



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Cooperative Extension

Gila County



4-H Youth
Development



Agriculture &
Natural Resources



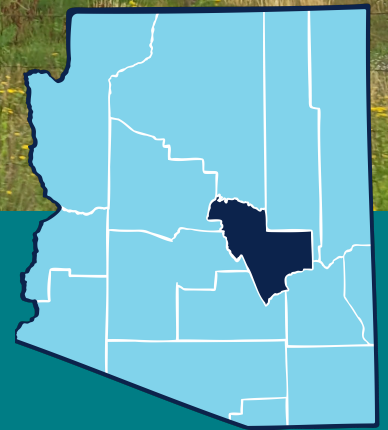
Family, Consumer
and Health Sciences



Federally Recognized Tribal
Extension Program

Summer Storm, Young, AZ

Gila County Cooperative Extension



Annual Report
2024

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"To engage with people through applied research and education to improve lives, families, communities, the environment and economies in Arizona and beyond."

Mission Statement

From the Director



I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to take a moment to thank our partners and emphasize the importance that partnerships play in fostering growth, resilience, and innovation within our community. Community partnerships bring together diverse stakeholders—government agencies, local businesses, schools, non-profit, and residences—to collaborate and share goals. This cooperation not only enhances resource sharing but also strengthens our collaborative capacity to tackle challenges and seize opportunities.

2024 was a year of impactful achievements for the University of Arizona Gila County Cooperative Extension (GCCE), driven by strong community partnerships that amplified our reach and effectiveness. As a vital resource, GCCE continued to provide essential education and outreach programs to the residents of Gila County, Arizona, covering agriculture, natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer health sciences, community development, and tribal programs. Our commitment to addressing community-identified needs was paramount, and these needs were met by working closely with our community partners. Key areas of our outreach include:

4-H Youth Development: 4-H expanded its programming through collaborations with local schools and youth organizations. The STEM Mobile Makerspace, the Exploring 4-H program, and enhanced Ag Daze curriculum were all made possible and expanded through these partnerships, inspiring the next generation of leaders.

Agriculture and Natural Resources: ANR's work was significantly enhanced by partnerships with local ranchers, farmers, and environmental groups. Range monitoring, farming production clinics, Master Gardener courses, and fire mitigation efforts were all strengthened through these collaborations.

Family, Consumer, & Health Sciences: FCHS deepened its connections with healthcare providers and social service agencies to deliver programs that promoted financial security and improved family communication. These partnerships enabled us to effectively bridge gaps and provide essential resources.

Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program: FRTEP worked closely with tribal communities and agricultural partners to improve food accessibility within San Carlos tribal lands. These collaborative efforts were crucial in supporting food sovereignty and resilience.

These accomplishments were made possible by the invaluable support of Gila County, our dedicated community partners, advisory board members, and volunteers. Their efforts and dedication were instrumental in fulfilling the Extension's mission of bringing research-based, land-grant developed innovations, advancements, and education to Gila County and beyond.

When we work together, we create a support network that amplifies our impact. Each partner brings unique strengths and perspective, allowing us to address issues more comprehensively and fostering a sense of belonging and ownership among our residents. Whether it's improving education, promoting health initiatives, or enhancing public safety, collaborative efforts lead to more effective solutions, which ultimately leads to a stronger, more vibrant community. By joining forces, we can build a brighter future for all. I invite you to learn more about the impactful work achieved in 2024.

