From the Foundation Board Chair

Dear Friends,

_CloverSeed_ tells the stories of what Illinois 4-Hers have been doing in the previous year, thanks to generous donations from people who know and value 4-H. My fellow Illinois 4-H Foundation board members and I are excited to see it in print.

Let me begin with a hearty thank you to each of you who donated to Illinois 4-H this year. Your gift may have provided a trip to 4-H Congress or the National 4-H Conference. It may have helped finance a judging team or funded scholarships for 4-Hers who are continuing their educations. Your donation may have provided a grant to a SPIN (Special Interest) club or helped fund the training of teen teachers.

I encourage you to read _CloverSeed_ from cover to cover to learn about the myriad ways that donations to the Illinois 4-H Foundation were used in FY2016 to enrich the life-changing experiences of Illinois 4-Hers.

We are proud to have been the conduit between you as the donor and 4-H youth throughout Illinois. This year, our combined efforts delivered more than $379,000 to provide key experiences to Illinois 4-Hers.

The Illinois 4-H program continues to grow in the number of young people served and in the breadth of offerings. This year, more than 180,000 youths are experiencing 4-H. Be sure to read Dr. Lisa Diaz’s letter (p. 3) to better appreciate the enrichment and expansion of 4-H, now in its second century.

The letter from Foundation executive director Angie Barnard is a must-read, too (p. 4). Angie highlights the fundraising efforts of the Foundation, which received more than $526,000 in donations this year.

My fellow board members and I help the Foundation staff develop relationships with potential donors and thank donors who give year after year. After you finish reading _CloverSeed_, think of a few people you know who share your passion for 4-H. You could pass your _CloverSeed_ on to one of them. Better yet, call the Illinois 4-H Foundation office at 217-333-9295 with their names and addresses, and we’ll do the rest.

I also encourage you to stay informed year-round: check the foundation’s web page—4hfoundation.Illinois.edu—and “like” the Foundation on Facebook.

Warm regards,

Cheryl Wormley
Chair, Illinois 4-H Foundation
Board of Directors

It’s been a year of “MORE” for Illinois 4-H

**MORE** participation at key 4-H events—4-H Memorial Camp (UP 8.5%), Illini Summer Academies (UP 24%), the State Robotics Competition (UP 14%), and 4-H at the Illinois State Fair (UP 28%). Plus more brand-new events, such as the Youth Livestock Conference.

**MORE** programs tackling important Illinois issues. New programs—the Honey Bee Challenge, Juntos, Junior Chef, Ready4Life—complement long-time programs of I Think Green, Conservation Day, Health Rock, Health Jam, and more.

**MORE** members. When involvement in other groups is declining, Illinois 4-H has enjoyed a 24% growth in total participation over 5 years.

**MORE** recognition for 4-H members. A new award system gives more youth more options for celebrating their successes.

**MORE** ways for 4-H alumni to stay connected to Illinois 4-H. Be sure to register as a 4-H alum at go.illinois.edu/4Halumni.
From Our State 4-H Program Leader

This was a big year for 4-H in the Diaz household. Our son attended his first 4-H camp in 2016; our daughter, as part of the 4-H international program, traveled abroad for four weeks. Both brought home wonderful stories of friendships made and lessons learned. I hope that 4-H likewise expanded the world of youth in your circle of family and friends.

Experiences like these, and the many others that 4-H members enjoy, are possible only because of the assistance we receive from supporters like you through the Illinois 4-H Foundation. We are truly grateful for each and every gift. The creation of the Illinois 4-H Alumni Association, launched at this year’s Illinois State Fair, gave me an opportunity to visit with many of you. You made it clear how important your 4-H heritage is to you.

We’ve worked this year to build our organizational capacity to guarantee high-quality 4-H experiences for this generation of young people. Please visit our new Illinois 4-H website, at 4-H.illinois.edu, alive with more than 2,000 photos of Illinois 4-H participants and families. In addition to the inviting graphics, the site provides lots of opportunities to interact. Ask a question, whatever page of the site you are on. Register for an event without leaving the page that tells you about it. Request new programs for your classroom or club. You can even “Tell a Friend” about an event by clicking a button which leads to your own social media page. That feature lets you become part of our marketing team. Share your story with us and you may be featured on the site! Finally, each page provides a direct link to the Illinois 4-H Foundation’s website, allowing you to donate your financial support to the 4-H program.

We have also transitioned (by popular request—and after a bit of internal hoop-jumping) to online registration. Now 4-H families can enroll, select projects, and register for the fair any time of the day without leaving home. A new award system allows youth from any background, interest, tenure, or location to celebrate what they’ve learned and be acknowledged for their achievements.

None of this would be possible without a team of devoted professionals who work countless hours for our 4-H youth and families. I want to acknowledge their hard work and dedication. Several were honored this year by the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, and many others presented educational workshops for the 3,000 youth workers attending the conference.

Despite many challenges facing U of I Extension in recent years, we’ve been able to grow 4-H by over 24% the past five years. We continue to expand our services to underserved youth, increasing minority membership by 90% in five years and Hispanic membership by 137% in the same time. Your gifts are making a difference in the world.

Dr. Lisa Bouillion Diaz
4-H Assistant Dean and Director, University of Illinois Extension 4-H Youth Development
Over the 115 years since 4-H began, it has remained consistently relevant to developing strong, independent, generous youth prepared to take on life and the workplace. Has the program evolved, too? Of course—we wouldn’t expect anything else of 4-H.

I am passionate about what I do, and I am proud to be part of 4-H—an organization that puts youth first, provides them with a safe environment to explore their interests, and affords opportunities to meet friends they might not cross paths with otherwise and to help identify their future paths.

There are so many new things with Illinois 4-H to be aware of and excited about! This edition of the CloverSeed highlights many. I hope you take time to enjoy the pictures, read about the impacts, and consider how you might financially support Illinois 4-H through a gift to the Illinois 4-H Foundation.

- **New 4-H programs.** Curriculums that focus on the needs of Illinois citizens along with efforts to recognize our large 4-H alumni footprint in Illinois are demonstrated by stories on 4-H Citizen Scientists (p. 8), the Honeybee Challenge (p. 9), and the Illinois 4-H Alumni Association (p. 44).

- **New leadership with our land-grant university.** Dean Kimberlee Kidwell has joined the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, home to University of Illinois Extension and Outreach and to our Illinois 4-H program.

- **New donor relations.** The mission of the Illinois 4-H Foundation has continually evolved during its 63 years of existence. We are proud that the number of donors to the Foundation increased by 6.3% this year. We are also pleased to welcome CoBank and CME Group as Illinois 4-H Project Partners (p. 41).

- **New recognition event.** The Foundation was proud to be a part of “Celebrate Excellence,” the first annual statewide award reception, in November. It was inspiring to hear about many accomplishments from around the state and to see so many supporters come together to acknowledge such hard work.

- And, in my family, a new 4-H member. Our son, Alex, joined 4-H this year, and our daughter, Brecke, became a Cloverbud. My husband and I are proud to deepen our family roots with a new generation of 4-Hers and to add “4-H parent” to our rich experiences with the program!

The Illinois 4-H Foundation Board of Directors and staff thank you for your financial support. Your gifts have allowed us to impact every statewide event or program at some level, insuring the continued success of the 4-H program.

With warmest regards,

Angie Barnard
Executive Director
Illinois 4-H Foundation
Nannette Armstrong

Why do you give to the Illinois 4-H Foundation?

For a long time, I just didn’t know how the projects, programs, and awards I enjoyed with 4-H were funded. Looking back, I know 4-H was a contributor to who I am and the life skills I mastered. It’s my turn to be a contributor to 4-H! Government funding is no longer there for the kinds of special trips—Leadership Camp, Dairy Conference, and 4-H Congress—I was awarded. Donations from businesses and individuals are needed to continue this excellent nationwide youth development program and to provide new opportunities for Illinois youth.

College became an extension of 4-H for me—my major, some of my activities, and definitely my home on campus in 4-H House. As an adult, I was a 4-H leader at times, and later I worked with 4-H as an Extension professional. I know 4-H is still relevant.

How do you give back to the Illinois 4-H Foundation?

While I was working for Extension, I invested a good portion of my salary in an IRA and sometimes made donations directly to the Illinois 4-H Foundation. Now that I am retired, my IRA Minimum Required Distribution exceeds my annual living expenses, so I can make a Qualified Charitable Contribution. Illinois 4-H Foundation is my choice for the biggest portion, and the 4-H Legacy of Leadership Scholarship is one designation I make from this gift.

For more inspiring thoughts from Illinois 4-H donors about their reasons for giving, see pages 7 and 47.
The Illinois 4-H Foundation Board of Directors

A Purposeful Foundation

The members of the Illinois 4-H Foundation Board of Directors are indeed purposeful. Giving their time and energy to pursue financial support for 4-H youth across Illinois, board members—using their backgrounds, connections, and expertise—advance the work of the Foundation as we raise funds and spread the word in ways that advance the 4-H vision.

Each board member is an ambassador to promote and share 4-H with unfamiliar individuals, corporations, and organizations, as well to express gratitude to those that already support us. The board understands the need to meet future challenges and the vital role they and the Foundation play in serving Illinois 4-Hers.

The Illinois 4-H Foundation Board of Directors: 18 dedicated volunteers with a vital mission. We are grateful to (front, from left) Jessie Crews of Clark County; Renee Deuth, corporate advisor, Illinois Farm Bureau; Lila Jeanne Eichelberger of Champaign County; Sharon Tenhouse of Adams County; Heather Thompson, corporate advisor, of GROWMARK; (back) Roger Clark of Cook County; Steve Launius of Washington County; Paul Hadden of DuPage County; Kara Brockamp, youth representative; Kevin Carey of Grundy County; Cheryl Wormley of McHenry County, chair; Anthony Warmack, youth representative; Barbara Rundquist Clark of Cook County; Jerry Hicks of Sangamon County; Dan Kelley of McLean County. Our thanks also to those not pictured; Beverly Haselhorst of Stephenson County, Karl Barnhart of Sangamon County, and Jan Sibley of Lake County.
Popular Ways to Give Today

- Cash
- Securities
- Real estate/farmland
- Personal property
- IRA charitable rollover (for those age 70½ or older)

Simple Ways to Extend Your Impact

- Retirement plan assets
- Life insurance proceeds
- Bank or brokerage accounts
- Will or trust

Share the following language with your estate-planning attorney to add to your will or living trust. “I leave (e.g., % of estate, $ amount, residue) to the University of Illinois Foundation, an Illinois nonprofit corporation (37-6006007), for the benefit of Illinois 4-H Foundation supporting the Illinois 4-H Youth Development Program.”

The good feeling of knowing you are making a difference can grow by combining a current gift to Illinois 4-H with a future gift. This thoughtful approach lets you both see the impact of your support today and help us address challenges of tomorrow.

Blending today’s giving with a future gift to Illinois 4-H lets you make a bigger impact than you might have thought possible. You have the flexibility to choose the combination of gifts that complement your financial situation and the future needs of you and your loved ones.

Why I give...

Jo Menacher

Why do you give to the Illinois 4-H Foundation?

4-H has always been a very important part of my life. From joining my local 4-H Club as an 8-year-old to currently serving on the 4-H Memorial Camp board, I have remained active and supportive of the values and opportunities 4-H provides to all participants. By giving to the Illinois 4-H Foundation, I can help future generations of youth have the same experiences and opportunities that I had.

How do you give back to the Illinois 4-H Foundation?

Some of my fondest 4-H memories center on 4-H Memorial Camp—I spent many summers there, first as a camper and then on staff. I have designated a percentage of my estate to support future 4-H Memorial Camp needs and have taken the steps necessary with the Foundation and my attorney to ensure this gift.
Stewarding the natural resources we all share

Illinois 4-H members enrolled in 56,000 4-H projects focused on the environment, and 7 out of 10 members involved in 4-H environmental programs say they have ideas to care for the environment. School programs are an effective way to deliver the environmental message. I Think Green engages youth in investigating how living things interact with each other and with their environments. In Nature Detectives, youth learn to understand local habitats. As 4-H Citizen Scientists, youth work in streams near their homes to monitor water quality and provide data to improve the conditions of Illinois waterways and streams.

