



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

# Rural Youth Development Grant Program

2009-2010 ANNUAL REPORT



# A MESSAGE FROM 4-H NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

**We are proud to present this 2009-2010 Annual Report of the Rural Youth Development (RYD) Grant Program.\*** In the following pages you will find many examples of ordinary youth accomplishing extraordinary things...improving their own lives and the rural communities in which they live. Indeed, they are not the leaders of tomorrow; they are the leaders of today.

In this report you will learn how youth, and the adults who work in partnership with them, have accomplished results such as:

- Turning \$6,000 into an \$800,000 amphitheatre
- Increasing graduation rates for pregnant teens which could save society \$6.5 million
- Turning \$8,000 into almost \$500,000 to provide hungry families with nutritious food
- Training for 200 Afghan farmers in meat goat production
- Keeping their rural schools open
- Using GPS technology to map rural locations for emergency first responders
- Improving multiple conditions on a Native American reservation

You will also learn about the three funded national organizations—4-H, Girl Scouts of the USA, and the National FFA Organization—that have proven track records of increasing leadership and life skills in young people to prepare them for the challenges of the 21st century. The impacts the RYD program have had on the personal and leadership development of individual youth and adults are also included in this report.

While each organization has their own brand for this grant program, all three are using approaches that will have similar results in the end...improving communities through increasing human, social, civic, cultural, natural, financial, and/or built capital.

Young people and adults work together to identify critical, complex community needs. Then they design and implement an action plan(s) to address those needs over the long term. They evaluate their efforts and report their results. A small sample of projects—some more mature than others—is highlighted in this report.

We congratulate the youth and adults across America—at local, state, and national levels—who have been engaged in this work. Their efforts have improved the lives of countless citizens and increased the health and well-being of their communities. This report is dedicated to them.

*Nancy Valentine*

**Nancy Valentine, Ed.D.**

National Program Leader, 4-H, and  
Program Manager, Rural Youth Development  
Grant Program

4-H National Headquarters  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture  
United States Department of Agriculture



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

\* The United States Congress authorized this program in 2002 with "Grants to Youth Serving Institutions" as the official title. Program staff use the working title "Rural Youth Development Grant Program." This program is administered through the 4-H National Headquarters, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture.



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“*Rural youth learn and apply leadership, citizenship, and life skills to improve their lives and the communities in which they live.*”

*~ Nancy Valentine, Ed.D.  
National Program Leader, 4-H*

# RURAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Rural communities are vital to the economic infrastructure of our nation as 49 million people (20 percent of the nation's population) reside there and rural areas comprise 75 percent of the nation's land. Food and agricultural commodities in rural America contribute almost \$200 billion to the U.S. economy and agricultural enterprises produce food to feed more than 280 million people in the United States and millions more around the world.

For America and the world, however, rapid change was the defining variable of the last decade in the 20th century. This change had been brought on by the movement from industrial jobs to service jobs, globalization of economy, and the infiltration of technology into the fabric of society. As this nation changes, so too does the face of rural America. These economic and technological changes transform the contexts of people who live in rural areas (Perkins, 2000).

As new technology options like distance education and telecommuting enable youth to stay in or return to their local communities, whether they do so will depend more on whether they grow up with a sense of belonging and connection to their local community than on the economic opportunities their local community offers (Perkins, 2000).

It is vital, therefore, that the trained and talented young people of today see themselves as living, working, recreating, and raising families in vibrant, rural communities in the future. Our country...and the world...are depending on it.

Unfortunately, many youth face poverty, isolation, intolerance, and economic breakdown of their communities as factories close and family farms are lost. Some turn to drug and alcohol abuse and gang membership as they have a great deal of unsupervised time, especially in the hours after school. They have few career and civic volunteer role models as many rural adults commute long hours to jobs in urban areas. These conditions, plus others, undermine the ability of rural communities to thrive.

However, the organizations funded under this grant — National 4-H Council (4-H), the National FFA Organization (FFA), and the Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA)— are making a difference through the combined efforts of their national, state, and local staff.

More than 13 million young people ages 5-19 live in rural America. 4-H, FFA, and Girl Scouts collectively engage more than 1 in 3 of these rural youth in positive youth development programs that help them build mastery, independence, generosity, and a sense of belonging. The organizations provide places for young people to successfully participate in experiences that develop their life and leadership skills. Youth also make friends in the process as they establish partnerships with adults, their peers, and younger youth.

Because 4-H, FFA and Girl Scout programs give young people a sense of ownership and purpose in their communities, the research suggests the youth of these organizations will likely decide to stay as adults. They become the next generation of entrepreneurs, professionals, consumers, and community leaders necessary for stable, vibrant, sustainable small towns, farms, and rural areas.

With more than 275 years of collective experience serving rural youth, 4-H, FFA, and Girl Scouts are well-equipped to help rural youth with the 21st century issues they face. The organizations have infrastructures already in place to effectively reach young people. 4-H, FFA, and Girl Scout programs meet anywhere caring adult volunteers and staff can come together with youth to help them learn, grow, and make a difference in their own lives and in their communities.

*4-H, FFA, and Girl Scouts have 275 years of collective experience serving rural youth and they currently engage more than one in three rural youth in their programs.*

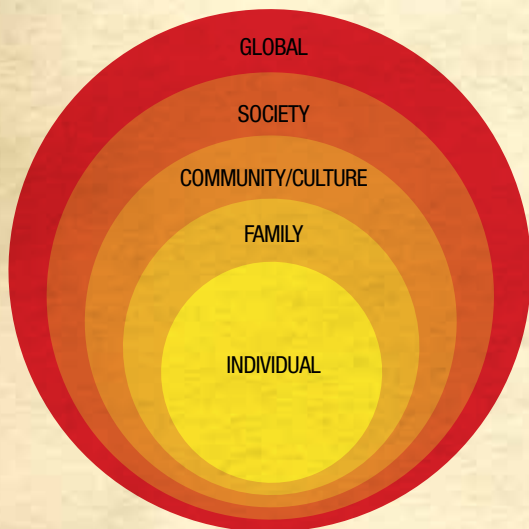


Leadership, citizenship, community service, and personal growth and development are cornerstones of these three organizations. Established by the United States Congress, the \$1.7 million dollar (FY2010 funding) Rural Youth Development (RYD) Grant program is designed to strengthen these attributes in young people and provide federal assistance to the organizations to expand their work.

To insure the consistency and rigor of the RYD program, there are three major areas of research on which this program is built:

- 1) The Human Ecological Model
- 2) Building Community Capitals
- 3) Youth Development

**The Human Ecological Model** (shown below), developed by Uri Bronfenbrenner and others, acknowledges that humans don't develop in isolation, but in relation to their family and home, school, community, and society. Each of these ever-changing, dynamic, and multilevel environments, as well as interactions among these environments, is key to development.



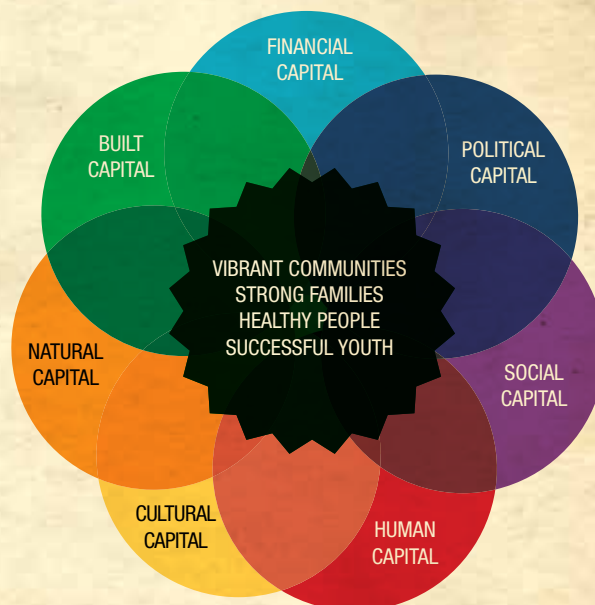
Model from Huitt, W. (1997, 1999, 2005, & 2009). Educational Psychology Interactive. <http://chiron.valdosta.edu/whuitt/materials/sysmdl.html>. Retrieved June 23, 2009.

Source: CSREES. (2009). 2009 Community Sustainability and Quality of Life Portfolio Annual Report

While the model may seem complex, the issues facing families and communities are complex and, therefore, need complex systemic solutions. This model provides the framework for how RYD programs contribute to the development of youth, families, and communities...and ultimately the world.

The second area of research is built on the model of **Building Community Capitals**. To measure long-term impact on communities, a community development research based framework guides the RYD program. The framework (shown below) outlines the following seven areas, or "Community Capitals," that can be improved: human, social, civic, cultural, natural, financial, and built.

Youth in this program, working in partnership with adults, are expected to identify, implement, and evaluate programs that improve their communities in one or more of the "capital" areas.



# RURAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The third research area on which the RYD program is built focuses on youth development. **Youth development** programs create the “context,” or environments for positive development that provide youth with opportunities to build competencies in areas such as mastery, independence, generosity, and sense of belonging.

## Essential Elements of Youth Development

### BELONGING

- Positive relationship with a caring adult
- An inclusive environment
- A safe environment

### MASTERY

- Engagement in learning
- Opportunity for mastery

### INDEPENDENCE

- Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future
- Opportunity for self-determination

### GENEROSITY

- Opportunity to value and practice service for others

The intended outcomes of the RYD program for youth, adult volunteers, community leaders, and communities are represented in the table to the right.

When programs that are built on a strong research foundation are combined with staff expertise of these proven organizations, enthusiastic and talented youth, and dedicated adult volunteers, the outcomes are truly amazing. A small number of project examples are featured in the following pages of this report.

(Perkins, D. F. (2000). Key issues facing rural youth. Rural-Urban Connections Working Papers. Lincoln, NE: Heartland Center for Leadership Development.)

*“Youth build strong rural communities.”*

## OUTCOMES

### LEARNING

#### YOUTH

##### LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- GOAL SETTING
- COMMUNICATION
- TEAM BUILDING
- DECISION MAKING
- PROBLEM SOLVING
- CONFLICT RESOLUTION

##### ATTITUDES

- SELF CONFIDENCE
- EFFICACY
- VALUES DIVERSITY

##### MOTIVATIONS FOR:

- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- SERVICE LEADERSHIP

#### ADULTS

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
YOUTH AS PARTNERS

#### COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

RESOURCES & POLICIES  
NEEDED TO SUPPORT YOUTH

WORK WITH YOUTH AS  
PARTNER & SUPPORT THEIR  
LEADERSHIP ROLES

### ACTIONS

#### YOUTH

ASSESS & IDENTIFY  
COMMUNITY NEEDS

DEVELOP, IMPLEMENT, &  
EVALUATE ACTION PLANS

ONGOING COMMUNITY  
LEADERSHIP

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

POSITIVE CROSS CULTURAL  
RELATIONSHIPS

#### ADULTS

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
YOUTH ON ACTION PLANS

#### COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

PROVIDE RESOURCES  
RECRUIT & EMBRACE YOUTH  
AS LEADERS  
VALUE YOUTH VOICE  
CHANGE POLICIES

### CONDITIONS

#### IMPROVED:

HUMAN CAPITAL

SOCIAL CAPITAL

CIVIC CAPITAL

CULTURAL CAPITAL

FINANCIAL CAPITAL

BUILT CAPITAL

NATURAL CAPITAL



# 2009 RYD PROGRAM: BY THE NUMBERS

## Number of Youth Who Served in Major Leadership Roles

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
CAUCASIAN	532	690	<b>1,222</b>
AFRICAN AMERICAN	60	86	<b>146</b>
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE	24	48	<b>72</b>
ASIAN	4	19	<b>23</b>
NATIVE HAWAIIAN	5	10	<b>15</b>
MORE THAN 1 RACE	11	22	<b>33</b>
UNDETERMINED	9	18	<b>27</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>1,538</b>

