

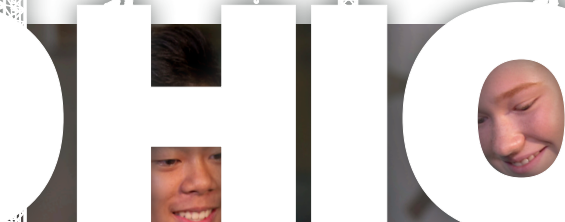
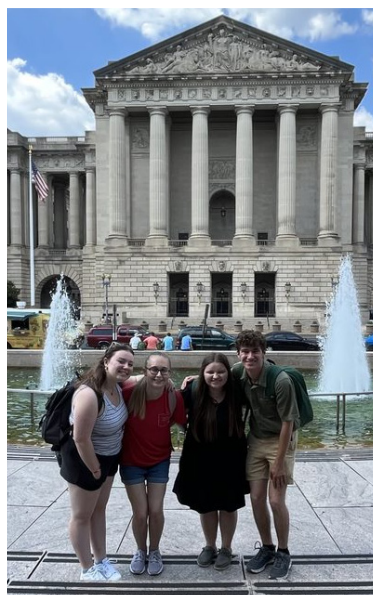


OHIO 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

CFAES

2023 IMPACT REPORT

Building Lifelong Skills With ...



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

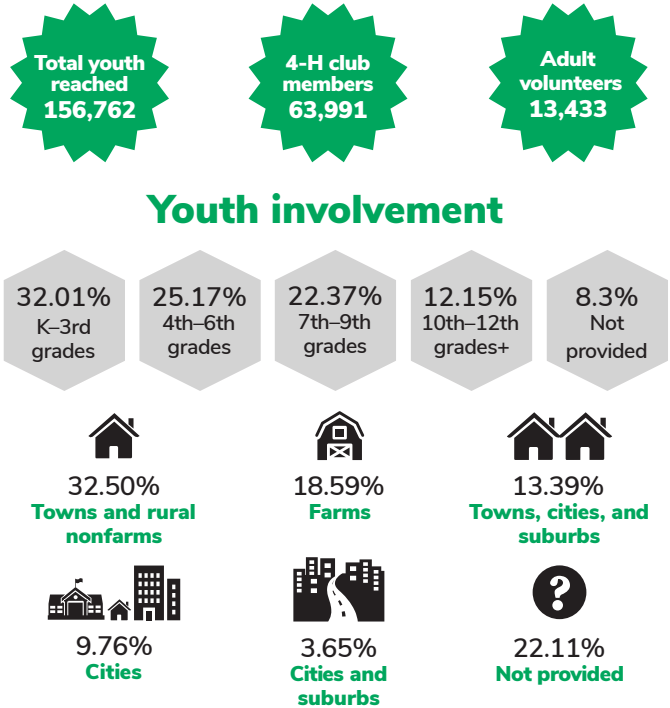
THE OHIO 4-H FOUNDATION
at The Ohio State University

COLLEGE of FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, and ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

OHIO 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT REACH

OHIO 4-H IN 2023

Project enrollment



4-H supporters receive national recognition



Jim Helt

Ohio 4-H youth development is honored to recognize Jim Helt as the newest member of the National 4-H Hall of Fame. Helt is the retired state 4-H program leader for Ohio State University Extension and was recognized for his 47 years of service to 4-H, both in Ohio and the country. From his start as a 4-H agent in Hamilton and Pickaway counties, Helt's lifetime of work had an enormous impact on youth and 4-H professionals.

"Jim's passion for positive youth development led to unparalleled learning and leadership opportunities," said Kirk Bloir, state 4-H leader and assistant director, OSU Extension.



Helt (second from left) with his wife, Marlene (left), Kirk Bloir, state 4-H leader and assistant director of OSU Extension, (second from right) and Crystal Ott, Ohio 4-H Foundation manager (right).

Patricia Brundige

Patricia Brundige, a generous benefactor and lifelong supporter of Ohio 4-H, was honored with a national 2023 Friend of Extension Award by Epsilon Sigma Phi (ESP) at its annual conference.

Raised as a 4-H'er, Brundige never forgot her 4-H background and has been an active volunteer, engaged stakeholder, and visionary donor with \$11 million going to support Ohio 4-H and The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

"Pat has had such an incredible impact on so many lives. I want to offer our sincerest congratulations on this very well-deserved national honor," said Cathann A. Kress, Ohio State vice president for agricultural administration and CFAES dean.



