

Communities are enriched by Wisconsin 4-H youth and adult volunteers



A summer intern shares nature science lesson material on a tablet with campers at Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center.

Youth and adults translate the skills learned through 4-H programs into their communities and workplaces.

The result: stronger communities with willing, able volunteers.



Involvement in Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development programs gives youth, volunteers and adult staff opportunities to practice, master and apply life skills in a wide spectrum of settings. 4-H program participants are more likely to use those skills in their communities, workplaces and future careers, as well as to give generously of their time and talents. Read on for highlights of how Wisconsin 4-H volunteers are bettering their communities.

Service/Civic Engagement

- Youth leaders involved in Columbia County's Future Leaders Active in Government (FLAG) program participate in teams that design, plan and implement capstone projects. Examples of these projects include teaching other students about government, writing a press release or letter to the editor for local news media, and organizing a live panel of local officials.

Workforce Training

- The 4-H SySTEMatics program in Milwaukee County partners with UW-Waukesha to teach STEM skills to nearly 150 students from seven Milwaukee schools. After the program, students who hadn't considered attending college

now say they want to and have asked to go on campus visits.

- Dane County's Grow Academy offers young males in the corrections system evidence-based, agricultural education as an alternative to juvenile incarceration. Teen participants learn practical skills, such as gardening, animal care and natural resource management, as well as life skills, like teamwork and effective communication.

Camp Counselors

- 4-H youth in Dane County participate in a six-week workshop series with topics including community- and team-building, diversity, program planning, self-awareness, temperament styles, equity, job expectations, behavior management, child development and financial management. Each youth who successfully completes the series is placed as a paid summer camp counselor in the community.
- Counselors are trained and assigned to teams of youth who needed extra physical, emotional or learning assistance, which creates a supportive and inclusive environment.

Program Planning

- 4-H participants in the Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership Conference took part in a committee that planned the next year's conference. Youth had a voice in the project and experience in planning a program that impacts them.

4-H Youth Development program participants build life skills and use them to support their communities. The result is stronger community connections and more skilled, caring adults and youth volunteers.

- Youth participants in a holiday service project — collecting donations for families in need and shopping for their holiday supper — reported feeling more connected to helping others. The Bayfield County 4-H'ers recognized how a small amount of money or organizing can have a significant impact in the community. The program increased youth awareness of food security and poverty in their community.
- Members in the Ashland County CANSKI Club, a partnership between 4-H clubs and local schools to teach skiing, reported an increased sense of belonging, independence, mastery and generosity. Annual member surveys show 68% of members taught cross-country skiing and 91% said the experience improved



A 4-H alum and volunteer directs a Wisconsin State Fair visitor at the Youth Exhibition Hall.

their leadership skills. CANSKI continues to work with community schools and organizations, both receiving support and giving back.

Youth who participate in 4-H programs feel valued and are more likely to contribute to their communities within and beyond 4-H programs.

- In Marathon County, a group of youth leaders called LEADS (Lead. Empower. Advance. Develop. Serve) integrates risk management and sharing leadership knowledge into their activity planning. They seek leadership positions and spread their passion and knowledge into areas beyond their 4-H lives.
- With Digital Outdoor Technology Skills kits developed at Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center, adults learn to

lead programs, creating opportunities for students. Students learn and apply skills in environmental stewardship, critical thinking and a better understanding of technology and the environment.

- High school-age 4-H youth and adults served on a planning team and/or served as counselors and volunteers at a Zombie Survival Day Camp for middle school age youth in Washington County. Volunteers were trained to offer a high-quality day camp opportunity for middle school youth to learn about disaster preparedness, emergency management and health and safety.

Adult 4-H staff and volunteers gain empowering competencies that help them coach youth to learn and apply those same life skills. As a result, youth and adults engage civically, making long-term service commitments to their communities.

Wisconsin 4-H by the Numbers

- **150,000+** youth members ages 5-19
- **4,000** youth volunteers
- **13,000** adult volunteers in
- **72** counties and
- **6** Native American nations
- **1 million+** volunteer hours or
- **\$24 million** value of volunteer time