



Virginia 4-H Alumni and Friends Newsletter

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JULY 2023

MESSAGE FROM YOUR STATE 4-H CAMPING SPECIALIST

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VIDEOS AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM STATE STAFF TRAINING

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fun Camp Facts:

The first 4-H Camp conducted in Virginia was in 1917 in Loudoun County

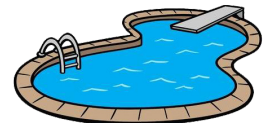
The first Center in Virginia opened in 1928 (Jamestown)

The first campers arrived to this Center on a train. (Southwest)

Favorite Camp Food:



Favorite Camp Activity:



Join our Virginia 4-H Alumni and Friends Network

We are forming the Virginia 4-H Alumni and Friends network. Stay connected about upcoming 4-H Alumni and Friends events, statewide 4-H programming efforts, volunteer opportunities and much more. Sign up to receive information from Virginia 4-H.

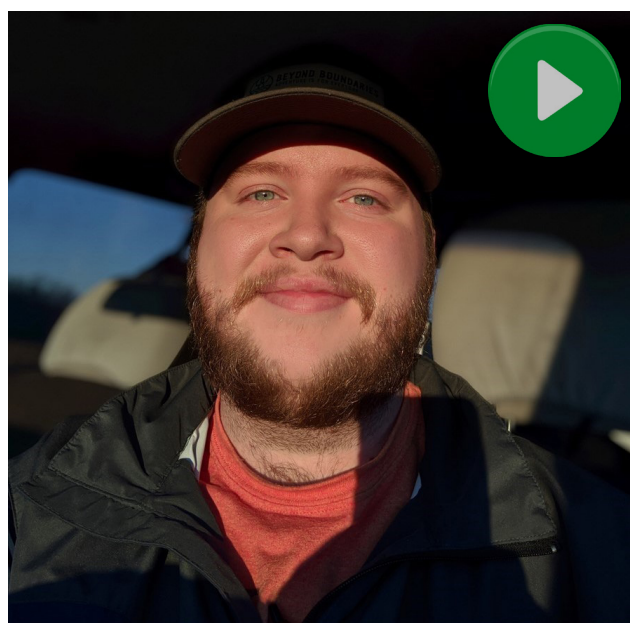


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MEET YOUR 2023 4-H CENTER PROGRAM DIRECTORS



Abbie Moore
Program Director
Southwest VA 4-H Center



Tyler Cheely
Program Director
Holiday Lake 4-H Center



Tatyana "Sequoia" Yates
Program Director
Northern VA 4-H Center

"The thing that I am looking forward the most to this summer, I love camp in all of its forms, though I am especially excited for our Cloverbuds Camp, our weekend with campers 5-8 and their parents, this year with a Treasure Hunters theme! Our Cloverbuds Camp has grown so much since I first coordinated it in 2021, and for many it's their first taste at 4-H camp and I love working with the little ones."

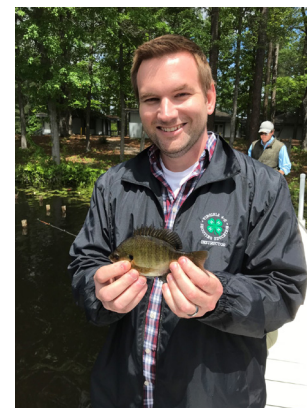
Sequoia looks forward to her chicken tenders and mac and cheese days at camp. Her favorite part of being a program director is the ability to work with so many youth and people within the local communities. "No days are the same, there is always some rainbow at the end of the even the stormiest days." Sequoia also grew up in the 4-H camping program from Rappahannock County.



Rayna "Caddyshack" Wheeler
Program Director
Skelton 4-H Center

"There are SO many favorite camp memories. My favorite memories mostly consist of my time on summer staff at Airfield. That experience truly changed me as a person and made me realize I wanted to make positive youth development in a camp setting my career. My favorite memories mostly consist of my time on summer staff at Airfield. That experience truly changed me as a person and made me realize I wanted to make positive youth development in a camp setting my career."

Caddyshack has spent 25 consecutive summers at 4-H camp. She has spent 11 summers as camp staff at Airfield and is now in her 14th year at the Skelton 4-H Center. Growing up in the Virginia Beach 4-H camping program, Caddyshack looks forward to working with her summer staff and the new experiences with the Military Teen Adventure Camp.



Joey "Skoot" Patterson
Program Director
Airfield 4-H Center

"My favorite part of being a program director is seeing staff grow as a team and leading them to success. Seeing all of the happy campers knowing camp was a success when they all cry because they don't want to leave. I enjoy seeing all of the hard work to prepare for camp come to fruition each and every week."

Skoot is a former 4-H camper from Surry County. He enjoyed making new friends and having Twinkie (4-H staffer) bring him out of his comfort zone. Twinkie helped Skoot to grow as a camper. She instilled the value of positivity and how to be kind to others. She also taught Skoot not to be afraid to leave his comfort zone. His favorite camp food is corn dog nuggets and Skoot is looking forward to getting to see what the campers have learned.

How being a 4-H Camp Staff Member influenced our 4-H Alumni



"Camp is not only about learning new things but making new friends while keeping the old."