Warm regards,

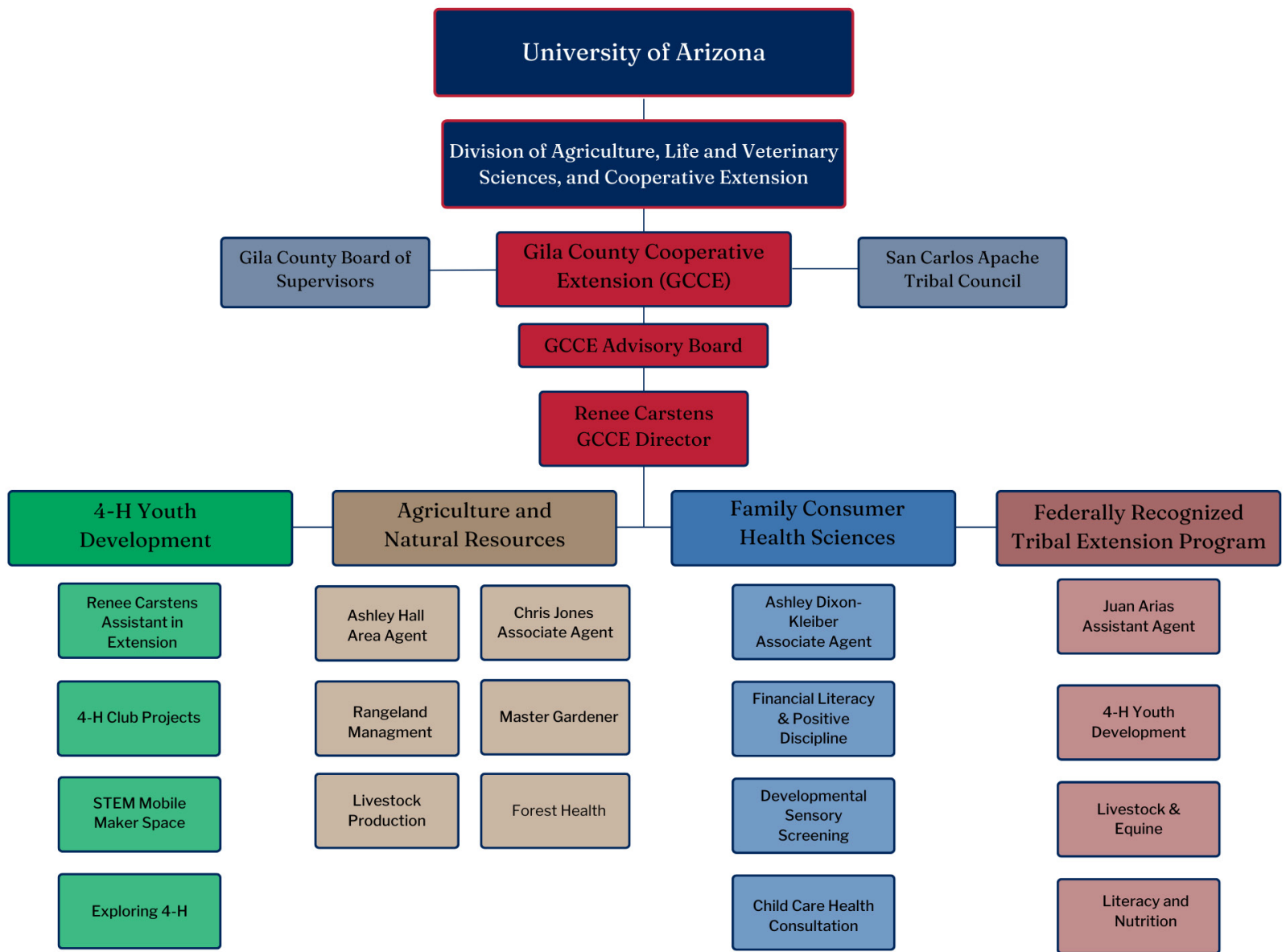
Renee Carstens

Director, Gila County Cooperative Extension

Organization Chart

The Morrill Act of 1862 established land-grant universities focused on agriculture and mechanics. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 formalized Cooperative Extension, partnering the USDA with land-grant universities to deliver research-based knowledge to the public. Initially focused on agriculture, Cooperative Extension has expanded to cover a wide range of topics, including family and consumer sciences, youth development, and community development.

Gila County Cooperative Extension (GCCE) is an Extension Unit of the University of Arizona, housed under the Division of Agriculture, Life, and Veterinary Sciences and Cooperative Extension.



Advisory Board

The seven-person Gila County Cooperative Extension Advisory Board, is appointed by the Gila County Board of Supervisors per ARS Title 3. Advisory Board meetings are open to the public and held quarterly in a hybrid format, allowing for both online and in-person attendance at the Globe and Payson offices, or occasionally at other locations. The Advisory Board provides essential input to the Extension program, aiding in direction, networking, and fundraising. Per university guidance, external advisory boards are not governing bodies. Agendas are posted on the Gila County Cooperative Extension website

Members:

- Clark Richins, advisory board member since 1998. 32 years as range program manager with San Carlos Tribe.
- Ben DalMolin, advisory board member since 2014. Contractor for the local mines, owner of Radium Allotment Ranch (business partners with brother Tyler DalMolin, Globe. 4 kids that participate in 4-H.
- Cassie Waggoner, advisory board member since 2021. Ranch owner for 6 years.
- Sammi Jenkins RN, advisory board member since 2021. 5th generation Gila County native, former Gila County 4-H member, leader, and mother of 4 past/present Gila County 4-H members; Gila County rancher, retired registered nurse.
- Paul Wolterbeek, advisory board member since 2023. 5 years with Gila County Government.
- Shelbi Parker Wilson, advisory board member since 2024. Principal of Rim Country Middle School.