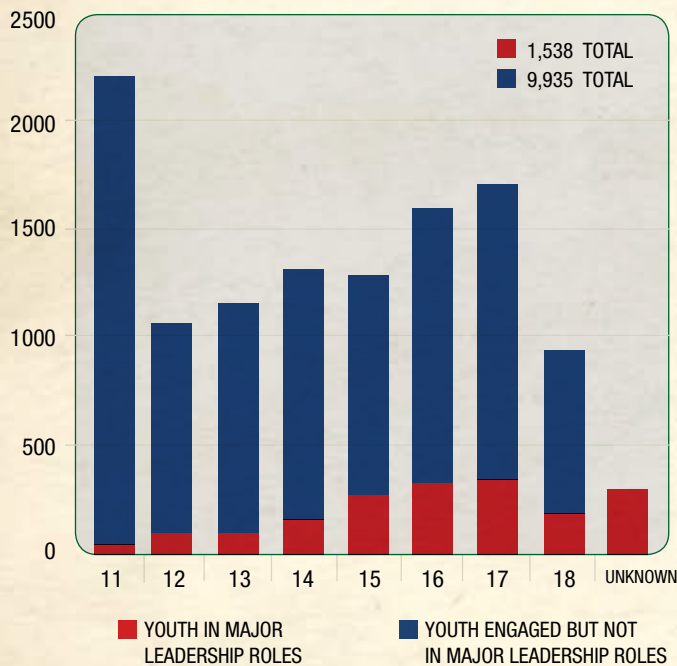
NUMBER OF HOURS 51,375  
 \* VALUE OF TIME \$ 1,040,344

## Number of Youth Engaged in the Projects but Not in Major Leadership Roles

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
CAUCASIAN	3,534	3,941	<b>7,475</b>
AFRICAN AMERICAN	332	332	<b>664</b>
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE	96	156	<b>252</b>
ASIAN	53	48	<b>101</b>
NATIVE HAWAIIAN	2	2	<b>4</b>
MORE THAN 1 RACE	52	103	<b>155</b>
UNDETERMINED	704	580	<b>1,284</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4,773</b>	<b>5,162</b>	<b>9,935</b>

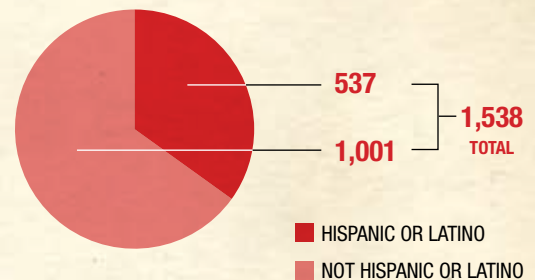
NUMBER OF HOURS 65,995  
 \* VALUE OF TIME \$ 1,336,399

## Ages of Youth Participants

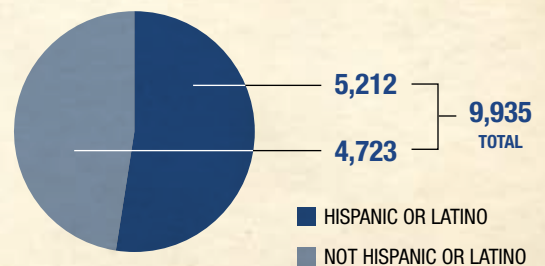


## Ethnicity of Youth Participants

### YOUTH IN MAJOR LEADERSHIP ROLES



### YOUTH ENGAGED BUT NOT IN MAJOR LEADERSHIP ROLES



\* The value of time was calculated by multiplying hours contributed by youth and adults by \$20.25 which is the 2009 value determined by the Independent Sector ([www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org)). The information in this section represents 2009 and the first quarter of 2010.

# 2009 RYD PROGRAM: BY THE NUMBERS

Youth engaged in these projects who became leaders within their **ORGANIZATIONS** and the value of their time served in these leadership roles.

TOTAL NUMBER OF YOUTH	757
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS	14,935
<b>* VALUE OF TIME</b>	<b>\$ 302,433</b>

Youth engaged in these projects who became leaders within their **COMMUNITIES\*** and the value of their time served in these leadership roles.

TOTAL NUMBER OF YOUTH	469
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS	5,353
<b>* VALUE OF TIME</b>	<b>\$ 108,398</b>

\* (e.g. school boards, advisors to county commissions, board members of agencies and organizations)

## Number of Adults Serving in Major Leadership Roles

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
CAUCASIAN	244	318	562
AFRICAN AMERICAN	33	45	78
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE	10	16	26
ASIAN	0	0	0
NATIVE HAWAIIAN	0	0	0
MORE THAN 1 RACE	13	22	35
UNDETERMINED	6	8	14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>715</b>

NUMBER OF HOURS	32,521
<b>* VALUE OF TIME</b>	<b>\$ 658,550</b>

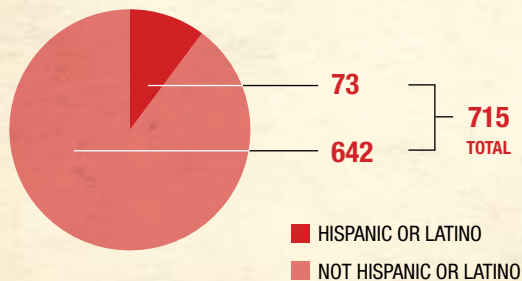
## Number of Adults Engaged in the Projects but not in Major Leadership Roles

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
CAUCASIAN	505	610	1,115
AFRICAN AMERICAN	55	110	165
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE	9	25	34
ASIAN	0	3	3
NATIVE HAWAIIAN	0	2	2
MORE THAN 1 RACE	13	21	34
UNDETERMINED	15	26	41
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>797</b>	<b>1,394</b>

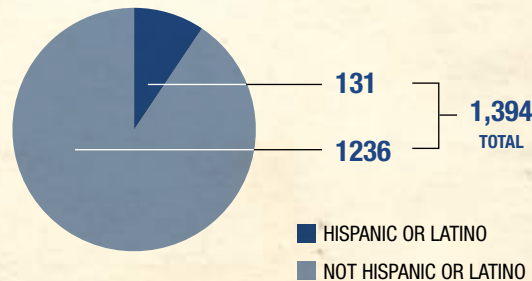
NUMBER OF HOURS	12,846
<b>* VALUE OF TIME</b>	<b>\$ 260,131</b>

## Ethnicity of Adults

ADULTS IN MAJOR LEADERSHIP ROLES



ADULTS ENGAGED BUT NOT IN MAJOR LEADERSHIP ROLES



\* The value of time was calculated by multiplying hours contributed by youth and adults by \$20.25 which is the 2009 value determined by the Independent Sector ([www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org)). The information in this section represents 2009 and the first quarter of 2010.



### Salaried Staff In-Kind Contributions to the Grant

(contributions beyond normal work hours; calculation based on actual salaries)

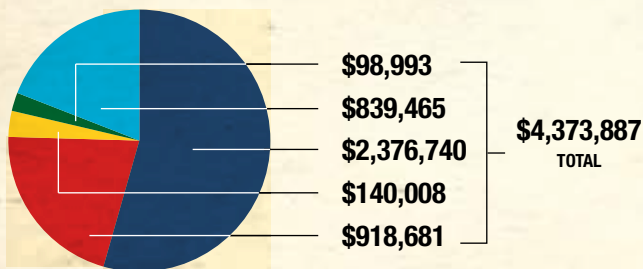
NUMBER OF SALARIED STAFF	237
NUMBER OF HOURS	15,151
<b>VALUE OF TIME</b>	<b>\$ 282,837</b>

### Adult Professional Staff In-Kind Contributions

(stipends subtracted)

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER STAFF	1,246
NUMBER OF HOURS	27,806
<b>* VALUE OF TIME</b>	<b>\$ 556,628</b>

### Summary of Cash, In-Kind, and Time Value Resources with Return on the Federal Investment



#### RETURN ON FEDERAL INVESTMENT

FOR EVERY FEDERAL DOLLAR SPENT DIRECTLY ON YOUTH AND COMMUNITIES, THERE WAS A RETURN OF:

**\$3.20**

- VALUE OF YOUTH TIME
- TOTAL OF CASH RESOURCES
- VALUE OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONTRIBUTIONS
- VALUE OF ADULT VOLUNTEER TIME
- TOTAL OF IN-KIND RESOURCES

### Community Partnerships Established by the Projects

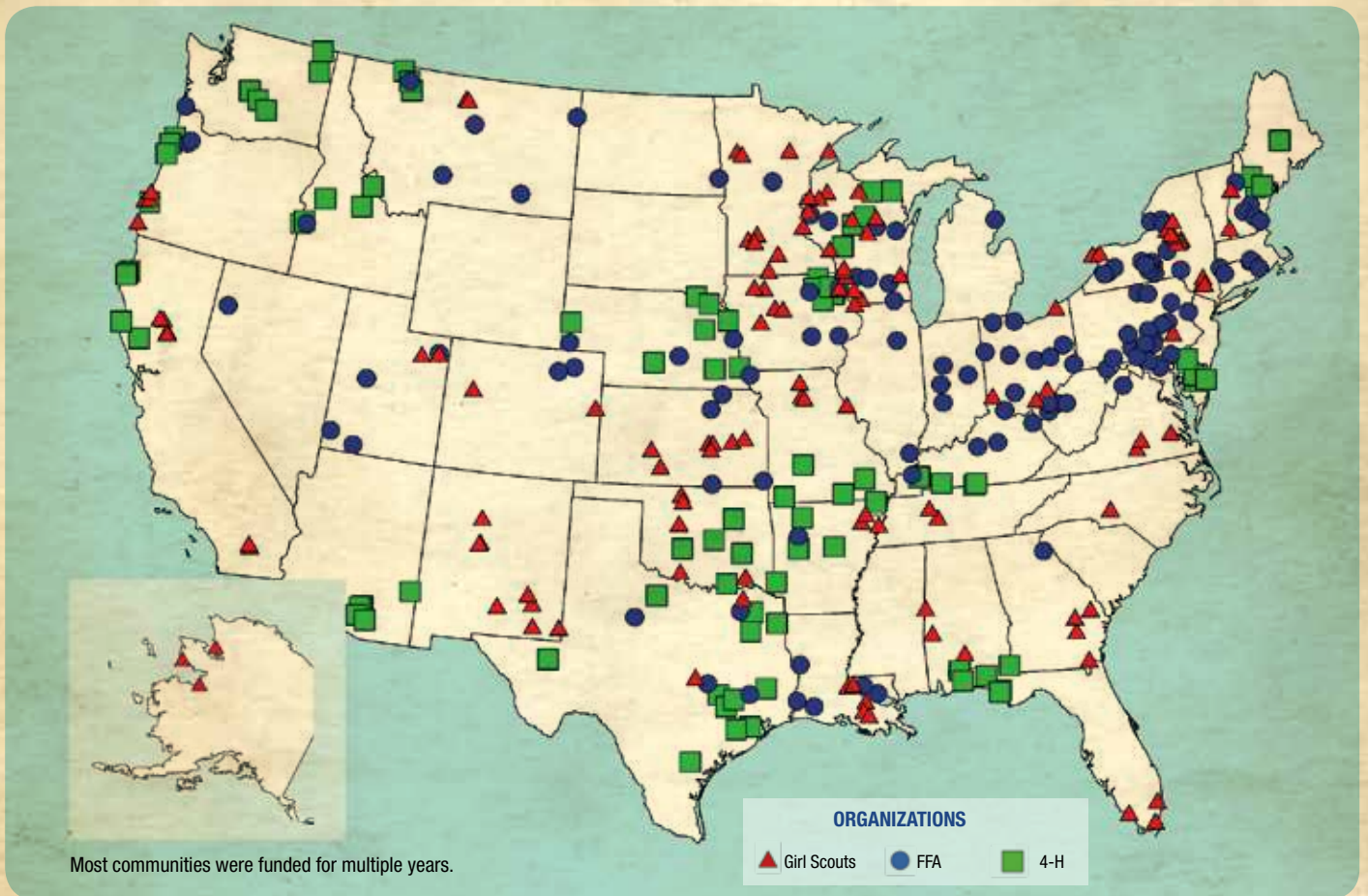
NEW COLLABORATIONS **394**    EXISTING COLLABORATIONS **317**    TOTAL **711**

### Beneficiaries of the Program

	COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO BENEFITTED FROM THE PROGRAM	OTHER CITIZENS WHO HAD CASUAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PROGRAM
YOUNG CHILDREN 0-5 YRS OLD	4,365	3,516
ELEMENTARY STUDENTS	3,789	5,555
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS	3,271	3,615
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS	9,073	7,454
ADULTS 19-60 YRS OLD	4,299	17,033
SENIORS 60+	1,019	3,404
AUDIENCE WITH DISABILITIES	486	753
ACTIVE MILITARY FAMILIES	53	58
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>26,355</b>	<b>41,388</b>

\* The value of time was calculated by multiplying hours contributed by youth and adults by \$20.25 which is the 2009 value of volunteer time determined by the Independent Sector ([www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org)). The information in this section represents 2009 and the first quarter of 2010.

