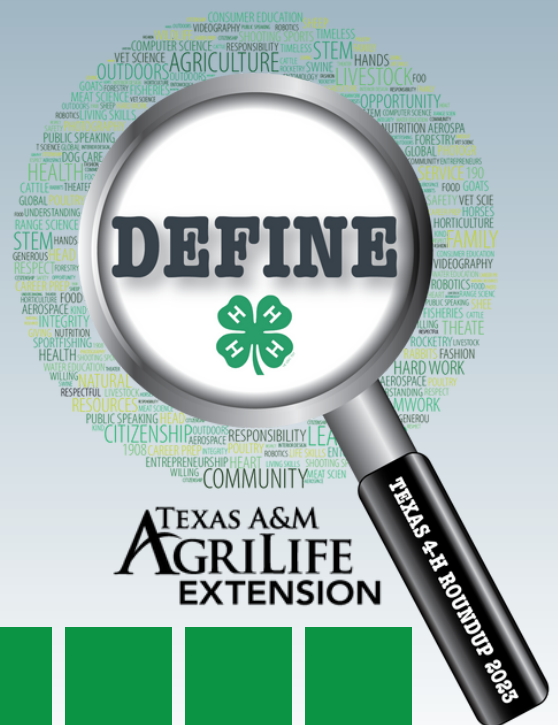


# 2023 SALUTE TO EXCELLENCE *Winners*



START



# Salute to Excellence

**Rodney Robertson**  
**District 1, Gray County**



"Rodney Robertson is an exemplary volunteer for the Gray County 4-H program. For seven years, Rodney has worked tirelessly to build and sustain a successful Shooting Sports Shotgun program. His passion and commitment have resulted in securing \$17,615 for the Gray County Shotgun Program through Phillips 66, NRA Grant, and Fun Shoots. Moreover, he generously works with coaches from surrounding counties to help them build their own programs; his dedication knows no bounds! The leadership skills that Rodney exhibits are truly remarkable and deserve recognition; therefore it is only fitting that he should receive the Salute to Excellence Award as a token of appreciation for all of his hard work!"

**Sandra Mowry**  
**District 1, Randall County**



"Sandra Mowry has been involved in the Randall 4-H program for 6 years. She has served as club manager for Clover Kids, a project leader for Food & Nutrition and Fashion & Interior design, and serves as the Parent Booster President. She is responsible for raising thousands of dollars through donations and fundraising events to help pay for scholarships, project expenses, and national contests. Sandra has a heart for 4-H and is making a huge impact on the youth of Randall County.

**Juli Belt Wood**  
**District 2, Hockley County**



"Inspiring, motivated, and humble are three words used to describe Juli Belt Wood. Juli has been a 14-year volunteer helping others learn from the diverse 4-H programs. She assists her own two children, Kennedy and Carson, but also countless others as a volunteer of the Levelland and Whitharral 4-H Club. She has assisted with Food and Nutrition, Clothing and Textiles, and Veterinary Sciences projects. In addition, she has been an instrumental figure when it comes to helping the youth with community service projects and leading fundraisers for the county. Hockley County 4-H is better every day because of Juli!"

# Salute to Excellence

**Shelley Berry**  
**District 2, Hale County**



"Shelley Berry, of Hale County 4-H, is the epitome of what a "4-H Mom" is. She leads with grace and poise and is always excited to lend a helping hand. Many 4-H members would tell you she is an "extra" 4-H mom and mentor to anyone she meets. When asked what she liked about working with the 4-H program, she said, "I love to see kids learn amazing life skills while having fun and to see the community we have working with each other."

**Kristi Brantley**  
**District 3, Parker County**



"Kristie Brantley has served as a Parker County 4-H Volunteer leader for the past 8 years. Throughout her involvement in the program as a volunteer leader, club manager, and project leader, she has shown tremendous dedication and support to not only the 4-H project work, but the county program as well. Kristie has served as the county-wide Fashion and Interior Design project leader for the past 5 years, and sharing her endless and practical knowledge, which has grown the county program exponentially. She has been an executive member of the Parker County 4-H Parent Leader Association and has been a key component in the planning and implementation of our Parker County 4-H Cash for Clovers Scholarship fundraising event. Needless to say, Kristi Brantley has a passion for the 4-H program and her community."