Clark Richins
Chairman



Ben DalMolin



Cassie Waggoner



Sammi Jenkins



Paul Wolterbeek



Shelbi Parker Wilson

Gila County Board of Supervisors



Steve Christensen
District I



Tim Humphrey
District II



Woody Cline
District III

San Carlos Apache Tribal Council



Terry Rambler
Chairman



Tao Etpison
Vice Chairman



Ina Salter
Seven Mile Wash



Barbara May
Gilson Wash



Valerie Key-Cheney
Peridot



John Antonio Jr.
Seven Mile Wash



Simon Hooke
Gilson Wash



Eugene David Nosie
Bylas



Ned Anderson Jr.
District



Jonathan Kitcheyan
Bylas



Dr. John Bush
District



4-H Youth Development

The Gila County 4-H Youth Development Program uses a learn-by-doing approach to enable youth ages 5 to 18 to develop attitudes, and skills they need to become competent, caring, responsible citizens, and agents of community change. This is achieved by using the knowledge and resources of caring adult volunteers and GCCE 4-H professionals. 4-H is the only national youth development program federally mandated through a partnership with Cooperative Extension (land-grant universities) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Youth can participate in a variety of ways such as clubs, special interest groups, after-school programs, camps, and other methods.

Cattle Showmanship Clinic





Wacky Quilter's 4-H Club



5th Annual Jr. Beef Cook-Off



Besh Ba Gowa Service Project

4-H Youth Development

Research shows that young people who take part in evidence-based youth development programs are four times more likely to contribute to their communities and twice as likely to make healthier choices, be civically active, and participate in STEM programs. In addition, when coupled with high-quality adult mentors, studies indicate improved high school graduation rates, higher self-esteem and self-confidence, and enhanced interpersonal skills in youth. In Gila County, youth from 5 – 18 years of age have participated in various programs offered by the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension 4-H program. The following are some of the activities and programs delivered during 2024.

4-H club members experience firsthand learning opportunities to develop leadership, technical, social, emotional, cognitive and life skills. Youth members participate in community club activities and choose from over **20 projects** to complete during the year. **229 youth** learned about a wide variety of projects from large livestock (beef, dairy cattle, goat, sheep, and swine), small livestock (poultry, cavy, turkey, and rabbit), reptile, dog training, quilting, fiber arts, cooking, gardening, horse, shooting sports, and life skills such as civic engagement, responsibility, public speaking, and financial planning. The 4-H calendar begins each year on October 1st and ends September 30th.

Our **49 volunteers and leaders** provided over **5,602 hours** of service mentoring and teaching Gila County youth valued at **\$179,656** based on the Independent Sector 2024 Value of Volunteer Time Report at an hourly rate of **\$32.07 per hour** for Arizona volunteers.

The **2024 Gila County Fair** was held September 25-29. **106 youth** sold animals at the livestock auction, and approximately **73 4-H entries** were exhibited in the hall during the five-day event. The total sales at the livestock auction brought in \$470,651.00 of which **\$398,967.75 was raised by 4-H members**. Thank you to the generous buyers who continually support our 4-H and Future Farmer of America (FFA) youth by purchasing their project steers, swine, goats, lambs, and turkeys.

In April 2024, 4-H hosted its **6th Annual Junior Beef Cook Off**, engaging **108 young aspiring chefs** who showed off their culinary and public speaking skills to judges from local businesses, elected officials, and government agencies.



Renee Carstens

4-H Assistant in Extension **Renee Carstens** has managed 4-H in Gila County since 2017. **Thuy Bishop** and **Teri James** provided leadership for many programs, alongside Americorp Members, **John Griffin** and **Kendra Martinez**, who worked on Ag Daze lessons, and 4-H enrollments. **Mollimae Griffin** was essential in planning and announcing events through published and social media and recruiting new volunteers and presenters. **David Flores** and **Toni DeAnda** coordinated curriculum kits and taught lessons.



Next Step 4 Leadership (NS4L) is a statewide Cooperative Extension grant with the objectives to widen youth knowledge of the fields of agriculture and technologies, provide support for youth-led community action, and provide careers readiness skills for students to prepare for success in college and the workforce. **143 students** participated in the **20 sessions** delivered at **4 schools** throughout Gila County and San Carlos.

Exploring 4-H is a unique opportunity for non-club youth to explore and discover their spark through special interest events, classes, and workshops offered throughout Gila County. These programs inspire kids and teens to explore new career possibilities, actively engage with their communities, and develop the skills they need to become leaders for a lifetime. Participants engage in hands-on projects in agriculture, health, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math), and civic engagement in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles.

