

4-H Military Partnerships

Making a Difference for Military Youth



4-hmilitarypartnerships.org

2014 Annual Report

Professional Development

The Cooperative Extension System is supported by 106 Land Grant Universities across the United States and its Territories. Universities develop and deliver research based positive youth development training. State and local extension staff and 4-H volunteers provide training for military staff, and teen and adult volunteers. Training, along with 4-H youth curriculum, helps military staff deliver life-changing experiences (learn-by-doing) to military youth.

Nearly 5,000 military personnel and volunteers participated in professional development opportunities. Training was provided through face-to-face opportunities (more than 70%) and distance education. Through the delivery of quality positive youth development programs, 4-H helped military youth develop confidence and become capable and caring youth with the life skills to thrive in today's world and succeed in their boldest dreams for tomorrow.



Virginia

Virginia works closely with Military Child and Youth Directors at 14 military sites in the state, offering hands-on youth development training. Their professional development goal was to train staff to create positive learning experiences for all youth. A Navy Youth Director indicated, "After the training, staff refreshed our youth development goals and identified opportunities to get youth involved in their community. Staff learned how to interact with children and build on their needs and goals. Youth are now setting goals for the Center and understand how small steps can affect the world around them."

Florida

Air Force child and youth staff (179) in Europe received hands-on training by Florida 4-H staff. Training included developing new knowledge and skills in Positive Youth Development, Educational Design and Delivery, 4-H Program Management, and Interpersonal Characteristics. Staff indicated they learned how to: incorporate life skill development into a variety of programs, modify activities to appropriate skill levels, and expand 4-H opportunities within the programs. Staff are now incorporating life skill development into daily activities with 83% indicating positive behavior changes in their delivery of 4-H youth programs since the training.

"My kids love coming to Open Rec and doing all the fun science projects. They come home and talk my ear off. I didn't know Aviano Youth Programs did so many activities, happy we are members." — *Parent*

Delaware

Delaware trained 31 military staff and 21 volunteers to support military youth and their families. Additionally, 32 teens were trained and certified as peer educators creating new learning opportunities

for younger youth to have a safe and healthy environment to grow and thrive. These teens delivered educational programming in the areas of: nutrition, health, science, and drug prevention. The teens reported an increase in leadership and public speaking skills, as well as an increase in self-esteem as co-educators for 4-H educational opportunities.

Massachusetts

Hanscom Air Force Base restructured their program after 4-H professional development training. The staff identified that a 4-H Cooking Club would create an excellent opportunity for youth to learn numerous life skills. Objectives for youth and staff included: developing communication skills between staff and youth, creating a safe social and physical environment, setting goals, creating a plan to achieve goals, and enhancing record-keeping skills.

As a result of the "Cooking School/Camp," staff developed skills in: recruiting volunteers and improving communication between staff and youth, as well as identifying age appropriate skills and teaching techniques to help youth develop life skills. Youth gained knowledge and skills in scheduling, budgeting, measuring, personal health and safety concerns, improving food choices, preparing and serving meals, effective communication, planning events, and working with others. Youth are now participating in county and regional 4-H communication activities and presenting information to other organizations with confidence.

"The boys even help with dinner now." — *Parent*



Citizenship

Citizenship programs empower young people to be well-informed citizens who are actively engaged in their communities. By providing youth with opportunities to connect to their communities and adult leaders, youth gain a clear understanding of their role in civic affairs and are able to build their decision-making skills. These opportunities help youth in leadership and civic engagement by sharing their voices and energy as a concerned community member.

Pennsylvania

Eighty-seven percent of military youth are geographically dispersed throughout the state. A state-wide marketing campaign connected 4-H and military families on and off installations. 4-H created the opportunity for more than 600 4-H and military youth to engage in community service projects together. Military youth were able to work side-by-side with other youth while becoming engaged in their community. Together they provided 213 community service hours at local food banks, Ronald McDonald House, and various community based events. "4-H has helped my kids grow in ways I never imagined." — *Service Member*