**Casey and Deidrea Mabry**  
**District 3, Parker County**



"Casey and Deidrea Mabry have served as Parker County 4-H volunteers for the past four years. In this short time they have amplified the Parker County 4-H Meat Science project to the largest it has ever been. When they first reached out after moving back to Texas, they told of their passion for educating youth about meat science and wanting to help in any way they could. They had coached a national winning 4-H team in Wyoming and made a promise to their team that they would not coach another until those members had graduated. Parker County 4-H is lucky to have such dedicated leaders that have such a passion and great knowledge."

# Salute to Excellence

**Emily Holt**  
**District 4, Denton County**



"As an alumni of 4-H, Emily knows all about what it means to make the best better. Emily has been a volunteer with Denton County 4-H for the past six years. She has helped to start and lead a few different projects, including Fashion & Interior Design and Public Speaking. Through her projects and leadership in her local club, Emily has impacted over 500 youth in her short time as a volunteer. Her holistic view of the county 4-H program and realistic expectations set the tone for growth of the county 4-H program. Emily leads by example as the volunteer association president and has created an environment where any and every volunteer is welcomed."

**Bill and Kathrin Esposito**  
**District 4, Collin County**



"Bill and Kathrin Esposito have each served as leaders in Collin County 4-H for over 15 years. Their dedication to youth development and learning is without equal. Bill enjoys cooking and has a passion for sharing his food and nutrition knowledge with those around him. Kathrin enjoys growing leadership and public speaking skills in her 4-H youth, and uses her eye for detail to help keep the Legacy 4-H club in order. The Espositos' zeal for life, love of learning, and compassion for young adults truly make a difference in the lives of their club members. They are growing tomorrow's leaders and Collin County is blessed to have them as volunteers."

**Milton Marshall**  
**District 5, Gregg County**



"Milton Marshall has served as a Gregg County 4-H Volunteer for three and a half years. Milton led his family to the Gregg County 4-H Youth Development Program at the onset of Covid-19. Milton completed the 4-H Club Manager Training and began to recruit other youth and families. While recruiting and building Shamrock's 4-H Club membership, Milton was instrumental in assisting with establishing the Gregg County 4-H Adult Leader's Committee and 4-H Archery program. He became a Certified Shooting Sports Coach for Archery. Milton is an asset and an exceptional leader for our 4-H program. He believes in involving the whole family and makes sure we have youth-adult partnerships at club meetings and county events. Milton is dedicated and leads with patience, kindness, consistency, and selfless service."



# Salute to Excellence

**Brandee Wofford**  
**District 5, Cherokee County**



"'Selfless giver' is the phrase used time and again to describe Mrs. Brandee Wofford. Her consistent service and dedication to 4-H for more than a decade is a marathon achievement that few can claim. Bluebonnet 4-H has had the good fortune to have had her. Brandee takes her mission to grow leaders seriously! She brings out the best in her 4-H members by convincing them to constantly move out of their comfort zones and to develop and refine new skills in order to find their true passions in life. While Brandee spends an inordinate amount of time with Bluebonnet, she is never selfish with her time and talents and gladly guides and mentors youth from all neighboring 4-H clubs when the need arises. Brandee has provided a great service to her community and to the world by developing our true leaders of tomorrow."

**Jennifer Thurman**  
**District 6, Ward County**



"Jennifer resides in Monahans, Texas with her husband Carl & children Faith, Samantha, William and Lainey. She has been serving Ward County 4-H as an Adult Volunteer for over six years. Over the course of her volunteer duration she has served as a Food & Nutrition Project Leader, Senior Club 4-H Club Manager, and Adult Leader Association Treasurer. As she wears so many hats, Jenny has always made it a point to include our 4-H members in those various activities, whether it be at fundraisers or community service adventures within the county.