In their individual project work, 4-H members study the impact of chemical runoff as they grow crops to feed the world. Youth enrolled in animal production practice the medication procedures that provide a safe consumer product. Young entomologists discover the importance of insects to the web of life. Forestry projects help youth see the importance of trees for clean air. Together, 4-H members are putting their heads, hands, and hearts into the health of the planet.

= Members become Nature Detectives as they learn more about our natural resources.

The Illinois constitution states that “the public policy of the state and the duty of each person is to provide and maintain a healthful environment for the benefit of this and future generations.” The Illinois Department of Natural Resources supports 90,000 Illinois jobs and at least $32 billion of annual economic impact. Our very lives are inseparable from the health of our planet. While we save the world for future generations, Illinois 4-H believes, we should be saving it for the current generation.

“The emphasis 4-H placed on living a well-balanced life and the ‘I dare you to be your own self at your very best all the time’ challenge made an impact on my life that has continued to this day. Trees that I planted as part of a conservation project are now fully mature and provide homes for birds and other wildlife. 4-H taught me how our lives can make a difference in our world.”

—Karen Campbell, Champaign County
Feeding the world by saving the honey bees

You don’t think much about honeybees until you realize what won’t exist without their work as key pollinators.

Picture your local grocery store aisle. Now take away all the apples, beans, blueberries, broccoli, cantaloupes, cherries, cucumbers, grapefruit, lemons, limes, oranges, peaches, peppers, plums, pumpkins, raspberries, strawberries, squashes, and watermelons.

The empty spots on the shelves represent what will disappear unless we protect pollinators, said Bill Million, University of Illinois Extension 4-H youth development specialist. “Honey bees account for 80 percent of all insect pollination.”

Illinois 4-H, through a grant provided by Monsanto and the National 4-H Council, is teaching young people the importance of pollinators to our food supply. As part of the national 4-H Ag Innovators Experience, youth participants took their peers on the “Honey Bee Challenge” last summer.

4-H teen teachers made learning fun for the 2,145 participants. The teens taught about honey bee habitats, showed the important role of honey bees in agriculture and food production, showed the current threat to habitats, and explored ways to preserve these bee habitats.

“We know in order to feed the additional 2 billion people which will live on this earth in the coming 40 years, we need young professionals to drive innovation in agriculture,” Million said.

In addition to the Honey Bee Challenge, an entomology program was added to the Illini Summer Academies, a high school 4-H program aimed at introducing students to a college experience. Ten students monitored the beehives at the University of Illinois Pollinator Farms.

Leaders for the state team of teachers were (from left) Lanie Obermark, Bryce Crim, Tammie Obermark, and Keeton Reynolds. Tammie Obermark serves as the state volunteer coordinator; the others are 4-H members from Massac County.

Jody Johnson, University of Illinois Extension county director, promoted the Honey Bee Challenge in the five southernmost counties in Illinois. “Being a part reminded me of the importance of bees in our ecosystem,” Johnson said. “The pictures of a grocery store showing our produce choices with bees and without bees were very impactful. They drove home the importance of educating our youth to the challenges honey bees face and how we can help.”

To save the honey bees, youth had to help the bees do the “waggle dance” to tell other bees where good sources of food exist and relay that information back to the hive.
4-H conducts groundbreaking research on the Edwards River

Mercer County 4-H Citizen Scientists began their adventure partnering with Living Lands and Waters, adopting a section of the Edwards River to clean. Later they also joined the Illinois RiverWatch effort to test and monitor the river’s water quality.

The first outing for the Citizen Scientists was June 30. The testing conditions were challenging—the group experienced heavy rainfall, swift current, and high winds. Despite the weather, the water’s turbidity remained remarkably clear. The sandy substrate and swift current made it difficult to find many macroinvertebrates in the sampling. From the few that were found, the group rated the water quality as fair to good.

In August, fish and wildlife biologist Aleshia Kenny met with the group at the river site. Using a large seining net, they collected samples that confirmed the findings regarding the health of the Edwards River. The collection included the shell of an endangered large yellow sand clam, many sand shiners, flathead minnows, and a johnny darter, whose intolerance to water pollution indicates excellent water quality.

Fish and wildlife biologist Aleshia Kenny points out the distinguishing “M” on the side of a johnny darter. She explains that the species is an indicator of excellent water quality due to its intolerance to water pollution, confirming that Edwards River water quality is good.

The club revisited the river throughout the fall and performed chemical analyses with Kenny. The Mercer County 4-H Citizen Scientists are the first group to collect samples and data on the Edwards River. “Realizing that Living Lands and Waters and Illinois RiverWatch had no previous data makes this project even more exciting,” a club leader said.

Collecting samples downstream in a uniform riffle area.
There are 4-H projects—and then there is Anthony Warmack’s version of a 4-H project. For years, Anthony has made environmental sciences his passion.

Robert Woodruff of the Illinois Stewardship Alliance has collaborated with Anthony on water quality and nutrient loss projects. “I was impressed with his knowledge and ability to understand the information we were researching.”

Anthony, a recent 4-H alum from Grundy County who now works at the county U of I Extension office, promoted natural resource education on three fronts. First, he created a magazine for both rural and urban homeowners addressing proper fertilizer use, importance of soil testing, and sustainable gardening and landscaping.

Second, he developed a mobile app that allows people to get answers to environmental questions. And third, Anthony has honed his educational skills to reach more than 4,500 people. “Citizen science is something I’m really passionate about,” Anthony said. “I think is a really great tool for teaching the general public.”

Gathering information can be costly, so Anthony designed an easy-to-make spectrometer that teachers use with their students to collect data from the field. That data is added to the collective research from people around the country and leads to practical policies and practices to preserve our natural resources.

“Anthony is very conservation-minded and devoted to educating others on our natural resources and how to preserve them,” said David Wallgast, Illinois conservation officer.

How to Remember Illinois 4-H Program in Your Will or Trust

Share the following language with your estate-planning attorney to add to your will or living trust.

I leave (e.g., % of estate, $ amount, residue) to the University of Illinois Foundation, an Illinois nonprofit corporation (37-6006007), for the benefit of Illinois 4-H Foundation supporting the Illinois 4-H Youth Development Program.
What can robotics do for you?

Robotics has been a highly successful way to engage youth in out-of-school programming. Besides the pure fun of building and designing, 4-H STEM projects encourage youth to be critical thinkers and team players. Our surveys show that Illinois 4-H members are more likely than their peers to want a job related to science and that they find science exciting. Not only do they like science, Illinois 4-H members are twice as likely to believe they are good at it.

Across the state, STEM-related projects account for 214,000 individual projects, and robotics continues to grow year by year. Special grant funding allows for concentrated work in key metro areas, which host regional showcases at the end of their programming. Staff expected to reach 750 metro youth; they reached 1,282 instead.

And it’s not just robotics that is increasing in popularity with 4-H members. In DuPage and Kendall counties, for example, groups raised enough funds through a Barnes and Noble book fair to purchase a 3-D printer. Just like that, a 4-H Maker Club was created.

More than 65 teams and 400 youth participated in the 2016 Illinois State 4-H Robotics Competition held on the U of I campus.

Companies that rely on technology are encouraged to mentor 4-H robotics teams.
These dogs may not bark, but they do obey commands

Building a robot that obeys commands is hard enough. Now build it to resemble a dog that does tricks, and you have the right ingredients for the 2016 Illinois State 4-H robotics competition, held in April on the University of Illinois campus in Urbana.

Sixty-five teams with 450 4-H members from across the state met to test their skills and forge new friendships.

"4-H Robotics is all about ‘co-opertition’ [a healthy balance of cooperation and competition]," said Bob Smith, University of Illinois Extension volunteer. "The competition encourages youth to work hard, but cooperating with your teammates and other competitors is more important than winning:"

Much of the scoring, in fact, is based on how well team members interact and work together on a team challenge unknown to the participants until they arrive for judging. "Figuring out the challenge isn’t the goal," Smith said. "Working together to consider the options earns the most points."

This year, clubs were challenged to build and program robots that acted like dogs competing in an agility contest. In addition to designing a robot, each team designed an 8-foot by 4-foot mat where the robots performed. Some clubs programmed their dog robots to walk through covered tubes and climb ramps. Others had them weave in and out around poles. A team earned extra points if its dog barked.

Each team was given three attempts on the competition tables, with time between runs to make improvements to its robot. Although there were tables spread around the room, that improvement time found most teams huddled together on the floor with their heads together, trying to better their previous performance.

The Illinois 4-H robotics program has seen tremendous growth, with project enrollments exceeding 7,500 last year. The Illinois 4-H Foundation provided nearly $30,000 in funding, with money going to many 4-H robotics clubs for equipment purchases. In metro areas, work is also supplemented with a grant from Altria.

Nearly 50 volunteers, many of them U of I students, mentored the youth while they judged the event. "4-H members look up to the college students and begin to see the possibilities of having a career in the technology field themselves," Smith said. "For many young people, 4-H robotics offers their first glimpse of a future STEM career."
It starts with an idea. That’s as far as some people get, but Thad Hughes is not “some people.”

The McLean County 4-H member was the 2016 National 4-H Youth in Action award winner in the area of science, technology, engineering and math. He was selected from more than 250 applicants nationwide for the award, sponsored by National 4-H Council through a gift provided by HughesNet.

“Out of the hundreds of submissions we received this year, Thad’s stood out from the crowd not only for his incredible talents in robotics and engineering, but for his dedication to sharing his passion and skills to make a positive impact in his community,” said Jennifer Sirangelo, president and CEO of National 4-H Council. “4-Hers like Thad show just how much positive impact 4-H youth leaders can have on their communities and the world around them.”

Through talks, demonstrations, workshops, and interviews, Thad has engaged more than 6,000 youth in the wonders of science. For four years he has been a mentor for FIRST Lego League and the state robotics competition. He developed a 4-H out-of-school program in McLean County called Spinning Robots, in which he taught 50 middle schoolers basic circuitry and how to build simple robots.

The son of Matthew Hughes and Connie Schneider, Thad is currently studying engineering at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, one of the nation’s top-ranked undergraduate schools in engineering.

Thad said he works to turn an idea into reality. “It’s satisfying to know I built something. I didn’t just come up with an idea; I made it a reality.”

The Youth in Action award celebrates 4-H members who have overcome challenges and used the knowledge they gained in 4-H to create a lasting impact in their community. Thad has helped fill the void of STEM training in the rural central Illinois community where he lives.

Thad is a charter member of Team Metal Cow, which now boasts 33 members, as well as five other 4-H clubs, including Power Surge, Quadratic Crushers, Spinning Robots, Linden Lead ’Em, and Robo Vortx. For his work, Thad received a $5,000 scholarship for higher education. An additional $5,000 for STEM programming was awarded to McLean County Extension.
The current graduation rate means that in 2018 there will be 3 million fewer workers than the labor market needs, with 72 percent of jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree or higher. Illinois 4-H is increasing its efforts to prepare youth with skills needed in the workforce—Ready4Life skills, we call them. Illinois 4-H is inspiring a new generation of entrepreneurs and channeling youth to college experiences and mentors who can guide them toward a productive path.

“4-H gave me a sense of accomplishment and my future career path. Because of the success I experienced in sewing, cooking, and other projects, I became a family and consumer science teacher.”

—Dawn Jones, Greene County

Welcome to the Real World

Welcome to the Real World vividly teaches youth the importance of education and training to successful careers. In 2016, 2,600 youth in 10 Extension units participated in this real-life simulation of paying typical monthly bills with income determined by the career they were randomly assigned.

What Did They Learn?

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<th>NOW know</th>
<th>LEARNED MORE about the relationship of jobs, money, &amp; education.</th>
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<td>63%</td>
<td>how to balance income and expenses.</td>
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<td>57%</td>
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In 4-H, youth have a safe place to explore potential careers, meet professionals in jobs of interest, and develop the work ethic and responsibility to be successful in their chosen careers. Here we present just a few of our impacts in College and Careers.

“My view of how important watching how you spend your money is has greatly changed,” said a student at Glenwood Middle School. “I now realize you will have to sacrifice certain things in order to pay for necessities.”
Tech Wizards mentoring program

4-H Tech Wizards is a small-group mentoring program for youth who tend to be underrepresented in STEM fields. Mentors help engage youth interested in science and emerging technologies in learning and encourage them to apply their learning to their future career goals. In Illinois, 46 mentors across the state meet regularly in small groups at community centers, schools, and military bases with 224 youth, who put their heads and hands to a variety of challenging activities. Youth in the program have designed robots, experienced being engineering students for a day during college visits, and used their knowledge and skills to create an all-natural toothpaste.