New Jersey

Often military youth in New Jersey live in communities that have traditionally been agricultural with urban sprawl competing for many of the natural resources. Military and 4-H youth attended an "agri-science" summit to understand the natural resources in their community. As a result of attending, the "Sod Squad 4-H Club" members set a goal to develop a community garden. Youth tested the soil and water, learned about the appropriate use of herbicides, identified plants for their local climate, developed a risk management plan, and a marketing plan to sell their produce. Youth gained skills in teamwork, confidence, problem solving, and entrepreneurship. Military families have volunteered to be club leaders for the coming year. A community Ag Board donated \$1,000



for tools and a laptop for scientific experiments. "My daughter has become more self-motivated and responsible for her own education. She learned the patience necessary for a multi-step project that takes weeks and months to complete."—*Parent*

New Hampshire

Teen Leadership camp connected and engaged military teens in hands-on theme-based activities involving leadership and communication. Emphasis was placed on the connections formed between the families and youth to provide support

networks, and interpersonal growth opportunities that further give youth the skills to be more resilient in spite of drastic changes. Teens indicated they increased skills in Mastery (65%), Independence (56%), and Generosity (69%). "This camp really helped my son last year when my husband was deployed."—*Parent*

Healthy Living

Health is one of the foundations of the 4-H Pledge and a significant amount of research is being conducted at universities in partnership with USDA. 4-H's goal is to help youth learn how to lead lives that balance physical, emotional, and social health. 4-H programs help youth develop skills in disease prevention, resilience, and developing healthy life choices.



Virginia

Teens at Fort Lee identified that teen suicide was a public issue facing many teens. To address this issue, teens researched the issue, connected the findings to the 4-H Healthy Living Curriculum, and created a video. The teens identified filmmaking as their best avenue for sharing their voice. The teens gained a personal understanding of the importance of recognizing teen suicide warning signs and how to best respond. Club members also gained technical and communication skills as well as critical thinking, problem solving, and effective teamwork. The team won the 4-H Oscar for Most Inspirational Video of the Year.



New York

4-H worked with Fort Drum and West Point to improve resiliency in youth through connections to 4-H on installations and within their communities. 4-H focused on staff training and consistent programming on and off installations. Gardening provided youth the opportunity to gain skills in growing their own healthy food, and improving their environment with composting. Ten military youth demonstrated skills learned by volunteering at summer camps and coordinating and leading projects in their clubs. "West Point teens participated in CPR and First Aid training in order to prepare to help family members and serve in the community in the event of an emergency."—*Military Staff*

Connecticut

The 4-H program expanded in Connecticut by recruiting and training 55 additional volunteers to help youth develop life skills expanding their 4-H membership by over 50%. Youth were encouraged to develop their communication skills by being part of 4-H programs like reading, gardening, and babysitting. The 4-H Babysitter's Club, learned about ages and stages of child development, received Red Cross CPR training, and put together 'Babysitter's Bags' with games, books, and first aid kits. Several of the club graduates were hired to be Teen Leader Assistants at the Youth Center at Submarine Base New London.

New Mexico

Youth learned how their own kitchen is a science laboratory as they developed skills in chemistry, biology, math, and the importance of their own diet at Holloman Air Force Base. Youth increased their understanding in: how gluten structures bread (30%), how carbon dioxide effects bread leavening (79%), and the effects of chemical reactions of cut fruit leading to browning (45%).

Participants gained skills in food safety, and handling and storage of food products. Youth developed skills in interpreting instructions, measuring and mixing ingredients, using kitchen utensils, and

appliances safely. A big part of this 4-H opportunities include teamwork, critical thinking, communication, keeping records, and cooperation.

Science/Technology

The U.S. Economics and Statistics Administration indicates our nation's workforce needs youth to learn how to be independent thinkers, collaborators, innovators, and problem solvers. By exploring Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) content, using a project-based learning approach, youth gain an understanding of the power of wind, food systems from soil to plant growth, harvesting, food safety, and food science. A 4-H Science study¹

suggested that youth who take part in 4-H STEM programming are more likely to take positive steps in high school toward a future that includes science literacy and in some cases, a science career.



