

# What we do & Why it matters

## 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### UNIT 1: JO DAVIESS, STEPHENSON AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES

#### **ANNIE HOBSON** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development – Metro)

Annie Hobson empowers youth to become active leaders in their communities through the development of innovative and culturally relevant adolescent programs. As an experienced youth professional, she trains and educates youth organizations on how to implement successful youth-focused programs using the youth development framework. Annie helps young people develop into positive community members who actively advocate for community change and equality.

#### **JACKIE DE BATISTA** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Jackie de Batista equips youth with the critical skills they need to address pressing issues of our time through innovative programming specializing in cultural awareness and tolerance, environmental education, and college and career readiness. Jackie engages with diverse members of the community to build trust, relationships and pathways for collaboration that will positively impact youth. She provides leadership to local youth development staff to ensure programmatic efforts and resources are relevant, impactful and equitably distributed.

### UNIT 2: BOONE, DEKALB AND OGLE COUNTIES

#### **JOHNNA B. JENNINGS** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Johnna Jennings is preparing today's youth to be tomorrow's leaders by working with volunteers and partners to teach healthy living, STEM, and leadership / citizenship using the principles of positive youth development. Her unit's program focuses on youth learning leadership, science inquiry and career exploration through the 4-H program. 4-H prepares youth for future success in their lives, their career choices and their communities.

### UNIT 3: LAKE AND MCHENRY COUNTIES

#### **SANDRA PREZ** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Metro)

Sandra Prez brings the benefits of 4-H positive youth development programs to urban youth of Lake and McHenry counties, with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) and college and career readiness programs. Through this work Prez is advancing the reach of 4-H among Hispanic/Latino, African American and other minority youth, in after school and out of school 4-H clubs.

#### **MICHELLE COX** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Michelle Cox provides leadership for the 4-H youth development program including programmatic performance and evaluation, volunteer management, and community collaboration. As a result, she empowers stakeholders, at various levels, by providing resources that assist in the overall success of the 4-H program.

### UNIT 4: CARROLL, LEE AND WHITESIDE COUNTIES

#### **MARTHA EBBESMEYER** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Martha Ebbesmeyer provides positive youth development activities for youth and volunteers through 4-H clubs, local schools, and partnerships to help youth learn skills for life. Through 4-H youth have a place to belong, learn independence, demonstrate generosity, and exhibit mastery.

### UNIT 5: DUPAGE, KANE AND KENDALL COUNTIES

#### **DONNA NUGER** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Metro)

Donna Nuger brings opportunities to youth in STEM, leadership and citizenship. Donna helps youth learn skills in teamwork and leadership as they contribute to the community planning and teaching programs for the diverse community in their counties, Illinois and nationally.

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#### **DEANNA ROBY (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

Deanna Roby uses the principles of positive youth development to provide 4-H youth development programs in a variety of ways including clubs, school enrichment, and other youth outreach programs. Work is done through volunteers, local clubs/programs, workshops, partner agencies/organizations, and mass media to address the needs of clientele and local communities in her Unit. This work is important as it gives youth life skills for their future and provides opportunities for youth to feel a sense of belonging, develop independence, practice generosity, and experience mastery.

#### **UNIT 6: COOK COUNTY**

#### **MARILU ANDON (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development – Metro)**

Marilu Andon engages youth in college readiness, career readiness and leadership roles to provide a sense of belonging and independence in their communities. Through 4-H, she provides youth from different ethnicities, races, and genders the opportunity to interact with each other while increasing their prospects to a successful career.

#### **LEONARD PARKER (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Metro)**

Leonard Parker engages youth in leadership roles to provide a sense of belonging and independence in their neighborhoods and communities throughout Chicago. Through 4-H, he provides youth from different backgrounds opportunities to interact with each other while increasing their exposure to explore careers.

#### **UNIT 7: HENRY, MERCER, ROCK ISLAND AND STARK COUNTIES**

#### **DIANE BAKER (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

Diane Baker delivers 4-H youth development programming to Rock Island military families and to refugee and immigrant youth from more than twenty counties. Her programs advance teen leadership development, healthy living, and engaging youth in science, technology and engineering outside the classroom.

#### **UNIT 8: BUREAU, LASALLE, MARSHALL AND PUTNAM COUNTIES**

#### **BREANNE SUAREZ (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

Breanne Suarez collaborates with schools, businesses, and other community and youth development organizations to provide hands-on learning experiences that are proven to grow life skills. Breanne is focused on providing 4-H programs that help youth make informed decisions about their college and career path while helping them develop social skills, self-motivation, responsibility, teamwork and leadership skills.