# 2005-2010 FUNDED COMMUNITIES



## Rural Youth Development Community Locations and Project Leaders

### 4-H

#### Arizona

- Clifton
- Marana
- Picture Rocks
- Robles Junction
- Sahuarita

*Lisa Lauxman,  
University of Arizona*

#### Arkansas

- Beebe
- Danville
- De Queen
- Jasper

*Brian Helms,  
University of Arkansas*

#### California

- Arcata
- Eureka
- Humboldt
- Kelseyville
- Mendocino

*Sharon Junge,  
University of California-Davis*

#### Delaware

- Bridgeville
- Georgetown
- Lake Forest/Harrington
- Middletown
- West Rehoboth

*Mark Manno,  
University of Delaware*

#### Florida

- Cedar Grove
- Defuniak Springs
- Jay
- Malone
- Milton
- Panama City

*Wendi Armstrong,  
University of Florida*

#### Idaho

- Cascade
- Challis
- Homedale
- Notus
- Salmon

*Arlinda Nauman,  
University of Idaho*

#### Iowa

- Cresco
- Elkader
- New Hampton
- Oelwein
- Postville

*Vanette Grover,  
Iowa State University*

#### Kentucky

- Eddyville
- Elkton/Trenton/Taylorsville
- Gamaliel
- Kuttawa
- Tompkinsville

*Ken Jones,  
University of Kentucky*

#### Maine

- Bethel
- Bridgton
- Milo
- Poland

*Barbara Baker,  
University of Maine*

#### Missouri

- Alton
- Buffalo
- Exeter
- Greenville
- Holcomb

*Steve Hennessy,  
University of Missouri*

#### Montana

- Babb
- Browning
- Heart Butte
- Seville
- Starr Boarding School

*Terry Tatsey, Blackfeet Community College, Montana*

#### Nebraska

- Crete
- Gering/Scottsbluff
- Hartington
- Lexington
- Madison
- Nebraska City
- Santee
- Walthill/Macy

*Jeff Hart, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

#### Oklahoma

- Durant
- Sapulpa
- McAlester
- Shawnee
- Anadarko

*Karla Knoepfli,  
Oklahoma State University*

#### Oregon

- Cloverdale
- Lincoln City
- Myrtle Point
- Newport

*Mary Arnold,  
Oregon State University*

#### Texas

- Beeville
- Greenwood
- Lindale
- Pecos
- Polk
- Seymour

*Courtney Dodd,  
Texas A&M University*

#### Washington

- Brenham
- Caldwell
- Fresno
- Jefferson
- Kendallton
- Navasota
- Chewelah
- Cle Elum
- Kittitas
- Mattawa
- Northport

*Gail Long,  
Prairie View A&M University*

#### Wisconsin

- Black River Falls
- Florence
- Merrill
- Eagle River

*Matthew Calvert,  
University of Wisconsin*



## FFA

### Arkansas

- Lamar  
*Chris Bacchus, Lamar FFA*

### Colorado

- Merino  
*Todd Everhart, Merino FFA*

- Weldona  
*Cara Heid, Weldona Valley FFA*

### Connecticut

- Milton Natusch, Connecticut State FFA Association

- Falls Village  
*Karen Davenport, Housatonic Valley FFA*

- Litchfield  
*Charlie Rowland, Wamogo Regional FFA*

- Putnam, Thompson  
*Bethany Royer & Ken Couture, Killingly FFA*

### Georgia

- Carnesville  
*Gary Minyard, Franklin County FFA*

### Idaho

- Caldwell  
*Melissa Sherman, Vallivue FFA*

### Illinois

- Eldorado  
*Bill Kittinger, Eldorado FFA*

- Seneca  
*Jeff Maierhofer, Seneca FFA*

### Indiana

- Brian Buchanan, Indiana State FFA Foundation

- Middleton  
*Jessica Geisler, Shenandoah FFA*

- Roachdale  
*Kate Skirvin, North Putman FFA*

- Rossville  
*Dale Griffin, Rossville FFA*

- Spencer  
*Tom Wallace, Owen Valley FFA*

### Iowa

- Montezuma  
*Rick Swenson, Montezuma FFA*

- Nashua  
*Ronald Zelle, Nashua Plainfield FFA*

- West Liberty  
*Stepahnie Lukansky, West Liberty FFA*

### Kansas

- Arkansas City  
*Cory Epler, Arkansas City FFA*

- Clay Center  
*Jay Bohnenblust, Clay Center FFA*

- Columbus  
*K.C. Youngblood, Columbus FFA*

- Marysville  
*Craig Lister, Marysville FFA*

### Kentucky

- Bardstown  
*Josh Mitcham, Nelson County FFA*

- Grayson  
*Kenny Brammell, East Carter FFA*

- Nicholasville  
*John Martin, Jessamine County FFA*

- Smithland  
*Robert Schmitt, Livingston Central FFA*

### Louisiana

- Ronald Mayeux, Louisiana State FFA Association

- Florien  
*Amy Green, Florien FFA*

- Hayes/Bell City  
*Hope Berry, Bell City FFA*

- Ponchatoula  
*Alice DuBois, Ponchatoula FFA*

- Pride  
*Barret Hargrave, Northeast FFA*

- Starks  
*Regina Smart, Starks FFA*

### Maryland

- *George Mayo, Maryland State FFA Association*

- Accident  
*Rick McCrobie, North Garrett FFA*

- Pylesville  
*Greg Murrell, North Harford High School FFA*

- Sykesville  
*Kim Moyer, Century FFA*

- Thurmont  
*Diane Ogg, Catoctin FFA*

### Michigan

- Lincoln  
*Brian Matchett, Alcona FFA*

### Minnesota

- Brainerd  
*Denise Reeser, Brainerd FFA*

### Missouri

- Tarkio  
*Dean Hicks, Tarkio FFA*

### Montana

- Bill Jimmerson, Montana State FFA Association

- Bainville  
*Ann Ronning, Bainville FFA*

- Browning  
*Mike Tatsey, Browning FFA*

- Clyde Park  
*Jim Rose, Shields Valley FFA*

- Lame Deer  
*Mike Morgan, Lame Deer Morning Stars FFA*

- Winifred  
*Oscar Cantu, Winifred FFA*

### Nebraska

- Blair  
*Matt Kreifels, Blair FFA*

- Cairo  
*John Hadenfedt, Centura FFA*

- Kimball  
*Alan Held, Kimball FFA*

### New Hampshire

- *Gail Kiley Sanders, New Hampshire State FFA Association*

- Newfields  
*Andy Anderson & Anne De Marco, Seacoast School of Technology FFA*

- Northwood  
*Sara Ward, Coe-Brown Northwood Academy FFA*

- Tilton  
*Maria vanderWoude, Winisquam FFA*

- Whitefield  
*Jenn Barton, Paradise FFA*

- Wolfeboro  
*Bruce Farr, Region 9 FFA*

### Nevada

- Gerlach  
*Elizabeth Jackson, Black Rock Desert FFA*

### New York

- Shari Lighthall, New York State FFA Association

- Adams  
*William Stowell, South Jefferson FFA*

- Candor, Dryden, Groton, Lansing, Newfield, Ovid, Trumansburg  
*Michele Sutton, Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga New Visions FFA*

- Gainesville  
*Nicole Koerner, Letchworth FFA*

- Hamilton  
*Tiffany Drape, Hamilton FFA*

- Lowville  
*Melvin Phelps, Lowville FFA*

- Springville  
*Alan Butzer, Springville FFA*

- Turin  
*Bruce Rohr, South Lewis FFA*

- Walton  
*Tina Miner-James, Walton FFA*

- Yorkshire  
*Jon Clayson, Pioneer FFA*

### North Dakota

- Colfax  
*Tony Boehm, Richland FFA*

### Ohio

- *Katy Endsley, Ohio State FFA Association*

- Carrollton  
*Dan Kirk, Carrollton FFA*

- Felicity  
*Holly Jennings, Felicity-Franklin FFA*

- Leesburg  
*Matt Unger, Fairfield FFA*

- Oak Harbor  
*Louis Damschroder, Oak Harbor/Penta FFA*

- Ridgeway  
*Stephanie Jolliff, Ridgeway FFA*

- Rockford  
*Alan Post, Parkway FFA*

- Utica  
*Steve Priest, Utica FFA*

- Wauseon  
*Eric Richer, Wauseon FFA*

- West Lafayette  
*Sue Davis, Ridgewood FFA*

### Oregon

- Amity  
*Ron Whitman, Amity FFA*

- Astoria  
*Sarah McArthur, Knappa FFA*

- Dayton  
*Mitch Coleman, Dayton FFA*

- Pennsylvania  
*Michael Brammer, Pennsylvania State FFA Association*

- Alexandria  
*Raylene Russell, Juniata Valley FFA*

- Bangor  
*Amy Sakers, Bangor FFA*

- Berlin  
*Dan Miller, Berlin Brothers-valley FFA*

- Canton  
*Tom Hojnowski, Canton FFA*

- Dillsburg  
*Carol Richwine, Northern York Gifford/Pincho FFA*

- Elliottsburg  
*Mike Woods, West Perry FFA*

- Hegin  
*Gretchen Dingman, Tri-Valley FFA*

- Mar Lin  
*Dirk Musselman, Schuykil County AVTS FFA*

- Mechanicsburg  
*Todd Biddle, Cumberland Valley FFA*

- Mercersburg  
*Herb Hoffeditz, Conococheague FFA*

- Millerstown  
*Krista Pontius, Greenwood FFA*

- Newport  
*Natalie Barkley, Newport FFA*

- Newville  
*Sherisa Nailor, Big Spring FFA*

- Waterfall  
*Eric Rubenstein, Forbes Road FFA*

- Wellsboro  
*Melanie Berndston, Grand Canyon FFA*

- Wilkes-Barre  
*Janice Leiby, Wilkes-Barre FFA*

### Rhode Island

- West Greenwich  
*Gwynne Millar, Exeter-West Greenwich FFA*

### Texas

- Buckholts  
*Stephen Frei, Buckholts FFA*

- Cumby  
*Tara Spencer, Miller Grove FFA*

- Hamlin  
*Steven Pyburn, Hamlin FFA*

- Lago Vista  
*Julia Ricicar, Lago Vista FFA*

- Losoya  
*Kristen Rike, Southside FFA*

- New Waverly  
*Michael Lilley, New Waverly FFA*

# 2005-2010 FUNDED COMMUNITIES

## Utah

*William Deimler, Utah State FFA Association*

- Delta  
*Chad Warnick, Delta FFA*

- Enterprise  
*Pat Cook, Enterprise FFA*

- Orderville  
*Jeff Cox, Long Valley FFA*

- Vernal  
*Dave Wilson, Uintah FFA*

## West Virginia

*Jason Hughes, West Virginia State FFA Association*

- Ashton  
*Jenna Meeks, Hannan FFA*

- Baker  
*Danny Dewhurst, East Hardy Middle School FFA*

- Glen Dale  
*Nicole Shipman, John Marshall FFA*

- Point Pleasant  
*Sam Nibert, Mason County FFA*

- Ripley  
*Connie Scarborough, Ripley FFA*

- Spencer  
*Danny Cummings & Jim Workman, Roane County FFA*

## Wisconsin

- Amery  
*Derrick Meyer, Amery FFA*

- Bloomer  
*DeWayne Fossum, Bloomer FFA*

- Ithaca  
*Jim Favreau, Ithaca FFA*

- Johnson Creek  
*Ann Schutt, Johnson Creek FFA*

- Prairie du Chien  
*Mark Pedretti, Prairie du Chien FFA*

- Pulaski  
*Joshua Rusk, Pulaski FFA*

- Sauk City  
*Troy Talford, Sauk Prairie FFA*

- Walworth  
*Lisa Konkell, Big Foot FFA*

- Wittenberg  
*Brenda Gienau, Wittenberg-Birnamwood FFA*

## GSUSA

### Alabama

- Choctaw
- Clark
- Wilcox  
*Rhonda Lambert, North Central Alabama Girl Scout Council*