The 4-H Mobile Makerspace is a portable trailer filled with 3-D printers, laser cutters, and vinyl printers that provides youth and community members with opportunities to gain advanced skills employers are looking for. Youth and adults use these tools to learn software design and computer skills. These equipment and technology offer endless possibilities for creative and entrepreneurial experiences.

In partnership with the Tonto Natural Resource Conservation District and the H-4 Ranch, Cooperative Extension coordinates **Ag DAZE** by delivering eight agriculture lessons to 4th and 5th-grade classrooms throughout Gila County. The objective is for students learn how agriculture impacts their daily lives, how their food is produced, explore careers, and investigate what makes Arizona agriculture unique. After completing classroom lessons, **347 students** completed classroom lessons and spent the day at H-4 ranch immersed in agricultural experiences.

This summer, many local youth were awarded scholarships to attend 4-H camps across Arizona. The AZ 4-H Summit gave teens ages 14 to 18 a pre-college experience, complete with dorm life at the University of Arizona and a full schedule of academic and recreational activities. Meanwhile, our younger campers, ages 8 to 13, headed up to the 4-H camp on Mingus Mountain, where they escaped the summer heat and enjoyed hiking, archery, crafts, and canoeing among the cool pines.



Thuy, Renee, Toni, Teri



Johnny & Mollimae



David

Gila County 4-H Volunteers

The success of the 4-H program hinges on the dedication of our volunteers. We are deeply grateful to these individuals who provide hands-on education and create enriching experiences that shape the lives of our youth and fostering leadership, resilience, and a lifelong love of learning. In 2024, we were thrilled to welcome over **20 new volunteers** to our 4-H family, further expanding our capacity to empower young people in our community.

In 2024, 49 Volunteers and Leaders in Gila County volunteered...



Current 4-H Projects

What skills can you add?



Inspired by our current volunteers' input.
We're excited to invite you to join us in supporting these and new areas of work



1st Annual Cookie Bake-Off



Scan me

Interested in Volunteering?

Are you a caring adult who wants to share your knowledge and skills with 4-H youth to support their futures and the future of Gila County. Scan the QR code for more information!



Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR)

Gila County residents and agricultural producers have access to a range of research-based programs through Gila County Cooperative Extension ANR Agents. These programs cover topics such as rangeland and forest health, horticulture, and master gardener classes, as well as Range Monitoring and Sustainability Programs.

These programs provide valuable information and expertise to help individuals achieve their goals and improve their relationship with the environment. By accessing these programs, Gila County residents can gain insights and expertise to promote sustainable agriculture and eco-friendly practices.





Payson Master Gardeners

Master Gardener/Horticulture Programs

These programs reached over **457 clients** with impactful educational programming, including webinars, workshops, classes, and presentations.

Master Gardener Training Course: Agent Chris Jones conducted a Fall training in Payson, with **15 participants graduating**. Instruction covered core topics such as botany, composting, soil, water and plants, and tree care. A valuable addition to the curriculum was the **'Meet-a-Master-Gardener'** session, where volunteers Michele Daniels, Ram Khalsa, Dana Sledge, and Rich Johnson provided hands-on insights into composting, seed starting, greenhouses, and the role of a Master Gardener.

The **Payson Master Gardener Group** maintained a consistent presence in the community through monthly meetings and active volunteerism. **8 members** dedicated a total of **588 hours of volunteer service**, and **6 members achieved Master Gardener status**. Their outreach encompassed a range of practical projects: volunteers contributed to the maintenance and pruning of the Payson Apple Orchard, managed and expanded seed library services in both Payson and Pine, and they potted **100 rootstock seedlings** in Gisela during the spring. Master Gardener and farmer, Ram Kahlsa, is currently caring for **180 seedlings**, which will be utilized in a grafting project next spring.

Agent Jones and Payson Master Gardeners hosted the **Garden Education Extravaganza** featuring 4 presentations for **60 participants** at the Payson Community Garden on April 13th. Additionally, Agent Jones and Master Gardener Rich Johnson ran a gardening table at the Young Expo on April 20th.

The **Payson Heritage Apple Tree Orchard**, featuring pioneer apple varieties from at least 10 local homesteads, has completed two grafting seasons. After losing several grafts to a late freeze, they were regrafted in 2023. In 2024, the Master Gardener group took on increased orchard management, focusing on irrigation and soil improvement. Gophers are a challenge, and control strategies are currently being tested.

Agent Jones provided **horticultural assistance** through approximately **50 phone calls** and **90 email interactions**, including responses to "Ask-an-Expert" inquiries. He also conducted two radio interviews: one on KRIM in Payson to promote the Garden Education Extravaganza and general gardening tips, and another on KIKO in Globe, focusing on fall gardening and program highlights.

