A Message from the Department Head

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4-H, Citizenship and Bringing Communities Together

This past year has certainly brought plenty of contentious viewpoints on what the future of our country should be. Very strong words and actions from both ends of the political spectrum, peaceful and not so peaceful demonstrations have become part of the norm. Our new UConn Interim Provost Jeremy Teitelbaum, recently quoted Alexis de Tocqueville who wrote “the greatness of America lies not in being more enlightened than any other nation, but rather in her ability to repair her faults.” Fake news, alternative truths and a host of options for instant electronic messaging make filtering and finding the truth harder than ever. 4-H should actively seek ways to bring people together and be part of repairing the divisive landscape of our country. 4-H has an advantage as we train young people to be community leaders. We have the 4-H pledge which guides our principles including those around citizenship. Do our 4-Hers feel comfortable and empowered addressing what they would like to do in unifying as well as strengthening our clubs, our communities, our country and our world? Can we understand and work to seek common ground on the issues in our own communities? National 4-H Council conducted a survey 10 months ago where 81% of youth identified the top trait of a strong leader as being responsible, and 57% said that leaders have to be prepared to make tough decisions. Let’s start having these discussions in our 4-H clubs. There are materials here http://4-h.org/get-involved/grow-true-leaders/campaign-media-resource-center/ to get you started!

Connecticut 4-H Teen Ambassadors
Written by Members of the CT 4-H Teen Ambassador program

The goal of 4-H is to develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills of youth through experiential learning programs and a positive youth development approach. Teens looking for a 4-H citizenship and leadership program in the State of Connecticut should consider joining the Connecticut 4-H Teen Ambassador Program based out of Norwich, CT.

The Connecticut 4-H Teen Ambassador Program is a program for teens in 9th-12th grades and helps them work on a variety of skills such as communication, problem solving, public speaking, and general leadership. We are one of two 4-H Teen Ambassador clubs in the country that have more than 45 teen members, and the only one in the country to have a membership of over 60 teens.

The Connecticut 4-H Teen Ambassador Program is closely associated with the New London County 4-H Camp in Franklin, CT. Many of the members in the TA Program are Teen Leaders and Junior Staff at the 4-H Camp. Due to its longstanding commitment to the Connecticut 4-H Camps, many of the Teen Ambassador Program community service projects and fundraisers are dedicated to the camps.

The TA Program is supervised by a group of advisors who all have a general interest in promoting leadership and citizenship in local 4-H as well as empowering teens and providing opportunities for them that they would not receive elsewhere. Our advisors for the 2016-2017 season are Cory Bailey, Don Beebe, Susan Klimek, Deanna Davis, Joyce Gootkin, Donna Guernier, Allison Aspinwall, Julianne Alicé, and Bri Laskey. We organize and participate in many fun events such as the Big E, Breakfast at Applebee’s: 4-H Camp Reunion, Teen Leadership Weekend in November, and The Heart Dance in February.

Each year, the advisors and teens set goals for the program to make it what the teens want it to be. The Teen Ambassador Program has a yearly goal to organize and participate in community service projects; as of January 23, 2017 we have completed 5 projects and have at least 4 more planned before the end of the season in mid-June. One of our finished projects was to make friendship bracelets to be distributed at the Pediatric Emergency Room at Lawrence & Memorial Hospital and Yale New Haven Hospital to make...
What is a Healthy Home?

Did you know that most people spend about 70% of their time indoors especially in their homes? People who live in a healthy home are less likely to become injured or sick – with illnesses like asthma and lead poisoning. A healthy home helps the people who live there – both children and adults – become healthy and safe.

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<th>A healthy home is</th>
<th>Why it matters</th>
<th>Problems to look for</th>
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| **Clean**         | Clean homes have fewer pests and fewer dangerous chemicals (like lead). | Unwashed dishes  
Trash lying around (not in garbage cans)  
Dust  
Pet hair  
Mold or mildew in bathroom or kitchen  
Dirty floors |
| **Dry**           | Dry homes are less likely to have mold (which may trigger asthma – a serious lung disease) and pests (which may trigger asthma or carry diseases). | Leaky plumbing: pipes, faucets  
Moisture stains on ceilings or floors  
Bubbling paint  
Clogged drains in kitchen or bathroom  
Damp odors |
| **Free of pests** | Pests can carry diseases and trigger asthma attacks. However, many chemicals used to kill pests (pesticides) are themselves dangerous, especially for young children. | Signs of pests: waste, nests, chew marks  
No lids on garbage cans  
Gaps or holes in building  
Torn screens |
| **Free of dangerous chemicals** | Homes without lead, tobacco smoke, unsafe household cleaners, and pesticides are safer and healthier. | Dangerous chemicals not locked away such as: pesticides, cleaning chemicals and medicines or cigarettes and other tobacco products |
| **Fresh, moving air** | Well-ventilated homes have healthier, cleaner air, so people generally have fewer breathing problems. | No exhaust fans in kitchen and bathrooms  
Unpleasant smells (chemicals, smoke)  
Windows that don’t open, even in good weather |
| **Safe**          | Safe homes help people avoid accidents and injuries from falls, burns, and poisoning. | Clutter on stairs or walkways or near stove or heaters  
Slip, trip, and fall hazards, such as loose carpet  
Burned out light bulbs; Electrical outlets without child-safe covers; Smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors, none or not working |
| **Safe**          | In case an emergency occurs, call 911 and be sure to give the address of the emergency. | Not having poison control phone number posted: (1-800-222-1222) |
| **Well maintained** | Well-maintained homes help people avoid injuries; they can help protect people from contact with lead and mold. | Broken windows  
Missing stair railings  
Chipping or peeling paint  
Leaking pipes |