### Alaska

- Kotzebue
- Nome
- Unalakleet  
*Cassie Toth, Alaska Girl Scout Council*

### Arkansas

- Jonesboro
- Osceola
- Paragould  
*Anna Beth White, Diamonds of Arkansas, Oklahoma, & Texas Girl Scout Council*

### California

- Biggs
- Gridley
- Hamilton
- Orland  
*Teresa Hughes, Northern California Girl Scout Council*

### Colorado

- Mecca
- Thermal  
*Mary Moore, San Gorginio Girl Scout Council*

### Colorado

- Burlington  
*Peg Peterson, Colorado Girl Scout Council*

- Rifle  
*Heidi Pankow, Colorado Girl Scout Council*

### Florida

- Redland
- Everglades
- Florida City
- Homestead  
*Maria Tejera, Tropical Florida Girl Scout Council*

## Georgia

- Baxley
- Folkston
- Lyons/Metter
- Stilson  
*Dawn Kaley, Historic Georgia Girl Scout Council*

## Iowa

- Emmetsburg
- Fort Dodge
- Spencer
- Swan Lake
- Webster City  
*Sally Frotscher, Greater Iowa Girl Scout Council*

## Kansas

- Greensburg
- Marion
- Melvern
- Emporia
- Hanston
- Hillsboro
- Peabody  
*Mary Wilson, Kansas Heartland Girl Scout Council*

## Louisiana

- Iberville
- Livingston  
*Kelly Thomas, Louisiana East Girl Scout Council*

- St. Francisville
- Morganza
- Napoleonville
- Thibodeaux
- Gonzales  
*Annie Casanova, Louisiana East Girl Scout Council*

## Minnesota

- Echo
- Fairmont
- Mahanomen
- Mankato
- Olivia
- Redwood Falls
- Waubun  
*Janet Gracia, Minnesota & Wisconsin River Valley Girl Scout Council*

- Marble  
*Elizabeth Ellis, Minnesota & Wisconsin Lakes & Pines Girl Scout Council*

## Missouri

- Brookfield
- Louisiana/Clarksville/Eolia
- Marceline
- Pollock/Milan  
*Jessica Upchurch, Eastern Missouri Girl Scout Council*

## Montana

- Box Elder
- Rocky Boy  
*Erika Willis, Montana & Wyoming Girl Scout Council*

## New Hampshire

- Libson
- Walpole  
*Patricia Mellor, Green & White Mountains Girl Scout Council*

## New Mexico

- Bosque Farms
- Carlsbad
- Cloudcroft
- Eunice
- Hagerman
- Jemez Pueblo
- Los Lunas
- Roswell  
*Julie McCullough, New Mexico Trails Girl Scout Council*

## New York

- Boonville
- Dolgeville
- Herkimer
- Little Falls
- Mohawk
- Poland
- Remsen
- Webb  
*Carol Nabors, NYPENN Pathways Girl Scout Council*

- Lewiston
- Lockport  
*Maria Diaz, Western New York Girl Scout Council*

- Pine Bush
- Rondout Valley
- Walkill  
*Hada Reed, Heart of the Hudson Girl Scout Council*

## North Carolina

- Stanley  
*Anita Harrison, Carolina Peaks & Piedmont Girl Scout Council*

## Ohio

- Athens
- Fairfield
- Jackson
- Perry  
*Elizabeth Kohler, Ohio Heartland Girl Scout Council*

## Oklahoma

- Antlers
- Cherokee
- Helena
- Walters
- Watonga  
*Halie Campbell, Western Oklahoma Girl Scout Council*

## Oregon

- Bandon
- Coquille
- Gold Beach
- North Bend  
*Tricia Stewart, Oregon & Western Washington Girl Scout Council*

## Pennsylvania

- Oley, Wernersville, New Tripoli  
*Corey Cullreath, Eastern Pennsylvania Girl Scout Council*

## Tennessee

- Hickman
- Humphreys  
*Susan Chapman, Middle Tennessee Girl Scout Council*

## Texas

- Roxton  
*Roxanne Kosanda, Northeast Texas Girl Scout Council*

- Nolanville  
*Rhonda Hersey, Central Texas Girl Scout Council*

## Utah

- Altamont
- Vernal  
*Darlyn Robertson, Utah Girl Scout Council*

## Virginia

- Charlotte  
*Denise Hayes, Virginia Skyline Girl Scout Council*

- Farmville
- Charles City  
*Sheila Johnston, Commonwealth Girl Scout Council of Virginia*

## Wisconsin

- Antigo
- Balsam Lake
- Hudson
- Lac Du Flambeau
- Medford
- River Falls
- Webster  
*Amy Schultz, Northwestern Great Lakes Girl Scout Council*

- Arcadia
- Darlington
- Hazel Green
- Montfort
- Prairie du Chien
- Soldiers Grove/Gay Mills
- Viroqua  
*Sarah Felicelli, Badgerland Girl Scout Council*

- Mayfield
- Hayward
- Ashley
- Spooner  
*Elizabeth Ellis, Girl Scouts of Minnesota & Wisconsin Lakes and Pines*





## ENGAGING YOUTH, SERVING COMMUNITY

4-H didn't really start at one time or in one place. It began around the start of the 20th century through the work of several people in different parts of the United States, all concerned about the practical education of young people. The seed of the 4-H idea of practical and "hands-on" learning came from the desire to make public school education more connected to daily life. Early programs tied both public and private resources together for the purpose of helping rural youth.

During this time, researchers at experiment stations of the land-grant college system and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) saw that adults in the farming community did not readily accept new agricultural discoveries. But, educators found that youth would "experiment" with these new ideas and then share their experiences and successes with the adults.



## THE 4-H VISION:

*A world in which youth  
and adults learn, grow, and  
work together as catalysts  
for positive change.*

So, rural youth programs became a way to introduce new agriculture technology to the adults. A.B. Graham started one such youth program in Ohio in 1902. It is considered the birth of the 4-H program in the United States. From 1905 to 1914, clubs were started in nearly all states. When Congress created the Cooperative Extension Service at USDA in 1914, it included boys' and girls' club work. This soon became known as 4-H clubs—Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

Youth programs—focused on agricultural production and improving food safety and other family practices in rural areas—also started at the USDA in 1902. This early work evolved into the 4-H program which continues to be the flagship youth development program of USDA. 4-H is also the world's largest non-formal educational program. It reaches youth through a variety of delivery systems such as 4-H clubs and other types of community-based youth development programs, after-school and out-of-school time programs, resident and day-camps, and school enrichment programs.

4-H is built on the concept of four-fold development and service to others as evidenced in the 4-H pledge:

*I pledge my Head to clearer thinking,  
My Heart to greater loyalty,  
My Hands to larger service, and my  
Health to better living  
for my club, my community, my country,  
and my world.*

In June 1948, under Title 18, U.S.C.707, the United States Congress gave broad federal protection to one of the most recognized symbols in America, the 4-H emblem--a green four-leaf clover with a white "H" on each leaf. This Congressional action puts the 4-H emblem in the same category as the White House Seal.

4-H has continuously transformed itself to be relevant to meeting the needs of society. 4-H began to extend into urban areas in the 1950s. In addition, the basic 4-H focus became the personal growth of the member. Life skills development was built into 4-H projects, activities, and events to help youth become contributing, productive, self-directed members of society.

4-H programs, for over 100 years, have indeed provided opportunities for "youth and adults to grow and work together as catalysts for positive change." Throughout this rich history, 4-H has provided positive youth development experiences to diverse populations through a large and complex system. The 4-H program combines the cooperative efforts of:

- Approximately 6 million youth
- The 4-H National Headquarters at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) of USDA
- Over 500,000 volunteer leaders
- 2,400 professional staff
- Cooperative Extension Services (CES) at 106 state land-grant universities
- State and local governments
- Private-sector partners
- State and local 4-H foundations
- The National 4-H Council, functioning as the National 4-H Foundation

4-H programs are conducted in the United States, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Micronesia, and Northern Mariana Islands. 4-H-type programs are also international, with youth in more than 80 countries in similar independent programs.



4-H helps prepare today's youth to step up to the challenges of a complex and changing society. They are building robots, growing hydroponic vegetables on skyscraper roofs, using the latest GIS/GPS technology to solve community issues, and tackling youth obesity, just to name a few areas. 4-H is currently focusing program efforts in three broad categories: Science, Health, and Citizenship.

*“The seed money from the RYD grant program has enabled 4-H youth, in partnership with adults, to achieve extraordinary results for their rural communities. The youth are not waiting for tomorrow to lead. They are leading our next generation of citizens today.”*

*~ Jennifer Sirangelo, executive vice president,  
National 4-H Council.*



The RYD program supports the 4-H vision, mission, and goals of the organization and provides real-life experiences for young people to put the pledge into action. Using Engaging Youth, Serving Community as the theme for the RYD program, teams of trained youth and adults convene town meetings to identify and prioritize community needs. Then they move into action as they develop, implement, and evaluate plans to address those needs. The RYD program is the cornerstone of Citizenship—one of the three major focus areas of the national organization.

## Program Outcomes: Youth and Adults Learn and Apply Leadership Skills

An evaluation of the 4-H projects funded through the RYD grant program over a 3-year period was conducted by Michael Newman.\* It involved 12 land-grant university projects representing 11 states and 64 project sites. Results show that youth and adults perceive they have gained knowledge and skills on several leadership dimensions. From the Leadership Skills Post-then-Pre Survey (Blackwell, 1990),\*\* the findings show that youth believe they have increased knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- Organizing a group activity +
- Leading group discussions +
- Planning programs +
- Organizing information
- Establishing time use priorities
- Evaluating programs
- Working as a team member
- Speaking before a group
- Keeping written records
- Seeing things objectively
- Following a process to make decisions
- Identifying resources
- Sharing new ideas with others
- Teaching others
- Meeting with others
- Relating to people from other cultures and backgrounds

+ Participants reported the most improvement.

In addition, over the 3 years, between 80.4 and 95.8 percent of youth and adults either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with these statements:

- I taught others
- I acted as a mentor to others
- I planned learning activities
- I am more confident in helping others
- I am more confident in myself overall

Each year, youth, adult volunteers, and parents from the 64 project sites were asked to complete the Observation of Project Outcomes instrument. On average, 135 people responded per year. Responses are summarized in the table on the following page.

In summary, the data indicates that:

- Youth and adults improved their leadership skills and applied those skills in their communities
- Youth and adults participated at a high level in leadership experiences
- Project sites achieved a very high level of accomplishing the community outcomes of the project

\*\*The Leadership Skills Post-then-Pre Survey. Blackwell, L. (1990). New Mexico State 4-H youth leadership project: Relationships between elements of leadership participation and self-esteem. Unpublished master's thesis, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces.

*The evaluation was designed and analyzed by:*

**\* Michael E. Newman, Ph.D.**  
Professor, School of Human Sciences  
Extension Program and Staff Development  
Mississippi State University

## Observation of Project Outcomes

QUESTION FROM SURVEY	PERCENTAGE OF YOUTH & ADULTS OVER 3 YEARS ANSWERING "YES"
Did youth and adults learn how to identify community issues and assets while participating in the project?	89–98 percent
Has the project reflected the diversity of the community?	79–85 percent
Has the community seen an increase in opportunities for youth to be involved in positive youth development activities as a result of the project?	83–93 percent
Have community leaders demonstrated more positive attitudes about youth being actively involved in leadership roles in the community?	85–97 percent
Have project participants shown an increased commitment to the community as a result of the project?	92–98 percent
Did the youth and adult leaders apply leadership skills from their training to local situations?	95–99 percent
Are youth involved in authentic decision-making partnerships with adults?	96 percent
Have adult community leaders committed resources and/or changed policies in support of this program?	66 percent

(Note: Numbers at .5 and above were rounded up, and less than .5 were rounded down).





