



Situation

Through 4-H Project Achievement, youth learn valuable life skills such as organization, communication, and confidence. Through the selection, research, development, and presentation of the illustrated talks 4-H'ers develop strong life skills. Georgia 4-H works in partnership with teachers, volunteers, and teen leaders to facilitate and promote the participation of students in Project Achievement and emphasize the importance of this opportunity.

Communities in Georgia are impacted by military residents relocating where support networks, oftentimes other relatives, live. Communities face police officers, teachers, county extension agents, and other civilian members of the community deploying when their reserve units are federalized and deployed. Individual families face greater stress with the lack of high-quality childcare and youth programs in communities to build resiliency and support among military youth and families. Cooperative Extension in Georgia has an appropriate structure to provide knowledge to military caring professionals, volunteers, and families in fields related to youth development and family sciences. Through the 4-H Project Achievement process, young people can develop skills within a positive youth development program.

Response

The Georgia 4-H program is well-situated to respond to the situation facing military-connected youth. One of the keystones of the 4-H program in Georgia is Project Achievement. In 4-H Project Achievement, youth, based on their age and stage of development, identify a project area, construct a plan to learn more in that area, and share what they have learned with others. For middle school and high school participants, 4-H members create a portfolio to document their learning. This portfolio serves as an introduction to a cover letter and resumes for applying for a job. Because this is a 4-H core program, 4-H Project Achievement is available in all 159 counties in Georgia with dedicated staff members and volunteers able to assist military dependents whether they live on a military installation or live in a geographically dispersed area.



Through a series of workshops at the county level, young people can work on their projects. The amount of programming depends on the county. 2020 programming was a mixture of face-to-face and virtual programming. Youth gain communication skills through in-school and after-school clubs and workshops. Elementary aged-youth can compete at a day-long experience, while Middle and high school students compete at a weekend-long experience at Rock Eagle 4-

georgia4h.org

H Center. In 2020, the first-ever virtual project achievement was offered for elementary aged-youth in addition to face-to-face Project Achievements throughout the state.

Impact

Lowndes, Houston, and Cobb County 4-H programs in partnership with their local installations participated in the 2020-2021 4-H Military Partnership Grant. The partnership was funded by the Air Force thus a major focus of training and supports was provided to Air Force Installation staff and 4-H programs with an Air Force Base in the county.

In the 2020 4-H Year, over 366 military-connected youth in Lowndes, Houston, and Cobb County participated in the Georgia 4-H Project Achievement recognition process at the county, district, or state levels. The military-connected youth received presenting, speech writing, and related communication skills through after-school workshops, in-school club meetings, and competitions. Lowndes County 4-H offered over fifteen workshops after school for youth in preparation for Project Achievement. Cobb County 4-H impacted 37 military youth through in-school competitions, district project achievements, and educational activities to support youth with learning more about their chosen topics. The 4-H

Military Partnership provides educational opportunities and a place for military teens to belong. Lowndes County 4-H member and Air Force dependent teen shared that 4-H allowed her “to make both great friends and memories and participate in many different things like Poultry Judging, Cotton Bowl and Consumer Judging, DPA, Fall Forum, and State Council. 4-H has made adjusting to a new place better and making friends easier.”



The 4-H Military Partnership grant funds focused on Air Force dependents and Air Force Child and Youth Service staff for FY21; however, Georgia 4-H continued to support geographically separated military youth. Military youth can participate in Georgia 4-H in every county; therefore, Georgia 4-H's military impact was statewide. Through a statewide Project Achievement, staff collected data on participants after the event. Over twenty counties across the state had military youth participate in Project Achievement and the post event survey. In the 2020-2021 schoolyear, 147 military dependent elementary age students and 43 middle and high school students participated in the 4-H Project Achievement competition.

For the military dependent elementary age students:

- 95% correctly identified at least 3 of the 6 things they can do to have a great presentation (make eye contact, practice your speech, use a loud and clear voice, research your topic, learn all you can, say thank you, and dress appropriately)
- 67% correctly identified at least 2 of the 3 parts of a presentation
- 79% of students indicated they were more confident speaking in front of people
- 82% indicated they are better at preparing a presentation

georgia4h.org

- 91% indicated they learned more about their selected topic
- 81% indicated they were better at giving presentations because of 4-H Project Achievement

Among the military dependent middle school and high school students:

- 89% indicated they were better prepared for the workforce because of their participation
- 57% increased their competence in best practices of public speaking
- 89% increased their confidence in public speaking
- 89% indicated that 4-H Project Achievement allowed them to value and practice service for others
- 63% indicated they felt connected to their community because of participation

About 4-H

4-H is America's largest youth development organization. It is delivered through faculty, staff, and volunteers of the University of Georgia in the state's 159 counties. 4-H partners at the federal, state, and local levels to build partnerships that equip youth to acquire knowledge, develop life skills, and form attitude that enable them to become positive, contributing citizens today and in the future. The Georgia 4-H Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that financially supports programming statewide.



georgia4h.org