

Virginia 4-H INSPIRE KIDS TO DO



photo collage created by Tim Skiles

Message from Jeremy Johnson, 4-H State Leader

From our inception in the early 1900s to this very day, Virginia 4-H has been dedicated to empowering youth to meet the challenges of the present.

Throughout the last year, 4-Hers rose to this occasion. Young people still learned by doing in ways that emphasized 4-H's renowned philosophy of youth development.

Youth used their voice to push for a more inclusive 4-H experience, to fight food insecurity, and to empower other youth to make positive change and create safe spaces to share ideas.

We take an immense pride in serving our communities and in our important role in serving youth. We promise to continue providing these opportunities and the platforms for youth

in Virginia so they may become well-rounded, civic-minded, and successful in their future endeavors.

While camp may have looked different this year, smiles and enthusiastic singing could still be seen and heard – even behind masks. Campers shared stories of teamwork, discovery, and fun with their peers.

Regardless of the circumstances faced, our youth have continued to strive for excellence.

All the best,

Jeremy Johnson
Assistant Director and State 4-H Leader
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Jeremy Johnson

Farming in view

Less than 100 years ago, the metropolis that is Tyson's Corner and the Beltway around Washington, D.C., was farmland. Now, most farms are out of sight in the areas surrounding the nation's capital.

After joining 4-H, Becca Berglie, 17, of Fairfax, Virginia, saw the lack of agricultural awareness firsthand.



Becca Berglie

Becca wants use the skills 4-H equipped her with to educate people about how food comes from the farm to table. She is volunteering at Frying Pan Farm Park, a county park that is a working model of a 1930s-1950s-era farm to show people how food goes from the farm to the table.

"I used skills like leadership, public speaking, and the confidence that I developed in 4-H at the club and county level to provide agricultural education to my community and provide agricultural education in an urban area," Becca said.

4-H inspired Becca by empowering her to do what she loves.

"I learned to never give up on something you believe in, to keep pushing for change if you feel it is right, and to use my voice," Becca said. "It has inspired me to continue my involvement through college to inspire others to be their authentic self, ask questions, be a leader, learn and find what they love."

Training your brain

Perisa Ashar loves STEM. So much so that she led a 4-H monthly STEM club.

In these clubs, she taught students how to program a Sprite – a simple character that is coded to go through a maze. In another class, Perisa helped students create a diagram of the circulatory system and various organs, such as using pink balloons to symbolize lungs.



Perisha Ashar

The Henrico County resident didn't want these workshops to disappear during COVID-19, so she continued volunteering with 4-H while pursuing her passion for STEM education. Through her international nonprofit organization, STEMinate, where she is the executive director, she collaborated with 4-H to offer a 10-week virtual program called "Train Your Brain" in hopes of reaching a new audience she had not yet reached. With an audience of elementary and middle school students, Perisa and three other STEMinate advisory board members successfully taught engaging lessons each week.

"Her unique, hands-on lessons engaged the students each and every time," said Carter Humphries, a 4-H youth development agent in Henrico County. "Youth from all over Virginia and even other countries participated in the virtual sessions. Perisa's passion for STEM has impacted youth within and beyond the borders of Henrico County. Henrico 4-H is thankful for the influence she has had on the lives of Henrico County 4-H youth over the past two years."

4-H'ers excel compared to their peers. They are:

4X

more likely to actively contribute to their communities

2X

more likely to participate in STEM activities in out-of-school time

2X

more likely to make healthier choices

Using 4-H to find a voice

Andrew “Charlie” Sloop got involved with 4-H when he was a young child. Sitting in his 4th grade class in Bland County, he distinctly remembers the junior 4-H program of a speech, presentation, and monthly meetings that offered different projects and opportunities.

From these speeches and presentations, Charlie grew. He found his passion in communications, storytelling, public speaking, and advocacy. In his time in 4-H, he worked to help other 4-Hers become more comfortable with public speaking and communications, including technology that is mainly used in film, different structures of public speaking, and how talking about topics of interest can help them find their passion.

“When I started the project that I felt I could make a difference by making it entertaining and enjoyable for those at a young age and I did,” Charlie said. “4-H gave me the aspiration to inspire and assist others – along with myself – to pinpoint their potential and passion.”

His work with youth in developing their communication and presentation skills led Sloop to attend Virginia Tech in fall 2021.

“4-H has inspired me to become the better version of myself,” Sloop said. “No matter the situation, I am always trying to find a way to improve myself because I know that there is still a lot that I want to learn and improve my flaws.”



Andrew “Charlie”
Sloop

Jumping over bullies

One day in middle school, Samantha Whysong befriended someone new. But her other friends didn't take kindly to that – they were jealous that Samantha was spending time with someone else.

That's when the bullying began. She began to feel more alone each day – and that's when she realized that she didn't want anyone else to feel this way.

As a member of 4-H, Samantha began an anti-bullying campaign. She worked with her 4-H mentors and put her campaign, “Jumping Over Bullies,” into action.

The campaign includes Samantha's dwarf miniature horse Reuben: he has a bulging forehead, an extreme underbite, and knock knees. She chose to use Reuben in her campaign to highlight that just because someone looks different does not mean they should be treated differently. Reuben's best friend, Prince, the rooster, also appears in the campaign to show that friendship knows no limitations.

“Throughout my 4-H career, I have made forever friends, developed an amazing support system, and blossomed as an individual,” Samantha said. “There have been endless opportunities provided to me in 4-H, that I would not have been able to get anywhere else. Through the opportunities provided to me, I have also been able to develop crucial life skills such as, teamwork, leadership, responsibility, organization, and so much more. It is because of my amazing experience with 4-H that I feel prepared to enter the next chapter of my life.”



Samantha Whysong

4-H spirit shines through Emerald Clover winner

In 2021, Dooley received 4-H's Emerald Clover and is the 2021 National 4-H Hall of Fame Inductee for his significant 4-H involvement and contributions to his local, state, and national communities. Though Dooley has had a plethora of roles at Virginia Tech – including being the CEO of the Virginia Tech Foundation – he said his experiences in 4-H shaped who he is both as a leader and a person.

“4-H has contributed so much to who I am today,” Dooley said. “I would not have had the life that I have without 4-H.”

And some say that 4-H has benefited from Dooley just as much as Dooley benefited from it.

“Without John Dooley, Virginia 4-H would not be what it is today,” said Jeremy Johnson, state 4-H program leader. “He has been instrumental in truly giving youth the opportunities to succeed and become strong, confident leaders in their communities, the commonwealth, and the nation. He spent his entire career making the best better. We are all thankful for John's many contributions to 4-H and Virginia's youth.”

In all of his endeavors, Dooley lived by one personal motto, which echoes a 4-H slogan: “You don't make the best better by going halfway.”

“As long as I can get up in the morning and my feet hit the ground, I am going to get out there and make sure I do something that makes a difference in someone's life.”



John Dooley



***140,978**

**young people — and
counting — participate
in Virginia 4-H youth
programs**

*enrollment data from
2019-2020



107

**counties and cities
served, with 6 4-H
educational centers
throughout the state**



7,152

**adult and youth
volunteers**



32.1%

**of 4-H youth
participate from
under-represented
groups**

**Enrollment numbers
decreased due to
COVID-19 restrictions**



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100TH

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JUNE 20- JUNE 24, 2022



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- Send a teen to State 4-H Congress: **\$500**
- Send a kid to a national 4-H leadership event: **\$2000**



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