Chris Jones has been the Gila County Cooperative Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources for over 24 years. Current programs include biochar awareness and arid land agroforestry, and Master Gardener activities, such as fruit tree grafting (Payson, Gisela) and stinknet rapid response (Globe-Miami). Chris earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Forestry at Northern Arizona University and a Master of Science Degree in Renewable Natural Resources at University of Arizona.



Forest Health and Sustainability Programs

These programs reached at least **686 adult** and **76 youth** clientele via in-person and live webinars in the county, state, and nationally.

Agent Jones co-facilitated a **Community Food Forest Forum** with Dr. Jim Allen (Northern Arizona University (NAU)) at the Arizona Community Tree Council's Annual Conference, managing program design, speaker invitations, and session facilitation for **43 participants**. Additionally, Agent Jones actively pursued grant opportunities, serving as co-PI for a SARE grant with NAU on biochar, contributing to a pre-proposal with Dr. Rodolfo Martinez on agroforestry, and providing guidance for a SARE grant related to an agroforestry/biochar project at Boyce Thompson Arboretum.

Invasive Plants Education: Stinknet, a nonnative invasive plant, has become a widespread issue in Maricopa County. It is arriving in Globe-Miami, but early detection and rapid response can inhibit its foothold. Agent Jones presented about nonnative invasive plants for the Tonto Basin Chapter of the Native Plant Society and about stinknet for the Globe Rotary. Jones organized an "early detection and rapid response" initiative to monitor and manage stinknet in the Globe/Miami Area.



MG Rich Johnson, Young Expo



Chris Speaks for the Trees

Firewise Outreach: Agent Jones gave a mistletoe presentation for the "Friends of the Payson Library" event, including speakers on ecology, tree care and firewise treatments reaching **40 participants**. Jones staffed a Firewise table and presented on bark beetle control in Pinetop. At the SW Fire Ecology Conference in Santa Fe, Jones and Tonto NF fire ecologist Mary Lata led two long-format sessions for **52 attendees** on managing fire in the Sonoran Desert. Jones also facilitated a World Café exercise for **42 individuals**.

Youth Programs: In collaboration with co-chair Noel Fletcher and other volunteers, Agent Jones led the **Arizona FFA Forestry Career Development Event** with **66 students competing**, representing 17 schools.


Southwest Agroforestry Action Network

(SWAAN): Agent Jones organized and moderated the annual conference on the UA Campus, April 22 to 26. Jones garnered a **\$25,000 USDA grant** for the event, **75 participants** attended. Partnering with the Arizona Community Tree Council, SWAAN promotes agroforestry across tribal, state, federal, county, municipal, and private lands in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah.

To advance his **Biochar Education Program**, Agent Jones delivered demonstrations and presentations utilizing 4'x4'x2' metal kilns, reaching a total of **97 participants**. These events included a session at the Cobre Valley Rec Center addressing potential mining applications; an extended professional development session with Cornell and Penn State Extension colleagues at the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals conference in Pennsylvania; and an outreach event at the Rio Rico farmers' market, highlighting the benefits of biochar for local growers.



Bio Char Kiln Demonstration



Monitoring Presentation for NOAA

Rangeland Management & Livestock Production

Rangelands play a vital role in society by producing goods and providing ecological services. Gila County is a hub for beef cattle ranching, with **employment five times higher** than the national average.

Livestock sales are also a large part of the local economy with an estimated **96% of county cash** receipts originating from sales of livestock and livestock products. It's crucial to balance livestock grazing with preserving natural resources. This is especially true as livestock producers have been reducing and managing herds because of drought conditions for the last two decades.

Applied research aids in addressing land management queries, with ongoing monitoring of ranches for soil and vegetation trends. Collaboration occurs with the US Forest Service (USFS), Natural Resource Conservation Districts (NRCD), and local ranchers. VGS, software developed at UArizona to collect ecosystem data, is an integral part of the Gila County monitoring program and similar programs across the southwest. It's utilized across **97 federal and state agency offices**, universities, and private consultants. Ashley is a member of the VGS Development Team.

Healthy rangelands support livestock production, wildlife habitat, and other natural resource benefits for Gila County.

In 2024, **90 sites** on **20 USFS allotments** were **monitored**, including **3 allotments (11 new sites)** that had not previously participated in the monitoring program.

Presented at **13 workshops/seminars** in Arizona and across the southwest, which focused on range monitoring and management, forage nutrition, range record keeping, plant identification, invasive species, and drought planning.

Co-organized and presented at **2 Artificial Insemination (AI) 2.5-day Clinics** held at UArizona V Bar V Research Ranch. Each clinic was full with **24 participants** in total. A mid-term survey was distributed to all past participants, 105 in total. Results indicate that **80% of clinic participants have implemented AI** technology into their livestock operation with a **71% successful insemination rate**.

