

BRAND MESSAGE PLATFORM



4-H
GROWS HERE



WHO

4-H is America's largest youth development organization.



WHAT

We empower young people with the skills to lead for a lifetime.



HOW

Youth collaborate with caring adult mentors to lead hands-on projects in areas like science, health, agriculture and citizenship. Mentors provide a positive environment where youth learn by doing. This 4-H experience is delivered by a community of more than 100 public universities across the nation.



IMPACT

This experience grows leaders with life skills like confidence, independence, resilience and compassion. This produces 4-H'ers who are 4X more likely to give back to their communities, 2X more likely to make healthy decisions and 2X more likely to pursue STEM opportunities.



TOP-LINE MESSAGING COPY

For Summary, Lead-In Written Communications

About 4-H

In 4-H, we believe in the power of young people. We see that every child has valuable strengths and real influence to improve the world around us. We are America's largest youth development organization—empowering nearly six million young people across the U.S. with the skills to lead for a lifetime.

4-H Grows True Leaders

4-H empowers young people to be true leaders. True leaders are young people who have confidence; know how to work well with others; can endure through challenges; and will stick to a job until it gets done. In 4-H, we believe true leaders aren't born—they are grown. The 4-H experience is proven to grow true leaders with life skills like confidence, independence, resilience and compassion.

American Youth Unprepared

Too many of America's youth are lacking the opportunities that prepare them to lead in life and career. They are missing experiences that grow the life skills they need—like confidence, independence, resilience and compassion. Experiences where they have the freedom to learn by doing, grow from failure, express their ideas and use their influence to drive positive outcomes.

As a result, half of all high school students report they are not prepared to lead in their life after high school—for college or career—and most are unsure about their career path when they graduate.

It is a serious problem now that could escalate in the years to come, because America needs more true leaders who are prepared and engaged to take on critical challenges facing families, communities and businesses today.



TOP-LINE MESSAGING COPY

For Summary, Lead-In Written Communications

The 4-H Experience

4-H is delivered by Cooperative Extension—a community of more than 100 public universities across the nation that provides experiences where young people learn by doing. Kids complete hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and citizenship, in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles.

Kids experience 4-H in every county and parish in the country—through in-school and after-school programs, school and community clubs and 4-H camps. These 4-H experiences grow young people who are four times more likely to contribute to their communities, two times more likely to make healthy decisions and two times more likely to pursue STEM opportunities outside of school.

4-H'ers have risen to high points of achievement and leadership in virtually every industry and sector. Including such “true leaders” as Grammy Award-winning singer and actress **Jennifer Nettles**; Facebook executive and “News Feed” inventor **Andrew Bosworth**; former U.S. vice president **Al Gore**; tech guru and founder of Aspera Software **Michelle Munson**; business leader and CEO of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce **Javier Palomarez**; Retired NBA player and business entrepreneur **Earvin “Magic” Johnson**; and former NASA Chief Astronaut **Peggy Whitson**, to name a few.

[VIEW THE FULL ALUMNI LIST](#)



MESSAGE PLATFORM SUPPORTING POINTS

Who We Are

What We Do

How We Work

Why Our Work Matters



WHO WE ARE

Our Core Beliefs

About Young People:

- In 4-H, we believe in the power of young people. We see that every child has valuable strengths and real influence to improve the world around us.

About Leadership:

- 4-H empowers young people to be true leaders.
- 4-H believes true leaders aren't born, they are grown.
- True leaders are young people who have confidence; know how to work well with others; can endure through challenges; and will stick to a job until it gets done.
- The 4-H experience is proven to grow leaders with life skills like confidence, independence, resilience and compassion.

About Youth Empowerment:

- In 4-H, empowerment comes from doing—not hand-holding, not lecturing, not baby-sitting.
- It involves giving young people the guidance, tools and encouragement, and then putting them in the driver's seat to make great things happen.



WHAT WE DO

OUR APPROACH:

The 4-H Way

- 4-H empowers young people with the skills to lead for a lifetime.
- The research-based 4-H experience includes a Caring Adult Relationship; a Hands-On, Skill-Building Project; and a Meaningful Leadership opportunity.
- 4-H'ers learn by doing—with adults providing guidance, instead of directing; asking questions, instead of giving answers; sitting in the passenger's seat while the young person takes the wheel; and sharing learnings and encouragement if they make a wrong turn.
- This is the 4-H positive youth development approach that is proven to grow life skills.

HOW WE WORK

OUR DELIVERY SYSTEM:

The 4-H Community

- 4-H reaches nearly six million young people through Cooperative Extension—a community of more than 100 public universities and more than 3,000 local offices.
- Programs are delivered by more than 3,500 trained 4-H professionals and more than 500,000 volunteers who serve every county and parish in the country.
- Young people experience 4-H through school and community clubs, in-school enrichment programs, 4-H Camps and after-school programs.





HOW WE WORK

OUR BREADTH: 4-H Programming

Based on their interests and guided by adult mentors, youth develop their own pathway in 4-H. They select from a broad menu of local 4-H programs. There are hands-on, learn-by-doing, opportunities for everyone.