Patricia Brundige (center), Daphne Richards, national ESP president (left), and Beth Boomershine, 4-H educator in Franklin County (right).



Ohio 4-H friends and families,

Wow, what a year 2023 has been! Across the state, the Ohio 4-H community came together to bring the 4-H pledge to life—for our youth, our clubs, our communities, and our world. The experiences we provide youth today help set rock-solid foundations for lifelong success and will benefit society for generations to come. We know this is true from the success stories of our Ohio 4-H alumni, several of whom we feature in our inaugural *From Clovers to Careers ...* publication, as well as from new research comparing 4-H'ers to those not involved in 4-H.

Results from studies commissioned by the National 4-H Council show that 4-H youth are twice as likely to report leading healthy lives and feeling hopeful about the future. Given recent news about the alarming rates of disconnection, overwhelming sadness, and unhealthy choices many youth are experiencing, the positive youth development kids get by being a part of 4-H is making an incredible impact.

What we do together truly makes a difference! I hope you enjoy reading the stories on the following pages and learning more about our work this past year. On behalf of the entire Ohio 4-H community, thank you for your continued investments of time, talent, and treasure to inspire curiosity, fuel adventure, and teach lifelong skills to grow tomorrow's leaders today.

Yours in 4-H,

Kirk Bloir

Kirk Bloir, PhD
State 4-H Leader
Assistant Director, OSU Extension



Dear 4-H families,

Over 100 years ago, A.B. Graham started an agricultural club in Clark County, Ohio. From that small act of leadership, the 4-H program blossomed, and today, it reaches young people in Ohio, across the country, and throughout the world. The growth of 4-H, along with the vast array and diversity of projects, would astound Graham today.

From STEM projects like rockets, to woodworking and traditional livestock projects, 4-H opportunities are plentiful and touch every subject area imaginable. This is possible because of supporters and believers of 4-H, like you.

Just like A.B. Graham's decision to start an agricultural club, your decision to support 4-H through your time, energy, and finances has helped 4-H grow to its present success. Thank you for your support and belief in the future. You are truly making the best better!

Sincerely,

Lisa Peterson

Lisa Peterson
President
Ohio 4-H Foundation Board of Trustees

We love to hear about the impact 4-H has had on our alumni. Share your 4-H story with us today at go.osu.edu/alumnistoriesfb!



Our focus



Creating true leaders

At Ohio 4-H, true leaders aren't born; they're grown. Youth grow these skills through both project work and experiences.



Endowing future 4-H success

Gifts to Ohio 4-H endowments help provide youth with the experiences, support, and encouragement they need to thrive for years to come.



Growing 4-H across Ohio

Young people need the kinds of hands-on, youth-led experiences that Ohio 4-H provides. Ohio 4-H is engaging new audiences while continuing to grow traditional programming.



Ensuring career and workforce readiness

The 4-H approach gives young people the guidance, tools, encouragement, and experiences they need in life and in their careers. Through Ohio 4-H, youth make great things happen in their own lives and in their own communities.



CREATING TRUE LEADERS

National shooting sports ambassadors

In 2023, more than 3,000 Ohio 4-H youth enrolled in shooting sports projects, and two teens expanded their skills by becoming national shooting sports ambassadors. Cadence Richard of Allen County and Austin Clark of Pickaway County traveled to Nevada to participate in the National 4-H Shooting Sports Leadership Conference, along with 30 teens from across the country.

They participated in leadership activities, heard from guest speakers, and learned more about topical issues such as firearms and mental health. “Ohio 4-H shooting sports has done so much to develop me as a person over the last 10 years,” said Richard. “Being able to become an ambassador has been a dream come true.”

As ambassadors, they will work with Tracy Winters, 4-H educator for shooting sports and natural resources, to promote shooting sports at county and state programs and trainings. “We have two excellent youth representatives this year, and I’m looking forward to working with them to promote all the opportunities shooting sports offers for our 4-H members,” said Winters.



Austin Clark and Cadence Richard

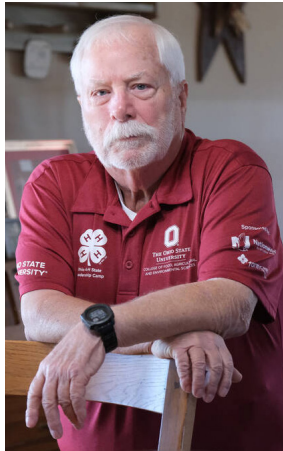


Steve Arnold

Few 4-H volunteers have left as big of an impact on the Wood County 4-H and Ohio 4-H shooting sports communities as Steve Arnold. For more than 30 years, he has devoted his time, experience, and support to the Ohio 4-H program. This year, he was recognized by National 4-H Council as the 2023 North Central Region Volunteer of the Year.