#### **UNIT 9: GRUNDY, KANKAKEE AND WILL COUNTIES**

#### **JOHN DAVIS (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

John Davis collaborates with volunteers and community partners to teach youth skills related to STEM, career development, and leadership. Youth experience hands on learning activities and opportunities for leadership within their community club, county and state. His work helps develop the skills, confidence and leadership talent of today's youth to help make them more successful adults.

#### **MEGAN WALSH (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Metro)**

Megan Walsh teaches youth about STEM and healthy living through hands-on learning activities, leadership and community service events. These opportunities help youth reach their full potential by developing important life skills that will help them achieve their goals and passions in life.

#### **UNIT 10: HENDERSON, KNOX, MCDONOUGH AND WARREN COUNTIES**

#### **TESSA HOBBS-CURLEY (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

Tessa Hobbs-Curley empowers and prepares youth for success. In support of Illinois 4-H, she focuses on providing programs in the area of leadership, social and emotional learning, and workforce preparedness.

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#### **UNIT 11: FULTON, MASON, PEORIA AND TAZEWELL COUNTIES**

##### **JUDY SCHMIDT** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Judy Schmidt leads positive youth development initiatives for after-school programs, community groups, 4-H clubs and other organizations that prepare youth to find creative solutions to the issues facing communities today. She also engages teens and adults who work with youth in innovative networking and educational opportunities to strengthen STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) career pathways.

##### **EMILY SCHOENFELDER** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Emily Schoenfelder leads a team of 4-H staff and volunteers to provide research-based youth development programming. Emily guides strategic efforts to foster independence, generosity, skill development, and a sense of belonging in local youth to help them grow into successful adults who make positive contributions to society.

#### **UNIT 12: LIVINGSTON, MCLEAN AND WOODFORD COUNTIES**

##### **ALCHA CORBAN** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Alcha Corban empowers youth to embrace their passions and develop key life skills through 4-H programming. By providing youth learning opportunities through workshops, school enrichment programs and leadership programs, Corban assists them in thinking outside the box, developing leadership skills, and becoming an active part of the community and society as a whole.

#### **UNIT 14: ADAMS, BROWN, HANCOCK, PIKE AND SCHUYLER COUNTIES**

##### **SHERI MERRY** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Sheri Merry promotes opportunities for youth to learn life skills from caring volunteers. She provides programs that promote healthy social and emotional learning environments, effective communication, healthy habits, and financial well-being and mastery.

#### **UNIT 15: CALHOUN, CASS, GREENE, MORGAN AND SCOTT COUNTIES**

##### **APRIL LITTIG** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

April Littig provides researched-based educational programs to 4-H youth and adult audiences geared towards healthy lifestyles, positive youth development, protecting and appreciating our environment, and workforce preparation. Her programs allow youth to develop a sense of respect, belonging and mastery.

#### **UNIT 16: LOGAN, MENARD AND SANGAMON COUNTIES**

##### **CARISSA AKPORE** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Carissa Akpore teams with 4-H staff, volunteers and community members to plan, conduct and evaluate youth programs that incorporate mastery, belonging, independence and generosity. She provides innovative 4-H programming for youth ages 5-18 that includes but is not limited to teen leadership development, school enrichment, expanding 4-H to new audiences, volunteer management, networking and partnerships and 4-H club program management.

##### **ERICA AUSTIN** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Erica Austin collaborates with Extension staff, volunteers and community members in the Springfield metro area to plan, conduct and evaluate youth programs that incorporate mastery, belonging, independence and generosity. She provides innovative 4-H programming for metro area youth ages 5-18 that includes but is not limited to teen leadership development, school enrichment, expanding 4-H to new audiences, volunteer management, networking and partnerships and 4-H Club Program management.

#### **UNIT 17: DEWITT, MACON AND PIATT COUNTIES**

##### **JAMIE BOAS** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Jamie Boas engages volunteers and partners to teach skills related to healthy living and leadership/citizenship to youth using positive youth development principles. Her focus areas include 4-H Food Challenge, 4-H Teen Teachers, and 4-H club members demonstrating leadership and service.

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#### **UNIT 18: CHRISTIAN, JERSEY, MACOUPIN AND MONTGOMERY COUNTIES**

##### **PEGGY HAMPTON** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Peggy Hampton applies positive youth development practices to help develop 4-H programs for youth ages 5 to 18. Through her programs help youth develop their leadership skills, identify their career aspirations, and become civically engaged in their communities through service to others. The goal of her programs is to help youth reach their fullest potential.

#### **UNIT 20: CLARK, CRAWFORD AND EDGAR COUNTIES**

##### **JESSIE CREWS** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Jessie Crews provides experiences for youth that are preparing them to be tomorrow's leaders and the future workforce. Crews works with local staff and volunteers to provide opportunities for youth to explore their passions and build mastery of their skills. Through both the 4-H program and programs conducted in local schools, youth have hands-on opportunities to build their skills that will help them transition to successful careers and leaders in their communities.

