

University of Connecticut 4-H Program

*4-H is a community of young people across America
learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.*

Summer 2017



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Thank you to our 4-H Volunteers!

This issue of the 4-H Donor Newsletter is dedicated to our 4-H volunteers in Connecticut who help to make the 4-H program possible and provide youth with caring and supportive mentoring and important life skills. In this issue of the newsletter we feature several of the outstanding Connecticut 4-H volunteers who have received state, regional and national recognition for their efforts.

Elsie Woolam Named 2017 National 4-H Hall of Fame Inductee

Congratulations to Elsie Woolam for her selection as a member of the 2017 National 4-H Hall of Fame.



The National 4-H Hall of Fame honors 4-H volunteers, extension professionals and staff employees, donors and others who have made a significant impact on the 4-H program and /or 4-H members through the contribution of time, energy, and financial resources. The Class of 2017 consists of 16 laureates from around the country. The induction ceremony will take place on October 6, 2017 at the National 4-H Center in Chevy, Chase, Maryland.

Elsie's dedication to the Connecticut 4-H program began 65 years ago as a 4-H member in Hartford County. She participated in a variety of animal projects along with clothing and dress revue and has fond memories of showing the Grand Champion steer at the Hartford County 4-H Fair as well as showing two steers at the Eastern States Exposition.

She began volunteering for 4-H in 1955 where she was active on many

Hartford County committees planning Favorite Foods shows, Clothing Revues, awards programs and interstate exchanges as well as many statewide activities. She was also the leader of five separate 4-H clubs teaching life skills to hundreds of local youth in the areas of horse, livestock, home arts and leadership. She has been active with the Hartford County 4-H Fair for over 30 years, serving as advisor and assisting with countless "behind the scenes" activities such as putting the premium book together and helping with fair banquets and ad campaigns. Elsie has received the Connecticut 4-H Alumni Award and the Connecticut 4-H Leadership Award. In 1970 her family which includes her husband, Dick (now deceased) and four children received the Hartford County Honor 4-H Family Award illustrating the entire family's dedication to 4-H.



Elsie is most well known for her work with the Hartford County 4-H Camp in Marlborough, CT. She and her husband, Dick, were part of a group of

dedicated volunteers who spearheaded the purchase of land in Marlborough, CT for a 4-H camp, raising \$175,000 to build it. She and Dick played a key role in the camp construction at the 75-acre site. The camp opened in 1966 and it is here that Elsie has dedicated her time and energy to providing memorable overnight camping experiences to thousands of children both at home and abroad. Elsie has easily impacted the lives of over 55,000 youth and counselors through the Hartford County 4-H Camp. When the camp opened she began as a volunteer staff member and then moved into the role of Camp Director, a role she served in until 1994. Elsie continues to be involved in all aspects of the camp's operation and mentors the staff and directors providing them with guidance and confidence.



When the 4-H camp's 5,000 square foot dining hall/activity center collapsed in February, 2011, Elsie was involved in every aspect of the Baldwin Hall rebuild project offering historical, logistical and practical insight. This was critical to the effort to have the building up and operational in time

for the 2011 camping season in June. Elsie has been instrumental in growing the camp's endowment as well as expanding the camp property from 75 to 100 acres. She is dedicated to providing financial assistance to youth who cannot afford to attend 4-H camp and in bringing inner-city youth to the camp as well. If these underserved youth do not have a ride to camp, Elsie goes into the city to get them. The Hartford County 4-H Camp has close to a 100 percent fill rate every summer with a wait list for many of the weekly sessions.

At the age of 80, Elsie shows no signs of slowing down. She continues to serve the South Windsor community where she has lived most of her life, and has received awards for her service. Of her 4-H experience she states, *"My relationship with 4-H began as a young teen. Little did I know that over my lifetime local, state and national 4-H events would help create lasting friendships with generations of families that included staff from at least a dozen foreign countries. Teaching, demonstrating, solving problems, and chaperoning were a huge part of working with all 4-Hers."*

William Jacobs Named 2017 Salute to Excellence Northeast Region 4-H Volunteer of the Year



William Jacobs (Bill) is in his ninth year as a New Haven County 4-H volunteer. He works as a Vocational/Transition Coordinator for Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES), a regional public school that provides programs for students with regular education, special education and talented and gifted needs. He is located at Whitney High East/West

and CREATE, a high school for students with special needs. The school has committed itself to the incorporation of 4-H club work to give special needs students with all levels of ability the opportunity to participate in 4-H activities, integrate their school programs into 4-H and learn new skills to better prepare them for the adult world.

Nine years ago Margaret Grillo, New Haven County 4-H Extension Educator, was approached by the vice principal of ACES to collaborate and apply for a three year recreational grant with the Department of Education to provide gardening, workforce preparation and leadership skills to special needs youth aged 13-22. The funds would provide transportation to classes, supplies for making gardens both on school property and in a neighborhood garden and field trips along with learning workforce prep skills.

Bill was asked to be the lead teacher establishing the 4-H program in all classrooms. He took on this role with gusto, encouraging every classroom to select a project, meet as a 4-H club weekly and participate in some of the county 4-H activities. After the first three years, the grant funding ended and it looked like the 4-H program might end along with it. Bill was able to inspire the teachers and youth to continue, finding funding to conduct 4-H activities and keep both 4-H clubs and the 4-H fair going. Under his leadership, over 1,500 youth have participated in the UConn Extension 4-H Program through ACES. Through his encouragement and support the ACES 4-H program has continued six years past the end of the grant. Bill is truly deserving of the Salute to Excellence award.

2016 DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS

A special thank you to the following donors who helped support the UConn Extension 4-H Youth Development Program last year through The University of Connecticut Foundation 4-H Centennial Fund.

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News for the 4-H Program



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Connecticut 4-H Volunteers Receive State 4-H Recognition

Three Connecticut 4-H volunteers were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the 4-H Program at the annual UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources Awards and Honors Event held on March 31st.

Hartford County 4-H Volunteer, **Peter Brzezicki** received the 4-H Alumni Award for his lifelong affiliation with 4-H. Peter was a member of the Winding Brook 4-H Club, and has been a 4-H volunteer for the past 40 years.

Tolland County 4-H Volunteer, **Mark Kloter** received the 4-H Leadership Award for his work with the Piston Pushers 4-H club. As club leader Mark encourages and facilitates the youth in his club to help with community service projects while learning entrepreneurial and life skills.

Hartford County 4-H Volunteer, **Marlene Mayes** received the Meritorious Service to 4-H award for her tireless efforts at the 4-H Education Center at Auerfarm. She has been instrumental in furthering production on the farm as well as in training instructors and delivering the Junior Master Gardener Program at Auerfarm.



From left to right – Mark Kloter, Marlene Mayes, Peter Brzezicki and Michael O'Neill, Associate Dean, UConn Extension