### IMPROVING THE FUTURE FOR PREGNANT TEENS IN ARIZONA

When a teen from Robles Junction discovered she was pregnant, rather than dropping out of school, she decided to make a difference for pregnant teens who were struggling to complete high school degrees. Flowing Wells High School is the smallest public high school in Pima County and serves youth from remote areas who generally have over an hour bus ride each way.

Many high school teens are looking forward to what life has to offer. But, the future may not look so positive for girls who find themselves pregnant during their adolescent years. Arizona school policies regarding absenteeism forced many to drop out of school because of pregnancy and parenting issues.

Through interviews with 31 other pregnant teens—out of her high school of 1,800 students—the teen found that many were forced to drop out of school due to missing classes and the ability to maintain required credits. The teens met with school administrators to recommend policy changes that would provide pregnant and parenting teens adequate access to education. As a result, school policies were changed so that teen parents now have the option of taking maternity leave to complete their school credits from home.

As a result, the graduate rate for pregnant and parenting teens increased significantly. Of the 31 identified in one year alone, 25 went onto graduate. Using national data sources for comparison, these 25 girls maintained \$125,000 in funding for the school district by staying in school.

This has a dramatic impact on the lives of these girls and the larger society in the future. National data further suggests that a high school graduate will make \$260,000 more over their lifetime than someone who drops out of school, and conversely, each dropout costs the nation

approximately \$260,000. Therefore, these 25 graduates have potentially saved American taxpayers \$6,500,000 while also having the potential to make \$6,500,000 more over their lifetimes than if they would have dropped out of school.

~ Lisa Lauxman, 4-H National Headquarters  
llauxman@nifa.usda.gov  
(Formerly at the University of Arizona)



*I am very proud of my daughter for staying in school and graduating, learning so many things she will be able to use later and being independent while taking such good care of my new granddaughter. Life is what happens when you are waiting for your plans to take place and we are very happy that school policies now enabled her to graduate.”*

~ Parent of teen mother

## 4-H SUCCESS STORIES

### IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN AN ARKANSAS TOWN

When 4-H members from De Queen began their work in alcohol prevention in 2005, little did they know that their work would result four years later in a new \$800,000 amphitheatre in their small rural town of 6,000 people.

In De Queen, which has seen a 338 percent growth of Hispanic families, there was little for youth to do. When youth do not have options for positive influences, they often engage in high risk behaviors such as substance abuse.

With this in mind, 38 youth and adult community team members—who represented diverse populations—started identifying community needs. They found that 28.3 percent of the youth in their county were engaged in underage drinking and 19.2 percent were involved in binge drinking.

The team formed a collaboration of 8 government agencies and 4 community organizations to impact substance abuse. They facilitated a Town Hall Meeting with 52 participants and conducted several educational programs that offered positive alternatives to drinking. Concurrently, the group conducted a survey to which 775 youth and parents responded. Over half of the students thought a movie theatre would give them something constructive to do.

While building a movie theater in such a small town did not appear to be feasible, the group identified a town park as an asset. The group decided that having movies in the park might be a viable alternative and secured a grant to purchase equipment to show movies.

But, the story doesn't end there. Youth influenced town officials to form a youth-adult team that wrote a successful grant for an amphitheatre that now serves as the primary place for educational, cultural and entertainment events.

Almost \$809,000 has been leveraged in cash and in-kind support. Youth and adults have contributed 4,395 hours of

volunteer time and uncompensated professional staff time to the project at a value of \$104,991. There has been a return of \$152.00 for every federal dollar invested in this project.

~ Brian Helms, University of Arkansas  
bhelms@uaex.edu



*The community amphitheater provides a resource for cultural activities, dance recitals, theater productions, concerts, and other events. It is a definite asset to this small rural community.”*

~ Community leader



## BLACKFEET RESERVATION PROGRAM HELPS ALL PEOPLE SUCCEED

*“Ahsaistowaastsimaan” means “to see all people succeed”* according to the Blackfeet tradition. The Blackfeet Native American Reservation sits on 1.5 million beautiful—but isolated—acres in northern Montana. Like many rural communities, there are few opportunities for youth to engage in positive experiences, and community needs abound. But 4-H, collaborating with FFA and Girl Scout youth in the community, are creating opportunities *“for all people to succeed”* and impacting community issues across this vast territory.

Community forums—conducted by trained teams of 4-H youth and adults—engaged local citizens in determining the most important issues facing their reservation. Once issues were identified, the youth and adults planned and implemented service-learning projects aimed at solving those issues.

Blackfeet Community College not only coordinates the project, but has provided in-kind support such as staffing, meeting space and transportation for the families engaged in the project, many of whom have no vehicles.



at one town; building a raised bed so that tribal elders can garden more easily; planting 30 trees at a senior center; and facilitating a youth after-school tutoring program. The after-school tutoring program engages 18-20 youth at a Bureau of Indian Affairs Boarding School where the youth do not live with their families. Lacking support from their families, this program helps the youth with homework and other school assignments so they can meet the Montana state educational standards.

Building on tribal values and the heritage of the Blackfeet Nation where citizens of all ages are truly interdependent, the entire community has been engaged in—and will benefit from—the multiple projects.

*~ Terry Tatsey, Blackfeet Community College  
ttatsey@bfcc.org*



Projects included conducting “adopt-a-lake” with four natural watersheds, streams, and lakes; initiating illegal dump clean-ups at one site and planting native plants to maintain natural beauty in two areas; creating and landscaping a community welcome sign



*The values that are instilled in our youth through the 4-H program will shape future leaders, educators, and decision makers of the Blackfeet Nation.”*

*~Blackfeet tribal leader*



# 4-H SUCCESS STORIES

## REDUCING HUNGER IN KENTUCKY

When most people think of backpacks...books, pencils, and paper come to mind. But in the neighboring Monroe County communities of Tompkinsville (pop. 2,600) and Gamaliel (pop. 439), backpacks are often filled with fruit, granola bars, and pudding cups.

Over the past six years 800 local jobs have been lost which has created a median income of about \$20,000 for most families. One by-product of these economic conditions is a growing number of youth suffering from hunger. Statistics show 75 percent of children in grades K-5 are eligible for free and reduced meals.

Ten 4-H youth and adults from the community, who were trained in facilitation skills, convened a town forum that engaged 75 youth and adults. Through the forum discussions, hunger was identified as the leading community issue. It was particularly an issue on weekends when schools were closed and there were no free lunches or breakfasts available to the children. To address this need, 20 4-H youth and adults formed a partnership with the family resource center to prepare and distribute backpacks of non-perishable, nutritious food every Friday for 40 children in the most economically deprived families. The local medical center provided families with information on nutrition.

Over the past 4 years, this 4-H youth-led effort has leveraged \$9,000 in cash and in-kind support. Youth and adults have contributed 3,425 hours to the project at a value of \$447,354. For every federal dollar invested in this project, there has been a return on that investment of \$57. Youth have learned leadership skills, developed a sense of belonging to the community, and are motivated to continue to give of themselves to help their fellow citizens. This project has decreased hunger and improved nutrition for families. The overall health and well-being of these two communities have been improved through increased human, social, and civic capital.

~ Ken Jones, University of Kentucky  
kenrjones@uky.edu



*Many skills have been utilized through this grant opportunity. Economics, scheduling, problem-solving, critical thinking, and budgeting...I could go on and on. The most important feature of the program was the compassion the youth had for the at-risk population the grant was serving.”*

~ Adult community resident



## CHANGING LIVES—CHANGING COMMUNITIES IN RURAL NEBRASKA

Most people think of pride as a noun defined as a feeling of satisfaction at one's achievements. To the 22 youth and adults engaged in this project in Scottsbluff County, pride means *"People Restoring Involvement, Dignity, and Excellence (PRIDE)."*

PRIDE participants felt their neighborhood, comprised primarily of Latino and Native American residents, did not positively reflect the welcoming minority population living there. Boarded-up buildings, vacant lots full of weeds, alleys filled with trash, and graffiti were some of the most visible problems to address. PRIDE members teamed with the mayor, police chief, and local businesses to brainstorm solutions.

Members cleaned up a local park so families and friends can socialize and have a safe place to enjoy outdoor activities. Trees were planted in front of the Guadalupe Center and the youth have started a community garden.

Youth used their artistic abilities to cover graffiti with beautiful murals throughout the neighborhood and washed buildings to restore them. The Parks Department director was so impressed with their work that he partnered with the group to build and maintain a wall in a local park for youth to utilize for artistic expression.

Community leaders are enthused about the changes in the community and provide support in a variety of ways. For example, a local law firm is donating a laptop computer to a college-bound youth each year.

The community has been improved—but so have the lives of individuals. As a result of their experiences and engagement in PRIDE, ten youth leaders are now enrolled in college. Another 8 youth presented information regarding their work to 35 state senators.

Over 4 years, the value of time invested in this project by youth and adults was \$334,079, plus they received a \$12,000 grant



for the community gardens and graffiti wall. For an investment of \$8,000 in federal money there was a return of \$43.25 for every dollar spent.

~Jeff Hart, University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
jhart@unhlnotes.unl.edu



*Two youth who used to paint graffiti on public buildings were unknowingly invited to help paint over unwanted graffiti on a building. Not only did they participate in cleaning up the graffiti, but went onto join PRIDE as regular members because they saw the constructive work that the group was doing."*

~Adult volunteer

## 4-H SUCCESS STORIES

### YOUTH KEEP SCHOOLS OPEN IN RURAL WISCONSIN

Florence County, is a rural county with only 5,100 residents. They have only three schools in the county that serve elementary, middle, and high school students. Four years ago, the county was facing a highly divisive school referendum. If the referendum did not pass, all three schools would have been closed and most youth would face a 2-hour commute to school.\*

The youth in this project, along with the adults who worked with them, understood that the schools were the “heart and life blood” of their rural communities. Rather than stand by and “let other people do something about it,” the youth went into action.

Their plan was to make themselves so valuable to the community, that the citizens opposed to the referendum would realize what their communities would be like without the schools. They received a \$5,000 grant from a state agency to make home improvements for elderly, low-income homeowners. The group soon grew from 7 to over 60 members.

They started an afterschool tutoring program with elementary students and led an outdoor adventure program for the middle school students. The youth lobbied the state legislature and testified at public hearings to reduce the amount of public smoking in their towns. Youth also conducted a pedestrian needs assessment as well as sorted and pruned 150,000 trees for a county reforestation project. Of particular note was a mural they painted that expressed “healing and peace” to students in Crandon, where a police officer shot and killed six students in 2008.



Over the 4 years of the grant, the community received \$8,000 in seed money. The value of their time was about \$1,060,259. Therefore, there was a return on the federal investment of \$132 for every dollar spent. The youth have accomplished their major goal—their schools are still open. Even though the need to defeat the referendum no longer exists, youth have created a lifelong culture of making a difference.

~ Matthew Calvert, University of Wisconsin  
[matthew.calvert@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:matthew.calvert@ces.uwex.edu)



*The process and product is richer when the youth voice is present.”*

~Director of economic development





## THE FFA MOTTO:

*Learning to Do, Doing to Learn,  
Earning to Live, Living to Serve.*

## LIVING TO SERVE

Founded in 1928, the Future Farmers of America (now the National FFA Organization, or FFA) brought together students, teachers, and agribusiness to solidify support for agricultural education. In Kansas City's Baltimore Hotel, 33 young farm boys charted a course for the future. They could not have foreseen how the organization would grow and thrive.

Since 1928, millions of agriculture students—no one knows exactly how many—have donned the official FFA jacket. FFA has opened its doors and arms to minorities and women ensuring that all students could reap the benefits of agricultural education.