Provided **5 VGS trainings sessions** to **95 federal employees** across the southwest and **IT support** for **8 VGS users**.

Thought lessons to **280 youth** during the **Tonto NRCD Ag Days** field trip to H4 ranch.

Area Associate Agent, Ashley Lauren Hall, has been serving Gila and Pinal Counties since August of 2016. Programs focus on Rangeland Management and Livestock Production which provide workshops and other educational opportunities on various subjects relating to rangeland management, monitoring, livestock nutrition, and other identified needs requested by clientele.





Family Consumer and Health Sciences (FCHS)

Our community-specific programs and educational classes help build strong families, strong minds, and strong bodies. This is where Extension works to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions regarding their health and nutrition, food preparation and food safety, financial management and literacy, family development, child development, and parenting.

Pam Trobaugh completing a DSS screening





FCHS Team at the NEAFCS Conference in Tucson, AZ

Family Consumer and Health Sciences

From census data, the United States **poverty rate** in 2020 was **11.4%**, with Arizona's rate being **14.1%**, and **Gila County** having a rate of **20%**.

Cumulative exposure to adversity (poverty, maladaptive financial strategies, poor nutrition, violence, and negative parenting), causes stress that behaves as a toxin in the developing the brain of a child and can change a child's neural architecture resulting in emotional disorders and cognitive deficit.

The influence of poverty and harsh environments may significantly impact the quality of parenting a child receives. Not only does poverty affect an adult's individual experiences, but racial-ethnic disparities and historical trauma also contribute an additional layer of stress. The way parents interact with their children also needs to be considered when studying long-term child outcomes in relation to parental mental health. Extension takes a holistic approach which provides programs in financial literacy, parenting education, mental health, developmental health of children, and more.

Financial Literacy: Offering one-time, 2 hour single session overview, Where Does Your Money Go? and the more in-depth 4 session series Building Financial Security for Self, Family, and Community.

Positive Discipline: A current, engaging, and creative 5-session parenting series that encourages caregivers to be kind and firm with their children 3-18 years old.

Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC): Work with childcare providers to promote safe and healthy learning environments for young children and staff.

Gowa: Teachable Moments for Apache Children on the San Carlos Apache Reservation: This program provides free resources for Apache parents, guardians, grandparents, childcare providers, and other caregivers so they can help their children (ages 0-6) get ready to read.

Developmental and Sensory Screening (DSS), Gila Region and San Carlos Apache Region: Provides education about early screenings as well as hearing, vision, and development screenings and referrals for kids ages 0-5.

Associate Area Agent Ashley Dixon-Kleiber has been serving Gila County for 8 years, including serving the San Carlos Apache Lands, as well as a small appointment in Yuma and Pinal counties. She enjoys working with families and diverse groups and has a passion for working with children and individuals who have experienced trauma and challenging life events.





Chrisann Dawson completing screenings at the CVRMC Health Fair.



Miss Indian Arizona participating in the 12 Nights of Virtual Bedtime Stories

Family, Consumer, and Health Sciences

As a result of 2024 programming:

8 residents of Gila County have benefits-eligible positions and together create a versatile and dynamic FCHS team of instructors for Gila County and San Carlos.

On children 0-5 years of age in Gila County and San Carlos Apache Tribal Lands:

356 vision screenings were conducted for children ages 0-5 with **37 referrals** to see their primary care doctor to have their vision checked.

373 hearing screenings were conducted with **22 referrals** after their hearing rescreen indicated there was a potential for hearing delays/challenges.

56 developmental screenings were conducted with **15 referrals** for further assistance after receiving a screening outcome that indicated concern.

22 people participated in Positive Discipline classes, with those completing the classes saying that they: increased their ability to see things from their child's perspective, decreased their use of spanking as a way to discipline their child, and increased their ability to give their child age-appropriate roles at home.

159 people completed a Where Does Your Money Go? class, with more than half saying they will track expenses, work on spending on needs before wants, and develop a spending or savings plan.

47 people participated in a Building Financial Security for Self, Family and Community workshop, accessing tools to build a stronger financial foundation for themselves and their families.

110 families attended Gowa: Teachable Moments for Apache Families early literacy sessions, with **99% of participants** saying they liked the workshop and **95%** said they would attend another event. The program also gave out **91 free books**.

10 childcare sites in Gila County completed a **Health and Safety Action Plan** with a CCHC, identifying steps to make safer environments for children to thrive while in childcare.