The participants in Tech Wizards are growing as a result of their involvement. Teens say they take more challenging coursework in school and develop more confidence in problem solving, interpersonal communication, and creative thinking by being in the program. One mentor, reflecting on the progress of a female youth participant, said, “She’s got the mind of an engineer.” Youth who may have not considered pursuing STEM careers are opening up to the possibility that they may be the next STEM innovator.

4-H Teen Teacher Ag in the Classroom

4-H Teen Teacher Ag in the Classroom provides opportunities for teens interested in teaching and agriculture to hone their skills and explore agricultural education. In 2016, 83 teen teachers were involved at 55 different sites. More than 1,700 youth participated.

Teens gained experience in many aspects of teaching, including lesson plan development, positive youth development, teaching methods, and group management skills, all while sharing the story of Illinois agriculture. Youth gained a greater appreciation for the importance of agriculture and some of the careers it offers.

“My experiences have intrigued me to want to be a teacher,” said one teen teacher. “Being a teen teacher has helped me realize how much I love working with children.”

The 4-H Experience

We asked graduating high school seniors what they thought of their experiences in 4-H. This is what they told us:

**EXPOSURE TO OPPORTUNITIES**

96% believe that their 4-H experience helped them build skills they need in future jobs.

73% are more aware of college majors related to their project.

Awareness of career pathways is an important step toward being ready for life, and 4-H creates opportunities for members to gain that awareness.

**SKILL BUILDING**

70% had meaningful conversations with 4-H staff and volunteers about skills they need to achieve their goals.

76% were influenced by coaching from an adult that helped them identify their strengths.

Mastering skills requires practice, but practice without coaching may not lead to progress. 4-H combines practice with frequent opportunities for members to receive coaching from adults who care about their success.

**CREATING PATHWAYS**

17% have started a business related to their project.

66% plan to attend an educational institution in Illinois after high school.

89% have considered a business idea related to their project.

4-H creates viable pathways youth can travel to achieve success in business or a career.
Illini Summer Academies guide youth to college

Bruce Fouke is a leading researcher in the co-evolution of life and the Earth through the sciences of molecular microbiology and geology. As a professor of geology, microbiology, and genomic biology at the University of Illinois, he follows his work to exotic corners of the world to study hot springs and coral reefs. And Fouke is a 4-H alum.

That kinship presented a unique opportunity for Illinois 4-H. Fouke and his team at the Roy J. Carver Biotechnology Center and Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology hosted 20 4-H delegates during the 2016 Illini Summer Academies in the first astrobiology academy.

More than 300 teens explored the U of I campus in 15 different academies of study. Scholars spent 17 hours working closely with university instructors. More than 55 percent of the teen delegates were new to 4-H.

In addition to astrobiology, teens studied aerospace, ag mechanization, animal science, anthropology, chemistry, computer science, creative writing, digital fabrication, electrical and computer engineering, entomology, human development and family studies, molecular and cellular biology, plant science, and vet medicine.

Nearly 70 percent of participants said they’re more interested in attending the University of Illinois because of their academy experience, and 88 percent said they gained valuable career counseling about their field of study.

Illini Summer Academies work. Just ask life sciences teaching specialist Melissa Murray Reedy, who provides the instruction for molecular and cellular biology. “Three students walked up to me at the start of the fall 2016 semester and said they were former delegates in my summer academies course,” Reedy said. “I think their experience at the academies made them more comfortable approaching me and made the new learning environment better for them.”

The Department of Human Development and Family Studies hosted 25 delegates (pictured here with their instructors) during Illini Summer Academies. The department also provided full scholarships to two participants.
FOOD ACCESS & GARDENING

The difference one person can make

Some 4-H teens have taken to heart the “hands to larger service” promise of the 4-H pledge by feeding their neighbors. Clare VanSpeybroeck was recently honored by Illinois 4-H as a state community service award winner for her efforts fighting local hunger. Together, Clare and her team of 4-H Hunger Ambassadors in Rock Island County have distributed more than 115,000 meals in Rock Island County alone.

Clare’s experience helping at a meal-packaging event inspired her to take on the challenge of organizing an event of her own. First she raised $2,300 to cover the cost of the ingredients, aided by an Illinois 4-H Foundation $750 grant (made possible by financial assistance from Evelyn Brandt Thomas). Then Clare and a core team of volunteers distributed more than 16,000 meals for their local community.

Clare and fellow 4-H members also prepare and serve a free monthly meal for the community. They fund a weekend backpack program and teach other Illinois teens how to advocate for those in need. The teens also developed recipes to enhance the packaged meals’ flavor.

“It is because of the amazing support of my 4-H Extension program and 4-H Foundation that I was able to take on this challenge,” Clare said.

—Patricia Elswick, McHenry County

Children can’t learn if they’re hungry. Although Illinois is a leading producer of agricultural commodities, one in five Illinois children—nearly 750,000 of our Illinois youth—experiences hunger. 4-H is helping youth understand where their food comes from, inspiring them to pursue interests in agriculture, and creating opportunities for them to lead change as they advocate for more food-secure communities.

“My favorite memory of 4-H was my trip to State Fair: staying up all night to pick my veggies and pack them gently for the bus ride down, then staying in a huge dorm-like building with so many kids. What an exciting experience.”

—Patricia Elswick, McHenry County

Clare VanSpeybroeck of Rock Island County was inspired to lead a meal-packing event in her community. With the help of many, more than 16,000 meals were distributed locally.
Half a million meals packaged by 4-H Feeding and Growing initiative

Across the state, Illinois 4-H members and volunteers are creating more food-secure communities. Three years into the 4-H Feeding and Growing Our Communities initiative, more than half a million meals have been distributed. Thousands of pounds of garden produce also have been raised to feed hungry families. The grassroots effort empowers youth to understand hunger in their local community, then to tailor a plan to their community’s needs.

Some 4-H members gather food donations to fill weekend backpacks for children to take home. In other places, volunteers create meal packets they donate to local family-assistance sites. These food-packaging events are done with the assistance of Illini Fighting Hunger, a University of Illinois student organization that operates with the campus Wesley Foundation.

In 2016 alone, 259,878 meals were packaged by Illinois 4-H, bringing the people fed through 4-H’s efforts to 588,275 in three years. More than 5,050 volunteers have assisted, donating 30,700 hours of service.

The raw ingredients cost about 14 cents per meal; 4-H clubs must raise funds to cover most of the cost of what they package. Up to $750 is provided for each event from a statewide Illinois 4-H Foundation grant. Seed money was provided by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation; subsequent funding has come from Evelyn Brandt Thomas and Farm Credit Illinois.

Community 4-H gardens also provide valuable support, said Bill Million, U of I Extension 4-H youth development specialist. In some counties they provide a full-circle experience for young 4-H members who till the land, plant the seeds, care for growing plants, harvest the vegetables, then prepare nutritious dishes.

The 2016 growing season challenged gardens; still, in three years, nearly 17,500 pounds of produce with a value of $25,000 have been donated locally. An estimated 7,000 families have enjoyed the bounty.

"It is a joy to watch a garden grow," said a 4-H volunteer from the Bountiful Kids 4-H Club in Peoria County. "But I think the bigger joy was in donating the vegetables we worked hard to tend," she said. "Experiences like these will nourish these children to become giving adults."

Logan County 4-H Ambassadors have filled a real need with their weekend food backpack program, but it was hard for them to grasp that other children didn’t have food at home, Extension educator Carissa Akpore said. Once they understood, their passion to help their peers exploded. The life lessons 4-H members gain may equal the life-saving food their efforts provide, said a Hardin County Corn Fed Clovers Club leader. "The 4-H Feeding and Growing Our Communities garden not only produced vegetables for community members in need; it also produced kids with a new outlook on how they can be caring citizens."

Fifty counties held a 4-H hunger initiative program locally in 2016. Those who wish to support continued 4-H efforts in this area are encouraged to contact Illinois 4-H at illinois4H@illinois.edu or call 217-333-0910.
Illinois 4-H is helping build the capacity of rural youth interested in agricultural careers, while also introducing a new audience to careers they never knew existed in the ag world. Sonny Ramaswamy, director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, warns there’s not enough supply to keep up with the demand in the ag workforce.

“4-H livestock projects, public speaking, and leadership opportunities helped prepare me to run a company developing innovative new technology to help livestock producers better meet the needs of consumers and increase productivity.”

—Joy Parr Drach, Mason County

4-H events make ag come alive

4-H Neighbor to Neighbor

With grant funding from Brandt Foundation, 40 teens from 10 counties investigated current and emerging research being conducted at the University of Illinois. They then worked locally to tell the story of safe and wholesome food production, inspiring other teens to consider careers in agriculture. In Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties, rural and urban teens together toured Braeutigam Orchards to learn how apples are produced and turned into cider. At Finke Dairy Farm, the youth watched as cows, equipped with electronic chips, entered the milking parlor, where the dairy was able to collect data to improve herd management. Macon County youth conducted a food drive and rewarded all the providers with ice cream sundaes while they learned about the careers that contributed to the cool treat.

4-H Youth Livestock Conference

After the inaugural Illinois 4-H Youth Livestock Conference, every one of the 70 participants said they gained knowledge they can use to improve their livestock herds; they also learned about livestock careers. The conference for 4-H members in seventh through ninth grade included lessons on meat science, breeding, herd management, herd health, and marketing. Funding was provided by Farm Credit Illinois and 1st Farm Credit Services through the Illinois 4-H Foundation.

Clay Zwilling demonstrates the reproductive tract of swine.
Livestock Ambassador Team Events

Illinois 4-H livestock ambassadors are the voice of the 4-H youth livestock industry. Twenty-two teens advocate both locally and statewide for livestock and agriculture, in 2016 reaching more than 5,000 people across the state. At the Illinois State Fair the ambassadors provided guided trolley tours of the agriculture complex. At the Youth Livestock Conference they taught sessions on eyeball dissection, carcass cuts, reproductive tract palpation, suturing and wound dressing, biosecurity, and marketing. Serving as livestock ambassadors prepares teens for success in college and agriculture careers as they hone their skills in public speaking and working in teams as well as developing their organization, confidence, decision making, and knowledge of important agriculture issues.

Commodity Carnival

In partnership with National 4-H Council and the CME Group, Illinois 4-H teaches the public about the risks, costs, and income in raising and marketing livestock through Commodity Carnival, a fun, hands-on game. As youth play the game, they learn the challenges and financial risks associated with raising livestock. More than 100 teen leaders presented Commodity Carnival at 35 county fairs across the state in 2016, reaching more than 8,000 people.

State 4-H livestock judging contest draws youth interest

Interest in livestock judging remains high across the state as participation in the state contest grows. Nearly 200 youth participated in 2016.

What do we know about youth who attend the state contest?

- 78% have held an office or another leadership role in their club.
- 44% have held a county, regional, or state leadership role.
- 73% complete 4-H records or award applications.
- 94% participate in other county 4-H events.
- 84% participate in the State Fair or other state 4-H event.
- 25% attend 4-H camp.
- 56% are males.

What skills have these 4-H members learned that help them be better animal stewards?

- 90% are now interested in a career in the livestock industry and say 4-H is giving them the skills to achieve that goal.
- 97% say 4-H animal science has taught them what it means to be responsible and ethical.
- 96% say 4-H animal science has helped them build confidence and social skills.
- 70% have helped their community through their livestock project work.

Two young members intent on their work at the state 4-H Livestock Judging Contest.
That peeping you hear is coming from the hottest 4-H program aimed at bridging the gap between food production and consumption.

Last year more than 26,000 youth, many in metro areas, learned a very simple lesson: chickens come from eggs. 4-H Embryology is the program most requested by school educators in Cook County and the collar counties. For many students, it is their only exposure to food production.

“The Incubation Embryology Program introduces in-school youth to 4-H and Illinois agriculture with a hands-on animal science project that teaches the life cycle of the chick incorporating the STEM scientific model," said Deanna Roby, University of Illinois 4-H youth development educator. “It also emphasizes food safety and responsibility to the school-aged children."

In most counties, teachers must complete professional development training developed by University of Illinois Extension poultry specialist Ken Koelkebeck before being allowed to conduct the program. Extension staff help connect teachers with incubator and fertilized-egg providers, then provide them complete lesson plans.