The National FFA Organization is a national youth organization of 520,300 student members (and counting)—all preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business, and technology of agriculture—as part of 7,430 local FFA chapters in

all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The Future Farmers of America changed to its present name in 1988 in recognition of the growth and diversity of agriculture and agricultural education. Additionally, the National FFA Organization operates under a federal charter granted by the 81st Congress of the United States, and is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture. The U.S. Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for the FFA as a service to state and local agricultural education programs.

The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. Additionally, a critical goal of FFA is to provide supervised experiential learning opportunities that promote technical and personal skill development and high academic achievement.





FFA is a dynamic youth organization that is a part of agricultural education programs at middle and high schools. Today, student members are engaged in a wide range of curriculum and FFA activities, leading to over 300 career opportunities in agricultural sciences such as bio-technology, irrigation engineering, entrepreneurship, and rural sociology.

The FFA motto, **“Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve,”** gives members 12 short words to live by as they experience the opportunities in the organization. With these words, hundreds of thousands of young people—over the past 80 plus years—utilize the skills and talents learned in their classrooms to effect positive changes in their communities through service-learning and civic engagement.

Excerpts from the FFA Creed also articulate the fiber of an organization that has always worked to make communities better:

*“I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds...I believe in leadership from ourselves and respect from others. I believe in my own ability to work efficiently and think clearly, with such knowledge and skill as I can secure...”*

The RYD program embodies the FFA motto and creed, while providing key leadership opportunities that fulfill the mission of the organization and support critical goals. In addition, the RYD program has been a major influence in transforming the entire organization.



*“The USDA RYD program was the catalyst to move FFA from a model of ‘community service’ to a much more rich and meaningful model of ‘service-learning’.”*

*~W. Dwight Armstrong, chief operating officer,  
National FFA Organization*

Through the youth governance model of the National FFA Delegate process, youth representatives from across the country stated that although the FFA model of traditional service was beneficial to the community, the impacts to the participants, beneficiaries, and the community were not as deep or meaningful as they had the potential to be. Thus, the FFA youth delegates proposed to the National FFA Board of Directors that the organization move from a model of “service” to a model of “service-learning.” The official acceptance of the programmatic shift was announced during the 2007 National FFA Convention.

Federal “seed money” from the RYD program provides the opportunity for FFA members across the country—working in partnership with teachers and volunteer adults—to apply knowledge gained in agricultural classrooms to meaningful service-learning experiences that meet authentic community needs.

This experiential learning further supports youth as decision-makers in their communities and nurtures critical thinking and leadership skills as they identify, implement, and evaluate local projects that improve communities by increasing human, social, civic, natural, financial, cultural, and built capital.

## **Program Outcomes: Positive Changes in Leadership Skills, Personal Growth, and Career Success**

A Web-based questionnaire of 80 questions was completed by 1,200 students. Strategic Marketing and Research, Inc. (SMARI)\* used the survey to assess the leadership and life skill development of the young people throughout the course of their engagement in the Living to Serve RYD program. The survey consisted of multiple choice, Likert scale, yes/no, and open ended questions. Although the questionnaire measured several dimensions, a selected representative set of questions integrated the goals of both FFA and the RYD program that include:



### Leadership development

- Goal setting
- Communication
- Decision making and problem solving
- Conflict resolution

### Personal growth or attitudinal changes

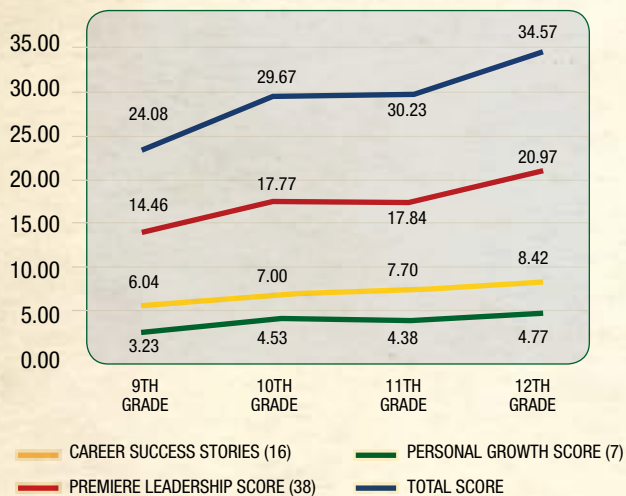
- Self confidence
- Efficacy
- Valuing diversity

### Career success or motivational changes such as

- Community engagement

An analysis of the results of the survey clearly indicates increases in knowledge, skills, and abilities between 9th and 12th grade students in leadership development, personal growth, and career success as shown on the table below.

## Assessment Performance Among Living to Serve Members



The results from the survey also suggest that those students who participate in the RYD program, as compared to students who did not participate, are significantly more likely to participate in service projects in the future as well as assume leadership roles.

FUTURE LEADERSHIP COMMITMENTS	RESPONSES OF VERY AND SOMEWHAT LIKELY
How likely are you to participate in community projects outside your FFA chapter in the future?	65 percent
How likely are you to take a leadership role in community projects or activities in the future?	55 percent

Students who participated in the RYD program showed a very strong understanding of self-efficacy and how to increase this trait in themselves and in others.

SELF-EFFICACY	RESPONSES OF VERY AND SOMEWHAT LIKELY
"People treat me with more respect knowing that I have participated in community projects?"	51 percent
"I believe I earn respect from community leaders when I participate in community projects?"	72 percent

The National FFA Organization also utilized student focus groups designed and conducted by Robin Peiter-Horstmeier\*\* to evaluate the RYD program. Students reflected on their experiences and described their involvement in their civic engagement projects. They also identified the influence of other members, advisor(s), and community members in their project experience.

Twenty students representing 12 FFA chapters across the country engaged in the focus groups. Analysis of the focus group statements documented that students felt the following skills were developed:

- Goal setting
- Communication skills
- Public speaking
- Self confidence
- Decision making
- Adaptability – thinking on your feet

As a result of participating in FFA and the RYD program, students were able to describe other benefits such as:

- Being able to “talk to people”
- Feeling comfortable around people
- Dealing with interpersonal conflicts
- Learning to work with others
- Building trust
- Following through on commitments
- Viewed as “true partners” by adults

### Adult Perceptions

Approximately 135 adults who partnered with the youth in local FFA chapters responded to an online survey of 30 questions. The questions were constructed for yes/no, Likert, multiple choice, and open-ended responses. Below is a sampling of questions, responses, and comments.

#### Adult Perceptions of Student Skill Development

QUESTION: HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE IMPACT THAT PARTICIPATION IN THE “LIVING TO SERVE” PROGRAM HAS HAD UPON STUDENTS’:	RESPONSE—RATINGS BETWEEN 5-7 ON A 7 POINT SCALE
leadership development?	74 percent
community involvement?	79 percent
ability to assess the needs of the community?	85 percent

#### Future Commitment of Adults to the Program

How likely are you to be involved in future service-learning projects through the FFA RYD program?	95 percent
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------



#### Community Partners

QUESTION	AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE
Through this project, do you believe youth are experiencing greater community connectedness?	92 percent
As a result of this experience has your view of students changed?	51 percent

(Note: Numbers at .5 and above were rounded up, and less than .5 were rounded down).

Survey conducted and analyzed by:

\* **Tim Ittenbach and Melanie Schumacher**  
Strategic Marketing and Research, Inc.  
(SMARI)  
Indianapolis, IN

Focus groups conducted and analyzed by:

\*\* **Robin Peiter Horstmeier, Ph.D.**  
CEO, Horstmeier Education and Leadership  
Programs (HELP)  
O’Fallon, MO



## INDIANA YOUTH ENTREPRENEURS GO GLOBAL

As rural families are increasingly affected by hard economic times, FFA members in Owen County are learning entrepreneurial skills they can use throughout their lives, while improving the supply of healthy food—not only for their communities—but for the larger global society. While the meat goat industry is one of the fastest growing agriculture fields in the United States, Indiana imports 55 percent of its consumable goat meat, which is a healthy red meat alternative. Goat meat is lower in total fat, saturated fat, calories, and cholesterol than traditional meats.

Recognizing these two complex issues—struggling families and health—the Owen Valley FFA chapter charted a course for addressing both. Drawing on entrepreneurship principles, FFA members established a 33-head Boer goat farm that they manage. Their good management practices resulted in 812 pounds of goat meat, valued at \$1.85 per live weight pound, or a total of \$1,500. A local restaurant purchased \$900 of the meat, and some goats were bought to be used as 4-H/FFA projects so that youth can continue to expand their knowledge of meat goats. The FFA chapter expects to triple the amount of goat meat in the coming year. All of the proceeds from the farm go back into the program.

But the story does not stop in this small U.S. county. Indiana National Guardsmen, who were to be deployed to Afghanistan as the first Agriculture Development Team, learned all aspects of the meat goat business from the FFA members. When the guardsmen arrived in Afghanistan, they established a goat farm, on base, as a training center. Utilizing what the FFA members had taught them, the Guardsmen trained 18 Afghan extension agents, who in turn trained another 16. Those 34 agents worked with 200 Afghan farmers throughout the province to establish, expand, or improve goat herds. Additional guardsmen are scheduled to be deployed, and Owen Valley FFA plans to train them all.

*~ Tom Wallace, Owen Valley High School  
trwallace@socs.k12.in.us*



*The opportunities from the goat farm allowed me to get an internship (working on genetic modification of oysters on the east coast) because of the experience and maturity I brought to the interview.”*

*~ FFA student participant*

# FFA SUCCESS STORIES

## INCREASING SCIENCE SKILLS AND HEALTH IN MARYLAND

What do wildlife, education, and healthy living have in common? All can be explored through the newly constructed nature/fitness trail and learning labs created by North Garrett FFA members. Accident, located in the western part of the state, is a rural community with a population of only 353. With science scores in their school district hovering around 68 percent, 73 FFA members realized they had a wonderful opportunity to utilize the skills they were learning in the classroom to impact science education, health, and the natural environment by creating an outdoor learning lab and nature/fitness trail.

FFA members reached out to community partners to help them design and implement this grand plan. The local Jr. ROTC, along with five local businesses, 'stepped up to the plate' to help make this project a reality. FFA members and community partners contributed 191 hours and 200 hours, respectively, to create four outdoor education classrooms. In addition, the team renovated over 3,000 feet of trail—or about ½ mile—through a wooded area of the high school complex. To improve physical fitness of the town's citizens, youth placed exercise information along the trail and encouraged people to increase physical activity. Plans are to expand the fitness trail and create additional outdoor classrooms.

Over the course of 4 months, a total of 1,610 students and community members from throughout the county utilized the ½-mile trail. This one-way trail results in a 1 mile round trip walk. It is estimated that a person burns 100 calories per each mile walked. That totals 161,000 calories burned. It takes 3,500 calories to burn one pound. Thus, the collective weight that people potentially lost by using the fitness trail was about 46 pounds. For this first year project, over \$14,800 was leveraged through in-kind and cash support. This is approximately a \$6 return on investment of every federal dollar awarded to the community.

~ Rick McCrobie, Northern Garrett High School  
rmcrobie@NH.GA.K12.MD.US



*Hats are off to all who have worked on the new trail surrounding the school. It is wonderful! The students and our community partners are to be commended for the planning and hard work that has gone into this project.”*

~ School administrator



## YOUTH RESEARCH AND TEACH ABOUT RENEWABLE ENERGY IN NEW YORK

In 2009, the governor of New York proclaimed, "We in New York are leading the fight against global warming, because we understand that reviving our economy and protecting our planet go hand in hand..." When the state-wide initiative to improve energy efficiency and develop clean renewable energy was unveiled, six FFA chapters located in agriculturally based communities stepped up to the challenge. They developed a plan of action that aided their individual local communities, New York Agriculture Education, and ultimately the country.

To begin the research phase of their plan, 486 FFA members visited numerous organizations researching alternative and clean energy. This included a landfill, wind farm, and renewable energy center. Back in their local communities, youth continued to learn about alternative energy sources. With the help of Cornell University, they created school research stations, comparing different aspects of wind power, reversible fuel cells, bio-diesel, and solar cell technology. In addition, FFA members also researched areas of recycling and composting. Once the youth tested each alternative energy source and set up their recycling/composting program they worked together to develop curricula and created learning labs that were used with elementary students and community members.

