

# GREAT STORIES

GEORGIA

4-H



## Junior Conference STEM Lesson

Avery Douglas

November 2018



Avery Douglas, an AmeriCorps VISTA, at the Georgia 4-H State Extension Office, develops STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) resources to support 4-H county programs throughout the state. Avery was given the opportunity to lead a STEM lesson at Georgia 4-H's Junior Conference, an educational conference for middle school students grades 6-8. Avery teamed up with a 4-H volunteer who had a background in developing lesson plans. The two decided to put together a lesson that would teach youth about the importance of agriculture and agricultural technology. The activity consisted of participants building a variable rate irrigation system out of cups and straws. The goal of the activity was to distribute varying amounts of water into different cups. Students learned that with variable rate technology, farmers can irrigate various crops in one location with different amounts of water depending on the needs of each crop. After weeks of developing a plan, creating PowerPoints, putting together supply lists, and building grab-and-go supply boxes, Junior Conference had finally arrived. 605 middle school 4-H'ers arrived at the conference excited for the day's activities. Before the activities began, Avery led an orientation for 16 facilitators who would be teaching the STEM activity to the 605 middle school students. Once the STEM lessons commenced, Avery watched as hundreds of students and volunteer facilitators explored the future of agriculture and agricultural technology.

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## Healthy Colquitt Coalition

Ashleigh Childs

October, 2018



Southwest District AmeriCorps VISTA, Ashleigh Childs, was able to see her home of Colquitt County take the first step in becoming a Well Connected Community on October 4, 2018 through her involvement with this nationally recognized initiative.

The newly restructured Healthy Colquitt Coalition held its first meeting and participated in a training led by University of Georgia specialists, Dr. Kevan Lamm, Dr. Courtney Brown, and Jenna Daniel. The training consisted of an introduction of the importance of youth-adult partnerships and how they can be effective in the implementation of the project. The members were commended for their participation in the coalition, as involvement was on a volunteer basis and was critical to the success of the project.

The youth and adults completed various ice-breaker activities, which transitioned into the process that the coalition would follow to identify community needs and develop an action plan. Ashleigh's responsibilities prior to the face-to-face meeting included recruitment of the youth participants, communication with and project presentations to the adult members, and facilitation of appropriate documentation. She also was able to secure the donation of the meal provided for the meeting from Surcheros Fresh Grill, a locally owned restaurant in Colquitt County. The Healthy Colquitt Coalition will meet once a month as the project progresses.

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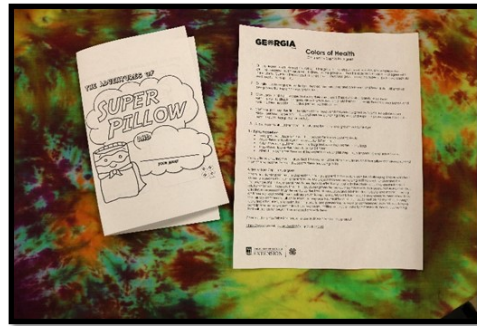
4-H



## *Colors of Health* Tie-Dying Workshop at Volunteer Conference

Avery Douglas

October 2018



Avery Douglas, an AmeriCorps VISTA in the Georgia 4-H State Office in Athens, Georgia, works to develop capacity and sustainability through volunteer development. In October, she attended the annual 4-H Volunteer Conference at Rock Eagle. The 4-H Volunteer Conference is an opportunity for volunteers to network and share ideas with other volunteers and conference facilitators from all over the country. During the conference, Avery led a healthy living class, called, *Colors of Health* Tie Dye Workshop. She and her volunteer development team taught volunteers the importance of mental health, by tie-dying pillow cases and socks. The tie-dying class taught volunteers that feelings are like tie-dye- they can be mixed up and confusing but still turn out beautiful. The activity is an adaptation from a project by Georgia 4-H'er, Sophia Rodriguez. Sophia created the activity to help military youth understand the importance of positive mental health and how to deal with the challenges of having a parent in the military. Sophia created a comic character, Super Pillow, whose purpose is to explain to children how everyone can find a comforting friend through their pillow. Avery and her team taught the activity to 20 volunteers during the conference. They provided volunteers with a worksheet and Sophia's comic book, so they can share the activity with their 4-H'ers. By sharing this activity with volunteers from all over the country, Avery has helped spread awareness on mental health and educated the volunteers on how to bring this activity home to their 4-H'ers.

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## STEM Videos and Career Connections

Avery Douglas

September 2018



Avery Douglas, an AmeriCorps VISTA at the Georgia 4-H State Office in Athens, Georgia, is building capacity in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) programs through volunteer development. Avery has developed a video series that will introduce volunteers to activities in STEM subjects. The title of Avery's STEM videos is IDEA Lab (Investigating Diverse Experiential Activities), and she plays the main scientist- Dr. Cosmos. The videos include an introduction to the subject, the activity, and a career connection. In the videos Avery interviews a professional in the STEM fields. To show young 4-H'ers and volunteers that 4-H is full of opportunities, Avery interviewed a former 4-H'er who is now receiving her Masters in Plant Protection and Pest Management. For an IDEA Lab episode about seed germination, Avery brought on a Master Gardener Coordinator and horticulturalist to discuss why plants are beneficial to our environment. The videos will air on Georgia 4-H's Volunteer Facebook page. These videos will show Georgia 4-H volunteers how STEM can be incorporated into their 4-H clubs and events. The STEM career connection will show our Georgia 4-H'ers the abundance of opportunities youth have to grow in a STEM subject they enjoy. The legacy of Dr. Cosmos will inspire the next generation of leaders to develop a passion through STEM.

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## School Garden Program

Ashleigh Childs

September, 2018



AmeriCorps VISTA member Ashleigh Childs, serving in the Southwest District Extension Office was able to get her hands dirty while aiding Family and Consumer Sciences and Agriculture and Natural Resources agents in Crisp County. The Crisp County Extension team has developed an experiential learning experience for the preschoolers in Cordele, Georgia.

Through incorporating school garden curriculum and nutrition education, Crisp County Extension demonstrates cross-programming efforts with 4-H, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Agriculture and Natural Resources through allowing youth to be involved in the process and then using the fruits (or veggies, if you will) of their labor to teach the importance of a healthy diet.

Ashleigh plans to mirror the relationship established with the school administration and the garden décor ideas in counties that are implementing strategies to improve access to healthy foods. This experience allows for the potential of utilizing parents and other school staff as volunteers to maintain the gardens and aid in educational Extension-led events.