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National Volunteer Week Salutes 4-H Volunteers in Stoddard County

APRIL 17TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Each year, thousands of volunteers in Missouri donate their time and energy to make their communities a better place to live. These volunteers will be among the millions across the country who will be spotlighted during the 44th anniversary of National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, 2018.

Research conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service found that in 26.5% of adult Americans (64.5 million) volunteered 7.9 billion hours of service worth \$175 billion in 2014. In Missouri, approximately 1.45 million volunteers of all types contributed 151.6 million hours of service. The 32.3 volunteer hours per resident ranks Missouri 15th among the 50 states and Washington, D.C. (Source: <http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/MO#sthash.vpNhdtuB.dpuf>).

One group that relies heavily on volunteers is the University of Missouri Extension 4-H Program. In 2018 over 7,000 youth and adults volunteered in some capacity with Missouri 4-H. In Stoddard County, 34 volunteers, both youth and adult, will serve as club leaders, project leaders, committee members, and in advisory capacities for the 4-H Youth Development Program.

Volunteers spend numerous hours working on tasks, such as helping organize an event at the county fair, helping a child with a 4-H project, or leading a project to serve the community.

4-H Program volunteers are just one group of volunteers who are instrumental in carrying out the mission of the University of Missouri Extension. Volunteers are involved in every

aspect of the Extension Service, including determining the needs of the local residents, planning and implementing programs to address these needs, securing resources, and evaluating programs.

An example of these volunteers is the Stoddard County Extension Council. The 12-member board, which consists of appointed county citizens, works with the county Extension staff to plan and oversee Extension activities.

The work of Extension volunteers is continuous. Every day volunteers lend a helping hand to make Extension programs more beneficial to the residents of Stoddard County. Those interested in joining the team of Extension Volunteers are invited to contact the Stoddard County Extension Office at 573-568-3344, stoddardco@missouri.edu, or email milnersn@missouri.edu .

Submitted by: Stephanie Milner, 4-H Youth Development Specialist

LAST UPDATED ON APRIL 17TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

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