

2023 Statewide Impact

West Virginia University Extension reaches communities in all 55 counties. Stop by one of our rural communities and you will find our experts helping farmers safely increase production and fighting pests that threaten their crops. You also will find our faculty and staff leading statewide youth programs that build leadership, improve literacy and provide educational opportunities that build a strong foundation for future success. WVU Extension is building paths to prosperity through workforce development programs in safety and health, childcare apprenticeships and training for firefighters in our communities. Our educational programs span generations of West Virginians, and we remain committed to improving the lives and livelihoods of all our citizens.

Improving lives and livelihoods



for all West Virginians

Education

✓ The West Virginia 4-H program, funded and delivered by WVU Extension, served more than **68,000 youths** across the state through community and special interest clubs, county and state camps, and school enrichment programming.

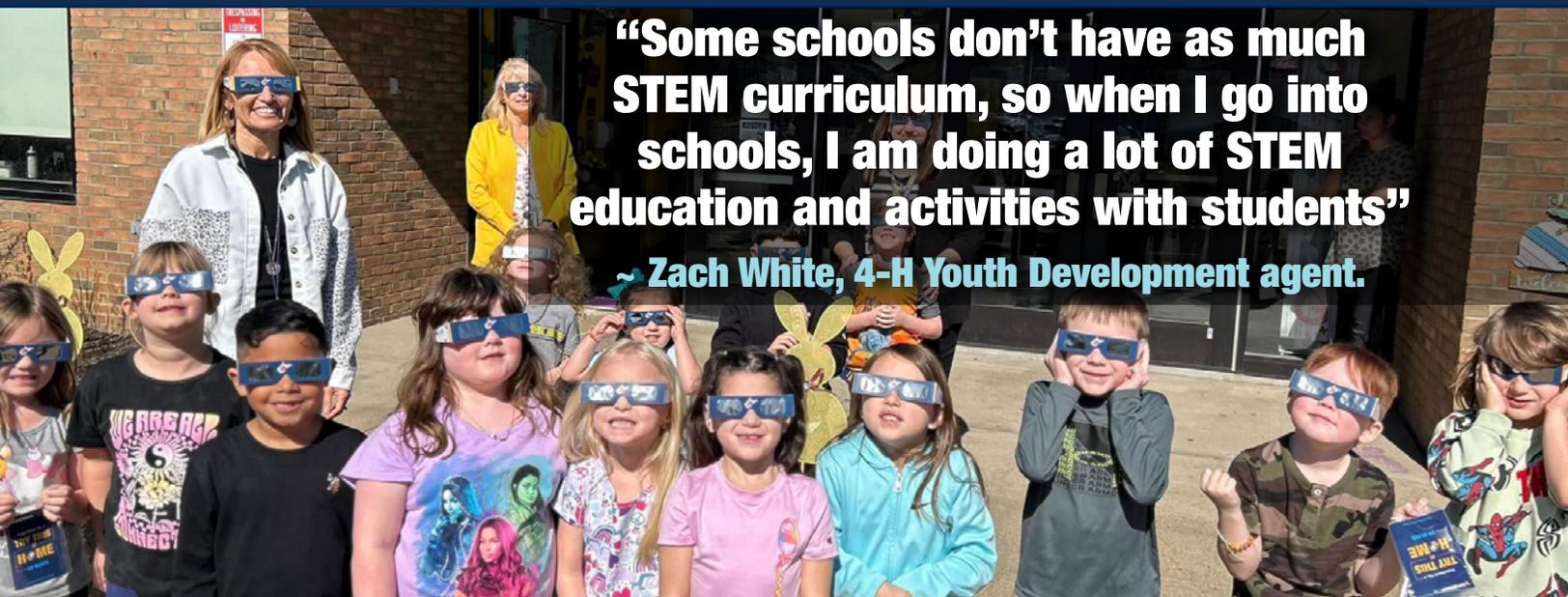
✓ Students in our Energy Express free summer reading and nutrition program **improved reading frequency by more than one day**.

✓ In West Virginia, the labor force participation for the population ages 16 and above is **11% lower than the national average**. WVU Extension's hands-on classroom career readiness program is helping youth "see" themselves in the future through educational modules addressing job opportunities, building a resume and more. During the 2022-23 school year, **67 eighth grade students from nine counties** participated in the program.

✓ WVU Extension partnered with state and federal agencies to host a Conservation Camp to help encourage youth advocacy in nature conservation. Campers increased their sense of environmental stewardship, **interest in nature learning and discovery**, and **concern for natural resources issues**.