Teachers must have a plan for placing the chicks after they hatch.

In a world where many people have become disconnected from the food they eat, this program brings the farm into the classroom, teaching animal husbandry, responsibility, and empathy.

"Some students who are sometimes unkind to their peers with words or actions were very empathetic and gentle with the chicks," one instructor said. "It was nice to see their kindness shine.

"It was a great way to engage those students who are often quiet and don’t regularly volunteer in class."

Of course, students also learn harsh realities of life when some of the eggs don’t hatch or chicks don’t survive. Such disappointments give teachers an opportunity to discuss what might have gone wrong, such as an inconsistent temperature in the incubator.

“We were able to have a community around the chicks," said one instructor. "A lot of our kids cannot have pets, so this gave them a sense of ownership, united many cultures, and broke down language barriers."

The activities inspired inquisitive exploration, said one instructor. “All age groups had valid questions, and it motivated kids to read, write, and learn.”

At a time when interest in science is declining, teachers say this program excites youth to think more about science careers. Twenty-six counties conducted 4-H embryology programs in 2016, with 35% of the youth minority and 16% Hispanic.

Currently classrooms must cover the cost of incubators and eggs. Your gift to the Illinois 4-H Foundation could help classrooms in your county provide the resources many schools aren’t able to provide. Be a "good egg" and support your local 4-H embryology program. Start by calling the Foundation office.

The facts of life from a chicken’s viewpoint

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Illinois stands tall in the world of national judging contests. Being good does not just happen; it takes hours and hours of study and practice. The Illinois 4-H Foundation is proud to provide financial support to all the Illinois 4-H teams competing in national judging competitions.

**Three Illinois 4-H members earned the elite status of National Champions.**

**National Hippology—FIRST PLACE**

Aubrey Sieve completed her 4-H career with a first-place win at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup Hippology Contest in November. Aubrey is a member of the Just Say Nay 4-H Club of DuPage County.

“I am so grateful for my time in 4-H,” Aubrey said. “It has taught me so much about the world and myself. Through the wins and losses, I am better because of my 4-H experience.”

**National Horse Judging—FIRST PLACE**

Bailey Wight won the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup Judging Contest held in November. The contest was part of the North American International Livestock Expo. Bailey also placed first in both conformation and oral reason divisions. She is a member of the Bridle Path 4-H Club and the McLean County 4-H Horse Judging Team.

“4-H has taught me that, through hard work and dedication, anything is possible,” Bailey said. She demonstrated that with her dominance against 90 participants.

**Livestock Judging, American Royal—FIRST PLACE**

Adam Gradert of Henry County was the American Royal National 4-H Champion at the contest held in October. He also placed first in swine, second in oral reasons, and fifth in sheep.

“The American Royal was an overall awesome and exciting experience,” Adam said. “It was a fun atmosphere—fun to compete, even more fun to win.”

These Illinois teams earned top awards.

**American Royal 4-H Livestock Judging FIRST-PLACE TEAM**

The top Illinois livestock judging team from Henry/Stark counties was also named the national champion team at the 2016 American Royal Livestock Judging contest. Pictured (from left) are James Dobbels, Lucas Wisnefski, Adam Gradert, Jacob Dobbels, and coach Lee Denzer; not pictured is coach Tyler Cambridge. Adam won the individual contest, Lucas finished 9th, and Jacob finished in 10th place overall.

**National 4-H Livestock Judging SIXTH-PLACE TEAM**

The Illinois State 4-H Livestock Judging Team placed sixth at the National 4-H Livestock Judging contest held in conjunction with the North American International Livestock Exposition. Pictured (front row, from left) are Adrian Austin of Marion County, Adam Gradert of Henry County, Gage Hank of Henry County, Austin Walter of LaSalle County, and (back row, from left) coach Jack Oattes and Lucas Wisnefski of Stark County. The Illinois team placed second in cattle, second in oral reasons, fourth in swine, and sixth overall.

(Continued)
These Illinois teams earned top awards. (Continued)

**National 4-H Horse Hippology**
**THIRD-PLACE TEAM**

The Illinois 4-H Hippology team finished third in the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup Hippology Contest. They placed first in the judging phase of the contest, second in stations, and fourth in the written exam phase. Pictured (from left) are coach Dana Taylor and team members Aubrey Sieve of DuPage County, Madde Klinkey of Kane County, Kaiti Collins of Carroll County, and Bailey Ricketts of Kane County.

**National 4-H Horse Judging**
**THIRD-PLACE TEAM**

A team of Illinois 4-H members placed third overall at the Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup Judging Contest, as well as earning first in oral reasons, second in conformation, and fourth in performance classes. Pictured (from left) are Courtney Wiedenmann of Mercer County, Elena Chapa of Kane County, Bailey Wight of McLean County, and Erin LaKamp of Morgan County. Paul Rogers of Quincy, a former 4-H member from Pope/Hardin counties, coached the team.

**National 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl**
**SECOND-PLACE TEAM**

The Illinois 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl team placed second at the 2016 National 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest. Pictured (from left) are assistant coach Becky Meier, Connor Erbsen of Carroll County, Charlie Elliott of Stephenson County, Jared Dickman of Carroll County, Jordon Oellerich of Stephenson County, and coach Dave Fischer.

**National 4-H Horse Speaking**
**SIXTH-PLACE TEAM**

A team of Mercer County 4-H members placed sixth in the Eastern Nationals 4-H Horse Roundup Team Presentation Contest, as part of the North American International Livestock Expo. Pictured are team members Brandi Welch (left) and Kiersten Pratt.
Livestock judging is a family tradition for Adrian Austin. Adrian completed her 4-H career by winning the elite National 4-H Livestock Judging contest held during the North American International Livestock Exposition in November last year. The national win tops off a stellar judging career for the talented Marion County 4-H member.

Adrian earned the national championship by finishing first in the cattle and oral reason divisions and sixth in the swine division.

Winning judging contests is a way of life for those in Adrian’s family, but don’t think it comes easily; it’s a tradition forged through continual practice and research to improve their skills.

Adrian's older brother, Kane, completed his college judging career at Kansas State. Kane won his own share of national titles and, like Adrian, represented Illinois at the national livestock judging contest.

Their father, Steve, has coached several 4-H teams to national titles. A Marion County 4-H alum, since 2004 he has been the Marion County livestock judging coach and 4-H club leader. Steve is currently livestock specialist with University of Kentucky Extension and coach of its state 4-H team. Not to be left out, Holly Austin, Steve and Adrian's mother, was on the Western Illinois University college livestock judging team.

“It's a passion,” said Marilyn Thompson, former University of Illinois Extension 4-H program coordinator. “It shows in the way they practice, mentor, and compete.” After their Thanksgiving meal, instead of playing football or cards, the Austin family holds a fiercely competitive judging contest, Thompson said.

Adrian is a freshman at Lincoln Land College and a member of its livestock judging team. Her national win wasn’t the first time she’s stood at the front of the line. In previous years Adrian won both the Illinois 4-H individual junior and senior divisions. Two years ago, she won the 4-H Livestock Judging Contest held at the American Royal in Kansas City.

Adrian also serves on the State 4-H Livestock Ambassador Team, where she passionately promotes the value of Illinois agriculture and safe food production.
Faraway adventures await

What makes an Illinois teenager decide to travel to a new country and live with a family she’s never met? For Lana Fitzgerald, it was the adventure of the unknown.

As part of the 4-H intercultural exchange program, Lana lived with a host family in South Korea for four weeks last summer. Korea holds special meaning for the Champaign County 4-H member, who first studied the country in her 4-H intercultural project. Since then, Lana has immersed herself in Korean cuisine, music, and drama.

“I saw a K-pop music video and it got me interested,” Lana said. She downloaded a Korean language app and started learning the language.

Lana embodies the adventurous nature of today’s Illinois 4-H member. She flew alone from Chicago to Alaska, where she caught her flight to Seoul. Even a last-minute change in her host family assignment didn’t dampen the teen’s enthusiasm.

On one adventure, Lana and two of her host sisters toured several buildings and museums at Gyeongbok Palace, the main royal palace of the Joseon Dynasty.

“It was so strange to see such a historical place right in the middle of the bustling city,” she said. “On the way out, we

In our ever-globalizing and fast-changing world, international youth education programs such as those offered in 4-H serve to bring together the critical elements of positive youth development, cultural competency, and world understanding.

“I was fortunate to participate in a 4-H exchange program with a county in New York State [in the summer of 1974]. Elian, the 4-Her with whose family I stayed with, is one of my best friends—actually, she is like a sister. In fact, she is the godmother of two of my three children. Ours is a friendship that flourishes even with the long-distance separation. Our meeting came about because of 4-H, and for that I am forever grateful.”

—Barbara Marck, Stephenson County
Illinois 4-Hers live the “world” part of the 4-H pledge—“For my club, my community, my country, and my world”—by participating in international opportunities.

Last year, more than 2,200 Illinois 4-H members learned about the world through the 4-H Passport to the World project. The international group exhibit remains one of the most popular club projects at the Illinois State Fair.

For more than 40 years, Illinois 4-H families have welcomed international guests into their homes in the summer and even for an entire year through hosting opportunities offered through States’ 4-H International, our partner for global 4-H opportunities. This year, Illinois was home to 49 youth and four adults from Japan for the LEX and Labo international programs as well as to three long-term students through FLEX, the Future Leaders Exchange.

Five Illinois 4-H members also packed their bags for extended stays in other countries in 2016. Gwendolen McDaniel of Peoria County and Sophia Loiacano of McHenry County went to Japan, Susanne Russo of Winnebago County and Lana Fitzgerald of Champaign County to South Korea, and Lydia Fulton of Macoupin County to Costa Rica.

This year Illinois 4-H international programs, under the guidance of Miriam Rosenbohm, received the Extraordinary Quality Program Award for its continued support of global citizenship and cultural immersion programming for 4-H-age youth. The award was presented at the States’ 4-H coordinators conference in Seattle.

Rosenbohm, a Peoria County dairy farmer, was also recognized for her 15 years of service to 4-H international programs as a host family, host mom, and state coordinator for the past several years. Miriam works with a core group of Illinois 4-H volunteers in recruiting and orienting host families. Each year, about 50 international youth arrive in Illinois.
Illinois Junior Chefs

New in 2016, the Illinois Junior Chefs program was conducted in conjunction with U of I Extension's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) education staff. 4-H Teen Teachers taught 3,200 low-income SNAP-eligible youth basic food preparation skills, food safety, personal hygiene practices, and healthy eating choices.

Implemented in 28 counties, Illinois Junior Chefs helped 464 teen teachers gain critical skills in lesson planning, teaching, and evaluation.

"Being in the program helped me interact with people better," said Dierra Barnette, a Teen Teacher from Macon County. "It gave me a better sense of happiness when working with kids."

Illinois Junior Chefs helped Keishawn Walker learn to work with others and their personalities. "I have learned how to be a leader and how to lead by example," Keishawn said.

Just over half (53%) of the participants were of minority race; 14 percent were of Hispanic ethnicity. More than $11,000 was provided by the Illinois 4-H Foundation for Teen Teacher awards, and an additional $1,000 provided needed equipment for clubs focusing on nutrition.

Over the last three decades, childhood obesity rates in America have tripled, and today nearly one in three children in America is overweight or obese. If things remain as they are today, a third of all children born in 2000 or later may suffer from diabetes at some point in their lives. Illinois 4-H is teaching young people about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity.

"4-H was a fantastic experience! It shaped my character, developed new skills, and introduced me to the field of health, food, and nutrition, which became my career path of dietetics!"

—Stellera English, McDonough County

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Health Rocks!

Health Rocks! 4-H curriculum aims to reduce youth smoking and tobacco use, helps youth build life skills that lead to healthy lifestyle choices, and builds enduring partnerships with at-risk youth and caring adult mentors who can help guide youth to productive lives.

A teen participant in Chicago Health Rocks! said the program has helped her change her family’s perspective on drinking, using drugs, and smoking. “I feel it’s finally starting to get through to my mother, father, aunts, and uncles,” she said. “All the information I’ve learned has made me feel confident to say no to these vices.” She now feels hope for the future, she said.

