

The annual Hesse-Earl Youth Fishing Program is occurring again in 2024 with three workshops scheduled for May. You have either served as a volunteer in one or more of the previous 12 years of the program or have indicated a willingness to possibly help this year. The attached Guidance Document describes the program and the critical role that volunteers provide. I particularly hope that you'll take the time to read the attached feedback we received from parents/grandparents of youth who participated in one of our recent years. The comments clearly show the value of volunteers and how much they are appreciated. Over the years, we have averaged an incredible 50 volunteers for each workshop, the primary reason we continue to have such a successful program.

Now that we are approximately 8 weeks from our first fishing workshop for 2024, I am writing to ask if you will be able to help this year for one or more of the first three Saturday mornings in May.

**Please check your calendars and let me know at which of the following three workshops you may be able to assist:**

**May 4th** -- at Lake Lansing Park, South, Haslett  
**May 11<sup>th</sup>** -- at Hawk Island in Lansing off of Cavanaugh  
**May 18<sup>th</sup>** -- at Motz Park near St. Johns

Because we are now partnering with the Ingham County 4-H Program, it is now required that background checks be conducted on all participating volunteers. You may have already received a message from our 4-H Program Coordinator (Rachel Ochylski) asking you to submit a fairly brief application, which will allow a check on your criminal history and the sex offender registry. There is no charge to you as a volunteer for these background checks. To apply to volunteer during the Youth Fishing Program, please click here: <https://msu.samaritan.com/custom/502> and provide the following information in the appropriate fields. This will ensure your application is routed correctly. If you have already been certified as about 40 of you have, you do not need to apply again.

Please provide the following information in the appropriate fields. This will ensure your application is routed correctly.

Volunteer type: Silver (\*This is important, the application for Gold level is much more complicated)

Program applying to: 4-H Youth Development

Primary county: Select Your Home County

Specific event: Hesse-Earl Youth Fishing Program

Have you spoken to MSU Extension staff? Optional

Note: At the time of application, please be sure to sign the waiver that allows us to conduct your background check. and please sign the MSU Extension Code of Conduct statement.

Please contact Rachel Sheff at (517) 676-7300 or by email at [ochylski@msu.edu](mailto:ochylski@msu.edu) if you have any questions.

Within a week of each workshop, I will send out assignments for each volunteer and directions for locating the venue. Check-in for youth participants and their parent or guardians begins at 8:30am and the program goes until noon. Volunteers are asked to arrive no later than 8:00am unless instructed otherwise. Group leaders come earlier.

I am looking forward to hearing from each of you and for another successful program. **Remember, please send me an email letting me know if you'll be able to help and which date (s) may work out best for you. If your plans change as the time approaches, we'll make adjustments as necessary.**

**If you have never previously served as a volunteer, I'd like to have a phone number to facilitate communication with you if needed leading up to the workshops.** If you prefer not to provide this additional contact information, your email address will suffice, but having your phone number would really help me particularly if I need to announce any changes at the last minute.

With warm regards,

John Hesse, Youth Fishing Program Chairperson  
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