**Justin Epperson**  
**District 6, Upton County**



"Justin Epperson became a volunteer with Upton County 4-H when his children enrolled. He first started volunteering with the County Livestock Show in 2018 and became a Certified Shooting Sports Coach four years ago. He initially started with the Rifle Shooting Program. By the second year of the program, enrollment doubled within all age groups. It is now the second largest program in the county. Due to the increase in the program, there is now a certified assistant coach to help. Coach Epperson will be taking BB Gun Shooters to the National Competition this year and the Rifle Shooting teams will be competing at the D6 competition. Coach Justin Epperson's dedication and mentorship to this program is acknowledged by all in Upton County 4-H."

# Salute to Excellence

**Billy and Mary Kniffen**  
**District 7, Menard County**



"Billy and Mary Kniffen have been instrumental in the Menard 4-H Program for 20 years. In 2005 Mary and Billy formed the Menard Morning Glories Junior Master Gardener Program with only 5 participants. The Kniffens continued the program themselves for 15 years, growing its membership to 30+ members! This program is now in its 18th year, having won multiple awards including Texas JMG Group of the Year and National JMG Group of the year, JMG Leader of the Year and JMG student of the year. Mary has been instrumental in writing and acquiring grants for Menard JMG group and the Learn Grow Eat Go program. The Kniffens have laid a firm groundwork for the program to thrive in the future and they continue to help with the Learn Grow Eat Go program at the school as well as the upkeep of the Community Garden."

**Junior & Sylvia Carrillo**  
**District 7, Irion County**



"Junior and Sylvia Carrillo have been volunteers with Irion County 4H Shooting Sports for 14 years. They are incredibly kind and patient with new and experienced shooters. They never fail to encourage shooting sports participants and make sure the kids know how proud they are of the work they do. Junior and Sylvia volunteer not for gratitude, glory, or recognition. They do it for the pure and simple joy of empowering 4-H members and watching them grow. They are beloved by the 4-H members and go above and beyond to show they love them right back."

**John Adams**  
**District 8, Leon County**



"John Adams has served as the Leon County 4-H Rifle Project coach for over 26 years. He has not only coached his own sons and now grandsons, but also hundreds of Leon County 4-H members, as well. John's whole family has built and continues to build the Leon County 4-H Rifle project. There are currently around 50 youth that are involved in the rifle project and John's two sons, Clint and Colton, are now coaching alongside their dad. The Leon County 4-H Rifle Project would not be successful without Mr. John and the Adams Family."

# Salute to Excellence

**Caryl Lawrence**  
**District 8, Eastland County**



"The name Caryl Lawrence and "4-H" in Eastland County go hand in hand. Caryl has tirelessly served for 18 years on the Eastland County 4-H Adult Leaders Advisory Board and 12 years as the Rising Star 4-H Club Manager. She currently serves as the County 4-H Council Adult Advisor and has been the Eastland County Livestock Raisers Association Secretary for 12 years. Most importantly, she has raised four very active 4-H members who have been pillars of the Eastland County 4-H program. One 4-H member said, "Mrs. Caryl is the best club manager anyone could ask for! She goes above and beyond to accommodate all members and their schedules. She is kind, loving, caring, and provides unlimited support to all of her 'kids." She is the perfect example of a true leader, and she serves as the ultimate role model. We are blessed to have Mrs. Caryl as our leader."

**Desi & Shane Porter**  
**District 9, Montgomery County**



"As a team, Desi and Shane are the textbook example of dedicated volunteers. During their time fully submerged into 4-H, they have contributed more than many do in their lifetime. Their selflessness has grown numerous programs within the Evening Star club and the entire county. Shane has grown livestock judging throughout the county, providing hours of education and practice available to the entire county. Within the club, they have worked with members to provide any information to grow more programs. Desi has volunteered many hours to the county during the year and fair season, helping the show staff office. They are never too busy to help another member and they are dedicated to impacting the lives of the youth."

