

APRIL 2020

VOLUNTEERS 3 CORE VALUES

4-H MILITARY PARTNERSHIP



What makes the 4-H Military Partnership strong is our committed volunteers who work, play, and lead by strong core values. Since 2017 I have had the honor to work with countless volunteers from the Army, Air Force, civilian employees, 4-H alumni, GA 4-H camp counselors, military spouses, school teachers, and passionate youth leaders. In the 2019 4-H year, 3,163 4-H military volunteers dedicated over 30,000 hours to youth development. Through my work as the GA 4-H Military Camp Coordinator, I have learned the 3 Air Force Core values by heart. I did not learn the values from a banner, a website, or even by memorization. I learned them from the actions of the 4-H Military Partnership volunteers. The Air Force Core Values are Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do.

If you need a volunteer to step up and lead, challenge themselves with teens on a bike ride, hike up a mountain for what seems like hours, or even fly across the country to attend Counselor Selection... You will find a GA 4-H Military volunteer who is ready to serve just as the Air Force Core Values highlight. Our volunteers live by Service Before Self at work, at home, and as a volunteer.

In Simon Sinek's novel, *Leaders Eat Last*: why some teams pull together and others don't, (2nd ed.), he writes, a colonel in the Navy has stated that in the Marine Corps, trust and integrity are considered matters of life and death... Leadership is not a rank worn on a collar. It is a responsibility that hinges almost entirely on the character of a person and group. Leadership is about integrity, honesty, and accountability. All components of trust. Leadership comes from telling us not what we want to hear, but rather what we need to hear. To be a true leader, to produce deep trust and loyalty, starts with telling the truth. (Sinek, pp.185-197)



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Integrity, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do

Integrity, is the base for any strong leader and is why the Air Force and Army specifically include it as one of its core values. What is fascinating to me is that 4-H professionals can exchange the word volunteer with LEADER when it comes to all of the Georgia 4-H Volunteers. Volunteers are leading youth based on the 3 Air Force Core Values no matter their length of service, the club they lead, or age group they work with. Volunteers are teaching teens how to be a leader through their service before self, their upstanding morals (integrity), and their excellence in all they do.

Master Sgt. Brian Potvin, formerly of Air Combat Command of the Air Force shared, "when the subject comes up, I always tell Airmen that the last of our three core values [excellence in all we do] does not mean the Air Force expects perfection. It expects us all to strive for continuous improvement in everything we do in our lives" (Potvin, 2013). The sentiments are true for our 4-H Motto, "to make the best better". 4-H Volunteers are striving to do their best and in doing so teach young people through their example.

Georgia 4-H is BETTER because of volunteers from across the state and world. GA 4-H staff and volunteers are reaching military teens in 142 counties in GA in addition to reaching teens in Korea, Germany, Alaska, Indiana, Virginia, and other locations through various 4-H military camping opportunities. Our sentiments for appreciation span more than just one week a year or through a short thank you article. Our sentiments last all year as volunteers continue to teach us, 4-H professionals, how to live by integrity, serve others, and to strive with excellence.

Reference:

1. Sinek, S. (2017). Integrity Matters, Leaders Eat Last: why some teams pull together and others don't. (2nd ed.), (pp.185-187), Portfolio Penguin.
2. Potvin, B. (2013, June 28). Core Values Spotlight: Excellence in all we do. Retrieved February 20, 2020, from https://www.militarynews.com/peninsula-warrior/news/commentary/core-values-spotlight-excellence-in-all-we-do/article_4229edb8-cd40-5924-bf00-fc7d780ca7f0.html!



Volunteers are leaders



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