

Objectives:

- Identify a need in the community and develop skills for planning and conducting project(s) to meet those needs
- Motivate and encourage youth to become active and engaged in local issues and initiatives
- Express themselves in written form
- Practice skills that develop self-esteem
- Exhibit characteristics and competencies of a leader

Competition Guidelines:

1. The Junior Competition is for 7th – 8th grade youth. The Senior Competition is for 9th – 12th grade youth. Any 7th- 12th grade is eligible for recognition. Counties may submit as many youth for recognition as desired; there is no limit of entries in this competition.
2. Youth identify a community need or issue. Community can be defined in a broad sense and may include, but is not limited to, the 4-H'ers school, church, neighborhood, county, or region. 4-H'ers may also select an issue related to agriculture or the environment rather than one solely based on his/her community.
3. 4-H'ers develop a plan for meeting the identified need and conduct the project, activity, or awareness activity.
4. 4-H'ers submit an application for review. Applications include up to two sections. Part I is required for local recognition, and Part II is required for state recognition. 4-H'ers who complete Part I of the program will receive local recognition. 4-H'ers completing Part II will compete for state recognition.
5. Part I and Part II of the competition are open to both Junior and Senior youth.
6. All entries should include the Cover Page signed by the 4-H'er and Extension Agent.
7. **Part I includes:**
 - a. **Situation** (100 words max): Describe the community, environmental or agricultural issue in which you have chosen to be involved.
 - b. **Response** (600 words max): Describe how you have been a community leader by becoming involved in the issue. Questions to address:
 - i. How have you built relationships/partnerships to get involved? How many other organizations or groups have participated in your project? (list)
 - ii. How have you influenced or educated others to become involved? How many youth and adults helped in some way with your project?
 - iii. Who benefitted from your project? Describe your target audience and approximately how many people benefitted.
 - iv. How did you target special needs or vulnerable audiences?
 - v. How did you promote the issue and 4-H?
 - vi. What have you done to improve the situation (public relations, activities, clubs, etc.)? Include the role you played in these activities.



- c. **Impact** (350 words max): Describe how your involvement has improved or influenced the situation.
 - d. **Evaluation** (300 words max): Describe your experience in terms of lessons learned, ideas for improvement, and next steps.
- 8. Part II includes:**
- a. **All materials in Part I**
 - b. **Supporting Documentation** (two 8.5 x 11 pages max): Documentation must lay flat and may include (but not limited to): photos, news clippings, and flyers.
 - c. **Letter of Recommendation** (one letter max): A letter from a community leader who is aware of your work on this project should be included. This recommendation should not come from an Extension agent or family member.
9. Registration must be completed and portfolios uploaded by the County Extension Office in 4-H Event Registration prior to the deadline.
 10. Senior 4-H'ers completing Part II may select to compete in an interview process for additional awards and recognition as well as interview experience.
 11. Applications should reflect a 4-H'er's work over the past year, from January 1 of the prior year through March 1 of the current year in which the application is due.
 12. Applications are judged on Service (40 points), Leadership (40 points), Completeness/ Neatness (10 points), and Presentation Skills (10 points). In case of a tie, the tie will be broken by the high Leadership score in odd years and by high Service score in even years.

Awards & Recognition:

- Youth may receive recognition each year.
- Each participant will receive a certificate through the county Extension office.
- Junior 4-H'ers completing Part II of the application will receive a state recognition certificate awarded through the county Extension office. These applications will also be judged. Eight junior 4-H'ers will receive awards as "Outstanding Community Leaders" based on the application only. These juniors are eligible to compete again and do not receive Master 4-H status. Seventh grade state winners will be recognized at the statewide Junior Conference in the fall and 8th grade state winners will be recognized at State 4-H Council. The eight state honorees are not required to attend the conference for recognition. The 4-H'er is responsible for travel and reimbursement is not provided. Senior 4-H'ers completing Part II will receive a state recognition certificate awarded through the county Extension office. The senior interview process is required, in addition to Part II, to be considered for the competition portion. District contests will be held for senior 4-H'ers and interviews will be conducted.
- The senior district 1st and 2nd place winners who participate in the Part II interview advance to State 4-H Congress for state competition.
- District winners will compete at State 4-H Congress with an interview session.
- Two state winners will be selected at State 4-H Congress and have the option of representing Georgia at National 4-H Conference or receiving a \$500 scholarship. The two winners will be invited to 4-H Day at the Legislature and will be eligible for Master 4-H'er status. The two state winners are ineligible for Leadership in Action state competition but may submit applications for local and state recognition.

08/2020



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The University of Georgia 4-H program is the largest youth leadership organization in the state.
An Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, Veteran, Disability Institution