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# Virginia 4-H Foundation

[www.4-h.ext.vt.edu/give](http://www.4-h.ext.vt.edu/give)

Newsletter

Spring 2015

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## Teen Excellence in Leadership Institute

Caroline Sutphin, TELI Participant

This year I am participating in an amazing new program called the Teen Excellence in Leadership Institute. TELI is a youth leadership development program made possible by the Jack and Helen Tyree 4-H Leadership Endowment.

TELI has four goals: (1) to help the participants understand themselves and develop personalized action plans for engaged leadership, (2) to allow them to network with other teens who are also interested in learning about issues facing youth and communities, (3) to design projects that address community leadership needs in Virginia, and (4) to teach the participants more about advocacy and outreach in order to improve the lives of others.

The program reaches these goals with a three-stage leadership-training program.

The first stage is a leadership-development weekend. This year's weekend occurred in November, when the participants were able to identify their strengths and abilities and begin to understand how these affect their leadership styles. This weekend also marked the beginning of the team projects. Each team developed a plan of action and a presentation for a problem facing their communities. During the second stage, teams met online to discuss their projects and their plans to prepare for the last event of TELI. In March, the teams met to present their final projects and graduate from TELI. The members returned home with a real project plan that can be implemented in their communities.

TELI has 22 teen participants from both 4-H and FFA. Each graduate is a leader in her or his own club or chapter. I look forward to seeing how these incredible young leaders continue to develop!



Caroline Sutphin

## Chair's Update

Dear Friends,

Our programs are strong and our professionals are outstanding, but their initiatives would benefit from additional resources and our agents would sleep better at night if they could focus on programs rather than short-term fundraising.



We all have stories of doors to growth opportunities being opened, despite the potential roadblock of financial resources. Our 4-H agents and volunteers reach into their communities to ask for donations and hold bake sales and spaghetti suppers to find a way to make valuable initiatives happen. Not long ago, I received a late-night message from a 4-H agent trying to strategize ways to raise money for a 4-H'er to take advantage of being selected for a trip to Finland. I know that a young person is about to embark on a life-changing trip, and her 4-H agent is going to do whatever it takes to raise the money. But there has to be a better way, and there is.

Local endowments provide resources directly to agents to use on their program needs, and this board is focused on seeing more such endowments established.

Let's make this happen together. If you want to help establish an endowment for your locality, or if you have an endowment and want support to help grow it, we are here to help you. It's as simple as that.

Your Virginia 4-H Foundation Board believes that there has never been a Better time to invest in the future of our youth. We invite you to read our strategic plan <http://goo.gl/15Vviv> and collaborate with us to secure the resources that we know will have a lasting impact on Virginia's young people. I look forward to hearing from you, even if it's late at night.

Sincerely,

Mary Miller, Ph.D.  
Chair, Virginia 4-H Foundation



4-H Cabinet members Autumn Diggs, Rachel Kendrick, Adam Wilborn, Taylor Reed and Monet Wilson pose for a photo with Governor Terry McAuliffe at 4-H Day at the Capitol.

## 4-H Day at the Capitol

4-H Day at the Capitol is held annually during the Virginia General Assembly to provide an opportunity for 4-H members to learn more about state government. Several hundred youth and adults participated in 4-H Day at the Capitol on February 24. They spent their day visiting with legislators, observing the General Assembly in session, learning about the state Senate and House Page Programs, touring the Capitol Building, and visiting historical sites and museums in the area. Participants wear 4-H vests paid for, in part by the Virginia 4-H Foundation.

4-H'ers deliver shamrock plants to each legislator to thank him or her for supporting the Virginia 4-H program and Virginia Cooperative Extension, and they share how 4-H has made a positive difference in their lives. For many youth, this educational opportunity is the first time they have visited Richmond and met with their legislators, experiences that make lasting impressions.



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## Service Through 4-H

Being a 4-H All Star is one of the highest honors and recognitions that a Virginia 4-H member can achieve. The Virginia 4-H All Stars organization contributes to positive youth development through service to the 4-H program. 4-H All Stars serve as 4-H contest judges, conduct workshops on public speaking and other topics, lead 4-H clubs or activities, and provide leadership for service projects, along with many other volunteer opportunities.

Each year, county/city 4-H All Stars nominate deserving youth ages 14 to 19 to be considered for All Stars membership. The application process takes into account the youth's 4-H participation, leadership, and citizenship experiences. Each locality may also nominate up to three outstanding 4-H adult volunteers for honorary membership annually. In addition, as many as 12 Extension faculty and staff members with at least five years of outstanding service to the 4-H program may be nominated for membership. The tapping ceremony, at which new members are welcomed, occurs during the Virginia 4-H Congress at Virginia Tech each June. There are more than 9,000 4-H All Stars in Virginia.

[www.ext.vt.edu/topics/4h-youth/all-stars/index.html](http://www.ext.vt.edu/topics/4h-youth/all-stars/index.html)



## See the World with 4-H



"I cannot describe this past week and my experiences here. This is only my second year coming to Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, and visiting

Higuey again still hit me hard, seeing their way of life and purchasing goods from the farmers market. It makes me sad, yet motivates me to strive for making an impact in this world and to help others that need it most." — a recent 4-H exchange participant.

Youth who dream of travel and adventure can discover the world by participating in Virginia 4-H's international programs. Last year, more than 90 youth and 10 Virginia Cooperative Extension faculty members gained international experiences either by hosting an international visitor in their home or by traveling to another country for an experience of a lifetime. More than 20 countries were represented in the program. 4-H international program participants gain an appreciation for others' cultures while sharing theirs. They gain knowledge, skills, and attitudes to



Polina Prokophyeva from Ukraine and Soyeong Jang from South Korea met with 4-H agents during 4-H Symposium in November 2014.

help them become productive citizens of the global community.

4-H international program opportunities provide more than the typical tourist's view of a foreign land. They offer immersion in everyday life with a host family that shares its customs, culture, and language. The exchanges range from one week to extended stays of six months. In another aspect of the program, Virginia teens conduct day camps for children in the Dominican Republic each summer.

## A Powerful Partnership

Tractor Supply Company's help in raising money for 4-H is deeply appreciated. In partnership with the National 4-H Council, the retailer periodically asks customers at the register if they would like to give a dollar to support 4-H programs. Since 2010, this initiative has raised more than \$109,000 in support of 4-H programs in Virginia alone. It's an ongoing program, which next will run from April 22 to May 3 at stores across the state.



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