Over the years, Arnold founded and advised two 4-H clubs, received grants totaling more than \$110,000, and obtained state certifications in seven shooting sports disciplines, creating opportunities for all 4-H’ers. In March, his dedication to Ohio 4-H was celebrated at the state level when he was inducted into the Ohio 4-H Hall of Fame.

“Steve is a shining example of our 4-H volunteers,” said state 4-H leader and assistant director of OSU Extension, Kirk Bloir. “He is an incredible source of support and guidance for our young 4-H’ers as they grow into the next generation of leaders. We could not be prouder to have him as an Ohio 4-H volunteer.”



Steve Arnold



Skillathon and livestock judging at the Ohio State Fair

In 2023, the Ohio State Fair saw a record number of youth participating in skillathons and livestock projects. Some of the highlights included:

- 5,037 youth participating in skillathons
- 1,595 youth participating in in-person or virtual livestock judging
- 240 youth receiving an award for winning their age group in skillathons and judging contests
- 85 youth recognized as outstanding exhibitors

Celebrating our Achievement Awards winners

The spotlight was focused on 4-H members at the annual Achievement Awards banquet in June. Twenty-eight youth from across the state were recognized for their accomplishments in specific project areas. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, the honorees represented Ohio at the National 4-H Congress in Atlanta.

“I am so grateful to win this award because it is a reminder that I have lived my life by the 4-H motto,” said Madilyn Lawson, one of the winners of the Leadership Achievement Award. “Through 4-H, I have found a place where I feel successful and empowered. It has given me the experience and the confidence to make a difference.”



Thank you, Virgil!

Our thanks to Virgil Strickler for his many years of service to the agricultural industry upon his retirement as general manager of the Ohio Expo Center & State Fair. As a 4-H member, Strickler grew up at the fair, and as general manager, he was committed to creating a welcoming, educational environment for all youth exhibitors. We are grateful for his leadership over the past 30 years, and we wish him a happy retirement!



Read more about the impact 4-H had on Strickler’s life along with stories from other amazing alumni in our new 4-H alumni magazine, *From Clovers to Careers ...*



CAMP CONTINUES TO GROW

In 2023, Ohio 4-H saw a total of 14,007 campers, 3,387 counselors, and 1,341 staff. Here are the breakdowns of campers by camp type, and then by age:

4-H CAMP TOTALS	CAMPERS 14,007	COUNSELORS 3,387	STAFF 1,341
OVERNIGHT RESIDENTIAL CAMPS	9,641	2,500	892
DAY CAMPS	4,366	887	449
PROJECT AGE	10,822	2,530	931
CLOVERBUDS	3,185	857	410



ENDOWING FUTURE 4-H SUCCESS

Each year, the Ohio 4-H Foundation supports county and state 4-H professionals with grants for innovative programs. In 2023, the foundation awarded \$132,388.42 in grants with \$1,968,188.18 in total funding since 2012. Funding for grants is provided by contributions from generous donors and fundraisers such as the annual Celebration of Youth.

Celebrating support for 4-H

In September, Ohio 4-H supporters attended the Celebration of Youth to help grow 4-H. By bidding on auction items and making pledges for the Ohio 4-H Leadership Experiences Support Fund, more than \$138,000 was raised to benefit youth programs.



"In high school, I knew I liked math and science, but I didn't exactly know what I wanted to do with it. Ohio 4-H was the thing that helped me figure out I wanted to be an engineer."—Lauren Logen

Throughout the night, guests visited with 4-H professionals who shared their work, enjoyed delicious food, and networked with fellow 4-H advocates. They also heard from Lauren Logan, an Athens County 4-H alumna and the evening's keynote speaker. Logan shared the ways 4-H inspired her to pursue her current career as a professor of civil and environmental engineering.



Thank you to Nationwide for serving as the Celebration of Youth's Presenting Sponsor!



Throughout the evening at Leeds Farm, guests enjoyed pedal carts, the zip line, and other fall fun activities.



INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING OHIO 4-H?
Give online today at ohio4h.org/give-now.