Jennifer Shortridge, along with Michael McBride, served as summer camp staffers and now, both as adults, currently serve on the Board of Directors at the Southwest Virginia 4-H Center.

Jennifer became involved in 4-H as a camper then grew with 4-H and became a team leader, then an adult.

"I believe that growing up in 4-H helped me grow as an adult by becoming an effective leader. 4-H gave me the skills of being confident enough to lead a group of people, to learn new things, and to grow with the environment that I'm in. Growing up in 4-H gave me friends for life that I have met through doing different programming."

Recently while working Jennifer randomly ran in to a fellow 4-Her that she had worked with one summer during camp and 9 years later they still remembered working together at 4-H Camp.

"My favorite camp memory was and currently is the candle lighting ceremony at the end of the week at SWVA and watching everyone reflect on the week with the new experiences and friendships they have made."



Top Left: Jennifer Shortridge and Michael McBride as summer camp staff at the Southwest Virginia 4-H Center. Bottom Right: Michael and Jennifer with their new friends during the 2022 camping season.

J. T. Lawhorn is a 4-H camp staff alumni as well. He currently now serves as the 4-H Program Assistant at the W. E. Skelton 4-H Center in Wirtz, VA.

J.T. grew up in the 4-H camping program and has not missed a year of 4-H camp since 1999. He even spent all those years, with one exception, at the W. E. Skelton 4-H Center.

When thinking back about his time as a camper and who might have influenced him the most to stay with the camping program, J. T. said "choosing one person would be difficult for me. I have had so many great summer staffers who have positively impacted me throughout the years. Those span from those who were on summer staff when I was a camper all the way to those who I worked along side during my years on summer staff. "

This summer, J.T. is looking forward to seeing the youth get to experience the happiness and joy that he got to experience as a child. In addition, he enjoys watching all the teens, adults, and summer staff coming together to positively impact the lives of every youth participant that steps onto the W. E. Skelton property.



"I would have to say that my favorite camp memory as a camp staffer would be getting to see summer staffers who I have seen grow up in the 4-H program go out an excel at being positive influences to the youth. Getting to see a full circle moment, knowing that what they are doing for the kids is what was done for them and ultimately is the reason why they are on summer staff. ."

Inspire the Next Generation - Become a 4-H Camp Volunteer!

You are more than just a volunteer in 4-H — you are instrumental in inspiring the next generation.

4-H programs look to volunteers to help our young people learn the skills they need to prepare for their futures while also having fun!

Volunteers worked with Virginia youth — helping them learn by doing. In 4-H, you can help youth have opportunities to master life challenges, cultivate independence with guidance from caring adults, gain a sense of belonging within a positive group, and share a spirit of generosity with others.

Share your Talents!

You can share your expertise to provide young people with learning opportunities as varied as rocketry, GPS mapping, public speaking, agricultural science, photography, community service, and so much more.

Using research-based 4-H project curriculum, you will have the resources to learn as you teach. Either way, you will have the support you need from your local Virginia Cooperative Extension office.

Share your Time!

Volunteers are essential to help youth make the most of these learning opportunities.

According to research, youth who are provided with positive adult interactions grow to become strong, confident young adults

AROUND THE COUNTRY...

2024: IGNITE BY 4-H

Spark your imagination and passion! [Ignite by 4-H](#), an inclusive teen event, returns March 13 - 17, 2024, to Washington, D.C. Join us for four days of inspiring and engaging panels, respected speakers, hands on workshops, experiences, networking and connections. The summit will provide high school aged youth from across the country the opportunity to explore the best 4 H has to offer in STEM, Agriscience, Healthy Living, Career Readiness and Emotional Well Being.

Don't miss this opportunity to discover exciting career paths and create an actionable plan to ignite change in your community. Stay tuned for more information on registration.

THIS IS 4-H SPOTLIGHT: NIKHITA



In 4-H, we believe that leadership comes in all forms. Throughout the year, National 4-H Council will spotlight 4-Hers stepping up and creating positive change in their communities. The week of May 23rd spotlighted Nikhita Saravanan, a Virginia 4-Her. Nikhita is an accomplished artist and dancer, but what truly sets her apart is her dedication to public service and engagement.

Nikhita connects to her Indian heritage and Hindu religion through the different stories and mythologies she learns in her practice of classical Bharatanatyam dance. Whether she's creating opportunities for artistic expression with her non profit organization 4 Art 2 Heart, sharing her cultural connections, or leading events to establish a more equitable society, Nikhita is helping to make the world a better place every step of the way.

4-H CEO LETTER TO 4-H GRADUATES

"Your country and your world needs leaders like you".
Congratulations to all 2023 4-H graduates.

[Read 4-H's CEO Jennifer Sirangelo's letter to all graduates about this important milestone.](#)

AROUND THE STATE...

4-H ALUMNI AND FRIENDS SOCIAL SMITHFIELD, VA



VIRGINIA 4-H STATE STAFF CAMP TRAINING HELD AT JAMESTOWN 4-H CENTER

UPCOMING 4-H EVENTS FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

September 9, 2023
CALS Alumni Organization Tailgate
Blacksburg, VA

SAVE THE DATE:

March 13 - 17, 2024
2024 Ignite by 4-H

Follow us on Social Media!



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