Health Jam

4-H Health Jam partners with community health professionals to teach young people how to keep their bodies healthy, engage in a variety of daily physical activities, and make healthy food choices. The program reached nearly 3,000 youth participants in 2016, with 41% identifying as minority and 9% indicating Hispanic ethnicity. Forty-seven 4-H teen teachers and 250 adults provided the program, which targeted underserved youth ages 10 to 14. The program is funded through National 4-H Council with a grant from Wal-Mart Foundation.

“Young people are learning at an early age to make healthy choices and increase daily physical activity to keep their bodies healthy and strong,” said Madonna Weese, University of Illinois 4-H youth development specialist. “They are sharing that information at home, influencing family food purchases, and getting family involved in physical activity.”

4-H Food Challenge

The Illinois 4-H Food Challenge tasks teams of 4-H members to create a dish in 35 minutes using mystery ingredients. In their presentation, the team must include nutritional and cost information on the dish and identify any associated food safety risks.

The challenge is gaining in popularity. Last year, 170 teens in five counties participated. “The Food Challenge opened doors for 4-H in communities where we have not been able to reach youth,” said Sherry Fulton, University of Illinois 4-H youth development educator. “The food and consumer sciences teacher at Cerro Gordo High School is on fire for the program, and she is bringing kids to 4-H that we never would have reached.”

Many times, the food challenge experience leads youth to additional 4-H experiences, such as serving as teen teachers for the Illinois Junior Chefs program, Fulton said.

Illinois 4-H Food Challenges across the state are supported by proceeds from the sale of Favorite Recipes of Illinois 4-H Through the Years.
Creating a story of teamwork: The Fab Five Junior Chefs

From the beginning, they named themselves the Fab Five. The five kids from Belvidere—young, bright, enthusiastic—had never met each other, but they had a common goal that summer: to be 4-H teen teachers.

I was there to train Whitley Freeman-Russell, Reyna Nolan, Cameron Haenitsch, Tajori Johnson, and Chelsey Recendez (shown from left in the photo above) as teen teachers. I knew that creating a sense of team was essential for success but also challenging to accomplish in a short period.

We began by writing down qualities of good teachers. The youth included caring, going the extra mile, taking a personal interest in their students, fun, smiles, and smart. Our goal was to be “that teacher.” Now, I wondered, could I make that goal a reality for them?

I shared a tip that a mentor had once shared with me: from the moment students walk in the door until they leave for the day, they are always a teacher’s #1 priority.

As the teens began to teach, they were looking out for each other and their students. The teens worked one-on-one with the kids. Their interactions were incredible—Tajori taking the time to show a student how to use a rolling pin, Cameron keeping close watch as the kids practiced their knife skills, Whitley encouraging kids to take a little bite and give it a try.

I watched the teamwork I was looking for begin to form. On one occasion, Chelsey, who was lead teacher for the day, could tell the kids lacked energy, so she stopped the lesson to reenergize them. Before I could blink, Reyna jumped in with an activity, and the kids stood up to “shake it out.”

None of this had been rehearsed. The creativity and confidence of the teen teachers were growing with each lesson. Their hard work and effort paid off as they became known as the Fab Five of the Kitchen.

Story by Lisa Hepker, U of I 4-H youth development educator
4-H Shooting Sports offers more than you may think

Spending time outside raises levels of vitamin D, helping protect children from future bone problems, heart disease, diabetes, and other health issues. We know that a child's stress level falls within minutes of seeing green space. Learning to enjoy free time and a relaxed lifestyle helps combat anxiety and depression.

The gap is widening between the time kids spend indoors and what they spend outside enjoying nature. The lure of technology is one culprit, but youth also lack opportunities to explore nature. This shift impacts the wellness of our nation’s kids. Outdoor play increases fitness levels and builds active, healthy bodies, an important strategy to build fitness in the one in three American kids who are obese.

“If 4-H was a wonderful experience that taught me about responsibility, making critical decisions, following through on commitments, and practicing leadership personally and with others.”

—Steve Wagoner, Menard County

If you were to think it's all about shooting, you’d be wrong. 4-H shooting sports is 4-H first, shooting second.

“If 4-H is about fostering a sense of belonging and friendship for all youth in the program,” said Dan Dawson, University of Illinois Extension state 4-H shooting sports educator. “Helping them learn life skills of teamwork, problem solving, and decision making is just as important as what they learn about the sport—probably more important.”

The focus of all 4-H programs is the development of youth as individuals and as responsible, productive citizens. The shooting sports program is a stand-out example. Youth learn marksmanship, safe and responsible use of firearms, the principles of shooting and archery, and much more. The activities of the program and the support of caring adult leaders provide young people with opportunities to develop life skills, self-worth, and conservation ethics.

Last year the Illinois 4-H Foundation provided more than $11,000 in equipment for 4-H shooting sports clubs. A need for funding and volunteer leader support remains.
Volunteers make 4-H shooting sports program possible

You wouldn’t think it would work. The shooting sports program is one of the fastest growing in Illinois 4-H. It offers five disciplines: archery, rifle, shotgun, pistol, and wildlife/hunting. For some teens, shooting sports is the one reason they join and stay in 4-H during their busy high school years.

There’s just one hitch: to participate in this national 4-H program, youth must take the project as part of a 4-H club experience. And a 4-H shooting sports club requires at least two certified instructors, one who coordinates the club and one or more for each discipline the club offers.

To be certified, adults must attend a full weekend of training; most do so at their own $125 expense. They go through background checks and reference checks. Once approved, they spend countless hours in all types of weather giving their time to teach youth.

You can see why it really shouldn’t work; yet it does work, and it is thriving.

With the end of the 2016 training season, more than 900 adults have been certified as instructors in six years. About 175 have returned to receive certification in more than one discipline, and a handful are now certified in all six disciplines, as well as the coordinator position.

Some of the first youth participants, who have aged out of 4-H, are returning to take their turn as instructors in the program they say taught them patience and determination in a sport they passionately enjoy.

So why do instructors volunteer? Many say they want to be sure youth have a chance to experience the sport, and they know many don’t have someone to teach them. For others, the reasons are more personal.

John Berberich of DuPage County wanted to help his daughter fully participate. His daughter uses a wheelchair, but that doesn’t stop her from enjoying shooting sports. John is no stranger to volunteering. He also coaches a 4-H robotics club and knows the value of group learning.

Win Phippen of McDonough County said he enjoys sharing his enthusiasm for the out-of-doors with children. Mike Claypool isn’t new to 4-H; he is a long-time poultry and rabbit judge. He sees shooting sports as a way to expand the 4-H program to new audiences.

For Jacob Baxter, being an instructor has allowed him to be a 4-H participant. “I have two children in 4-H now, but I never got to be in 4-H as a youth," he said.

“This is my way to finally participate," the Crawford County volunteer added.

Others see instruction as an opportunity to pay it forward. “I’m volunteering to give back to my community and support my own children on their 4-H journey," said Phil Blunt of Rock Island County.

“Someone took the time to teach me," said Jon McDonald of Wabash County. “Now it’s my turn to pass it on.”

For Jeremy Conaway of Mercer County, this was his first real opportunity to be involved in his community. “This is my chance to give some of my time and knowledge to young people in an activity that I have enjoyed all my life.”

Karen and Ron Horsley of Stark County are volunteering together. The couple’s own children are 12, 6, 2, and 1. Already, their club has 14 young people in archery and 17 ready to begin air rifle once the Horsleys are certified.

“We knew we wanted to teach our own children and their friends about safety and the ethics of shooting sports so that accidents don’t happen," Karen said.

For Don Richart, it was the rich 4-H history that drew him to volunteer. “Our youth need all the help they can get, and the 4-H program has been doing a very good job for a long time," the Crawford County volunteer said. “I feel drawn to be a part of it.”

Zak Benjamin of Henry County chose 4-H because of the quality of the program that inspires youth. “Of all the youth programs I have been a part of," Zak said, “I have seen more impact from 4-H than any of the others.”

For many volunteers, this is their first experience in the 4-H program. Dan Dawson, University of Illinois Extension state 4-H shooting sports educator, noted the vital mentoring role they plan with these young people.

“We have extremely passionate and dedicated volunteers, and that’s why this program beats the odds and works so well," Dawson said.
When 4-H really matters

Life-changing. It is a description that loses its power when overused. Yet no other term accurately describes Josiah’s 4-H journey.

Josiah Taylor (shown among the competitors at right) won the 2016 Illinois State 4-H Air Rifle Shoot, held in September in Bloomington, but that isn’t why his life is changed. The change is the result of one simple year in 4-H.

Josiah joined the McLean County 4-H Shooting Sports Club in 2016 so he could learn to shoot air rifles. Until then Josiah, a young man with high-functioning autism, only ever spoke to members of his family. Period. He joined 4-H, and his life changed.

Josiah started at Central Illinois Precision Shooting as the only teenager in the beginner class. Though other teens might have been discouraged, Josiah persevered. Under the direction of 4-H Shooting Sports volunteers Kurt Willoughby and Joe Miller, nights at the range became a routine. As Josiah’s shooting improved, the bigger change came in his interaction with world around him.

Josiah began to engage with others.

“I couldn’t believe the change in my child,” said his mother, Rene.

Instructor Miller can barely speak of Josiah without tearing up. The relationship has changed them both, he said. Willoughby described how “we spent a lot of one-on-one time at the range, where I would carefully explain the whats, whys, and hows of air rifle training. Josiah took every word to heart.”

Willoughby discussed with Josiah what he calls “the heart of a marksman.”

“I told him that when he walks into the range, the world stops and you become a shooter with one thing on your mind: to make the best shot possible. Nothing else matters at that point in time.” Josiah lived it just as his coach described. “When he walks into the range,” Willoughby said, “he is a different person.”

Rene believes that part of the reason Josiah did so well so quickly is that his autism allows him a singular focus: one shot in the black circle.

Josiah also took up blacksmithing in 4-H, exhibiting at the 2016 Illinois State Fair. It has led to a new career path that Rene said he would not have found without 4-H. Under the direction of mentors, Josiah is progressing through the blacksmithing internship ranks and will soon study in North Carolina at the John C. Campbell Folk School.

In another testament to his changed life, Josiah conducted a blacksmithing demonstration where he interacted with the crowd. At one point, his mom recalled, he turned to the group and said, “Don’t be afraid to ask me questions.” Before his 4-H experience, she said, he never would have spoken to anyone in a situation like that.

“4-H gave us the opportunity for him to do this,” Rene said. “I would encourage any parents of special-needs children to consider becoming active in 4-H.”

“It’s hard to put into words how I feel to know I have actually made a difference in someone’s life,” Willoughby said. “It’s still hard to believe how much Josiah has accomplished in the short time that I have been working with him. Just to see his face makes my day every time.”

For the record, although Josiah walked away with the championship belt buckle at the state shoot, he doesn’t like to compete. He doesn’t like to “beat” someone else. He just wants to beat his last score.
They just keep getting better

Elite marksmen show skills at 2016 state contests

**Shotgun**

Any better and he would have been perfect. Top marksman Jacob Maschino, the day’s youngest competitor, missed just one shot—one shot out of 100, and it came in the very first round. After that, his performance was perfect.

The 4-H member from Edgar County had stiff competition. Second-place finisher Brandon Batchelder, from Logan County, scored 98 out of 100, one shot behind Jacob. Brandon said the morning’s misty rain forced the competitors to concentrate and adjust their shooting to compensate for the weather.

The next three competitors tied for third, each missing only four shots for the day. A 25-round shoot-off determined the final placings.

**Rifle**

Don’t tell Jaden Thompson that Olympic dreams are foolish. She’s bound to prove you wrong.

The McLean County 4-H member won the 2016 Illinois 4-H State Smallbore Rifle Shoot in September in Bloomington. Her ultimate goal, she said, is to shoot in the Olympics.

Jaden knows achieving her goal will take dedication, hard work, and great mentoring. Luckily she has all three. “Success doesn’t happen overnight,” Jaden said. “You have to work at it.” She trains at Central Illinois Precision Shooting, where the shoot was held, and works with Joe Miller, coach of the Illinois State University rifle team. “He believes in me; he inspires me,” Jaden said. “He’s honest and wants me to succeed.”

Standing to Jaden’s right throughout the competition was Iroquois County 4-H member Josette Peters. Josette nearly equaled Jaden and might have topped her had Josette’s clip not malfunctioned on one of the rapid-fire timed rounds.

Josette said 4-H shooting sports provides her a challenge and something to work for. “It takes lots of practice and dedication.”