**Stacy Schneider**  
**District 9, Brazos County**



"Abraham Lincoln stated "the best way to predict the future is to create it." Clearly this statement was made prior to the development of Texas 4-H, but it is one that reflects what successful 4-H leaders do, and there is not a nominee that embraces this concept more than Stacy Colvin. She has served the youth of Texas for the past 12 years, assisting in countless leadership positions and on numerous volunteer boards. Her peers and Extension Agents describe her as "the gold standard of what a 4-H club manager, project leader, coach and parent should be." She has served in roles from Livestock Skill-A-Thon coach, to club manager for over a decade, to chairman for the Adult Leaders Association that last year alone awarded \$16,000 to 4-H youth in Brazos County. There is no one more deserving of the Texas 4-H Salute to Excellence award than Stacy Colvin."



# Salute to Excellence

**Fred Stehling**  
**District 10, Kendall County**



"Fred Stehling is an outstanding individual who has dedicated not only 33 years of his own life to the Kendall County 4-H program, but has also opened his own property to house the rifle range for those 33 years. Through that time, he has impacted thousands of youth who have gained the rifle disciplines that they still utilize in their everyday lives. Fred has spent many Sunday afternoons building self confidence amongst the youth and educating the youth of Kendall County. His contributions make him a phenomenal piece of the puzzle that makes our program so successful."

**Patty Hoffmann**  
**District 10, Comal County**



"Patty Hoffmann has been a 4-H Volunteer, Club Manager, and Project Leader for over 25 years. Patty started the Bluebonnet 4-H Club in 2004 with about 20 members the first year. The Club has grown over the years to now having over 50 active members with a wide variety of projects. Patty, being a Registered Licensed Dietitian, was very passionate about the Food & Nutrition project including contests like Nutrition Quiz Bowl and especially Food Challenge. Many of her Food Challenge Teams won District and competed at State and National levels over the years. Patty also coached Livestock Judging and Livestock Quiz Bowl teams as well. Additionally, she helped found the Special Hearts Ambassadors who host the Special Hearts Livestock Show in Comal County. It is an event that helps give disabled youth the chance to show an animal for a day."

**Travis Janak**  
**District 11, Aransas County**



"Travis Janak is a remarkable example of an excellent 4-H leader. His steadfastness and dedication are a true support for our county program's growth. He leads by example, modeling important leadership attributes such as reliability—following through on every commitment that he makes; responsibility—taking on leadership of the Archery and Consumer Decision Making projects and county club management; and excellent communication—coordinating with Extension agents and keeping 4-H youth and parents informed. He exemplifies the 4-H club motto by giving his "hands to larger service.""



# Salute to Excellence

**Christy Moran**  
**District 11, Washington County**



"When thinking about the characteristics of Christy Moran and her time while serving as a 4-H volunteer, the main three attributes that come to mind are selfless, hardworking and success-oriented. Christy wants to see all 4-H members succeed and goes above and beyond to make sure that every 4-H member and family has the tools for success. She volunteers with the 4-H program on local, county, and district levels. Christy has organized multiple county level events that continue to grow the 4-H program in Washington County. Her heart for the 4-H program is truly special and deserving of this award."

**Christine DuBose**  
**District 12, Live Oak County**



"Mrs. Christine DuBose has contributed her time, money and efforts to make sure the Texas 4-H program thrives. She does anything to make sure 4-H members and the people around her succeed. She has dedicated her time to volunteering on a county, district and state level. She goes above and beyond to help with programs by getting items donated, showing up early and staying late, and never saying no. Mrs. DuBose is the Longhorn 4-H club manager and the Live Oak County Council Manager. She never expects anything in return, which is why it is an honor to present her with this award."

**Johanna Hagen**  
**District 12, Atascosa County**



"Mrs. Johanna Hagen has been a valuable part of the Atascosa County 4-H and the Texas 4-H program for many years. She started out as a member of Texas 4-H herself and participated in many projects as a youth member. Once she became a mother to 4-H age youth, she returned to the organization as a dedicated volunteer. As a volunteer, she has led the youth of Atascosa County 4-H as a Consumer Decision Making Project Coach, County Council Advisor, Ambassador Advisor, Club Manager, and so much more."

