The Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment

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Title: Berkshire County 4-H Tech Wizards

Project Leader: Angelica Paredes

Project Overview

The 4-H Tech Wizards program is designed to expose youth to science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM), help them understand how to better utilize the concepts, have some experiences with STEAM projects, and learn about different possible careers that involve technology.   By becoming 4-H members, or by meeting for a set number of times and participating in 4-H programming with a specific technology focus (using a broad spectrum of options) as a project, youth will learn about specific technology as well as participate in community service. Each group will have the opportunity to hold a family night where their families are invited to learn and see what the youth has been working on in the group.8

Activity Summary - 2018

- After School Workshops (45)
- Exhibits (30)
- Community Service Initiatives (5)
- Family Nights (30)

Total Educational contacts

	Youth Contacts	Adult Contacts
In Person	220	25
Indirect Contacts (Print, Web, etc...)		

Narrative Summary and Impact

Tech Wizards participates in the National Mentoring Project, which aims to reach at risk youth. Factors taken into account for youth participation are: location, public school performance, unemployment rates, and youth with disabilities. Youth can be in mentoring relationships as a one on one with a mentor, or in group mentoring situations keeping the ratio of four youth to one mentor (max). The Berkshire Tech Wizards program follows the group mentoring model.

At the grant sites the youth meet with their mentors on a weekly basis. They work on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) related projects. Projects range from science experiments to fishing to sewing to cooking. The youth and mentors use the Experiential Learning Model for all projects. They also must do at least 15 hours of community service.

The sites where the groups meet also hold family nights. These events are intended for families to not only see what the youth have been working on, but to also build on the relationship of the mentor/mentee/family. The nights also allow families to talk with one another and reach out to others for support.

The Tech Wizard program is a group of sites that work with youth and mentors to encourage the youth to:

- See STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) as a part of their lives.
- Each youth must also participate in community service.
- Feel connected to others
- Stay in school and aim for something after high school; college/career training/etc.

All of the components together: the groups, the family nights, and the community service are meant to support the at risk youth on a number of levels.

Collaborating Organizations

- **North Adams Tractor Supply Co.**
- **Drury High School/North Adams Public Schools**
- **Youth Center, Inc.**
- **Berkshire County 4-H Fair, Inc.**