**Archery**

Aaron Fishburn has learned a valuable lesson through 4-H: helping others sometimes has unexpected consequences. The 17-year-old was named champion of the Illinois 4-H State Archery Shoot, but he had more reasons to smile than the first-place award.
Aaron Fishburn was named the top archer for both compound and recurve divisions at the State 4-H Archery Shoot. The top 10 finishers are pictured: (front, from left) Aaron Fishburn of Sangamon County; Allie Phelps, Isaac Adams, and Rachel Casey, all of Woodford County, Steve Hilgers of Mason County; (back) Sarah Fandel of Woodford County, Cody Beckman of Effingham County, Dominick Trujillo of Macon County, Joshua Dean of Warren County, Andrew Volstorf of Edgar County.

The Sangamon County 4-H member is a skilled archer and was part of the 2015 team that finished sixth out of 30 teams at the national championship. Earlier this year, he volunteered to mentor 4-H members from Woodford County. There he met Sarah Fandel, and a friendship soon developed. Fast-forward to spring: the teen found a unique way to ask Sarah to prom. Before practice, Fishburn set up two targets, one with YES in the bullseye and the other with NO. A sign read, “Will you go with me to prom?” Lucky for Aaron, Sarah hit the yes target.

Stories of camaraderie and friendship are common in a program that promotes the development of young leaders while it trains them to use a bow and arrow to hit a target. “It’s a big family that gets together to shoot arrows,” said Bill Mohn, state 4-H archery certified instructor.

Aaron won the 2016 contest in September at Panther Creek Bowhunters Club in Chatham. Members of the team he mentored took four of the other top five other spots. (See the photo below for the other finishers.)

Awards were also presented to contestants in the recurve division. Top winners were Alexandra Gast of McHenry County, first; Daniel Frank of McHenry County, second; Matthew Westfallen of McHenry County, third; Jeffrey Che of Jackson County, fourth; Noah Evans of McHenry County, fifth; Cheyanne Bihlmaier of McHenry County, sixth; and Alexander Ford of Kane County, seventh.

LEADERSHIP

What makes great leaders? Some would say it’s practice—good leadership is not formed in an instant. Instead, leadership skills are built by habit, by intentionally repeating practices until they become instinctive, natural, and powerful. 4-H builds good leaders by giving them safe environments and many opportunities to practice.

“I was in 4-H in the ’30s, taking sewing, and I am now 99 years of age. I was a leader in the ’60s. Many of my former 4-Hers still thank me for my leadership. Many of them have been leaders themselves, and some of my grandchildren are now starting their 4-H careers.”

—Thelma Bishop, Cumberland County

Pick the best fit for you

4-H has been building leaders for countless generations. So what makes today’s 4-H Teen Leadership program different? It really is a simple idea; instead of making teens do every activity, we engage them only in the elements of leadership they like.

“We recognized that 4-H members bring different talents and interests to their 4-H club work,” said Lisa Bouillion Diaz, Illinois 4-H assistant dean and director. “Teens often were asked to do some aspects of leading that made them uncomfortable or required a bigger time commitment than they could give.”

A “one size fits all” approach to leadership had brought a decline in teen retention. With the introduction of six different leadership focuses, teens now choose the role that’s best for them. Not only are we now retaining more teens, Diaz said, we’re gaining new members who come to us as teenagers. Of the 10,087 first-year members recruited in 2016, nearly 1,600 (16%) were recruited as teenagers.

The six leadership focuses are planning, promoting, teaching, mentoring, advocating, and advising. This statewide work is supported by the Illinois 4-H Foundation with funding from Project Partners, the Youth Leadership Development Fund, and the H. Richard & Sarah F. McFarland Endowed 4-H Youth Leadership and Character Development Support Fund.

Youth Leadership Team

Planning

The 4-H Teen Planner role is a great fit for someone who likes paying attention to all the details that make an event successful. The 22 members of the Illinois State 4-H Youth Leadership Team spend much of their work planning statewide conferences.
"I thank the Youth Leadership Team for showing me how diverse the world really is outside of my own little world, as well as showing me the diverse opportunities in 4-H," said Marion County 4-H alum Rhiannon Branch.

Promoting Teens passionate and knowledgeable about 4-H and not afraid to tell the world are well suited for the 4-H Teen Promoter role. The Speaking for Illinois 4-H program provides intense training in public speaking as well as tools to tell the 4-H story to local and state legislators and stakeholders. Teen Promoters spend four days in the state capital during 4-H Legislative Connection, meeting with legislators and telling the benefits of the 4-H program.

Youth Leadership Team member Brittney Muschetto was so excited about promoting 4-H she formed a county ambassador program in Will County. In six months, the team of promoters is 15 members strong.

"This past year has opened my eyes to so many great experiences, and I have grown tremendously as an individual," Brittney said. "I feel more independent and college-ready."

Seventy-five youth were trained through Speaking for Illinois 4-H last year. “This program helps me think about the public relations aspect of 4-H," said one participant. "I have always thought the question "What is 4-H?" was difficult to answer. Now I don’t."

Teaching The 4-H Teen Teacher program continues to engage teenagers from all communities. Teen teachers plan, teach, and evaluate a progression of lessons for younger youth on various topics, from nutrition and health to STEM and agriculture. Teens improve in listening, decision making, and communication skills while they become more confident teachers.

Teenagers across the state show initiative and self-determination by volunteering to share what they’ve learned with their younger peers. More than $22,000 from the Foundation was awarded in direct support to more than 300 teens in the teen recognition program in 2016.

Mentoring Teen mentors teach important life skills while they encourage youth to try new things and have fun. Camp counselor is a perfect example of a 4-H Teen Mentor role. As teens gain the trust of kids in their care, they build their own levels of leadership and responsibility.

Advocating 4-H Teen Advocates stand up for what they believe in to make positive changes in their world. Currently, teens are primarily involved as advocates on issues of hunger or in building research data as 4-H Citizen Scientists. Advocates gain skill in research, analysis, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork to bring youth voice to public issues facing Illinois.

Advising Teen advisers provide a youth voice on various committees to help guide local and state 4-H programs. On the state level, Illinois has youth serving on the Illinois Farm Bureau Youth Education Committee as well as the Illinois 4-H Foundation Board of Directors and the Illinois Extension Advisory Committee.
New ceremony honors outstanding award winners

The Illinois 4-H Foundation, along with Illinois 4-H, applauded the achievements of these youth, whose collective work sets them apart as the state’s elite, in a November ceremony in Champaign.

The Youth Education Committee of the Illinois Farm Bureau and its affiliates awarded 10 Illinois 4-H members with its Leadership, Citizenship, and Professionalism Award. Pictured (front, from left): Shelby Ledbetter of Rock Island County, Jackie Beck of Shelby County, Justene Jennings of DeKalb County, Brandi Welch of Mercer County; (back) Jenny Webb of Illinois Farm Bureau, Courtney Wiedenmann of Mercer County, Rachel Miller of Franklin County, Drew Groezinger of Jo Daviess County, Abigail Mongan of Ogle County. (Not pictured: Julia Taraszewski of Macon County, Jordan McLane of Jo Daviess County.) Presenting the award was Jenny Webb, membership and program specialist with Illinois Farm Bureau. Jenny is herself a McLean County 4-H alumna; she showed paint horses.

The Illinois 4-H Foundation presented $1,000 Legacy of Leadership scholarships to 4-H members who have maintained a high standard of 4-H excellence and mastery. Pictured (from left): Justene Jennings of DeKalb County, Jillian Parrent of McLean County, Courtney Wiedenmann of Mercer County, Drew Groezinger of Jo Daviess County, Alyssa Zimmer of Logan County, Wade Hutchens of Franklin County, Shelby Ledbetter of Rock Island County. (Not pictured: Lauren Robison of Bond County, Jacob Ebens of Ogle County.)

The scholarships are provided by the Illinois 4-H Foundation through gifts from donors: Legacy of Leadership Endowment, Farm Credit Illinois, Nannette Armstrong, Patricia Clikken, Lila Jeanne Eichelberger, Nellie R. McCannon Trust, Keith Parr, and LA-CO Industries. “Through their words and actions, the 4-H members honored with the Legacy of Leadership Scholarship have taken their personal leadership skills to the next level by elevating others around them,” said Debra Stocker, University of Illinois Extension 4-H youth development specialist.

The Illinois 4-H Foundation was proud to sponsor 13 delegates to National 4-H Congress in Atlanta in November. Pictured: (front, from left) Erin Stichter of Whiteside County, Parker Karrick of Marion County, Grace Skelton and Clayton Skelton of Logan County, Kaitlyn Ball of Cook County, Isabella Warmack of Grundy County, Julia Taraszewski of Macon County; (back) delegation coordinator Debra Stocker, James Martin of Kendall County, Devin Koester of Jo Daviess County, Will Short of McLean County, Zachary Perkins of Kendall County, Josephine Hubele of White County, Eli Tobin of McLean County, 4-H volunteer chaperone Michael McKellar.
Twenty 4-H members from across the state were honored for their achievements with the Illinois 4-H Award, which recognizes exemplary work in communications, community service, leadership, personal growth, and project mastery. Pictured (front, from left): Erin Stichter of Whiteside County, Grace Skelton of Logan County, Shelby Ledbetter of Rock Island County, Parker Karrick of Marion County; (center) Eli Tobin of McLean County, Courtney Wiedenmann of Mercer County, Alyssa Garner of Macoupin County, Isabella Warmack of Grundy County, Clayton Skelton of Logan County, Kaley Rouse of Stark County, James Martin of Kendall County; (back) Devin Koester of Jo Daviess County, Josephine Hubele of White County, Claire VanSpeybroeck of Rock Island County, David Kloppe of Sangamon County, Zachary Perkins of Kendall County, Kyle Hubbard and Drew Groezinger of Jo Daviess County, Josephine Hubele of White County. (Not pictured: Austin Brockmann of Boone County, Jacob Hubele of White County, Calista Kern-Lyons of Lee County.)

Winners received as their prize either a trip to National 4-H Congress, $1,000 toward attendance at another national 4-H event, or a $1,000 college scholarship. The award is supported through gifts to the Illinois 4-H Foundation from donors, including the Illinois Farm Bureau, Durbin Veterinary Clinic, Ruthann Bauroth, Jennifer Cowser, Peter Johnson, Susan Moore, Donna Mueller, Keith Parr, Phyllis Ruwe, Ryan Ruwe, Elizabeth Schnitzler, James Shinn, Kenneth Smith, Rod Stoll, and Gerald Theile. Illinois 4-H Foundation board members Barbara Clark and Jan Sibley presented the awards.

The Key Award recognizes youth leaders who mentor and serve their community. Presenting the award on behalf of the H. Richard and Sarah F. McFarland Endowed 4-H Youth Leadership and Character Development Support Fund was Richard McFarland (far right). Pictured with McFarland: (front, from left) Brandi Welch of Mercer County, Katlyn Helton of Logan County, Abigail Mongan and Natalie Carlson of Ogle County; Justene Jenning of DeKalb County; (back) Courtney Wiedenmann of Mercer County, Zachary Perkins of Kendall County, Kyle Hubbard and Drew Groezinger of Jo Daviess County, Josephine Hubele of White County. (Not pictured: Austin Brockmann of Boone County, Jacob Hubele of White County, Calista Kern-Lyons of Lee County.)

Justene Jenning of DeKalb County (right) was awarded the Illinois 4-H Veterinary Medicine Award for her work in the veterinary medicine project area. The $200 cash prize was awarded in November 19 in Champaign, presented on behalf of the Auxiliary to the Illinois State Veterinary Medicine Association by Illinois 4-H Foundation board chair Cheryl Wormley.
Addressing disparity in 4-H

4-H was expanded in the Lake County communities of Beach Park, North Chicago, and Waukegan. 4-H marketing packages and program support materials were developed to capture the interest of new families and inform them of opportunities. The initiative included basic orientation to the 4-H club program. The Juntos program served as the platform to reach new families. Working with the Round Lake Bilingual Parents Advisory Committee and Harvard Junior High, 4-H enrolled 20 youth as new members. Other outreach has included working with 22 families during a five-session Juntos program with ongoing recruitment for a new 4-H club. Lake County 4-H Ambassadors conducted a 4-H Hands-on Fair at the Lake Villa Library, introducing 80 families to 4-H activities. Formation of a new club and recruitment of volunteers in is process.

