

Title: Music Education Matters

Summary: The Georgia 4-H Music Education Matters Summit provides an experience for youth across Georgia, and around the nation, to practice and grow in music education, network and learn from industry professionals, and develop as a leader, team member, and performer.

Situation: Since it began over 100 years ago, Georgia 4-H has provided thousands of young people and their families the skills needed to be proactive forces in their communities. Traditionally, this programming and education has been founded in agriculture. As the landscape of our society changes, and more individuals move from rural to urban settings, so too has change occurred within Georgia 4-H. Over the past century, Georgia 4-H has transformed in its programming and its methodology to continue to engage youth across the state. One example of these changes has been through the Music Education Matters Summit. As performing arts classes and programs are cut from school systems and communities, Georgia 4-H has worked to provide programming and educational opportunities to giving youth a voice through music.

Response: In Georgia 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. Through a partnership with National 4-H Council and the CMA Foundation, Georgia 4-H, shares a commitment to giving youth a voice through music.

During July of 2018, Georgia 4-H hosted 170 youth and adult participants from eight states, including Oklahoma, Florida, Louisiana, North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, and Kentucky in participating in over 13 hours of music and performing arts training from a variety of specialists in their subject areas. Volunteers collectively donated over 1,100 hours of their time to this event. Participants tailored their Music Education Matters Summit experience to their individual interests by selecting from five tracks (dance, instrumental, songwriting, vocal, and musical theatre) during the three day conference.

The schedule provided for a mixture of formal workshops and informal sharing sessions during which youth participants could network, jam with other participants, and work one-on-one with instructors. Each track engaged multiple instructors with different areas of expertise to help participants become better performers and to teach them about the opportunities that exist for careers in their area. Additional classes were offered that highlighted successful collaborations among artists and music technology.

Each youth participation track was designed to focus not only on skills development, but mentorship and career exploration with industry professionals. Through a combination of workshops, presentations and informal networking time youth were able to ask questions related to their own development as a musician and their own career aspirations. In addition, youth had

the opportunity to work one on one with mentors who provided guidance on becoming a better performer, as well as discuss career opportunities in the music industry.

Impact: As a result of this Summit, participants will return to many communities to share what they have learned and strengthen their county and state performing arts programs. The support provided by the CMA Foundation created an opportunity for this Summit format to be launched in the future across the country. The design and development team, in conjunction with National 4-H Council, are currently documenting Summit processes, best practices, and budget for future replication across the country. This Summit format lends itself well to the stewardship and maintenance of alumni relations in Georgia and abroad, creating a venue for alumni to give back and volunteer, and a path to maintain relationships with those whose lives were impacted greatly by their experience in 4-H.

Evaluation data following the summit demonstrates a statistically significant increase in the participants' (1) knowledge about their area of interest (dance, instrumental, vocal, songwriting, or musical theatre), (2) knowledge and skills gained around the concept of performing, and (3) connections with peers and performers in their area of interest.

Elaborating on these outcomes, one youth participant responded, "The Music Summit is one of those places you can come and feel free to be whoever you are. I'm very thankful to have a place like this to be myself." An adult participant expanded by saying, "The caliber of instructors, quality of instruction, and depth of information far exceeded our expectations. Thank you to everyone who made this possible. We hope to return next year and in subsequent years".

Through programs like the 4-H Music Education Matters Summit, 4-H empowers young people to be true leaders. True leaders aren't born—they're grown. 4-H youth are becoming more confident, more caring and more capable due to their 4-H experiences, like the Music Education Matters Summit. The outcomes attained through the Music Education Matters Summit are what 4-H is all about—growing young people with leadership and life skills through diverse 4-H programming.