4-H'ers travel across the pond

The Ohio 4-H Dairy Judging Team took their talents to Europe this summer to compete in the Royal Highland Show in Scotland. Youth participated in judging contests, toured farms and historic sites, and met with dairy farmers and youth to discuss genetics, feeding, and facilities practices.

"This trip was an excellent way to encourage our youth to participate and excel in dairy judging," said Sherry Smith, Ohio 4-H dairy program specialist. "It educated our youth on the dairy industry in other countries and connected them with youth across the U.S. and Europe who are involved in agriculture."



The Ohio 4-H Dairy Judging Team competed in judging contests at the Royal Highland Show.



4-H'ers aim for new skills

Taking a shooting sports project for the first time can be intimidating, but Lydia Flores, 4-H Extension educator in Marion County eased those fears with a shooting sports education program. "About half of the youth participants experienced shooting sports projects for the first time," said Flores. "They had safe, hands-on fun while discovering projects like rifle, pistol, and archery."

Youth learned about gun and bow safety and practiced their shooting skills during the one-day program. Thanks to a partnership with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division, participants also learned about natural resources projects and opportunities.



Super Saturday in Clermont County

Ohio 4-H'ers in Clermont County got a jump start on their 4-H projects at the Super Saturday project clinic. Workshops were led by 4-H members and volunteers with expertise in specific project areas that included cooking, sewing, art, fishing, and electricity projects.

"The clinics prepared youth for a positive judging experience by connecting them with a knowledgeable project helper and giving them time to work on their project," said Kelly Royalty, 4-H Extension educator in Clermont County.

Crafting smiles with 4-H

Last summer at Wood County 4-H camp, youth displayed their creative talents and shared some joy through the Make One, Give One project. Campers crafted nature sculptures, ceramic magnets, embellished clovers, and beaded bracelets. They kept one creation to take home and gave another to clients of the Wood County Committee on Aging's home meals program.



Don't forget to save the date for next year's
Celebration of Youth!

Join us on
Thursday, Sept. 12,
for another evening of fun and fellowship
to support Ohio 4-H.



GROWING 4-H ACROSS OHIO

Ohio 4-H involvement is up nearly 20% from last year. We continue to grow by implementing new, innovative programming ideas and expanding on existing opportunities. Learn more about a few of these programs below.



Teens help create opportunities for all

Four Ohio 4-H members spent a week in Washington, D.C., last summer at the True Leaders in Equity Institute, learning about the work their peers and professionals are doing to expand the reach and impact of 4-H. "This experience opened my eyes to what it really means to be a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion," said Ari Wilson, a participant from Franklin County.

In addition to participating in workshops and roundtable discussions, teams from each state identified equity gaps in their state 4-H programs and developed a plan of action



Ohio 4-H'ers discussed comments they received from peers on their action plan.

to address these issues. The Ohio delegation focused on disability awareness and is working with Ohio 4-H professionals to make this plan a reality.

"Learning about the different ways my team and the delegates from other states exhibit and understand diversity was a special experience," said Scioto County 4-H'er Emily Scaff. "All the people I met and worked with truly had a passion for growing justice and equity within our 4-H community."

2023 Ohio State Fair by the numbers

- **4,538** 4-H'ers traveled to Columbus to participate in 4-H project judging.
- **233** clock trophies were awarded to the top youth participants in each project class.
- **907** 4-H'ers received Outstanding of the Day ribbons for their project class.
- Nearly **\$15,000** was donated by sponsors for this year's clock trophies.



Are you interested in sponsoring a clock trophy at next year's Ohio State Fair?

Contact the Ohio 4-H Foundation at ohio4hfoundation@osu.edu to learn how!



STEM Camp returns

The tech industry is booming in Ohio, creating opportunities for Ohio 4-H to focus on STEM education to benefit youth. This summer, more than 50 young scientists expanded their understanding of science, technology, engineering, and math as they traveled to Canter's Cave 4-H Camp in southeastern Ohio to explore food science, engineering, anatomy, stress management, environmental science, and coding.

They also participated in engineering design challenges and learned about entrepreneurship through a pitch project where they presented their ideas to a panel of judges.

"STEM Camp gave youth the opportunity to engage in hands-on exploration of STEM careers and taught them about the education required for those jobs," said Maddie Allman, 4-H Extension educator in Jackson County. "With the help of a grant from the Ohio 4-H Foundation, we were able to make STEM education more accessible to youth by offering camp at a reduced rate."

Support 4-H STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) education by donating today!