#### **UNIT 21: CLAY, EFFINGHAM, FAYETTE AND JASPER COUNTIES**

##### **DANA HOMANN** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Youth are our future. Therefore, it is vital that we work with youth to help them become contributing members of society. Through 4-H youth learn project mastery, where they not only can develop interests that can lead to careers, they learn leadership, citizenship and teamwork skills as well. Through workforce preparedness, I help youth develop skills needed to be successful in the workforce. Developing healthy lifestyles is another area of focus of great importance for our youth. With the high number of youth obesity, it is vital that youth learn to make healthier choices in nutrition and physical activity. Through positive youth development, I help youth develop skills that will help them realize success.

#### **UNIT 22: MADISON, MONROE AND ST. CLAIR COUNTIES**

##### **RACHEL HAZEN** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Rachel Hazen is preparing the youth of today to better serve themselves and their communities in the future. She reaches this through collaborative efforts with volunteers to help teach skills related to STEM, leadership, and college and career readiness. She uses the principles of positive youth development to help youth foster a better understanding of what they do and why it matters within their clubs, communities, country, and world. Her unit focuses on giving youth opportunities to become the leaders of tomorrow through extensive teen leadership, science exploration, and career focused initiatives.

##### **GENESIS POWELL** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

As a youth development educator, Genesis Powell, works with 8 to 18 year olds to advance their knowledge of life skills to make them more productive citizens in the community. Genesis leads programs that focus on social and emotional learning, college and career readiness and character development. She is an advocate for the BIG-M Model to ensure every student she comes in contact with has a positive youth development experience.

#### **UNIT 23: BOND, CLINTON, JEFFERSON, MARION, AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES**

##### **LIZ MILLER** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Liz Miller leads positive youth development experiences that foster a sense of belonging, independence, generosity, and mastery. Through club experiences guided by passionate volunteers and through impactful programs, Liz creates opportunities for youth to lead, practice citizenship, make an impact on the community, and build skills for the future.

#### **UNIT 24: GALLATIN, HAMILTON, HARDIN, POPE, SALINE, AND WHITE COUNTIES**

##### **MELISSA WILSON** (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)

Melissa Wilson empowers youth to think, observe, explore, and create through 4-H experiential learning opportunities. Wilson's youth development programs positively influence the lives of participants in areas such as, college and career readiness, life skill development, and hunger awareness.

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#### **UNIT 25: EDWARDS, LAWRENCE, RICHLAND, WABASH AND WAYNE COUNTIES**

##### **LEAH MILLER (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

Leah Miller is sparking youth's interest in science through hands-on STEM programs. Her Unit focuses on delivering fun, high-impact programs such as computer science coding, exploration with Makey Makey, and engineering design with catapults. Miller credits the implementation BIG-M and practical programs to the Unit's success of molding tomorrow's scientist and engineers. Her focus areas include 4-H Teen Teachers, college and career readiness, and STEM in both in and out of school settings.

#### **UNIT 26: FRANKLIN, JACKSON, PERRY, RANDOLPH AND WILLIAMSON COUNTIES**

##### **SARA MARTEN (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

Sara Marten works to develop the youth of today into the leaders of tomorrow, working with both local programming staff and volunteers to promote a positive 4-H club experience in the communities she serves. In her programming, she builds skills and knowledge in the areas of STEM, healthy living, career and college readiness, and environmental appreciation.

#### **UNIT 27: ALEXANDER, JOHNSON, MASSAC, PULASKI AND UNION COUNTIES**

##### **KRISTI STOUT (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development)**

Kristi Stout is empowering and encouraging youth to become teen leaders and tomorrow's future through innovative teen trainings and strong school partnerships. Her five county 4-H positive youth development program focus is the link to making the best better! She strives to provide quality programs in financial literacy, STEM education and college and career readiness. Stout feels by effectively promoting teen leadership and valuing the importance of community service, youth will become more active and engaged citizens.

#### **STATEWIDE**

##### **DR. LISA DIAZ (Program Leader and Assistant Dean)**

Dr. Bouillion Diaz leads the University of Illinois Extension 4-H program that serves nearly 200,000 youth across the state. She provides the vision and support for a statewide network of 4-H youth professionals who deliver youth development programs addressing college and career readiness, science and technology innovation, health and wellbeing, food access, and environmental stewardship. She also creates campus-community and public-private partnerships that translate into cutting edge learning opportunities for youth ages 5-18, preparing them for future careers and community life.

##### **JUDY MAE BINGMAN (Communications Specialist)**

Judy Mae Bingman uses powerful words and photography to tell the Illinois 4-H story. She builds communication capacity in Extension staff to help them show the impact of the local 4-H experience. She engages members, volunteers, stakeholders, legislators, and donors in dialogue through personal contact, digital content, and traditional media, resulting in increased member and volunteer recruitment, alumni support, and donor contributions to the University of Illinois Extension 4-H program.