Programs include:

- Healthy Living projects from nutrition and fitness to cooking;
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) projects from aerospace engineering and robotics to veterinary science and hydroponics;
- Agriculture projects from raising livestock to veterinary science;
- Business and Citizenship projects from public speaking and entrepreneurship to personal finance and civic leadership; and
- Creative Arts projects from photography and film-making to theatre arts and sewing.

Youth can concentrate on one focus area, or they can sample across the menu to explore various opportunities throughout their 4-H experience.

Regardless of the project area, all 4-H programs include mentoring and career readiness as core elements



HOW WE WORK

OUR IMPACT:

4-H Outcomes

Independent research proves the unparalleled impact of the 4-H experience. 4-H'ers are:

- Four times more likely than peers to take action in their communities
- Two times more likely than peers to make healthy choices
- Two times more likely than peers to pursue STEM opportunities outside of school

4-H alumni show our impact. 4-H'ers have reached the highest points of achievement in virtually every industry and sector. This includes:

- **Andrew Bosworth**, Facebook executive and “News Feed” inventor
- **Anne Burrell**, Food Network celebrity chef
- **Drew Gilpin Faust**, the president of Harvard University
- **Al Gore**, former U.S. vice president
- **Nancy Grace**, CNN Headline News host
- **Temple Grandin**, Ph.D., scholar and best-selling author
- **Carla Hall**, celebrity chef and TV personality
- **Earvin “Magic” Johnson**, retired NBA player and business entrepreneur
- **Cathy McMorris Rodgers**, U.S. Representative for Washington
- **Jennifer Nettles**, Grammy Award-winning singer, songwriter and actress
- **Javier Palomarez**, CEO of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- **Julia Roberts**, Oscar Award-winning actress
- **Terri Sewell**, U.S. Representative for Alabama
- **Herschel Walker**, Heisman Trophy-winning football player
- **Peggy Whitson**, former NASA Chief Astronaut and first female commander of the International Space Station



WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

THE PROBLEM: Youth Unprepared

Too many of America's youth are lacking the opportunities that prepare them to lead in life and career.

- They are missing experiences that grow the life skills they need—like confidence, independence, resilience and compassion.
- These includes experiences where they have the freedom to learn by doing, grow from failure, express their ideas and use their influence to drive positive outcomes.

As a result, youth are saying that they feel unprepared to lead in life after school.

- Half of all high school students report they are not prepared for life after high school—for college or career—and most are unsure about their career path when they graduate. ¹

Adults also feel youth are not prepared to thrive after school: Only 14 percent of Americans—and only 11 percent of business leaders—strongly agree college graduates have necessary skills for success. ² More than one-third of employers globally reported talent shortages in 2014, citing lack of skills as the top reason. ³



WHY OUR WORK MATTERS

Youth Not Engaged to Lead:

It is a serious problem now that could escalate in the years to come, because America needs more true leaders who are prepared and engaged to take on critical challenges facing families, communities and businesses today.

- Throughout our history, and at every positive turn of events, young people have stepped up to this challenge.
- Youth have served on the frontlines—providing the kind of passion, innovation and leadership to drive positive transformation whenever our country has needed it most. The kind of youth leadership that our country needs now.

From the economy to education to health care, America is confronting several priorities that could benefit from youth engagement now and solutions for tomorrow. The same is true for young people themselves, who are facing real challenges today—from stress and bullying to hunger and poverty.

- **Stress**— Young adults report the highest average levels of stress, and admit to feeling the least equipped to manage their stress well. ⁴
- **Bullying**—Almost half of youth in grades 4-12 reported being bullied by other students at school. ⁵
- **Hunger**— In 2014, one in six American households said there were times they could not buy enough food to meet their families' needs within that year. ⁶
- **Poverty**—For the first time in at least 50 years, the majority of U.S. public school students are living in poverty. ⁷
- **Obesity**—In 2012, more than one-third of children and adolescents were overweight or obese. ⁸

Sadly, too many of today's youth are either not engaged to drive positive solutions for the critical challenges facing our nation or not prepared with the skills they need to lead today or tomorrow.

WHY OUR WORK MATTERS



THE SOLUTION:

More young people need the kind of hands-on, youth development experiences that 4-H provides. Experiences where they can learn by doing, grow from failure, express their ideas and use their influence to drive positive outcomes.

- These experiences are proven to grow life skills—like confidence, independence, resilience and compassion—which are grown in stages and developed through experiences, not instruction. ⁹

Too many young people are not receiving these experiences, in school or out of school. Schools cannot do it alone.

- The expectations of schools are greater than ever, but the resources are stagnant or declining in many states. ¹⁰
- As an organization founded by educators, 4-H knows schools cannot do it alone.
- Across the U.S., trained 4-H professionals and volunteers are partnering with schools to empower millions of young people through classroom enrichment and after-school programs.
- But schools need us to do more. They need us to join forces—youth development organizations, corporate businesses, parents and government leaders—to bring experiences that support and enhance what is happening in the classroom.

In 4-H, this is what we do. We collaborate with schools, businesses, and other community and youth development organizations to provide learn-by-doing experiences that are proven to grow life skills.

- Experiences that empower young people to become true leaders—who have confidence; know how to work well with others; can endure through challenges; and will stick to a job until it gets done.



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