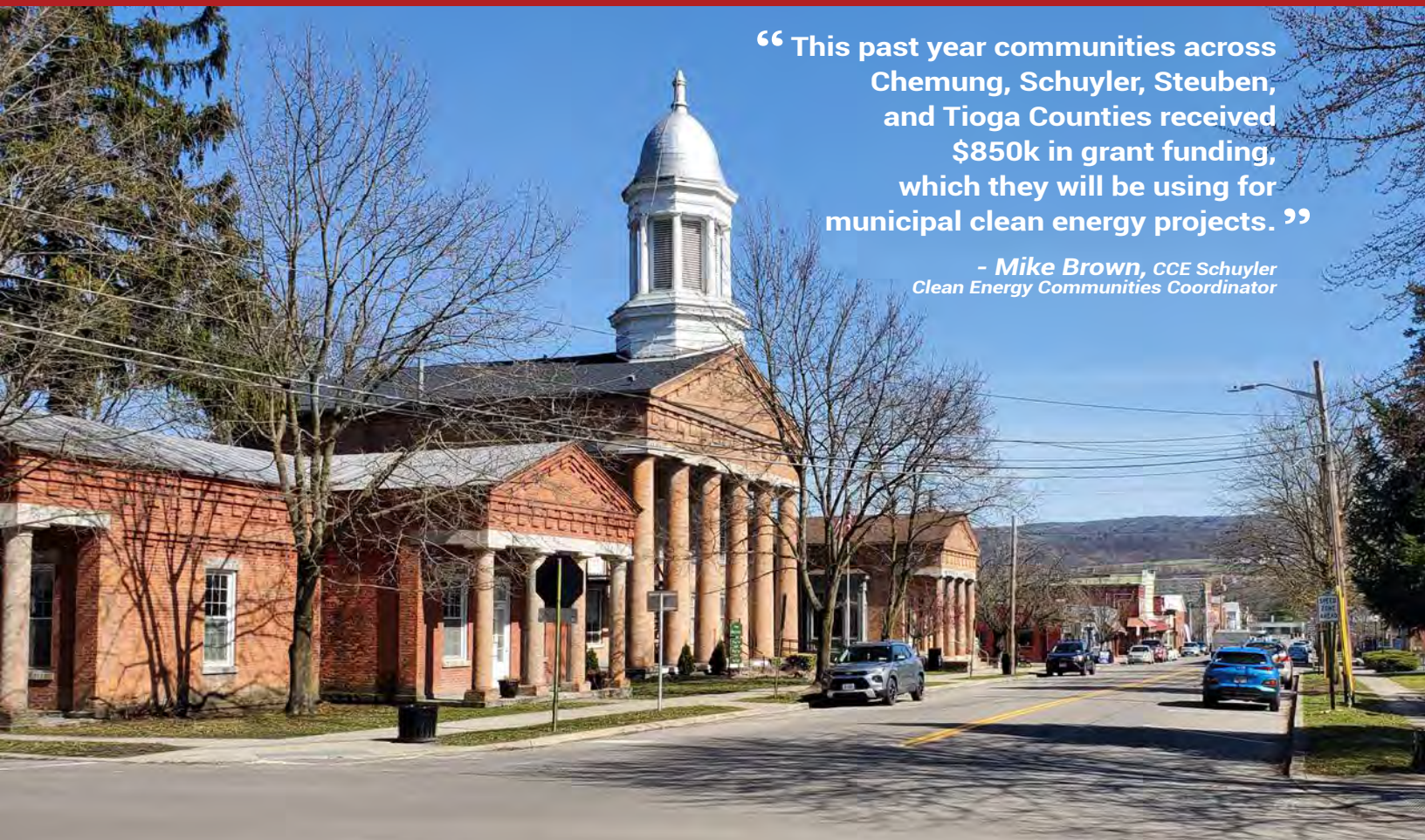
1408 Individuals Reached
through direct program presentations and outreach to both individuals and municipalities.



The CCE Smart Energy Choices Power House visited the Montour Falls Harvest Festival.

“ This past year communities across Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, and Tioga Counties received \$850k in grant funding, which they will be using for municipal clean energy projects. ”