Nebraska

The Offutt 4-H club included 323 youth participating in two separate 10-week programs focused on STEM activities in rocketry, electricity, and engineering. More than 80% of the youth reported they liked learning about the content areas (polymers and growing grass), like science, and get excited about new discoveries. "The youth have really taken off with 4-H and enjoy the wide variety of educational learning."—*Air Force staff*

Massachusetts

A new science club called "Take a Club Outside" was formed after 81% of military families and community members indicated they had little knowledge about the outdoors. Six educational lessons focusing on safety, backpacking, survival skills, and first aid were completed before the group took out on their first backpacking trip. Youth learned the following knowledge and skills:

- Camp safety knowledge increased from 15% to 90%;
- Ability to read a compass with all youth feeling capable of getting from point A to point B;
- Exhibited a "leave no trace behind" philosophy when hiking; and
- Prepared and exhibited the confidence to set up camp using a team approach.

One participant reported, "I love to take walks in the woods and now I know I won't get lost with my compass and I'll know what to do if I need help and I'll have a buddy."



Delaware

The number of STEM campers (75 youth) doubled in Delaware as past campers recommended the camp to their friends. Eighty-five percent indicated they gained an interest in STEM and 87% indicated they learned new knowledge. This strong interest in STEM led to the creation of Afterschool Clubs focused on Robotics and Photography/Videography. The latest is a robotics group that meets on the weekends, engaging youth in science and engineering competitions. "Having never grown up in 4-H, I was amazed at all you teach them from the Cooking, Sewing, Science, and Robotics, as well as the arts and crafts projects."—*Air Force Reserve Parent*

California

The California National Schools ranking was 49th for 8th grade scientific literacy according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2005)². Forty-two afterschool staff from 8 Bases developed skills in science-based thinking processes, organizing, and inquiry-based learning. Educators developed a positive attitude and interest in developing quality science programs. At the end of training, 72% of staff indicated they like science, 96% find science useful in solving everyday problems, and 92% learned science and engineering are essential for young people. Youth were asked to respond to the same survey questions taken by 4th Grade California students from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Seventy percent of these youth indicated; "I like science" compared to the state average of 61%, while 62% agreed that "I am good at science" compared to the state average of 32%.

"I really liked how challenging it was to build and program the robot. I came in here thinking it was going to be easy, but it was a challenge and made us think harder."—*Youth participant*

Missouri

4-H provided 15 hours of training to 25 military staff. As a result of this training, 300 youth engaged in STEM activities through the summer such as, geospatial mapping, strawberry DNA extraction, and robotics. Fifty-six percent of the participating youth reported that STEM activities got them excited about new discoveries. Seventy-five percent reported that STEM activities impacted their interest in how things are made. These programs helped youth apply their new knowledge to planting gardens at the Fort. "The program has been an asset not only to the youth but for the staff also. 4-H trainings and activities are always beneficial, creative, and professional."—*Military youth staff*

¹ Garrett, B., & Locklear, E. (2007). 4-H Science, Engineering, & Technology (SET). National 4-H Headquarters. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture www.joe.org/joe/2012april/a5.php

² <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>

4-H Military Partnerships

The 4-H Military Partnerships represent a collaboration of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, 4-H National Headquarters and Army Child, Youth, and School Services, Air Force Child and Youth Programs, Navy Child and Youth Programs, Coast Guard, and National Guard Bureau. Land Grant Universities partner with Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve programs to support children and youth in their local communities. These military partnerships provide 4-H the opportunity to establish 4-H Clubs on and around installations and engage youth and their families with community resources whether they are on or off installations. Programs for military-connected youth are not only available through 4-H Clubs, but also through special projects, after-school clubs, camps, and other opportunities.

4-H Military Partnerships grants were awarded to 46 states and territories to support military connected youth on and off installations. The 4-H Military Partnerships rely on Land Grant University faculty to serve as the Extension 4-H Military Liaison in their state or territory. These Extension 4-H Military Liaisons:

