

EXTENSION TRENDS: **SCHITSU'UMSH RESERVATION**

University of Idaho Extension, Schitsu'umsh Reservation • www.uidaho.edu/cdareservation



2024 By the Numbers

- 4,204 direct contacts
- 560 youth participants
- 20 volunteers
- 220 volunteer hours
- \$230,000 extramural funding

Our Advisory Council

Special thanks to our volunteers who help shape programming and inform the work we do for UI Extension, Schitsu'umsh Reservation: Caj Matheson, Christine Meyer, A.C. Sanchez and Laura Laumatia.

2024 Impact

The UI Extension, Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene) Reservation program made significant progress in 2024, serving over 500 youth participants, 40% of which were under 18. Programs addressed challenges like a 36% poverty rate and low high school graduation rates through culturally responsive programming. Key achievements included expanded STEM education, reaching 25% more youth aged 5-13; enhanced literacy programs including STEAM and cultural elements; strengthened cultural integration; development of community partnerships; professional development for staff; and fostered youth-adult partnerships through volunteer engagement.

Despite staff transitions, the program demonstrated resilience by streamlining structure, improving volunteer engagement and enhancing evaluation processes. Combining academic support, cultural education and mental health awareness created a supportive environment for youth to thrive academically and emotionally, setting a foundation for long-term community wellbeing and success.

Programs also addressed broader community needs including food insecurity through gardening initiatives and nutrition education and promoting sustainable practices and healthy lifestyles. Mental health support was prioritized, with counseling services and wellness workshops integrated into regular activities. Career readiness was also a focus, preparing youth for future success in higher education and the workforce.

Schitsu'umsh Reservation 4-H

4-H initiatives significantly empowered reservation youth in 2024. Program reach was expanded by blending traditional 4-H with culturally relevant, place-based practices. Key achievements included implementation of the Wizarding World Curriculum for 8th graders, enhancing literacy and critical thinking skills; mentorship of two 4-H Teen Art Advocates; youth participation in state and national 4-H events, including the National 4-H Ignite Summit and Idaho 4-H State Teen Association Convention; advancement of food sovereignty initiatives through youth involvement in the Inter-Tribal Food Summit and integration of traditional food knowledge into various programs. These efforts connected youth with their cultural heritage while developing essential life skills. The program's focus on cultural relevance, leadership development and sustainable practices has created a holistic approach to youth empowerment while strengthening ties to community and tradition. STEM activities, including robotics, sparked interest in STEM careers. A new peer mentoring program was established, pairing older 4-H members with younger ones, to foster a sense of community.

On the Horizon

The UI Extension, Schitsu'umsh Reservation has ambitious plans to deepen its impact and reach by weaving Indigenous knowledge into all programming, creating strong roots of traditional wisdom that support new growth in modern education. In STEM, students will continue exploring cutting-edge technologies through the lens of ancestral innovation, while literacy initiatives will draw inspiration from storytelling and literature. A volunteer initiative will be aimed at bringing together a diverse group of community voices. This collaborative effort seeks to involve tribal leadership, elders, youth and community members from various backgrounds to preserve cultural heritage and strengthen intergenerational and cross-community bonds. Tribal council members, respected elders, engaged youth and dedicated adults are invited to contribute their perspectives. This inclusive approach aims to create a framework that reflects the rich diversity of the Schitsu'umsh Reservation community, ensuring the program addresses a wide range of needs and aspirations.