- Mike Brown, CCE Schuyler
Clean Energy Communities Coordinator



CCE ENERGY PROGRAMS ASSIST SCHUYLER COMMUNITIES WITH CUTTING ENERGY COSTS

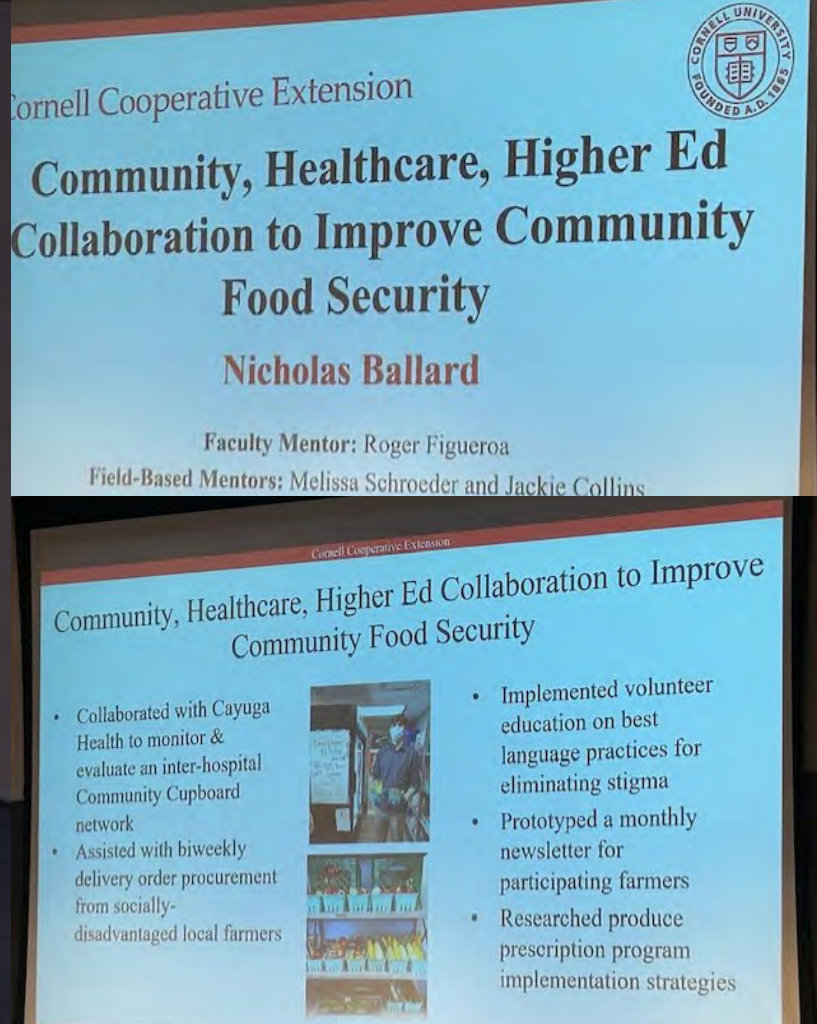
Through the Clean Energy Communities (CEC) and the Smart Energy Choices programs, CCE Schuyler continued to successfully offer programming that assisted local residents, businesses, and governments with cutting their energy costs and reducing their environmental impact.

Extension Resource Educator Mike Brown, a Coordinator with the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities (CEC) program, worked with multiple Southern Tier communities to help them receive nearly \$850M in CEC funding. These funds will be used towards clean energy projects like purchasing electric vehicles, installing solar panels on municipal property, and purchasing electric landscaping equipment. Mike also organized a successful convening of his communities where folks shared CEC success stories and provided feedback on the type of support needed from Extension going forward.

CCE Schuyler's other energy program, Smart Energy Choices, welcomed a new Community

Energy Advisor (CEA), Carrienne Tribe-Filhart, in September. In her first week, Carrienne attended the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Annual Conference in Albany and brought multiple resources back to Schuyler County. Her first community engagement at the Village of Montour Falls Harvest Festival brought 392 community members to the Smart Energy Choices information table and the CCE "Powerhouse" - a working tiny house used to educate the community on how they can make their own homes energy efficient through DIY tasks and potential grants up to \$10,000 per residence for retrofits and upgrades. As of December 2024, Carrienne has reached 470 individuals.

Taken together, CEC and the Smart Energy Choices programs provide comprehensive opportunities for local residents, businesses, not-for-profits, and governments to save money on their energy use. CCE Schuyler looks forward to continuing to provide this programming.



MEET OUR INTERN: NICK BALLARD

In the Summer of 2024 CCE Schuyler welcomed a new intern, Nick Ballard, a B.S Candidate in Health Care Policy from Cornell University's Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy. Nick was part of a shared collaboration between CCE Schuyler and Cayuga Health, looking at ways to improve community food security.

Nick collaborated with Cayuga Health to monitor and evaluate the inter-hospital Community Cupboard network. He assisted with bi-weekly delivery and procurement from socially disadvantaged local farms; implemented volunteer education on best language practices for eliminating the stigma of using a community food pantry; prototyped a monthly newsletter for participating farmers; and researched produce prescription program implementation strategies.

Knowing that Cayuga Health Systems(CHS) Community Cupboards may be a first point of food access for individuals to receive immediate fresh produce, it is believed that leveraging existing partnerships and collaborations with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schuyler County's SNAP-Ed nutrition program could help facilitate continued food access participation beyond the

marketing materials already available to individuals at the Schuyler Hospital Community Cupboard. By delivering Community Cupboard rack cards, along with the monthly newsletter to Cornell Cooperative Extension Schuyler County's SNAP-Ed program, we can increase awareness and participation of the Schuyler Hospital Community Cupboard.

"As we often say, 'food is medicine', there is no doubt that eliminating barriers to food security for a more health-promoting community requires addressing complex social drivers of health in every neighborhood, for every individual. I have learned through my short time interning that it takes a village to make such an impact reality.

The DINNERS program is a remarkable example of how, together, diverse stakeholders in higher education, health systems and community organizations can leverage historic collaborations in creating a more permanent transformation towards public health equity."

- Nick Ballard.



Family and friends gathered to honor the memory of Edward Gates at a dedication ceremony held in the CCE Schuyler Demonstration Garden, June 25, 2024. A handmade bird feeder created by CCE Schuyler 4-H Program Assistant, Dayna Karius, was added to our memorial garden in his honor. Past and present Schuyler Cornell Cooperative Extension Executive Directors, along with Ed's family, were on hand to pay their respects and share stories of working with Ed in the community.



CONTACT US

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Front Page: (clockwise l-r) TOP - Ulysses Harrell greets visitors to the Hidden Valley 4-H Camp - Photo courtesy of R.J. Anderson;
BOTTOM - CCE Executive Director Mel Schroeder tables outside the Montour Falls Library to announce our partnership with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, 2024 Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop, Master Gardeners greet customers at the 2024 Annual Plate Sale. - Photos courtesy of Danielle Cook & Mel Schroeder