Enhancing community clubs

Unit 9 took a multipronged approach to improving club quality: promote the formation of new clubs, foster an environment of member retention, and increase the interaction among clubs and members in the counties of Grundy, Kankakee, and Will. Using three events, strides have been made to increase youth engagement while providing clubs with tools to enhance youth belonging. Day-long events were held in each county focusing on team building and leadership development. Activities ranged from team-focused skill-building activities—low ropes and zip lining—to team efforts involving youth in combining creativity, science, and teamwork to solve a mission. With nearly 200 participants, visible enthusiasm was generated. Members were encouraged to bring a non-4-H friend as a potential member.

Donor funds expansion efforts in northern Illinois

The Northeast Illinois 4-H Club Grant Program promotes positive youth development experiences in the 10 counties of the northeast corner of Illinois (Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will). With the support of an anonymous donor, 4-H Club Grants—up to $1,000 yearly for the next five years—are available for counties to enhance local programming in ways that will improve club quality, expand club formation, and support club member retention.

Expanding teen leadership skills

In DeKalb County, Discover 4-H Day engaged youth in hands-on 4-H project experiences, providing a taste of the opportunities available through 4-H involvement. This low-income community had no current 4-H representation. Twenty-two youth participated and expressed interest in enrolling in 4-H; a Cloverbud Club with eight members has formed as a result. Northern Illinois University students have been recruited as volunteer leaders to support this new club. Efforts continue in this same area to establish a 4-H community club program for older youth. A second Discover 4-H event has been scheduled, targeting Latino families in another underserved community.

McHenry County fights high 4-H drop-out rates

Efforts are underway in McHenry County to increase STEM-related experiences available for 4-H members in middle and high school. In partnership with a local high school career technology education program, Good Year Autotech, and Buck Bros John Deere Service, the program exposes teens to potential career and entrepreneurship paths.
Project Partners help youth develop skills and knowledge for success in life

Our Illinois 4-H Project Partners’ passion for supporting young people is incredible! We are proud and humbled to have their support. Whether through annual gifts or time volunteered to be involved, they help us develop ways to prepare young people for the challenges of the workplace and daily life.

Look throughout the CloverSeed for the Project Partner logo—which indicates the combined support of all our partners—as well as for individual partner logos to learn about the many ways their funds have expanded the opportunities Illinois 4-H can provide.

Stories about 4-H programs generously supported by Project Partner funding can be found on the following pages:

STEM Projects..............................12
Tech Wizards..............................16
Illini Summer Academies.............17
National Judging Competitions.........21
Teen Leadership...........................36
Camping programs from April through October offer both a low-ropes challenge course and high-ropes team climbing. Highly trained facilitators lead all programs, which are flexible and tailored to match each group’s goals and participant abilities.

4-H Memorial Camp is accredited by the American Camp Association. This accreditation verifies that the camp has complied with up to 300 standards for health, safety, and program quality recognized by courts of law and government regulators.

Last year 1,200 youth attended one of the weeklong summer camp sessions. An additional 7,000 people participated in a group camp during the seven-month camping season. Of last year’s campers, 40% were first-timers, meaning that over half were repeat users. Youth camp is open to all youth ages 8 to 16. Escape to 4-H Memorial Camp!

Opportunities to escape today’s fast-paced routines are rare. 4-H Memorial Camp near Monticello is the perfect location to make an escape. Situated on 250 acres, the camp not only sponsors four weeks of summer youth camp and a week of Camp Corral for youth of military families, but it also serves organizations, churches, college groups, and businesses looking for a relaxing environment for team building and interaction.

“What amazes me about 4-H are the growth opportunities available. When I was a 9- to 12-year-old, going to summer camp was always a big highlight . . . until I learned it was even more fun to be a camp counselor . . . and even more rewarding to initiate and organize new camp opportunities for teens from adjoining counties.”

—David Schug, Champaign County
Despite all her worldly adventures, it is 4-H camp that captures Lila Jeanne’s heart

Sometimes greatness comes in a very small package, wrapped in humility and gentleness.

In October, Lila Jeanne Eichelberger was inducted into the National 4-H Hall of Fame. Known as Shorty around the University of Illinois campus because of her 5-foot frame, Eichelberger stands as a giant among her peers for her philanthropic efforts to support 4-H and the university.

Eichelberger’s storied 4-H background traces back to her mother’s volunteer 4-H leadership, and she continues to this day as member emerita of the Illinois 4-H Foundation Board of Directors and supporter of several 4-H endeavors.

Topping the list of her many accomplishments is Eichelberger’s service on the steering committee for the Illinois 4-H Memorial Camp “Remember CAMPaign.” She not only made her own generous commitment but also helped to raise funds to renovate the camp’s historic dining hall facility. An 11-year Mason County 4-H member, Eichelberger was one of the first camp counselors at Western Illinois 4-H Camp. Camp work remains dear to her heart. 4-H Memorial Camp will be the beneficiary of a $75,000 gift from her estate to further arts activities. A $30,000 donation funded two new cabins named to honor Eichelberger’s late husband and mother.

“The instant you meet Lila Jeanne Eichelberger, your definition of ‘genuine’ is shattered, and the bar is raised higher than you had it before,” said Curt Sinclair, 4-H Memorial Camp director. “Nothing in the mile-long list of her accomplishments is self-serving.

“My personal experience with Lila Jeanne entwines with our common belief in the incredible power 4-H camping programs can have in the lives of young people, both campers and counselors,” Sinclair said. “Her purely genuine spirit embodying the 4-H pledge—head, heart, hands, and health—mentors us all.”

“A new Arts and Crafts building will be built at 4-H Memorial Camp thanks to a generous donation from Lila Jeanne Eichelberger, pictured with camp director Curt Sinclair.

“Rarely has Illinois 4-H seen an individual make such a lifelong impact on the lives of young people,” said Angie Barnard, Illinois 4-H Foundation executive director. “A woman of remarkable grace, Lila Jeanne tirelessly campaigns with her time, energy, and financial resources to the advancement of Illinois 4-H, 4-H Memorial Camp, 4-H House, University of Illinois, and Fighting Illini sports.”

“Anyone who knows me,” Eichelberger said, “knows that I bleed Illini orange and blue and 4-H green. It is an honor to have Paul’s and my legacy live on through a gift from our estate. If we are remembered for just one thing, I hope it will be a commitment to the development of the next generation of young people.”

Eichelberger has made financial gifts to the University of Illinois and Illinois 4-H every year for 50 years. Her total giving to 4-H alone exceeds $2 million. In 2000, she created an endowment to honor her late mother, a 50-year 4-H leader. Today, Eichelberger continues to add value with an estate commitment that will endow the Margarette E. Athey 4-H Adult Volunteer Leader Development Fund at over a quarter-million dollars.

Eichelberger was honored in 2016 with the nation’s top 4-H recognition: The National 4-H Hall of Fame Award is given to individuals who have made a significant impact on the 4-H program and 4-H members through their contributions of time, talent, energy, and financial resources.
Tell us your 4-H alumni story

Were you a 4-H club member? Then you are one of 25 million Americans who share a unique bond. Each 4-H alum has a unique story to tell. Whether it’s spending time in summer at 4-H camp, conquering fears of public speaking, leading a club as an officer, traveling the world as an exchange member, competing at the 4-H fair, or working with 4-H club leaders—your 4-H memories helped make you the person you are today.

We’d like to hear your story. Each month, we’ll select five 4-H alums who have submitted stories to receive a 4-H Alumni t-shirt. Register online at go.illinois.edu/4Halumni.

Alumni snapshot

Marilyn Alice Tuckman recalls that as a young girl, and during a very impressionable time in her life, her 4-H leader was much like a Martha Stewart of the 1950s. The leader taught many home-oriented skills through modeling her own best qualities and sharing her interest in a casual, friendly way. Today Marilyn, a resident of Elk Grove Village, Illinois, can clearly see that 4-H gave her a wholesome and worthwhile experience that filled her time with constructive projects—projects that became her lifelong interests, hobbies, and even career.

Marilyn is a sensory taster for a large company that produces flavorings and fragrances. She credits 4-H with having set the tone, rhythm, and pattern of her life, inspiring her to find useful purpose in all she does, including her career. Early on, 4-H led her to collect recipes, especially pumpkin recipes, and later she lovingly constructed a cookbook.

Complementing her memories is Marilyn’s 4-H pin. Though its clasp is broken, the cherished pin is safely stowed in her jewelry box, forever representing something priceless.

The mission of the Illinois 4-H Alumni Association is to create a lifelong, statewide community of 4-H alumni and to provide increased opportunities for meaningful engagement in order to increase awareness, pride, participation, volunteerism, and philanthropic commitment to Illinois 4-H.

Among the 22 members of the Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors, 18 of them (shown here) are 4-H alumni.
The Illinois 4-H Foundation annually recognizes one 4-H volunteer from each county as a Hall of Fame winner for exemplary service to the Illinois 4-H program. This year, 74 new members were inducted into the Illinois 4-H Hall of Fame, the largest inductee class to date. “This year celebrated the 12-year anniversary of the award,” said Angie Barnard, director of the Illinois 4-H Foundation.

The ceremony was held Saturday, August 20, during the Illinois State Fair. “These long-time volunteers fully embody what 4-H strives to instill in youth,” Barnard said. “They are caring, dedicated, generous leaders, and the Illinois 4-H Foundation is extremely proud to provide this honor to each of them to thank them for their service to this wonderful organization.”

For a list of all inductees since 2005, visit http://4hfoundation.illinois.edu/content/hall-fame-award/list.

Since 1965, at least one descendant of the Joseph and Ida Geiger family has been a 4-H member. In that 50 years, there have been 62 family members and spouses with 4-H affiliation, for a total of 411 years of 4-H membership. Nine of the family members have served as 4-H club leaders, totaling 123 years. “Each family member has personal, special memories of how 4-H benefited them, be that through developing a hobby, choosing a profession, serving as a community leader, or even finding a spouse,” said Margaret Weis, granddaughter of Joseph and Ida Geiger. “As diverse as these accounts are, two commonalities run through all of our stories—4-H was fun, and the skills learned during our years in 4-H are still used daily.”
FY 2016 Annual Report on Giving

“Real generosity towards the future lies in giving all to the present.” —Albert Camus

The Illinois 4-H Foundation would like to thank the many individuals, businesses, trade associations, and organizations that provide financial support for our 4-H programs. Your financial support is the reason we can continue to fund outstanding 4-H opportunities in Illinois that give our youth opportunities to grow, learn, and succeed. The following contributions—each one important and appreciated—were made between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2016.

**Individuals**

Libbie and Rodney Aavang
William Abbott
Timothy and Barbara Abel
Carol and Victor Abell
Robert and Emma Ackerman
Cynthia Adams
DeWayne Adams
Jeffine Adams
Paul Ahilden
Wade Ahrends
Kurt Albers
Kimberly and Kevin Albert
Branden and Sheila Alexander
Keith and Camella Alexander

Philip and Sarah Alexander
Jule Allaman
James and Crystal Allen
Linda and Jay Allen
Shirley Allen
David Allspach
John and Lolita Alward
Kathleen Amundson
Sherry Anast
Barbara and Keith Anderson
Christine and Dale Anderson
Elisabeth Anderson
Joan Anderson
Joan Anderson and Darlye Wragge
Mary Anderson
Rebecca and Clyde Anderson

Theresa Anderson
Angie Anderson-Althaus
and David Althaus
Karen Anderson-Like and
Gerald Like
James and Leland Andrews
Mary and Darrell Andries
Lucinda Antonacci-Fulton
and Robert Fulton
Catherine Apel
Gene Apel
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Wendell and Geneva Armour
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Susan and Terry Asher
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Phylis and George Attig
Scott and Kay Ault
Arla and Richard Ault
Elmer and Beata Apperle
Virginia and Eldon Apperle
Allan and Ruth Aves
Barr and Karessa Aves
Ronald Aves
Mary Babb
Anna Babb
Larry and Myra Bachman
Tina and Kevin Bachman
Rhonda Badtke
Mary Baer
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John and Beatrice Bagby
Andrew Bagley
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<td>Joan Salzman</td>
<td>Douglas and Patricia Schneider</td>
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Businesses, Clubs, Foundations, and Organizations