Adapted from the Tools for Healthy Living project for 4-H youth, developed by the University of Connecticut’s Department of Extension, in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, funded by a CYFAR grant from U.S. Department of Agriculture/NIFA. An Equal Opportunity Program Provider.

Complete our Healthy Homes word scramble to see what you have learned.
Click Here: [https://uconn.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_erGtcOJOaLGPYEZ](https://uconn.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_erGtcOJOaLGPYEZ)
Go to [http://www.hec.uconn.edu](http://www.hec.uconn.edu) for more information on healthy homes or contact:
Mary Ellen Welch—[mary.welch@uconn.edu](mailto:mary.welch@uconn.edu); Mary-Margaret Gaudio—[mmgaudio@uconn.edu](mailto:mmgaudio@uconn.edu);
Karen Filchak—[karen.filchak@uconn.edu](mailto:karen.filchak@uconn.edu)
The Auerfarm is a 4-H Education Center with 120 acres located in the northwest section of Bloomfield, Connecticut. The Farm was deeded to the non-profit Connecticut 4-H Development Fund in 1976; however, has a rich history dating back to the early years of the 20th Century. The facility served as a model farm to other farmers in the 1950’s and hence, grew into a place that values education, outreach and engagement. The farm currently houses livestock including cows, goats, alpacas, donkeys, sheep, rabbits and chickens. It also has several large vegetable and flower gardens, an apple orchard, and a blueberry patch. Extension supported the building of a greenhouse on the property that is heavily used by school groups and master gardeners. Each year 14,000 children and 5,000 adults visit and access educational programs at the farm.

CYFAR’s Tools for Healthy Living grant partnered with the Auerfarm this summer to provide multiple week long day programs for low income youth from Hartford. Each week twelve to fifteen 8-12 year old youth from Hartford participated in a program designed to enrich their understanding of food, health, and agriculture through hands on learning. During this time, University of Connecticut (UCONN) staff presented two lessons about issues related to food safety; these lessons are part of the Tools for Healthy Living curriculum that was developed as part of this grant project. The first lesson was on hand washing and the second was on how to avoid food related illness. Students also spent time in the gardens, visiting animals and preparing the food they had picked.

The summer program was a highly positive experience for students, many who had not attended a summer farm program before. Students were very excited to go to the gardens and the blueberry patch. Several students made statements including “we get to pick berries!” The students also indicated that this is a new experience for (most) of them and upon the announcement from the teacher that berry picking time was over several made comments that they “wanted to do it again”.

All of the youth attending this summer program loved the experience, particularly being in the gardens, blueberry patch and in the kitchen. They interacted during the food safety lessons and showed increased awareness for the need to do thorough handwashing and minimize food safety risks. The animals and gardens throughout the property served as platforms for interactive learning. The children really seemed to enjoy the garden experience stating “I want to have my own garden” and “this is the best day of my life”. This garden supports the Foodshare organization by producing 2 tons of produce annually for hungry families in Hartford. Extension Master Gardeners are active with the Foodshare garden ensuring we give back to the community.

One student exclaimed “I can’t wait to come back to camp next year”. Another stated “I just really like the fresh air and mountains”. As a result of this project, our grant team strengthened our partnership with the Auerfarm and provided many youth with a farm experience that they would not have otherwise had the opportunity to attend.

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**DONATE to 4-H**

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**Connecticut 4-H Newsletter** is a publication of the UConn Extension 4-H Youth Development Program which provides educational and current information to 4-H members and volunteers.

**UCONN EXTENSION CENTERS**
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  67 Stony Hill Road
  Bethel, CT 06801-3056 (203) 207-8440
- Hartford County Extension Center
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  University of Connecticut
  1800 Asylum Avenue
  West Hartford, CT 06117-2600
  (860) 570-9010
- Litchfield County Extension Center
  843 University Drive
  Torrington, CT 06790 (860) 626-6240
- Middlesex County Extension Center
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- Publications Resource Center
  Room 2, W.B. Young Bldg., 1376 Storrs Road
  University of Connecticut
  Storrs, CT 06269-4035 (860) 486-3336
- 4-H Center at Auer Farm
  158 Auer Farm Road
  Bloomfield, CT 06002 (860) 242-7144
- Hartford County 4-H Camp
  c/o Elsie Woolam, Camp Administrator
  1225 Main Street
  South Windsor, CT 06074 (860) 260-2600
- Middlesex County Camp
  P.O. Box 687
  Middletown, CT 06459 (860) 873-2294
- New London County 4-H Camp
  Box 6002
  Norwich, CT 06360 (860) 886-7476
- Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp
  326 Taft Pond Road
  Pomfret Center, CT 06259 (860) 974-3379

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(continued from page 1)
the hospital seem like less of a scary place.
Another project was to make scarves for
individuals in New London County who
can’t afford winter clothes. The communi-
ty service projects that we plan are intro-
duced to the group by the teens; having
 teens empowered to propose their ideas is
what makes the Connecticut 4-H Teen
Ambassador Program a wonderful pro-
gram for teens who are looking to expand
their skill set.

