

Title: Georgia 4-H Certifies Youth in MyPI, Disaster and Emergency Preparedness

Situation: Disasters are increasing internationally. For Georgia, disasters -like Hurricane Michael in 2018, can wreak havoc on the state. “Georgia experiences an incredibly broad range of weather – everything from tornadoes to hurricanes with the occasional ice storm and even an earthquake” (<http://ready.ga.gov/be-informed/>). Prepared communities will aid in bracing for and reacting to the impacts of catastrophe. Georgia 4-H reaches 170,000 young people annually. By training youth to prepare their families and their communities for dealing with a wide range of disasters and emergencies, Georgia can be more equipped to face these increasing trends.

Response: Georgia 4-H offered a two-time national award winning youth preparedness, leadership, and educational outreach program known as MyPI (My Preparedness Initiative) for teens. Nine county Extension personnel teamed with 7 volunteers, 2 Extension Specialists, and the national MyPI training staff joined at Rock Eagle 4-H Center to complete an intensive instructor certification to lead MyPI in 8 counties across Georgia. Training participants received three-days of concentrated training in coaching preparedness, including evaluation specialty. A FEMA grant funded a portion of the training and prepared youth packs and MyPI manuals for 125 youth. At the training, participants committed to delivering the 5-10-week, training to 125 youth during 2018-19. MyPI Georgia is a component of the National Youth Preparedness Initiative (MyPI National), a partnership of 27 states and 2 US territories, and is funded through NIFA.

In 2018, seven training programs have been offered in Calhoun, Dougherty, Morgan, Turner, and Wilcox counties, enrolling 129 youth in the MyPI, three component program model. In Component A, youth completed the United States Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency-certified Teen CERT training and corresponding modules focusing on disaster preparedness, fire safety and utility control, disaster medical operations, light search and rescue, CERT organization, disaster psychology, and terrorism and CERT. In Component B, youth gained certifications in CPR and AED usage, along with a technology track comprised of awareness programs focusing on HAM radio, NOAA weather radio, smoke alarm maintenance, and smart phone app and social media in emergency preparedness. In addition, the training included disaster simulations, and a career track that focuses on public safety, fire service, and emergency management careers. Component C included a comprehensive family and community service project entitled "Prep + 6" in which each participant helped develop emergency supply kits and emergency communication plans for their family and 6 additional families or households. This component allowed for significant enhancement in individual, family, and community preparedness and resilience.

Results: To date 30 youth have graduated from MyPI Georgia; they have satisfactorily completed all components of the training. As a result of the Prep + 6 service project, 120 emergency supply kits were delivered throughout Georgia, including emergency communication plans for families. MyPI graduates self-reported through pre-and post-surveys indicating they now know how to

better plan for their future (+4.8% increase), consider their actions (+6.25%), deal with stress (+6.25%), communicate with others (+12.5%), and cooperate with others (+12%). Eighty-seven percent of graduates noted they learned how to make a bigger difference in their communities, 87% reported feeling like a part of the community (+8%), and 21% led a project to make a difference in their community for the first time.

In Dougherty County, a MyPI student's family shared their preparedness kit and offered preparedness advice on a fraternity's group chat a day prior to Hurricane Michael hitting their community. In addition, two students hosted a preparedness workshop in preparation for Hurricane Michael inviting their parents' sorority sisters and fraternity brothers.



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