Youth also learned about forestry science at STEM Camp.



JET takes off at Adventure Central

For more than 20 years, the Job Experience and Training (JET) program at Adventure Central in Dayton has offered teens workforce preparation programs to prepare them for careers. This summer, thanks to JET, 16 teens developed valuable skills in time management, collaboration, and public speaking.

JET supervisors said the impact on participants was evident, noting their growth as leaders during the summer. JET teens, such as Mya Day who worked at Adventure Central as a youth education assistant, also appreciated the opportunity. "I liked working with the kids and getting to be a good role model for them," she said.



Teens were placed at Adventure Central in youth education, nutrition, and administrative positions, and at parks in the Five Rivers MetroParks system.

Marvin Olinsky honored in Dayton

In October, Marvin Olinsky was recognized for his contributions to the Dayton metropolitan area and the youth who live there when he was inducted into the Dayton Region Walk of Fame.

As CEO of the Five Rivers MetroParks, Olinsky fostered a partnership with 4-H and OSU Extension to create Adventure Central. This learning center for urban youth has served thousands of youth since it opened in 2000 and empowers them through nature exploration; after-school educational programs, camps, and activity nights; and homework assistance.

"I'm so glad to be able to share the story of Adventure Central and speak about the role 4-H played in my life as a kid and the ways it still impacts me today," said Olinsky.

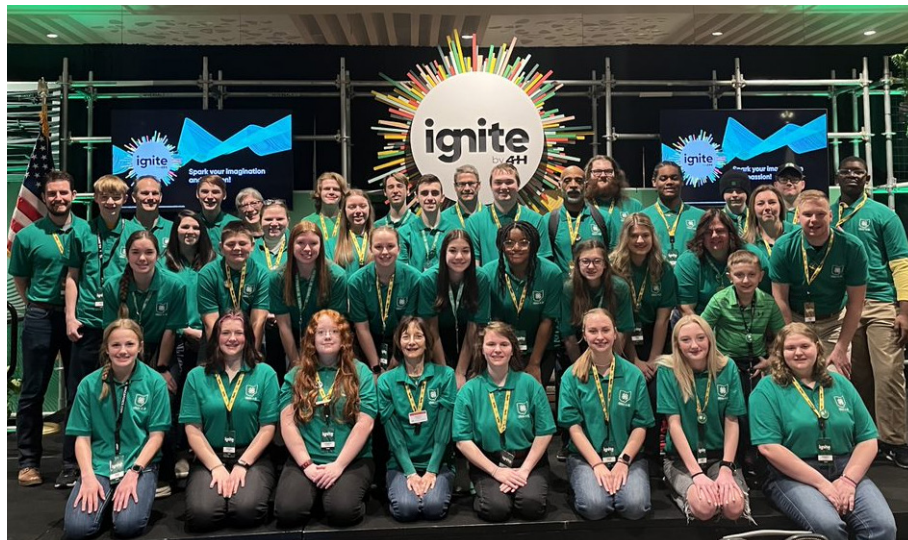


The Ohio 4-H Foundation is grateful to Kroger for its continued partnership and support of Ohio 4-H. Thank you for helping us distribute our project guides and new club starter kits to 4-H'ers across the state!





ENSURING CAREER AND WORKFORCE READINESS



Igniting new ideas

In March, Ohio 4-H'ers joined youth from across the country at the Ignite by 4-H National Youth Summit in Washington, D.C. Hosted by the National 4-H Council, the summit provided the opportunity to learn from experts and professionals in healthy living, STEM, and agriscience.

Ohio delegates included the 4-H Health HEROES, youth from Ohio State's Upward Bound program, and youth from the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. They participated in educational sessions and developed action plans to bring what they learned back to their communities.

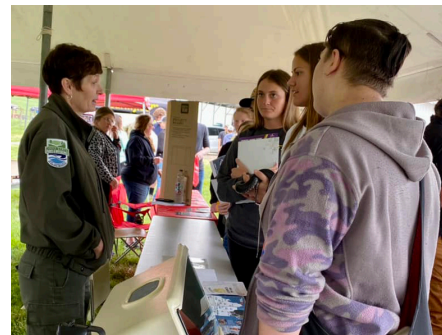
Emma Smith, a 4-H member from Morrow County and an agriscience participant, said, "I was able to meet and make connections with businesses and agricultural professionals. I also taught and shared my knowledge of STEM and the agriscience topics I'm passionate about with other 4-H'ers."