Family, Consumer, and Health Sciences Gila County Team: **Pam Trobaugh** (Educational Specialist DSS San Carlos and Child Care Health Consultant), **Ashley Dixon-Kleiber** (Associate Area Agent and Team Lead), **Melody Thomas** (Instructional Specialist for GOWA and beyond), **Chrisann Dawson** (Educational Specialist Senior DSS Gila), and **Cate Gore** (Instructional Specialist for Financial Literacy and Positive Discipline). Not pictured: **Ada-Mae Nandino** (Instructional Specialist for GOWA), **Josie Castillo** (Instructional Specialist for Financial Literacy and Positive Discipline)





Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program (FRTEP)

Funded by a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) NIFA, the FRTEP works alongside the San Carlos Apache Tribe to address community-identified needs, like increasing community health and access to resources in areas like agriculture and natural resources, family programs and youth develop experiences.



Junior Master Gardeners



Land DAZE, Nalwoodi Denzhone Life Center

Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program

Livestock & Equine Resource Program

The Livestock and Equine Resource Program provided 102 producers with local access to Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) trainings which help producers make better decisions around cattle welfare and care. Trainings focused on biosecurity practices, transportation methods that reduce cattle stress, livestock nutrition and vaccinations, accessing USDA programs, and more.

The FRTEP connected producers and tribal agents to resource kits specific to rural communities that cover animal health, vaccinations, nutrition, handling and general car practices. Besides kits, Equine Education sessions connect ranchers, producers and owners to education that improve their expertise with horse health, nutrition, and best practices for handling and rodeo. Funding was provided by the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) through their Expanding Tribal Capacity to Improve Animal and Human Health and Enhance Economic Sustainability initiative.

FRTEP also worked with the San Carlos community to make small-scale agriculture production more economically viable, connecting people to training and mentorship opportunities in entrepreneurship and marketing, land acquisition, production, food safety, and more. Funding was provided by Overcoming Business and Land Challenges: Assisting Refugees, Indigenous Peoples, and other Limited Resource Beginning Producers in Arizona.

Juan Arias, FRTEP Agent, has devoted more than ten years to serving the San Carlos Apache Tribe. His expertise spans various areas, including Agriculture, Natural Resources, Youth Development, Food Preservation, and Family Programs. His role as an Assistant Agent is supported by the Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program (FRTEP), funded by a competitive grant from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), which has been pivotal in enhancing the community's well-being through various educational programs.



Juan Arias

Tribal Youth Development

Extension agents and staff at San Carlos use a hands-on classroom approach which involves artistic and applied science methods to motivate young people to adopt positive attitudes about growing their food, raising their animals (ag tours), and learning archery and traditional crops within the community.

Tribal 4-H youth reached over 170 youth, creating a positive environment for them to participate in STEM, welding, cattle and equine education and food preservation activities that teach valuable life skills.

Land DAZE, a summer ag tour activity designed to introduce elementary, middle, and high school students to agriculture and natural resource topics and careers. School enrichment activities include poultry, seed saving, horticulture, composting, Entomology, livestock, and drone mapping.

85 youth reached during Land Daze AZ



Youth at Welding Workshop

Junior Master Gardener staff reached 172 youth this year. Activities teach gardening and introduce native and nontraditional crops, utilizing their land. Youth learned about plant needs, soil types, seed saving, nutrition, water preservation, composting/worms, and physical activity. Families participate in activities related to growing food on their land to provide for community members. Extension also works with kids at early childhood centers to help them learn about fruits and vegetables and the importance of physical activity, healthy eating, literacy, and agriculture. **172 youth** reached during JMG outreach.

Welding sessions connected youth and adults to the full spectrum of welding activities while teaching them problem-solving, attention to detail, safety, and the confidence to see welding as a potential career. Over seven sessions, youth learned about safety, preparing surfaces for welding and how to select and operate the right equipment for different situations.



Youth practicing archery skills after dark

Tribal Youth & 4-H

Tribal 4-H club and community programs are delivered through a culturally adapted model for Native youth, providing a safe, positive environment, fostering healthy choices and sparking interest in agriculture. Scan the QR code for more information!



Scan me



San Carlos 4-H Basketball Club



Gowa-Teachable Moments, Ada Mae



Junior Master Gardeners



BQA Workshop

Community Development - Family & Early Childhood Programs

Traditional food systems and food security topics supported the San Carlos community's needs. Community garden demos taught community members how to plant conventional and modern crops. Other topics include tree propagation, seed saving, composting, pest management, soil preservation, harvest, compost, and restoration. Three sister planting gardens were established for seed preservation, reintroduction, and crop access at three sites. Tribal Extension initiated the conservation and planting of native crops 13 years ago in collaboration with the Detention Center People's Garden. Native crops include Apache Giant, Apache White corn, Apache Sunflower, Apache Sugar Cane and Apache Dipper. At least **102 participants** were reached during compost, biochar, crafting, and seed saving, and also through the garden demo workforce.