# Citation for Outstanding Service to 4-H

## Texas 4-H Shooting Sports Level 2 Instructors



"The Texas 4-H Shooting Sports Level 2 Instructors are Nationally Certified Volunteer Instructors providing training in Archery, Shotgun, Rifle, Pistol, Muzzleloading, Hunting & Wildlife Skills and Western Heritage to over 1000 local volunteers annually across Texas. There are approximately 35 Instructors statewide and they utilize a consistent, researched based national curriculum emphasizing safety and first shot fundamentals through deliberate and positive learning experiences. Through the commitment of the Level 2 Instructors, the Texas 4-H Shooting Program reaches over 18,000 Texas youth with organized learning experiences, regular practices, and competition at the Club, County, District, State and National levels with a commendable level of success and safety."

## Gillespie County Commissioners Court



"The Gillespie County Commissioners Court has been a loyal supporter of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension programming by investing over 3.8 million dollars into a new facility in 2020. The building houses four County Extension Agents, two county full time secretaries, and a room to host a magnitude of local, district, regional, and state level educational programs. The new Texas A&M AgriLife Extension building has hosted district and regional agent and specialist trainings, district and state 4-H contests, as well as a variety of local 4-H youth activities. The Gillespie County Commissioners Court have supported 4-H youth in a multitude of ways and the investment in this facility will be used for many years to come in continued support of the 4-H program and Extension activities."

## Texas 4-H Roping School



"This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Texas 4-H Calf Roping School. This camp began in 1973 by a group of Agents, Specialists, and a committee of volunteers who saw a group of youth interested in horsemanship projects, beyond what is typically found at a 4-H horse show. This camp has reached approximately 2,430 kids and contributed more than 101,000 volunteer hours to making the best better. The School has changed a bit over the past 50 years, moving locations and surviving changes with Extension, with Texas 4-H, and with personnel at all levels. One thing has remained the same, though; the passion and dedication of the volunteers and committee members who implement the Texas 4-H Roping School to not only the sport but to the 4-H members who participate."

# Commendable Service Award

**Emily Besser**  
**District 9, Brazos County**



"Emily Besser serves a valuable role in managing the Brazos County 4-H program. As Office Manager, she leads all administrative tasks for the county Extension office that serves one of the largest 4-H programs in the state. She does an incredible job of communicating with 4-H families on the requirements and deadlines for a diverse set of 4-H activities. She has established herself as a reliable resource amongst County Extension Agents and fellow support staff. Her hard work is deserving of recognition as she is a true leader within Brazos County 4-H."

**Jofran Edwards**  
**District 8, Leon County**



"Jofran Edwards believes in the mission of the 4-H program! For many families, she is the first level of contact when they call or come into the office to find out how to get involved. Her enthusiasm for the program shines through! She also is a willing volunteer, serving as a club Clover Kid leader, as well as contest judge, both at the county and district levels. At the end of the day, she is one of the biggest cheerleaders in celebrating the success of Leon County 4-H members at all levels of competition and participation."



# Leader Legacy Award

**Lisa Wright**  
**District 2, Hale County**



"Lisa Wright, of Hale County 4-H, has dedicated thousands of hours to 4-H and the kids within it. She would not trade any of the late nights and early mornings, or miles put on pickups, for the world. She truly has made the best better for not only her club, community, country, but her world. The kids all love and respect her. She teaches them and makes it fun! She will do anything that is fun, such as riding a stick horse through the Christmas parade, to riding a real horse to Sonic for a Dr Pepper!"

**Marcella Oden**  
**District 2, Garza County**



"'I'm not a Leader, but a helper,' are words straight out of Marcella Oden's mouth. This is furthest from the truth. She started her volunteer career as a "master volunteer." In 2010, she took over as the Garza County 4-H club leader and in 2016 she kept the Garza County 4-H program alive when the county no longer had any agents. She goes the extra mile to make sure no kids are left out and each and every one feels special when they leave an event. Her love for the kids she serves is phenomenal. Garza county has been blessed with a volunteer almost beyond belief!"