1st Community Bank
1st Farm Credit Services
Abbott Fund
Ag Resource Management, Inc.
AgReplent Genetics, LLC
Agrigold
Aigas USA, LLC
Akron Services, Inc.
Aladdin Steel, Inc.
Albert K. Krause, Jr. Family Trust
Albrecht Brothers LLC
Ajets Automotive Inc.
All Hart Chiropractic
All Pets of Macomb PC
Alliance Contractors, Inc.
Allison Family Corporation
Alpha Controls & Services, LLC
Alpine Bank & Trust Company
Alward Trenching Inc.
Ameren Corporation
American Grinding and Machine Company
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 854
Animal Medical Center of Macomb Ltd.
AO Foundation Research Fund
Aquility Solutions, Inc.
Area Diesel Service, Inc.
Ard Loy Bros. Heating & Cooling, Inc.
AT&T Illinois
Badke Farms, Inc.
Bagley Grain & Livestock LLC
Bangert, Inc.
Bank & Trust Company
Bank of Modesto
BankORION
Barn Chic Boutique
Barnie HCE Unit
Bartlett Grain Company
Baylor Insurance Agency
Beeler Farms
Belin Apartments
Bergsneider, LLC
Best Buy Co., Inc.
Best Supermarket
Bicknell Farms Limited Partnership
Biddie Farms, Inc
Big R Stores
Bill’s IGA
Bird HCE Unit
Birkey’s
Birkey’s Farm Store, Inc.
Black Hawk College
Blandinsville Veterinary Clinic
Bond County 4-H & Extension Education Foundation
Boone County Community Foundation
Booneville Community Foundation
Borisch Farms, Inc.
Bork Family Trust
Bountiful City Kids Garden 4-H SPIN Club
Braudshaw Custom Pumping, Inc.
Brandt Consolidated, Inc.
BRANDT Foundation
Brass Door Restaurant & Catering Inc.
Brooks Farms
Buckardt Family Trust
Buck’s Decovery Center
Bunn-O-Matic Corporation
Bussey Bank
Bussey Wealth Management
Bushnell Banking Center
Bushnell Locker Service II, Inc.
Bushnell Veterinary Service, Inc.
Calmer Corn Heads, Inc.
The Cantlin Law Firm
Cargill Incorporated
Carlinville Public Works
Carlinville Lions Club
Carrollton Bank
Carrollton Levee, Inc.
Carthage Livestock, Inc.
Casteel Color Wheel
Catch A Star Learning
Central Illinois Steel Company
Chadco, Inc.
Charley Martin
Horse Shoeing
CHS
Citizens Bank - Morton
Community Bank
Citizens for Hammond
City of Virden
Clark County 4-H Foundation
Cleardfield Farm Reg.
Holstein Cattle
Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Close Farms
Clover Cadets 4-H Club
CME Group Inc.
CNB Bank & Trust
CoBank
Commerce Bancshares Foundation
CommUnity Foundation for the Land of Lincoln
Community Foundation of Northern Illinois
Community Foundation of the Quincy Area
Compton Accounting
Consolidated Grain & Barge Company
Coon Creek Sod Farms
Cornell University
Coutler Agency
The Country Cupboard
Country Financial
Covenant Animal Clinic
Cox Land and Cattle, Inc.
Craner Brothers, Inc.
Crop Production Services
Crop-Tech Consulting, Inc.
The Cubby Hole
Curtis Family Farms LLC
D & D Service Center
Dairy Queen of Carollton
Daley-Bruckert Chevrolet, Inc.
Dambacher Farms Partnership
Dandy Does HCE Unit
David Carroll, Inc.
David Grotelendt Farms, Inc.
David L. O’Dell Insurance Agency Inc.
Davis Towing
Dearwater Grain Services, Inc.
Diekemper Brothers, Inc.
Do More Unit (HCE)
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Durbin Vet Clinic, PC
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Gary D. Edwards Insurance Agency, Inc.
Geier Family Trust
General Grind and Machine, Inc.
Memorials

Regina Anderson
Galva, Illinois
July 9, 1933 – July 3, 2015
David and Mary North Corporation

Evan Biddle
Joy, Illinois
October 21, 1986 – August 4, 1999
Biddle Farms

Jacob Cash
Savoy, Illinois
George and J. Barbara Frock

Lois Dienst
Kewanee, Illinois
November 21, 1925 – April 11, 2016
Wyoming Veterinary Services

Debra and Dennis Bartman
Debra and Fredric Bindler
James Castagna
Robert Grant
Mary and James Little
Marie and Steven Loudenburg
Brad and Patricia Nelson
Willard and Joan Price
Wendy Schaffner
Julie and William West

Belle Drake
Urbana, Illinois
July 14, 1974 – July 25, 2004

Harold and Nancy Drake
Dorothea Eisenmayer
September 16, 1918 – November 2, 2006

Ted Lobello

Rose Ann Eggen
Joy, Illinois
August 7, 1938 – November 6, 2015

Sanya and Alan Boucher
Barbara Chiles
Penny Dixon
James Eggen
Barbara and Earl Etheridge
William and Marilyn Hessman
Martha Jackson
Tracy and Kevin Pestle
Various donors
Windy Acres

John Eisenmayer
Stronghurst, Illinois
March 7, 1925 – September 4, 2015

Barbara and Steve Determan

Vicki Hamilton
Toulon, Illinois
September 24, 1949 – March 29, 2016
Margaret and Scott Cline
Brandon and Janeen Kolb

Barbara Harlan
Olney, Illinois
April 4, 1937 – January 30, 1967
Bobbie and Joseph Sibley

Carol Hays
Champaign, Illinois
August 13, 1951 – October 17, 2015

James Cherrington
Mary Hays and John Hoag
Robert and Emily Lewis
Jena Thompson
David and Jennifer Watson

Chris Hennenfent
Wataga, Illinois
September 8, 1964 – August 3, 2016
Bob Hennenfent
Lawrence Johnson
Medora, Illinois
March 10, 1944 – March 24, 2015
Barbara Johnson
Eugene and Ruth Kolmer
Janet Grommet
Jean Main
Sherman Oaks, California
June 13, 1901 – October 21, 1999
Barbara Johnson
Eugene and Ruth Kolmer
Janet Grommet
Jean Main
Sherman Oaks, California
June 13, 1901 – October 21, 1999
Judy and Mike Hennenfent
Dean Nelson
Lee Marten
Waggoner, Illinois
October 10, 1948 – July 12, 2013
Mary Marten
Gary Mayhew
Aledo, Illinois
April 25, 1939 – May 19, 2013
Sharon Mayhew
James McCurdy
Monmouth, Illinois
April 26, 1929 – July 23, 2015
Larry Wachtel
Dylis McCutchan
Aledo, Illinois
June 29, 1938 – June 20, 2014
Mike and Kimberly McCutchan
James McGrew
Avon, Illinois
January 15, 1932 – January 6, 2015
Scott and Kay Ault
Jeff Brown
Joni and John Butcher
Karen and David Clement
Dean and Tessa Curley
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Williamsfield, Illinois
January 9, 1956 – February 13, 2014
Marsha and Doug Strom
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Lake Villa, Illinois
May 11, 1979 – July 10, 2000
Abbott Fund
Leanna Mrz
Ronald Phipps
Kane, Illinois
May 31, 1952 – March 1, 2016
Herbert and Janice Hagen
Claire S. Potter
Graymont, Illinois
December 17, 1913 – December 19, 1996
Ernest Potter
Verda Schottman
Effingham, Illinois
September 23, 1932 – June 15, 2016
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Richard and Carol Boemgen
Sherri and Steve Bourgeois
Jennifer Brock
Terry Courson
Debra and Richard Dorzewiler
Cheryl Duckwitz
Jesse and Glenda Durbin
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Dorothy Stirett
Curtis Stortzun
Kathy Streamming
Kim Walk
Margie Zimdars
J. L. Shepley
Tucson, Arizona
1915 – January 8, 2015
Virginia R. Dillon
Sherry Shimmin
Kewanee, Illinois
March 9, 1943 – May 18, 2015
James Godke
Cole Richard Steele
Williamsfield, Illinois
October 20, 1946 – February 22, 2015
Andea and Corey Hanson
Joe Stritzel
Johnston City, Illinois
July 20, 1921 – July 3, 2015
Georgia Bayer-Lichthardt
Janet Chapman
Barbara and Harold King
Phyllis Summers
Chatham, Illinois
March 17, 1917 – January 30, 2015
Helen McGranahan
Martha Vache
Katie Ann Thorp
Knoxville, Illinois
JoAnn Thorp
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Good Hope, Illinois
November 10, 1944 – October 19, 2015
Colleen and John Carlson
Dean and Tessa Curley
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Mahomet, Illinois
Marilyn Babb
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Lora and Kenneth Kesler
Linda and Donald Miller
Chuck and Jan Olson
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February 23, 1925 – December 12, 2014
Richard and Manlyn Moeller
Mike Wegrzyn
Naperville, Illinois
Molly Thayer
Perpetual Gifts

Perpetual gifts are a means to provide ongoing support for the Illinois 4-H Youth Development Program.

Endowed Gift Funds

An endowment can be created to continuously benefit a 4-H initiative or county 4-H program with a minimum gift of $15,000.

4-H Mr. and Mrs. Edward E. Alexander Memorial Fund
Margarette E. Athey 4-H Adult Volunteer Leader Development Fund
Ruth and Donald Berger Family Memorial 4-H Endowment Fund
Charles and Frances Brummer 4-H Endowment Fund
Camp White Eagle Scholarship Fund
4-H Jerry G. Cash Memorial Dairy Judging Awards Fund
4-H Citizenship Memorial Award Fund
4-H Dairy Judging Contest Endowment Fund
4-H George A. Dooley Memorial Aerospace Award Fund
4-H Endowment Fund
4-H Equine Excellence Endowed Fund
Farm Credit Services of Illinois Endowed Fund for the Annual Support and Sponsorship of the Illinois 4-H Project Partners Program
4-H Mel Fink Livestock Judging Travel Endowment Fund
4-H Dr. Leo Fryman Leadership Dairy Award Fund
Herman W. Hanouw Endowment Fund
Patti Jeanne Higgins 4-H Scholarship Fund
Illinois 4-H Alumnus Legacy Fund
Illinois 4-H Youth Development Center Endowment Fund
Illinois IFYE Association Fund
Lucille and Lester Korsmeyer 4-H Scholarship
4-H Legacy of Leadership Scholarship Fund
Nyle and Monica Masten Endowment Fund
4-H Lisa M. Mauney Memorial National Congress Achievement Award
Nellie R. McCannon 4-H Special Interest Club Fund
H. Richard McFarland Endowed Scholarship Fund
H. Richard and Sarah F. McFarland Endowed 4-H Youth Leadership and Character Development Support Fund
Suzanne McMurty Memorial 4-H Endowed Fund
Eugene G. Mosbacher 4-H Program Support Fund
4-H Deborah Edwards Or Memorial Dog Obedience Award Fund
David D. Pyle Fund for 4-H Volunteer Development Fund
4-H Harold Salzman Memorial Fund
4-H Emerson Scholl Memorial Fund-National Conference
Janice A. Seitz 4-H Character Education Awards Endowed Fund
4-H Earl J. Sobinsky Memorial Livestock Fund
Milford and Florence Skog 4-H Endowed Fund
John Clyde Spitler and Walter M. Johnson County 4-H Scholarship Fund
Superior Young Producers Scholarship Fund
Gordon and Evelyn Brandt Thomas Quasi-Endowment Scholarship Fund
4-H Kenneth Waddell Memorial Performing Arts Fund
Clastria Walker Endowed Fund
4-H Nedra Wesson Fund
Lisa Woessner Memorial 4-H Science and Technology Award Fund
4-H Ray Woodis Memorial IFYE Fund

Deferred Gifts (Bequests, Trusts, Life Insurance)

Thank you to the following individuals who have included Illinois 4-H Youth Development Program in their estate planning.

John and Beatrice Bagby
Dr. Sandra Broadrick-Allen
Patricia Blickner
Charles and Ruth Dow
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Jo Menacher
Duane Schroeder
Rod Stoll
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Susan and Ronald Warsaw

About CloverSeed FY2016

This report recognizes all donors who have generously supported the Illinois 4-H Foundation through their financial contributions from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of information.

In the interest of economy, computerized methods have been used wherever possible in compiling names. Please forgive any errors or omissions that may have occurred. We ask that you notify the Illinois 4-H Foundation of any mistakes so that we can correct our records. Thank you.

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