

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Grand Challenges

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Grand Challenge: Developing Tomorrow's Leaders

Title: Honoring Volunteers

Why is this issue important?

The work that Shawnee County Extension does is in demand. The small staff of the Extension Office can't meet the need without help. We are successful in our efforts because of our network of Shawnee County Extension Volunteers.

Volunteers who have ownership with the program where they volunteer their time leads to a more self-sustaining organization which will benefit the community by the organization's ability to reach more individuals with their programs.

How did Extension address this issue?

Our Agents work to regularly recognize their volunteers to show them our appreciation and the outcomes of their work.

Our Extension Council also grants 1 or 2 Extension appreciation awards a year to those volunteers who have gone above and beyond their volunteer role.

What was the impact?

In November the Shawnee County Extension Board recognized two outstanding Volunteers. Pictured on the Left is Steve Kersting and pictured on the right is Kevin Siek.



Kersting was recognized because of his work with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance coalition organized by Agent Susan Fangman. Kersting has been a VITA volunteer since 2012. Fangman said this about Kersting, "Steve was the master-mind behind the new process for VITA last year, putting together an incredible amount of planning to keep not just volunteers and clients safe from virus exposure, but to keep sensitive tax information secure as well. We would never have been able to pull this off had it not been for his hard work."

Siek was recognized because of his work with the Master Gardener Program organized by Agent Ariel Whitely-Noll. Whitely-Noll said this about Siek, "He has been an active member of Master Gardeners since 2018. Kevin has applied for and received several grants for new projects that expand our mission of education. One project was adding interactive QR codes to our demonstration garden. In another garden he added accessible parking and raised beds. In both efforts, his focus has been on accessibility and reaching new audiences."