

4-H Program Delivery and Administration FY23

Status: APPROVED

Project Director

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Organization Project Number

Organization

University of Massachusetts

Accession Number

7002322

Start & End Date

10/01/2020

To Project / Program

"4-H Program Delivery and Administration"

Primary Critical Issue

Youth Development

Fiscal Year

2023

In 2-3 sentences, briefly describe the issue or problem that your project addresses.

The UMass Extension 4-H Program delivers hands-on Positive Youth Development programming to young people ages 5-18 in all 14 counties in the state of Massachusetts. We utilize a network of resources which encompasses the Center for Food, Agriculture, and the Environment, volunteers, schools, and community centers to ensure that young people who engage in 4-H programs have a positive and engaging learning and development experience.

During the '22-'23 program year the UMass Extension 4-H Team relied on the research of Dr. Mary Arnold to implement aspects of the THRIVE model into 4-H programs. The 4-H Team focused on the aspects of 4-H, specifically the idea of belonging, that contribute to the positive developmental context youth need in order to thrive. We determined a large part of the success of programs on whether or not youth participants felt like they were supported and part of a community at specific events.

Briefly describe in non-technical terms how your major activities helped you achieve, or make significant progress toward, the goals and objectives described in your non-technical summary.

During the 2022-2023 UMass 4-H was able to bring 95% of all programs back in person or offer hybrid virtual and in person participation opportunities for young people across the 14 counties of Massachusetts. We reimaged volunteer trainings and youth programs to fit a hybrid world (virtual and in person programs) to ensure that all members of the 4-H community were able to engage with PYD programming. This decision was made in order to ensure that every 4-H Program focused on creating a sense of belonging amongst participants. With this model we were successfully able to engage youth and volunteers in UMass Extension 4-H Hallmark Programs in the areas of:

Animal Science: 3,248 youth

STEM: 1,445 youth

Plant Science/Horticulture: 4,510 youth

Child Care and Development: 246 youth

Communications and Visual Presentations: 177 youth

Leadership Development: 224 youth

Approaching program development with the goal of building programs that foster a sense of belonging aids the UMass Extension 4-H Program to ensure that all 4-H youth participants are ready to engage with project area material. We know from numerous PYD studies, that youth need

to feel supported, have a sense of agency, and a sense of belonging to be able to truly learn.

Briefly describe how your target audience benefited from your project's activities.

A total of 10,306 youth ages 5-18 benefitted from 4-H programs provided directly by UMass Extension 4-H staff and UMass Extension 4-H volunteers.

Briefly describe how the broader public benefited from your project's activities.

The Big E at the Eastern States Exposition, which ran from 9/15-10/1/2023 was the one event where members of the MA 4-H community consistently engaged with the public. 108 members of the 4-H community exhibited Dairy Cattle, Beef Cattle, Dairy Goats, Sheep, Dogs, Visual Presentations, and STEM demonstrations to the public throughout the 3 weeks of the Big E.

Comments (optional)

The UMass Extension 4-H Program consists of 4 main parts: UMASS 4-H School and Community Partnerships, UMASS 4-H Community Club Programs, UMass 4-H programs, and UMass 4-H Community Volunteers Programs. UMass 4-H School and Community partnerships reached 8,865 youth, UMass 4-H Community Clubs reached 1,441 youth, UMass 4-H programs planned and led 45 programs which reached 3,500 youth, and 676 UMass Community Volunteers led clubs, short term projects, fairs, national trips and served as chaperones and judges.

UMass 4-H provides monthly volunteer trainings and supports 4-H staff to take part in PYD professional development as well as NAE4-HYDP professional development opportunities. We communicate bi-weekly through email to 1316 subscribers: all of our community partners, volunteers, and families. This includes updates on programs, policies, and PD opportunities.