Coupling Human and Machine Knowledge to Optimize Tribal Food Systems - University of Arizona wants to develop tools and disseminate information to tribal producers to optimize the production of culturally essential crops to combat climate change and food insecurity on U.S. Tribal reservations. Multiple sites tested for soil health, including 15 sites, and outreach for that included GIS, Google Earth, and 21st Century Technology education for youth and adults.

Community Development - Family & Early Childhood Programs Family & Early Childhood Programs include reaching families through educational sessions that include Apache literacy initiatives, food access, support, and connections using local resources, reaching families, among other topics

Gowa: Teachable Moments Community-Based Culturally Responsive Early Literacy Programming for Parents of Young Children on the San Carlos Apache Tribal Lands is a community-based and sustainable program that aims to improve young children's early literacy by providing resources to community members in the San Carlos Apache Tribe. Program supports two staff funded by CYFAR & FTF. Leads Kate Speirs, Juan Arias and Ashley Dixon.

The Grow It, Try It, Like It! early childhood program provides educational sessions in nutrition and physical activity and resources for healthy eating. Activities themed around a garden give access to fruit and vegetables at locations for food sustainability and healthy eating. Five childcare & Head Start centers were reached.

The Financial Literacy program offers a session on essential resources, including single-session Where Does Your Money Go? classes, funded by Wells Fargo, for tribal communities. Two sites reached with eight sessions provided.

San Carlos FRTEP Team

The FRTEP Team provides several topics specifically supporting underserved tribal communities like San Carlos. **Juan Arias**, Assistant Agent, Tribal Programs FRTEP has served the community for ten years, providing ANR, FCHS, and 4-H education. **Hubert Thomas** Instructional Specialist FRTEP joined the team to assist in the expansion of soil sampling, mapping, food access, and youth development.



Hubert Thomas & Juan Arias

Financials



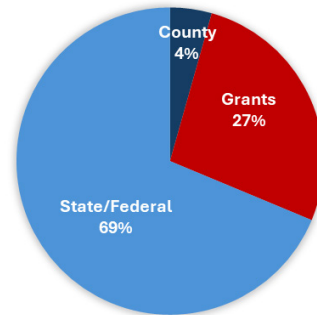
GCCE Funding

Gila County Cooperative Extension is supported by county, state, and federal funding, along with grants and donations. Gila County government also provides office space in Globe, Payson, and San Carlos.

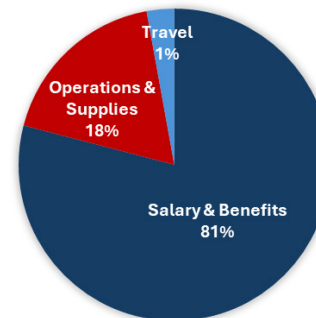
Revenues

State, Federal, and County funding provides faculty and staff salaries and supports a portion of our travel and operating expenses. State funds are appropriations to the University of Arizona College of Agriculture. Federal funds include USDA funding for Cooperative Extension programs, specifically for the San Carlos Apache Reservation. Gila County funds are appropriated from the county government, supporting faculty and staff salaries and in-county operating expenses. Various awarded and continuing State and Federal grants also help support programming throughout Gila County.

2024 REVENUES



2024 EXPENDITURES



Expenditures

Operations and supplies expenses include Gila County Extension program delivery items such as training and curriculum materials, food demonstrations, and basic office supplies. Standard operating expenses and other costs for vehicle repair and maintenance, fuel, and utilities are also included in this category. Expenditures for travel expenses include reasonable lodging, airfare, mileage, and/or per diem for faculty and staff who travel to conduct business on behalf of Gila County Cooperative Extension.

Salary and Benefits

Gila County Cooperative Extension employs 18.2 FTE (full-time equivalent) faculty and staff. Most of our funding provides salaries and benefits that allow GCCE to provide programming and services to youth, families, ranchers, farmers, and community organizations throughout Gila County and neighboring communities.



Donations or Other Resources

Donations to Cooperative Extension are tax-deductible and help provide education for improving lives and communities in Gila County and throughout Arizona.

For more information, please visit <https://extension.arizona.edu/give>



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Gila County Cooperative Extension is possible thanks to our community partners, sponsors, and volunteers!





Bill Brown pulling the Hay Wagon at Ag DAZE,
H-4 Ranch, Tonto Basin



We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Gila County being home to San Carlos Apache. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

Gila County Cooperative Extension
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