# Meritorious Service

**Joan Gray-Soria**  
**District 1, Carson County**



"Joan has the heart of a servant. She has a willingness to go out of her comfort zone, even for just one 4-H Member, and become certified as an Archery Coach. No one holds a candle to her hours and hours of dedication put into this program. Her passion for supporting and leading 4-H youth and families is extraordinary. She is adamant that kids have fun first, do their best, and learn something new at each 4-H event. Joan's dedication to teach life skills through the 4-H program is a great upheaval to the prevention of these skills becoming a lost art. These are just some of examples of why Joan Gray-Soria is a model candidate and most deserving of the Meritorious Service Award for 2023."

**Luis Saldana**  
**District 12**



"Luis Saldana began his career in December of 1991. In his almost thirty-one years in Extension, he has served in various roles, including County Extension Agent for Agriculture and for Urban Development, Regional Program Director for 4-H, and Extension Program Specialist – 4-H Youth Development for District 12. For almost 23 of his 31 years in Extension, he has been dedicated to the 4-H Youth Development program in the State of Texas. He has made significant contributions to the Texas 4-H Program throughout the years both personally and professionally. His passion for educating young people and volunteers shines in the work he does. He worked hard to create new and innovative ways to conduct events and activities that we have been hosting throughout the years to match our current clientele. Luis is the ultimate team player and jumps in to help his agents and fellow faculty members as needed. He has been committed to helping youth find their passion, helping others become an integral part of their community, and growing youth leaders."

# Texas 4-H Alumni

**Britney Campbell**  
**District 9, Brazoria County**



"Britney Campbell was one of the proudest Texas 4-H Council members in 2003, and since then has been sharing her love of the 4-H program with members near and far. 4-H taught Britney to be a leader. As a 4-H member, she was awarded both the "Danforth I Dare You" award as well as the "Gold Star" award. Her leadership skills continued to grow as she transitioned from a member to an adult volunteer. She has always remembered the impact 4-H has had on her life and she has been eager to give back. Britney has volunteered as a project leader within our county for over 10 years and she has served as the Alvin 4-H club manager for the past nine years."

**Carlos David Alvarado**  
**District 8, Coryell County**

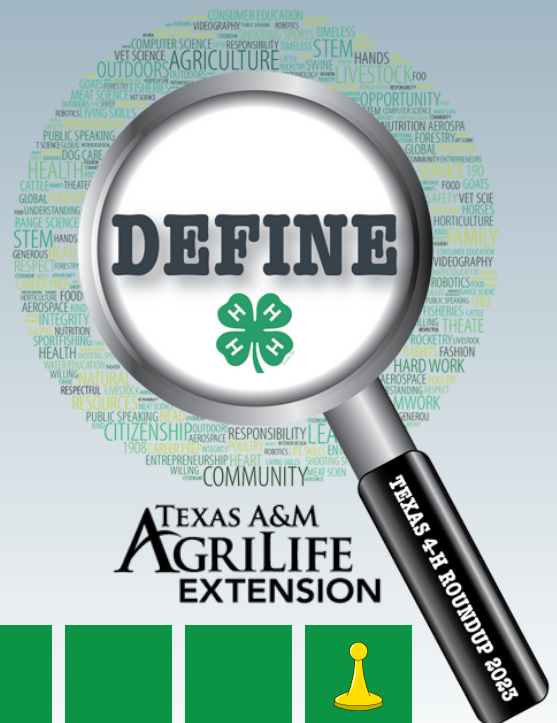


"David Alvarado took to heart everything our 4-H program teaches when it comes to service. You won't find him center stage; he is always working behind the scenes to make sure everything is running smoothly whether it is the sound system, the livestock scales, the electricity in the show barn, or the pipes in the wash rack. David can fix anything, and he uses his time and talents to serve in our community, not just as a 4-H leader, but also as a longtime volunteer firefighter and ten-year deacon of Eastwood Baptist Church. David has a servant's heart that has helped thousands of people in Coryell County."



YOU MAKE THE BEST BETTER.

thank you.



START

