

GREAT STORIES

GEORGIA

4-H



AmeriCorps

Volunteer of the Year, State Winner

Jessica Collins

December 10, 2022

On December 10, 2022, Georgia 4-H recognized Jessica Collins as the Volunteer of the Year for her outstanding year of service at the Houston County UGA Extension Office at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The following was shared about Jessica at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner:

“Jessica Collins has been a proud 4-H parent, volunteer, and now, service member. Between November 2021 through November 2022, she volunteered full-time as an AmeriCorps VISTA member. During her time of service, Jessica has increased youth participation in Houston County 4-H, reaching 83 new youth members in out-of-school 4-H programs like Tech Changemakers, Shooting Sports, and a Performing Arts club. To support the newfound youth participation, Jessica created new fundraisers such as Eat and Grow and Fill the Bus accompanying several ongoing fundraisers throughout her service year. As a result of her fundraising efforts, \$6,488 was raised, consequently, impacting 84 youth members. In conjunction with Jessica's fundraising efforts, she aided in cultivating 9 new local partnerships for Houston County 4-H. In addition to her impact on youth participation, she has also impacted volunteer participation and involvement. Jessica has recruited 9 new volunteers and managed 75 total volunteers, which resulted in a collective 321 hours of volunteer service. With increased volunteer involvement, she supported these volunteers through their onboarding and training to prepare them to lead specialty clubs and events for local youth. Under her direction, a 4-H Homeschool Club was created to reach a new audience and address local needs. Coupled with her volunteer efforts, Jessica created a new management system and tool for volunteers to be placed within their interest areas to further increase future participation and satisfaction. Overall, the core of her service to Houston County 4-H has cultivated sustainable capacity building through volunteer and fund development and participation efforts resulting in an overall strengthened county program to serve the needs of the community even after her service.”



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Volunteer of the Year

Jinnifer Caldwell

December 10, 2022



On December 10, 2022, Georgia 4-H recognized Jinnifer Caldwell for her outstanding year of service at the Gwinnett County UGA Extension Office. The following was shared about Jinnifer at the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at Rock Eagle 4-H Center:

“Jinnifer has served as a volunteer for eight years. As a parent, she coached judging teams and led many events. Jinnifer increased her volunteer responsibilities after her children graduated by opting to be a Volunteer in Service to America through the AmeriCorps VISTA 4-H partnership. Jinnifer created resources and tools to introduce District Project Achievement. Her willingness to speak with families and community groups led her to recruit over 15 volunteers to serve as 4-H volunteers, and she has raised more than \$1,600 to support 4-H programming since 2014.”

Every December the 4-H Volunteer Specialist, Keri Hobbs, calls on county and staff to recognize volunteers who support local and state programs. Jinnifer was one of seven volunteers recognized in 2022.

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Training for Success

McKenzie Tankersley

October & November 2022



From her start time in late October to the end of November, McKenzie Tankersley, a VISTA member serving with the Georgia 4-H and UGA Extension, has completed extensive training to prepare for her role as a VISTA. Her training consisted of approximately 68 hours of orientation, resource mapping, grant writing, resource development, volunteer management, the Georgia 4-H Enrollment management system, and other technical applications. The grant writing and resource development and mapping training prepared McKenzie with the necessary tools to consider ways to improve funding avenues for the GA 4-H Foundation and UGA Extension. The volunteer enrollment and management will provide McKenzie with the knowledge of how to recruit, manage, and support volunteers during her service. With all of these trainings, McKenzie is equipped to serve as a VISTA member, supporting GA 4-H and UGA Extension.

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Volunteer Appreciation

McKenzie Tankersley

December 2022

During December, McKenzie Tankersley, a VISTA service member serving with the Georgia 4-H State Office and UGA Extension, supported events such as this year's Fall Forum, volunteer dinner, and silent auction. While prepping for these events, she created two graphics via Canva to market the volunteer dinner and silent auction. She advertised through emails and posting on the Georgia 4-H Adult Volunteer Facebook page. While the volunteer turnout was lower, the silent auction participation cultivated approximately fifty donation items for the auction. The silent auction and raffle resulted in \$800 being raised for the Kelvin Bailey Camp Scholarship for one Junior Board member to attend the Georgia 4-H Middle School Camp and supported the goal of endowing the scholarship. McKenzie's marketing and support for this silent auction cultivated an environment for fund development.



In addition to the marketing pieces, McKenzie supported the volunteer dinner by editing the officer script, reviewing program drafts, creating a visual presentation, and cultivating a student-led volunteer appreciation service activity. Attendees remarked that the volunteer appreciation activity added to the event. The VISTA Coordinator, Laura Goss, shared that the activity supported the youth's ability to reflect on the importance of volunteers. McKenzie's efforts cultivated a strong

partnership with the Columbia County UGA Extension office. She leveraged their support for a workspace, teen volunteers to help with a volunteer gift for attendees and tools for creating the volunteer gift. This month's great work allowed sixty youth, at least three volunteers, and countless staff to participate in volunteer recognition efforts and a fundraiser to support a Junior Board to attend the 2023 4-H middle school camp. With the support she received, she completed tasks with confidence.