

## YOUTH, FAMILY, COMMUNITIES



# Living the Pledge: What CAN'T These 4-H'ers Do?

*Every year young people in Extension 4-H programs across the country do amazing things that reflect their commitment to live out the 4-H pledge—especially as they pledge their hands to larger service. Land-grant universities in every state make possible the 4-H programs that are empowering the next generation of servant leaders and strategic thinkers.*

### HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF 4-H'ERS IN ACTION:

- **Georgia** 4-H'ers were instrumental in providing much-needed aid to families in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael in 2018, which caused \$3 billion in losses to the state's agricultural industry. 4-H members in 11 counties collected and delivered a trailer full of water and household supplies to provide relief to hard-hit families. Also in **Georgia**, 4-H teens in Gordon County were trained in emergency preparedness and disaster response. Graduates of the program contributed more than 30 hours of volunteer service.
- In **California**, 4-H teens serve as confident role models to elementary school children on the importance of healthy eating. First, teens receive intensive training in gardening, food cultivation and preparation, nutrition and physical activity. Then, as Healthy Living Ambassadors, they use school gardens to teach elementary kids the importance of eating right, being active and caring for the environment.
- **Illinois** research is working to help 4-H program leaders nurture young people into strategic thinkers who understand

how to take responsibility and initiative to tackle complex problems. The research outlines the sometimes nuanced ways that program leaders can better support youth learning processes and build trust that leads to young leaders' confidence in navigating real-world issues.

- **Connecticut** 4-H'ers showcase their kitchen skills and nutritional knowledge at an annual statewide 4-H food and nutrition show. In front of top-chef judges, they prepare, present and explain the nutritional food they have prepared, and receive feedback to hone their future skills. More than 1,200 4-H'ers participated in food and nutrition projects in 2017.

### SHAPING THE CREATIVE MINDS THAT'LL ADDRESS GLOBAL FOOD ISSUES

Young people are inspired to become tomorrow's science leaders in **California** 4-H's Science Matters program. As part of the program, a diverse and mostly urban group of 13 4-H'ers participated in a national summit on agricultural science to learn more about challenges facing agriculture, food security and sustainability from leading scientists, elected officials and advocates.

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After the summer, the teens expressed changes in their understanding and attitudes toward where their food comes from and a better understanding of the role of technology and science in agriculture. Listen to their comments:

- “The most impactful was the career fair. I met a woman who showed me another field of study I am now super interested in. Sustainability sounds super cool, especially

in an urban setting and I’m actually considering studying this in college as a potential career path now.”

- “The summit gave me insight on farming and how big the industry is. I know now I need to care for it more and not take it for granted.”
- “I was expecting rural traditional farmers who were against the technological and scientific improvements to agriculture. This was not the case.”

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