✓ In preparation for the April 2024 solar eclipse, WVU Extension STEMCARE distributed more than **12,000 pairs of eclipse glasses** to students across West Virginia along with an educational video and downloadable lesson plan. Additionally, **20,000 "Try This at Home" STEM kits were distributed** to teach students about other kinds of solar and space science.

✓ Through the WVU Center for Community Engagement, WVU student volunteers completed nearly **109,000 service hours** to the community.



"Some schools don't have as much STEM curriculum, so when I go into schools, I am doing a lot of STEM education and activities with students"

~ Zach White, 4-H Youth Development agent.

Health

✓ Our West Virginia Extension Master Gardener Program provides service to communities throughout the state by offering horticultural educational programs to volunteers. The service of these volunteers helps increase food access and inspire others to grow their own food. In 2023, Master Gardeners completed more than **16,000 volunteer hours, valued at nearly \$515,000.**

✓ WVU Extension's tree planting program that encourages individuals and communities to improve shade, air quality and aesthetics at their local park areas. In 2023, WVU Extension facilitated the **planting of 100+ trees in public parks and local spaces** to improve overall health and wellbeing for **10,000+** people.

✓ Our Family Nutrition Program's Kids Market @ The Store project provided free fruits and vegetables to nearly **8,000** children across **26** counties and contributed **\$144,000** to those communities.

✓ West Virginia has the highest diabetes and mortality rates in the country. Last year, our **Dining with Diabetes experts provided virtual instruction to 82 people across the state.** As a result of the program, average A1c among participants decreased. At least **30%** of those who completed the follow-up survey reported exercising daily as the result of participating, **27%** reported doing more cooking at home, **39%** reported eating smaller portions and **34%** reported using the recipes provided in class.

Prosperity

✓ Through our financial literacy program, WVU Extension empowers youth and adults with knowledge and skills to make sound financial decisions. By providing education on a host of topics, including credit/debt, basic finance and savings, **75% of participants reported high financial knowledge, 31 % said that they now put money aside for future needs and 77% have a savings account.**

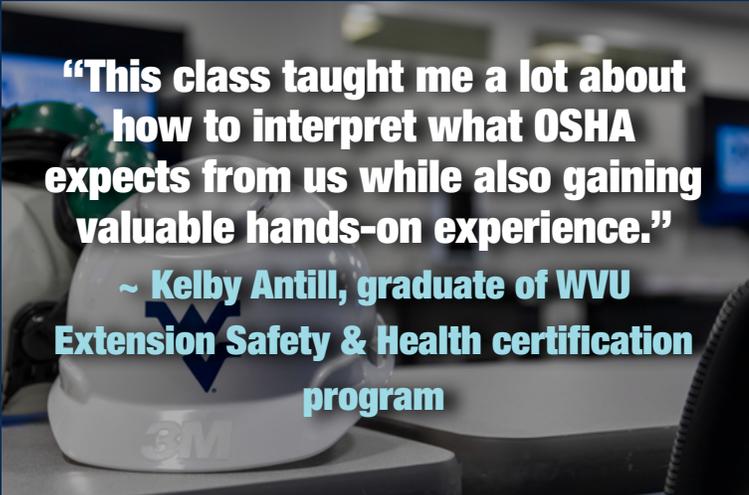
✓ An economic assessment of the benefits of Energy Express, WVU Extension's free, six-week summer literacy program, suggested a **\$1.2+ million cost savings to parents/families** for childcare and nearly **\$461,000 in feeding costs.**

✓ WVU Extension trained **846 pesticide applicators, totaling 4,809 pesticide credits.** In addition, **about 320 pesticide applicators** watched the pesticide videos **to obtain approximately 1,640 credits.** With increased fines for pesticide violations, our experts potentially **saved participants \$423,000 in pesticide misuse fines.**

✓ WVU Fire Service Extension trained and certified more than **1,400 firefighters across 44 counties.**

✓ For 20 years, WVU Extension has been a key partner in the West Virginia Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist, which helps **builds a competent, sustained workforce to provide quality care and education** to children and address a critical need in our state.

✓ The WVU Center for Community Engagement's **Purpose2Action program placed 23 Pell-eligible undergraduate students in paid positions** with nonprofit and public sector organizations to work on mission-driven projects.



“This class taught me a lot about how to interpret what OSHA expects from us while also gaining valuable hands-on experience.”

~ Kelby Antill, graduate of WVU Extension Safety & Health certification program

Visit extension.wvu.edu for more information.
WVU Dean of Extension & Engagement Jorge H. Atiles

Information in this impact statement is based on fiscal year 2022-2023 data.