The six FFA chapters provided a total of 3,733 hours in service to their communities at a value of \$75,600. The school research stations engaged over 300 elementary and middle school students and over 4,400 high school students. Results from pre- and post- test surveys, show that about 65 percent of the high school students increased knowledge about alternative energy. Each of the chapters has also held educational forums in communities. Although each local chapter project is unique, all of the projects provide the state of New York with viable and rich information needed to continue to move this environmental stewardship effort forward.

*~ Shari Lighthall,  
New York state staff  
New York Agricultural Outreach and Education,  
slighthall@oswegatchie.org*



*I am very proud that I am taking a part in reducing the amount of waste being added to the landfill with our project at school."*

*~ FFA student participant*

# FFA SUCCESS STORIES

## REDUCING RURAL RISKS IN OHIO

Who knew that GPS could be used for more than getting you to your destination! With a population of 354 residents, the small town of Ridgeway is located near a large Amish community. As residents of this area, FFA members were well aware of the growing number of local farmers getting “off farm” jobs, which created the risk of no one being present to guide emergency responders in case of an emergency. In addition, the large Old Order Amish population in their community had experienced four fatalities in the last two years involving Amish buggies and vehicles.

Eighty-five Ridgemont FFA members established an action plan to use technology to reduce these potentially life-threatening events. They met with their local first responders, as well as the Hardin County Agricultural Health and Safety Committee (HCAHSC), to discuss risks in their community and the best strategies to address them.

The first primary solution was to decrease response time for first responders to farm related accidents. FFA members utilized GPS technology to map 10 local farms. This project was so important to the community that Rhodes State College and six community groups assisted FFA members in the acquisition of \$5,000 to purchase equipment to map key utility shut off points on farms, which are critical in rural emergencies.

They also collaborated with 7 community groups and 35 volunteers to meet the needs of the Amish community by conducting workshops on the proper use of reflective tape to decrease buggy related accidents. Thirty-eight Old Order Amish citizens participated in the workshops that ultimately resulted in improved visibility on 50 buggies. The youth donated 928 hours to these projects which is valued at \$18,792. The financial value of adult volunteer time on the projects totaled \$13,750. Additionally, a grant of \$1,000 from the Mid-Ohio Energy Foundation was secured to provide the proper marking materials for the Amish buggies.

~ Stephanie N. Jolliff, Ridgemont High School  
jolliff@ridgemont.k12.oh.us



*The skills these kids are learning are preparing them for successful futures. I am so proud to work with youth that are this great!”*

~ State highway patrolman



## IMPROVING NUTRITION FOR UTAH'S SENIOR CITIZENS

The small town of Enterprise boasts only one local supermarket with the next closest opportunity to shop located 1 hour away. From their own shopping experience, FFA members knew that access to fresh produce left much to be desired. This was a particular issue for one of the most vulnerable populations, senior citizens. Through research, students found that many seniors—about 260, or 20 percent of the 1,285 people in their community—are undernourished as a result of the general aging process, eating processed and refined foods, and reduced metabolism. Also, many seniors do not have the economical means to ensure their food selections are nutritious.

With this in mind, 60 FFA members realized that they could address this problem by growing fresh produce for the community and helping to educate seniors on aspects of nutrition. With the help of numerous community partners, the FFA members developed the *Share and Care Program*.

The students prepared the one acre garden plot—located on school grounds—before spending a week planting 5,000 seedlings by hand, a significant number by anyone's standards. With the help of 46 elementary students, the FFA members started every plant from seed in the school's greenhouse. The plants—and students—survived a late freeze, constant 30+ mph winds, and a grasshopper invasion.

It is estimated that at least 3 tons of vegetables were harvested this year. FFA members delivered at least 25 percent—or about 1,500 pounds—of the harvest to the local senior center, which is frequented daily by about 80 percent of the senior population. Therefore, about 200 seniors increased their access to fresh, nutritious produce. Additionally, a portion of the harvest was made available to the community, at a reduced cost, through farmers markets. The proceeds from the sales at the farmers market went back into the project so the program can continue to expand.

~ Pat Cook, Enterprise High School  
[pcook@enterprisehigh.org](mailto:pcook@enterprisehigh.org)



*I have seen the students take personal pride in this project and really step up to plate. The most impressive change I have seen is that the students are not worried about what they are getting out of it. They are continually asking, 'what can we do?' In addition, the FFA members are inviting friends and parents to participate, so that they can share the knowledge that they have gained."*

~ FFA Alumni

# FFA SUCCESS STORIES

## REDUCE, REUSE, AND RECYCLE IN WEST VIRGINIA

The average American uses approximately one 100-foot-tall Douglas fir tree in paper and wood products per year (EPA, 2008), and that translates into several other impacts on the environment. The 51 members of the East Hardy Middle School FFA chapter in West Virginia were concerned about the environment and knew that the recycling opportunities in rural Hardy County, population 12,669, were limited. As part of their discovery process, FFA members learned from the Eastern West Virginia Technical College that toxic waste—in large quantities—was going into local landfills.

The students began a multi-prong, county-wide recycling project with the ultimate aim of reducing the amount of landfill usage, improving environmental conditions, and conserving natural resources. The first step was to initiate a school-wide model focused on collecting paper, cardboard, plastic, and metal cans. Recycling containers were placed in 40 classrooms and 5 outside the school for community use. Every Friday, students collected the recyclables and then sorted, weighed, and loaded the items that were then hauled to a recycling center. Region 8 Waste Management Authorities assisted the chapter with educating the students and community about the impact of solid waste on the environment and the value of recycling efforts.

In just 6 months, over 3,100 pounds—or about 1½ tons—of paper have been recycled from the middle school. Using EPA metrics, this project has saved:

- 26 trees
- 10,500 gal. of water
- 4½ cubic yards of landfill
- 3 barrels of oil (enough to run the average car for 1,900 miles)
- 6,150 kilowatt hours (enough to power an average American house for 7½ months)



FFA members also conducted a recycling logo contest as a marketing campaign. They received over 150 entries. Future plans for this project include expanding to electronics, phones, and computers and forming a county-wide recycling cooperative to harness the interest from local businesses.

*~ Danny Dewhurst, East Hardy Middle School  
ddewhurst@access.k12.wv.us*



*We are saving the planet one piece of paper at a time.”*

*~ FFA student participant*





## GIRL SCOUTS MISSION:

*To build girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place.*

## CHALLENGE YOURSELF AND CHANGE THE WORLD

Juliette “Daisy” Gordon Low assembled 18 girls from Savannah, GA, on March 12, 1912, for a local Girl Scout meeting. She believed that all girls should be given the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, and spiritually. With the goal of bringing girls out of isolated home environments and into community service and the open air, Girl Scouts hiked, played basketball, went on camping trips, learned how to tell time by the stars, and studied first aid.

Within a few years, Daisy’s dream for a girl-centered organization was realized. Today, Girl Scouting has a membership of over 3.3 million girls and adults, a significant growth from its modest beginnings nearly a century ago. From a willingness to tackle important

societal issues to a commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, Girl Scouts is dedicated to giving all girls (K–12) in all zip codes the opportunity to participate.

Approximately 50 million American women enjoyed Girl Scouting during their childhoods—and that number continues to grow as Girl Scouts continues to inspire, challenge, and empower girls everywhere.

Girls at home and abroad in more than 90 countries participate through USA Girl Scouts Overseas, and 112 local Girl Scout councils offer girls the opportunity for membership across the United States.

Through its membership in the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, Girl Scouts is part of a worldwide family of 10 million girls and adults in 145 countries.



# GIRL SCOUTS

Girl Scouts is the world's preeminent organization dedicated solely to girls—all girls—where, in an accepting and nurturing environment, girls build skills for success in the real world. In partnership with committed adult volunteers, girls develop leadership qualities that will serve them all their lives.

The Girl Scout Law reflects this philosophy.

## THE GIRL SCOUT LAW

*I will do my best to be honest and fair,  
friendly and helpful,  
considerate and caring,  
courageous and strong, and  
responsible for what I say and do,  
and to respect myself and others,  
respect authority,  
use resources wisely,  
make the world a better place, and  
be a sister to every Girl Scout.*

The Girl Scout Leadership Experience (GSLE) engages girls in discovering their own values, connecting with others, and taking action to make the world a better place. All Girl Scout experiences are intentionally designed to support one or more of 15 national leadership outcomes categorized under these three key areas.

It's not just what girls do, but how they are engaged that creates a high-quality experience. In addition to creating a safe environment for all girls, all Girl Scout activities are designed to use three processes (girl-led, learning-by-doing, and cooperative learning) to ensure the quality and promote the fun and friendship that's so integral to Girl Scouting. The Rural Youth Development (RYD) program provides one vehicle through which girls can implement the GSLE. In addition, *Challenge and Change*—a curriculum-driven leadership program for teen girls specifically developed for the RYD grant—and the GSLE share many of the same outcomes. Some examples include discovering their own abilities, building relationships, and learning about their communities' needs.



*Challenge and Change* draws on the concepts of social entrepreneurship, which applies business models to solve social issues. Both the curriculum and organization have received national and international recognition. *Challenge and Change* is widely seen as a model curriculum that provides a venue for girls to earn their Gold Awards, the highest honor in Girl Scouts.

“*The Rural Youth Development program has ‘raised the bar’ for Girl Scout programs by focusing on important program goals, strategies that address long-term needs in rural communities, and tools to engage local citizens in the rigorous evaluation of their efforts.*”

~ Michael Conn, vice president, research,  
Girl Scout Research Institute



## Program Outcomes: Girls Learn Leadership Skills in Positive Environments

SPEC Associates\* used a variety of methods to evaluate the *Challenge and Change* program. Selected results are included in this section. One part of the evaluation measured outcomes using a paper-and-pencil survey of girl participants. Seventy-six girls from nine programs completed the survey after they had been in the program at least 6 months. The six outcomes measured were:

- Girls learn problem solving skills
- Girls learn communication and relationship building skills
- Girls learn more about the broader community
- Girls learn how to work as team members
- Girls are in “authentic” decision-making partnerships with adults to identify and address issues of public/community concern
- Girls have opportunities to practice leadership skills

The percentage of girls who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the outcome questions on the paper-and-pencil survey are shown at the right. The results show that most girls (90–99 percent) report learning problem-solving, communication, relationship building, and teamwork in this program. Most girls (84-96 percent) also report having the opportunity to learn more about their communities, to practice leadership skills, and to work in authentic relationships with adults to solve community problems.

DESIRED OUTCOME OF THE PROGRAM	PERCENT OF GIRLS AGREEING OR STRONGLY AGREEING
<b>OUTCOME: LEARN PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS</b>	
I help make group decisions	95 percent
I try to do something about problems that come up	91 percent
<b>OUTCOME: LEARN COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING SKILLS</b>	
Girls get along	90 percent
I have chances to speak in front of groups	93 percent
We learn to talk about our problems	92 percent
<b>OUTCOME: LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BROADER COMMUNITY</b>	
I have chances to meet new people	96 percent
I have learned about the resources in my community	88 percent
<b>OUTCOME: LEARN HOW TO WORK AS TEAM MEMBERS</b>	
I work together with other girls	99 percent
I help to plan and make decisions with other girls	95 percent
<b>OUTCOME: HAVE AUTHENTIC, DECISION-MAKING PARTNERSHIPS WITH ADULTS TO IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS ISSUES OF PUBLIC/COMMUNITY CONCERN</b>	
I feel like a true partner with adults	92 percent
<b>OUTCOME: GIRLS HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE LEADERSHIP SKILLS</b>	
I have chances to lead a team	88 percent
I can energize other people	88 percent
I feel comfortable assigning jobs to others	84 percent

# GIRL SCOUTS

The 6-month survey results also indicate girls believe that the *Challenge and Change* program supported GSUSA processes of: girl-led, cooperative learning, and learning-by-doing. There were multiple questions under each of these elements. As shown in the summary below, a very large majority of the girls “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with survey items measuring these three processes.