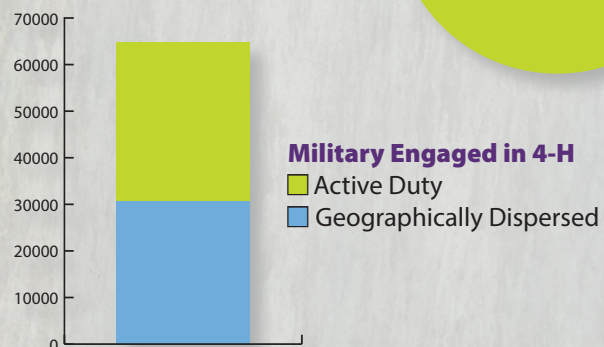
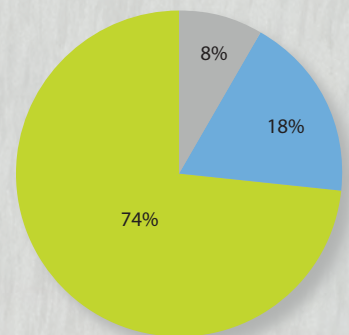
- Serve as a link between the State Cooperative Extension System, Military Service Branches, and 4-H National Headquarters at USDA.
- Coordinate support for 4-H Clubs on and off Army, Navy, and Air Force installations throughout the world and connect National Guard and Reserve youth with 4-H in their communities.
- Provide resources and training for military child and youth staff members to support the 4-H Mission Mandates of Science, Citizenship, and Healthy Living.
- Integrate military youth into County, State, and National 4-H Programs.

The 4-H Program is built upon four Essential Elements ensuring that youth feel a sense of **belonging** in a safe environment, develop **independence** in both group and individual work, share with others in the community through **generosity**, and develop a **sense of mastery** that continues through life as they practice and share what they have learned with others. As military families move frequently and experience the difficulties surrounding deployment and reintegration, 4-H provides predictable programming and a safe and nurturing environment for military connected children and youth.

Military funding enables Extension to support this partnership with **personnel (37 funded positions, 77,000 hours)** to enhance staff training and expand youth engagement in 4-H Clubs and other 4-H educational programs. 4-H, through its state and local staffing, have embraced this partnership with Extension staff contributing **305,760 hours** in support of military programming. 4-H is known for its strong, locally trained volunteers. Volunteers have contributed **35,753 hours** of time at a value of **\$820,692**. Additionally, community partners and State 4-H Foundations contributed **\$104,721** by providing curriculum and other program resources.

Personnel Support for 4-H Military Partnerships by Hours

- 77,000 hours Military Grant Funds
- 305,760 hours Extension In-kind Support
- 35,753 hours 4-H Volunteers



NAE4-HA 4-H Military Partnerships Award

The annual 4-H Military Partnerships Award recognizes those who provide quality 4-H educational programming to military youth and their families. This year's award recognized **Kasey Bozeman**, County

4-H Agent, Liberty County, Georgia. Working in collaboration with Fort Stewart's Child, Youth, and School Services, Kasey planned and implemented 4-H activities



reaching more than 950 military youth both on and off installations during the past two years. Additionally, she hosted training and periodic meetings to keep staff informed about 4-H policies and upcoming events.

April – Month of the Military Child and Purple Up! for Military Kids

The month of April provides an opportunity to recognize and honor the service of our youngest heroes, military children. Established by former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger in 1986, the designation of April as the Month of the Military Child acknowledges the significant role military youth play in our communities.

Many states and territories involved in the 4-H Military Partnerships participate in the annual Purple Up! for Military Kids celebration by wearing purple on April 15th. This is a very visible way to show support and thank military children for their strength and sacrifices. Purple symbolizes all branches of the military, as it is the combination of Army green, Marine red, and Coast Guard, Navy, and Air Force blue.



Air National Guard/Air Force Reserve Camps

The 4-H Air Force Partnership provided 19 camps for Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve youth and their families. 4-H and the Air Guard indicated there was a positive willingness to work closely with each other. Camp Directors indicated youth practiced communication skills with their peers as well as other caring adults and felt youth were able to make better decisions, take responsibility for their actions, and became better at making new friends.

Navy STEM Camps

The Navy 4-H Military Partnership provided four Navy Specialty Camps with a focus on aeronautics, digital media, robotics, and other Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs. Youth from Active Duty Bases participated in science and traditional camp activities that develop and foster teamwork and leadership skills. At the Florida Navy Reaching New Heights Camp, 94% of the youth reported the camp helped them learn science. Knowledge of Lego Robotics at the Texas Navy STEM Camp went from 25% before camp to 87.5% after camp. Youth attending the Maine STEM, Leadership, and Outdoor Adventure Camp built catapults and SeaPerch (underwater remote operated vehicles). The Louisiana camp focused on Coastal Sciences in Southeast Louisiana. Sixty-one percent of youth reported that this trip added to their scientific knowledge and may help them in school.



For More Information Contact:



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4-hmilitarypartnerships.org/contact_information/index.html



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