

For Immediate Release

Contact: Ryan J. Schmiesing, Ph.D., Associate State 4-H Leader, Ohio State University Extension PH: 614-292-4444; FAX: 614-292-5937; EMAIL: schmiesing.3@osu.edu; www.ohio4h.org

4-H Volunteer Contributions Continue to Increase

Former President Bill Clinton once said, “volunteering is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds”. 4-H volunteers across the state of Ohio continue to give of their time, energy and talents to support young people as they grow and learn so that they may contribute in a positive manner in our society. Ryan Schmiesing, Associate State 4-H Leader, with Ohio State University Extension, suggests that without local volunteers, our programs would not be nearly as successful.

According to Schmiesing, volunteering for 4-H continues to be an important component to successful programs and continued growth. Nationally, 65 million adults volunteer, with over 550,000 volunteering their time on a yearly basis with 4-H programs in rural, suburban, and urban centers. Not only does the 4-H program benefit, but the volunteers as well. According to David Reingold, Associate Professor and Director, Public Affairs and Public Policy Ph.D. Programs at Indiana University, it also provides opportunities for youth to develop skills, older Americans to remain healthy by being active and connected to their community, and adults to share their professional and work expertise.

Nationally, there are over 7.0 million young people in the 4-H program. The Ohio 4-H program has over 300,000 Ohio members and continues to grow by engaging more youth and adults from all communities across the state. “While the target audience

of this organization is youth,” said Schmiesing, “the 4-H Program functions and operates due, in large part, to the efforts of countless volunteers.” According to statistics from the state 4-H office, over 25,000 adult and teen volunteers serve the Ohio 4-H Program each year. Volunteers include 4-H club advisors, special interest leaders, 4-H Council members, project committee members, after-school volunteers, Cloverbud leaders, international county coordinators, fundraisers and a host of others.

Locally, **[Educators full name]**, the **[county name]** county OSU Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, also points out some 4-H volunteer statistics. According to **[Educators last name]**, over **[number of county 4-H volunteers]** volunteers worked together to deliver the 4-H Program to **[number of county 4-H youth]** youth last year in **[name of county]** county. "4-H could not function without the efforts of the volunteer staff," **[Educator's last name]** said.

For more information on becoming a 4-H volunteer, contact the **[name of county]** county OSU Extension office at **[office phone number]**.

#