Delegates who participated in the STEM sessions presented action plans to their peers for feedback.



Four Ohio 4-H Health HEROES attended healthy living education sessions at Ignite.



Exploring careers in agriculture

Choosing a future career is never an easy decision, but 4-H professionals in southern Ohio made it a bit easier with Ag Career Exploration Day. More than 240 youth from 13 school ag programs met with college admissions representatives and ag industry professionals to learn about careers and discuss education and training requirements.

"The career expo was an eye-opening experience for many of our students," said Regina Kuhn, an ag science teacher and the FFA advisor at Green High School. "They were able to get out of the classroom and explore real-world educational and career opportunities in the agricultural industry in a relaxed and fun-filled environment."



Barking up a new business

When Preble County 4-H'er Emma Bergbigler began showing dogs three years ago, she never expected to discover a future career. Now at just 14 years old, Bergbigler has started her own dog grooming and walking business and has big plans for its growth.

Named Leroy's Place after her dog who passed away in November 2020, Bergbigler's business has been a labor of love. "Leroy was my best friend, and this felt like a way to honor him," she said.

With the help of family, friends, and local professionals, Bergbigler opened Leroy's Place on June 1 from her family's garage: "As my business grows, I plan to move into a larger building and hire employees. I also want to offer dog day care services and a pet shop!"

This summer, she showed off her hard work at both the Preble County Fair and the Ohio State Fair with a workforce development self-determined project. Competing at the Ohio State Fair was a great experience," she said. "I'm already looking forward to doing another project on how I'm marketing Leroy's Place."



Developing work ethics

Ohio will be one of the first 4-H programs in the nation to offer high school students a work ethic certification.

Designed by Mike Rowe, best known as the host of television's *Dirty Jobs*, the curriculum will be offered under the Ohio 4-H Pathways to the Future initiative. Ohio high schoolers who participate can learn about the importance of work ethic, personal responsibility, delayed gratification, and a positive attitude when it comes to future employment.

Since introducing the work ethic certification, more than 40 Ohio high school youth have participated in the program and are eligible to receive the certificate after completing all the requirements.

More updates from the Ohio 4-H Workforce Development and Pathways program:

- Sixty-eight 4-H'ers participated in at least one of the workforce development opportunities offered at the 2023 Ohio State Fair.
- Sixty-four youth have completed the YouScience assessment since January 2023.
- Thirty participants representing 20 Ohio counties attended the Ohio 4-H Spark EXPO. Due to their experiences at the expo:
 - 92% of participants had hands-on experience in the career pathway that interests them
 - 69% of participants can start connecting their 4-H experience and career aspirations
 - 85% of participants can identify career pathways within CFAES



2023 Spark EXPO participants.

Help our 4-H'ers discover new college and career pathways by giving to the Ohio 4-H Workforce Development and Pathways Fund at go.osu.edu/4hpathwaysfund.



THE OHIO 4-H FOUNDATION

at The Ohio State University

Nationwide & Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center
2201 Fred Taylor Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43210
Phone: 614-292-6943
Fax: 614-292-5937

ohio4hfoundation@osu.edu
ohio4h.org/foundation

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Celebrating our volunteers!



Kathy McNutt, Franklin County

"I love the 4-H circle of life. I'm currently working with several second-generation 4-H'ers. I had the pleasure of watching their parents go through this journey, and now I'm lucky enough to share this experience with their children."



Ashley Wilfong, Lake County

As a young 4-H'er, Wilfong was reluctant to go to camp, but she quickly fell in love with it and everything she got out of the experience. The fun, connections, friendships, and feeling of belonging made it memorable. Now she serves as the Lake County Camp Whitewood dean of women and was the recipient of the Lake County 4-H's Forever Happy Camper Award in 2023.

"Ashley has an understanding heart and remembers all the feelings that can be associated with being at camp, so she is a great support to everyone," said Lisa Manning, Lake County Extension educator for 4-H. "Her love for camp is evident, and in return, she is loved by all the campers, counselors, and staff."



Steve Bader, Fairfield County

This year, Bader celebrated his 50th year of service with Ohio 4-H. "I enjoy helping youth become successful both in 4-H and outside of the 4-H program," said Steve. "I love hearing about their achievements and seeing their growth and development through the years of their 4-H career."

Are you interested
in becoming a 4-H
volunteer? Learn
about ways to get
involved today!



Would you like to stay
connected with our
alumni community?
Keep updated on
Ohio 4-H events by
completing our survey.