The Connecticut 4-H Teen Ambassador
Program meets from August to June and
typically meets at Don Beebe’s Recrea-
tion & Leadership Center, affectionately
known as “The Barn” or “Dudley”. If
you are interested in joining the Teen
Ambassador Program, would like more
information, or have ideas for community
service projects please email your Mem-
bership Application/Inquiry to Cory
James Bailey (Communications & Pro-
gram Coordinator) at corybai-
ley@outlook.com or by mail to: Con-
necticut 4-H Teen Ambassador Program,
Box 6002, Norwich, Connecticut 06360.

4-H Goat Project Contest
Winning Essay
In December, 2016 a 4-H Goat Project
Contest was held. 4-H members were
asked to write an essay and the winner of
the essay contest was awarded ADGA
registered Alpine Doeling “Josephine,”
donated by Out of Thyme Farm in
Griswold, CT. The winner of the
contest was Julia Du-
val, a 4-H member
from Tol-
land
County.

We are happy to share Julia’s inspiring
essay.

How Joining 4-H has Changed my Life

My name is Julia Duval and I live in Man-
chester, Connecticut. Three years ago I
joined 4-H, and I have enjoyed every sec-
don of it ever since. At only 10 years old, I
have experience working with a variety of
animals, including goats, poultry and beef
cows. Being a part of 4-H brings me joy,
and has changed my life for the better. I
hope you’ll continue reading to learn more
about how special 4-H is to me, and how
special it would be to receive Josephine
from Out of Thyme Farm.

4-H has changed my life because it
brings my family together. For instance,
when my family goes to fairs with me, it
gives me a chance to bond with them
while they help me get my animals ready.
Also, it gives me a chance to teach my
family something instead of them teaching
me. One example is the time I explained to
my mom that goat lice is not zoologic. She
learned something new that day, and it
made me proud to share my 4-H
knowledge with her. Another way 4-H
brings my family together is that it gives
me and my dad something we can do as a
team. I’ll never forget the time my dad and
I made our chicken coop because it was a
special experience that we shared. That
wouldn’t have been possible without 4-H.

Another way 4-H has changed my life is
through the many opportunities to make
new friends. A senior member of one of
the 4-H clubs that I belong to, Ryan, rec-
ommended that I enter this contest. He
said he thought of me when he saw the
advertisement for the competition. He has
been a helping hand and an awesome role
model for me in my 4-H experience. I am
so glad he encouraged me to write this
essay. Another good friend I have made in
these past three years is my 4-H leader,
Liz. She teaches me important lessons.
Recently, she taught me this: “one of us is
not as smart as all of us.” I love this phrase
because it reminds me that when I work
together with others, we can achieve great
things.

My friends have also taught me that 4-H is
not a competition, even when you are in
the show ring. 4-H is all about having fun
and learning. I am so glad to have all of
my 4-H friends, like Kirsten, Hally, Kayla,
Riley, Cayden, and more. They are like
family. They help me grow and learn as a
person, and I don’t know what I would do
without them.

Finally, 4-H has given me a sense of pur-
pose. I want to work with animals for the
rest of my life, and I am so grateful to
know this at such a young age. When I
look at my older siblings, I see that my
sister is a talented musician and my broth-
er is great at cooking. Now, because of 4-
H, I’ve found what I’m passionate about.
Working with animals makes me happy
and I hope to be a 4-H leader when I grow
up, just like my mentors Liz and Jen. My
goal is to pursue 4-H for the rest of my
life, from elementary school to high
school to college and beyond.

In conclusion, 4-H has made such a pow-
erful and positive influence on my life. If I
were to receive Josephine from Out of
Thyme Farm, I would be taking an excit-
ing next step in my 4-H journey. For three
years, I have been leasing fiber goats and
now, for the first time ever, I hope to lease
and train a dairy goat. I am determined to
participate in the Big E, but to get there, I
need your help. Receiving Josephine
would mean so much to me and my family
because it would help us with 4-H expen-
ses. More than that, it would inspire me to
continue growing as both a member of 4-
H and as an individual who loves working
with animals. Please consider me as the
recipient of Josephine from Out of Thyme
Farm. Thank you so much!

CWF Presidential Inauguration—4-H
members Erica Grenger, Sara Klimek,
Olivia Kappel, Rebeca Durinick and
Emily Syme along with Windham County
4-H Program Coordinator and chapera-
on, Marc Cournoyer attended another life-
changing 4-H experience, the 2017 CWF
Presidential Inauguration.