THREE KEY PROCESSES OF THE GIRL SCOUT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE	PERCENT OF GIRLS AGREEING OR STRONGLY AGREEING
Challenge and Change is girl-led	91–95 percent
Challenge and Change fosters “cooperative learning”	92–96 percent
Challenge and Change utilizes “learning-by-doing”	85–97 percent

The results from the 6-month survey also indicate that *Challenge and Change* was delivered in an environment where girls feel safe, have a sense of belonging, and have caring adults who are positive role models. Multiple questions under each category were asked. As shown in the summary information to the right, the vast majority of girls “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with all survey questions inquiring about the program environment.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT CREATED IN CHALLENGE & CHANGE	PERCENT OF GIRLS AGREEING OR STRONGLY AGREEING
Feelings of safety	91–95 percent
Bonding with caring, consistent adults who are positive role models	95–96 percent
Feeling a sense of belonging	86–90 percent

(Note: Numbers at .50 and above were rounded up; numbers at less than .50 were rounded down).

In addition to the 6-month follow-up survey, telephone interviews were conducted with program management staff from 10 of the 12 councils who delivered the program within one calendar year. Their responses show that nearly three-quarters of the girls in the program took the lead on multi-person project teams that included both youth and adults. In addition, program managers documented that approximately 20 months after they began, 45 percent of the projects were still going on, even if others were sustaining them.

*Evaluation designed and analyzed by:*

**\* Melanie Hwalek, Ph.D.**  
 CEO, SPEC Associates  
 Detroit, MI





## MISSOURI YOUTH LEARN BUSINESS SKILLS AND TAKE CARE OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT

With a dwindling population, low median household incomes, and a lack of positive programs for teens, Marceline—a small Midwest town of 2,500—struggled for years to figure out how to get some of the youth in the community on a positive track.

Girls in this program took on the challenge. Being teens themselves, they understood that their peers needed relationships with adults and a place to meet in order to create engaging, positive experiences. The girls convinced the owner of an abandoned building to provide money to renovate and convert the large space into a multi-purpose center called the Cotton Cavanah Youth Center—named after a local hero and former teacher. The center—which involves 50 or more youth on weekends—features an indoor skate park so teens can be physically fit, a concession stand where teens work to gain job skills, Internet access for the development of technology skills, and a music-performance space for youth to develop their artistic abilities. The teens don't just come to the center, they run it.

As a result of the center, city officials have said vandalism has decreased, teens have developed a variety of skills, and other improvements to the community have been possible. For example, after successfully establishing the youth center, the girls secured a \$15,000 grant from the State of Missouri Department of Natural Resources to purchase a recycling trailer to launch a community-wide recycling program. They held many educational programs in the school and community to inform people of the importance of recycling. The project pays developmentally disabled citizens to process the recyclables. This project is self-sustaining through the sale of the recycled materials. In 1 year's time, Marceline's citizens recycled 54,380 tons of materials. It is estimated that putting a ton of material in a land fill costs about \$20 more than recycling it. So, this effort has saved the community a little over \$1 million dollars.

~ Jessica Upchurch, Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri  
[jupchurch@girlscoutsem.org](mailto:jupchurch@girlscoutsem.org)



*“The fact that teens volunteer at the center and are part of a board that manages it is very important. It teaches them responsibility, goal setting, and how to accomplish what they set out to do.”*

~ A Marceline business owner

## CHANGE STARTS FROM THE GROUND UP FOR NEW MEXICO NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

**If you build it, they will come.**

The saying rings true in Jemez and Shiprock, two Native American desert communities outside Albuquerque. Low household incomes and a lack of resources present challenges, but two groups of girls were determined to make a difference in their communities.

**Jemez:** With community improvement and ancestral preservation as the primary goals of the Jemez group, the girls organized a highway cleanup project at the same time that they learned from their elder female tribeswomen how to make traditional Indian dresses. Both projects received strong community support, and the girls devoted much time to applying for and receiving governance approval of their service projects. But the achievements didn't stop there for the pueblo (adobe village) of fewer than 2,000 people. The Jemez youth services department funded a trip to an American Indian Scouting Association conference in South Carolina where the girls had many new experiences.

**Shiprock:** In the Navajo community of Shiprock—where high-school seniors average a 7th-grade reading level—the girls initiated two literacy projects: book exchange centers and a book club. The book exchange center started as a single bookshelf in a single location, but grew to include book exchange centers at several additional locations, including a domestic violence shelter, a teen counseling center, and a Subway restaurant. The girls collected magazines and books, and used these to generate interest in the book exchange centers. From there, as the community began to read more, the book club developed organically.

The communities benefited from the work of the girls, including a system for keeping the highway clean, increased literacy, interest in continuous learning, and a renaissance of and connection to the longstanding tribal tradition of dressmaking. In the process, girls learned professional skills that ranged from problem-solving and grant writing to teambuilding, communicating effectively, and navigating government processes.

~ Julie McCullough  
Girl Scouts of New Mexico Trails  
[jmccullough@gs-nmtrails.org](mailto:jmccullough@gs-nmtrails.org)



“Before, we saw [Girl Scouts] as service to girls. This project is service to the community. There’s a lot to be learned for other communities...whatever we do with girls has to be integrated into each community.”

~ Girl Scouts executive director



## HARVESTING FOR THE HUNGRY IN NEW YORK

Northville, a small rural town with approximately 1,000 residents, is on the southern edge of the Adirondack Park. The town is located on the Great Sacandaga Lake, a popular tourist destination during the summer months. Many businesses in this area rely on tourist traffic and summer residents for their yearly income.

Due to overall poor economic conditions, the local food pantry was experiencing a significant increase in families needing assistance. In addition, after talking with local groups, the girls involved this project found that the availability of fresh vegetables was lacking.

The girls worked with five local farmers to create a community garden behind the town hall that includes 12 beds with 24 varieties of vegetables. They focused on items that may be unique and special to the patrons of the food pantry, hardy enough to be stored, and/or high in nutritional value. The girls recruited 25 youth and their families to help with weeding and harvesting.

The young gardeners produced enough vegetables not only for the food pantry, but also to distribute to local churches and sell at the local farmers' market. Revenue from the farmers' market ensures that the project will be sustainable. In addition, the local citizens—including the local town board—who helped launch this project have agreed to stay involved.

And the girls did not stop with the gardens. They have also distributed nutritious recipes with the produce, educated the community on regional food systems, and encouraged citizens to buy local products, which builds the regional economy and conserves resources.



At the conclusion of each growing season, the girls will have facilitated the production of hundreds of pounds of vegetables that have benefited scores of citizens.

~ Emily Stoehr  
Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York  
estoehr@gsneny.org



*This project goes straight to the heart of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. The project is girl-led, fosters cooperative learning, and emphasizes learning-by-doing.”*

~ GSUSA project manager

## GIRLS EXPOSE AND STOP ILLEGAL DUMPING IN CALIFORNIA'S COACHELLA VALLEY

Located southeast of Palm Desert and south of Coachella, the Southern California rural areas of Thermal, Mecca, and the Salton Sea are some of the poorest in the state. The vast majority (99 percent) of Thermal is Hispanic; more than half the residents were born outside the United States, and of these, only 13 percent are naturalized citizens. Thermal's median household income is \$25,556—roughly a quarter of that of nearby Indian Wells. Education levels are also low, with 53 percent of Thermal residents advancing no higher than 8th grade.

To add to their challenges, in these three areas individuals and companies were dumping their trash in impoverished neighborhoods in order to avoid paying dumping fees. Because those living in the dumpsites were migrant farm workers without citizenship, they hesitated to complain. It was a classic Catch-22.

By videotaping the illegal dumping, girls from the San Geronio Girl Scout Council advocated for the migrant workers. Armed with cameras and recording devices, the girls were assisted by the Desert Mirage High School Tech Club. The club provided additional video equipment, editing assistance, computer time, and training. The girls also researched their project by getting background information on trash laws; interviewing city council members, waste management professionals, and others; and talking to those who make their homes near the dumpsites.

The girls' footage was submitted to the Palm Springs Film Festival, and their work was recognized by various community groups. Due in part to the girls' efforts, there is no more illegal dumping taking place in the affected areas!

This project's outcomes are multifold. The community benefits by earning more revenue from legal dumping operations; putting trash in its proper place allows better management of waste, which is good for the environment; and, perhaps most important, migrant workers enjoy a better quality of life.

*~ Mary Moore  
Girl Scouts of San Geronio Council  
mmoore@gssgc.org*



*As a result of this project the girls are not afraid of standing up for what they believe in and taking action.”*

*~ Girl Scouts Council staff member*



## CALIFORNIA YOUTH CHANGE THE WORLD ONE STEP AT A TIME

When Girl Scouts who had gathered at a training retreat were asked to figure out how they'd help their communities, they quickly came up with several projects to improve life in their rural California towns. Thanks to the RYD grant program, many of the girls' ideas came to fruition, and made life better for residents of Biggs, Orland, and Willows.

The towns' populations ranged from 1,793 (Biggs) to 6,281 (Orland). Median annual household incomes did not top \$34,000. About a third of each town's population was younger than 18. The Girl Scouts—budding social entrepreneurs—didn't let these facts deter them as they drew up plans for community improvement projects.

Girls in Willows helped start and lead a new Girl Scout Daisy troop when they learned that young children, particularly those whose parents worked, had few afterschool activity options. In Orland, girls worked with a bowling alley owner to develop a teen center and helped bring Girl Scouting to a housing project for migrant farm workers. A school clean-up was organized and implemented by a group in Biggs to rebuild school pride and curb vandalism. In yet another project, girls envisioned a teen center called "The Spot" that would serve as an alternative to gangs and drug use, and owners of a local café helped the girls achieve this goal.

Girl Scout Council staff report that these nascent projects are sustainable, thanks in large part to the seed money provided by this grant and the community partners who worked with the girls. As the projects have expanded, high-risk children have access to positive activities, community and school pride has been built, and youth have expanded their thinking and



possibilities for life. And the girls who are working to create real change in their communities are learning that even young girls can change the world, one small step at a time.

*~ Helen Molnar  
Girl Scouts of Northern California  
hmolnar@girlscoutsnorcal.org*

*“Nobody else was stepping up to the plate, so I decided I would.”*

*~ A Girl Scout participant*

# GIRL SCOUTS SUCCESS STORIES

## 'STEPPING UP' FOR HEALTH IN VIRGINIA

Charlotte County is a place where it's easy for youth to veer off a positive path. The rural area, nestled midway between Lynchburg and Richmond, can no longer rely on the tobacco farming that once employed many of its residents. As a result, the small, predominantly African-American county is economically depressed. Its schools are underfunded and its youth don't have many positive opportunities. They do, however, have plenty of time to get in trouble; drug use and teenage pregnancy are a few common problems. But in the cafeteria of Randolph Henry High School, a group of girls meet regularly to figure out the 'right steps' for a better future.

*Unique Soul Steppers* is a step-dance troupe created as an afterschool program to improve physical fitness. Along with other in-school Girl Scout opportunities, girls in grades 8 through 12 have access to opportunities to learn leadership in a cooperative, learn-by-doing environment. In the program's first year, 100 girls registered as Girl Scouts in order to participate in *Unique Soul Steppers*. That enthusiasm continued to the second year, in which roughly 30 girls worked to ready the team for competitions.

With no community center in the area and very limited programs for youth, dance practice offers the girls a chance to learn and grow emotionally, socially, mentally, and physically. Traveling to competitions has introduced many of the girls to places they'd never been before, including Lynchburg College. For some of the girls, this was the first time they had ever thought about the possibility of going to college. The girls plan to start similar programs in other areas of the county, and they see themselves eventually taking part in college-sponsored step-dance competitions.



An evaluation of the program showed that the girls rated themselves as stronger leaders as a result of *Unique Soul Steppers*—some even taught younger girls at summer dance clinics—and parents report that their daughters have increased self-confidence.

~ Denise Hayes  
Girl Scouts of Virginia Skyline  
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*This program gives the girls the opportunity to experience things outside their small community, to shine, and to share.”*

~ GSUSA program manager



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For more information on the Rural Youth Development Grant program,  
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<http://www.ruralityouth.org>

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