##### **SHEILA POWERS (4-H Resource and Policy Analyst)**

Sheila Powers assists staff throughout Illinois with questions regarding 4-H policies and procedures including fiscal, risk management and more. She manages several 4-H Club fiscal tasks including a master database of EINs, tax filings and annual financial reporting to the IRS. She assists the Illinois 4-H Foundation with funding awards that provide assistance for many 4-H programs in counties throughout Illinois.

##### **DR. AMY LEMAN (Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Development)**

Dr. Amy Leman answers questions about the effectiveness and efficiency of 4-H programs in Illinois by working in collaboration with Extension field staff. She also develops and facilitates plans to enhance the professional development offerings to 4-H Youth Development field staff across Illinois.

##### **BILL MILLION (Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Development)**

Bill Million encourages teens to respond to hunger and food insecurity in their local communities by becoming hunger ambassadors, learning best practices of successful programs from their peers. Working together, they are becoming equipped with a working knowledge of youth/adult and community partnerships, teamwork, workforce development skills and empathy for others less fortunate. Bill feels by effectively engaging teen leadership and valuing the importance of community engagement; youth will become more active and engaged citizens.

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#### **CURT SINCLAIR (4-H Memorial Camp Director)**

Curt Sinclair connects kids to nature in a social-group setting of peers from different locations while supervised by caring adults. 4-H Memorial Camp youth experience belonging to a group, actively discovering the outdoor world, and are exposed to positive role models as they reach the top of a rock-climbing wall; reel in a big catfish; hit the center of the target with an arrow; or receive applause by participating in their first talent show held at the campfire ring.

#### **DAN JENNINGS (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development - Animal Systems)**

Dan Jennings provides leadership to the statewide 4-H Youth Livestock program for all species and subsequent disciplines, providing a platform of mastery level events where youth can learn, socialize, and compete beyond the county experience. Dan's expertise allows for innovative programs and events in skillathons, quality assurance, evaluation/judging, exhibition, and youth leadership conferences. Dan also provides support to all county staff, volunteers, and youth for animal science projects, teaching life skills and creating educational pathways and future career opportunities for thousands of youth annually.

#### **DEBRA STOCKER (Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Development)**

Debra Stocker empowers young adults to use their voice and leadership skills to develop educational programming on a local, state and national level. As teen leadership specialist, she works with teens to plan events; promote the 4-H program and special events; mentor both younger youth and their peers, advocate for change, and provide youth voice in an advisory capacity. Teens learn life-long skills that ease the transition from school to the workplace and impress employers who value those skills.

#### **CARLA BLUE (Program Coordinator, State 4-H Events)**

Carla Blue works alongside state 4-H staff co-creating state-wide events where Illinois youth can participate in a fun, exciting, safe environment. Through these events, youth gain valuable life skills, network with other participants, explore careers, learn how to give back to their community, and proudly demonstrate and/or display their creative inventions and projects. Learning in such positive environments develops personal growth impacting youth for a lifetime.

#### **ALVAREZ DIXON (Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Development)**

Alvarez Dixon provides leadership for programs aimed at helping youth across Illinois find and pursue fulfilling career pathways. He works to build a youth development ecosystem that connects youth to educational opportunities beyond high school, potential employers, and resources for entrepreneurship. The constellation of experiences under Alvarez's Ready4LIFE pathways initiative help youth develop and practices skills that are in high demand in every industry such as design thinking & innovation, collaborative project development, team leadership, and more, which will give them a competitive edge in emerging markets.

#### **KEITH JACOBS, JR. (Extension Specialist, STEM)**

Keith Jacobs provides state-wide leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math, or STEM programming. As the STEM specialist, Keith works with educators in the field to implement, improve, and expand programming opportunities for youth interested in STEM. In addition, Keith works with local and national partners to deliver cutting edge technologies, and one-of-a-kind experiences unique to 4-H. With over 200,000 STEM related projects each year, Keith is constantly searching for new ways to deliver STEM content that is memorable and impactful.

#### **PATRICIA C. MCGLAUGHLIN (Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth Development)**

#### **ANDY DAVIS (Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development/Assistant Camp Director)**

Andy Davis assists with the management of 4-H Memorial Camp. He has built the team-building programs up into a highly valued asset used by middle school, high school, university, and professional participants, serving over 35,000 participants since 2005. These programs focus on bringing groups together to work effectively, help individuals learn to become better leaders, and create a bond between participants that fosters respect and understanding for the differences we all possess. He helps to assemble the 70+ member staff team each year who are trained to run programs for youth and adult campers during the summer months.