

2023-2024

Texas

4-H

Youth

Development

ANNUAL REPORT





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Texas 4-H Youth  
Development Program



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# *A Word from the Program Director*

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Service. Respect. Determination. Empowerment. These words describe what 4-H members can walk away with after making the most of their opportunities in 4-H. As the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program Director, I am bestowed the honor of seeing firsthand those qualities in our members, volunteers, and employees. In 2023-2024, new opportunities were developed, new achievements were reached, and new memories were made. However, not all things were ‘new.’ What has allowed 4-H to continue to thrive for more than 115 years are the foundational values that were laid in 1908: service, respect, determination, empowerment, and so many more. As we do create new opportunities to meet the demands of our growing world, we hold true to the values 4-H was founded upon in the early days of the corn and tomato clubs.

In 2023, Texas began our journey with Quilts of Valor, an opportunity to honor our veterans through quilting. Also in 2023, Texas saw one of our own members become a cooking champion on national television. In 2024, Texas hosted the 4-H Family and Consumer Sciences Championship and Conference in San Antonio, bringing 4-H members from across the nation to the Lone Star State. The Norman Borlaug Youth in Agriculture Program continues to connect the dots between urban and rural youth to solve the “wicked problems” in agriculture, food, and water. The eight state ambassador programs and Texas 4-H Council continue to provide education and an opportunity for our youth to serve. Our volunteers give selflessly year in and year out and we are proud to honor a select few of those volunteers through our Salute to Excellence awards each year. Through our partnership with the Texas 4-H Foundation, more than \$2.7 million in scholarships were awarded to more than 230 seniors.

Putting into words the achievements and work of this past 4-H year brings light to the success of the program and makes me proud of the work we have done in Texas 4-H. I would like to invite you to read further into these topics and others throughout this annual report as you get a closer look into what our young leaders are doing in Texas. Thank you for your continued support of our program and walking alongside our efforts to “Make the Best Better!”



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# TEXAS 4-H MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2023-2024

**450,692**  
YOUTH PARTICIPATION

## GENDER

Female	45%
Male	43%
Not Provided	12%

## GRADE

K-2	40%	3-5	44%
6-8	13%	9-12	9%

## VOLUNTEERS

35,928

## 4-H MEMBERS

50,855


## RACE

White	75%
African American	14%
Other	9%

## ETHNICITY

Hispanic	47%
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## RESIDENCE

Farm/Rural		4%
Town <10,000		25%
Town 10-50,000		24%
City >50,000		10%
Central City		29%
Not Provided		8%

## PROGRAM

  
**297,017**  
AGRICULTURE  
& LIVESTOCK

  
**120,051**  
FAMILY &  
COMMUNITY HEALTH

  
**35,221**  
LEADERSHIP &  
CITIZENSHIP

  
**64,328**  
NATURAL  
RESOURCES

  
**21,863**  
STEM

\*The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.\*



# GRIT & GRAVY

“If I could tell Rae anything, I’d tell her that I’m proud of her and that I see the hard work she’s done and the time she’s put into everything. I couldn’t be more proud of her as a father,” Rae’s Dad said. “And that I know sometimes it seems like it gets hard, but it’s all worth it in the end. Keep pushing. Keep going at it.”

# Raelynn Barker

first grabbed an apron when she was a young four-years-old. Fast forward eight years and that small-town Texas girl is nationally famous for bringing home the 2023 championship in Master Chef Jr.

Master Chef Jr, featured on Food Network, welcomed nine young chefs to Los Angeles to display their best skills in the kitchen in 2022 during “Master Chef Junior – Home for the Holidays.” Raelynn “Rae” Barker of Live Oak County 4-H was selected among the “best of the best” for what she called a “once in a lifetime opportunity.”

“I’d never even thought about going to Master Chef and it’s still mind-blowing today,” Rae said. “It still feels so surreal.”

However, Rae’s culinary success did not begin with her television debut. Rae’s first love of food was found where not many other “little girls” were... outside, with a wood-fire pit smoker and exquisite cuts of meat.

“I didn’t have any ties in the beginning to barbeque or anything,” Rae said. “But once I went to my first cookoff, I loved it. So, I immediately asked - when’s the next one?”

Rae’s first barbeque competition was at the San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo, and since then, with the close help of her parents, she has competed in around 100 cookoffs, winning or placing high in many of them.

“My family and I, we kind of all did it together,” Rae said. “We were all learning together, so we just went on YouTube and learned the basics and progressed from there.”



As a three-year participant in 4-H, Rae said that the skills she’s learned in raising and showing livestock and participating and competing in Food Show and Food Challenge, help her not only in her cooking competitions, but in life overall, as she moves closer to her career goals.

“4-H has helped me prepare for a lot of things like performing under pressure, staying consistent, and a lot of things that I’ll be using in my life,” Rae said. “In the future, I want to have multiple restaurants. I want to have a couple here in Texas and then I hope to have one in New York.”



One of Rae's priorities on Master Chef Jr was giving the world a taste of South Texas. Rae's southern charm and unique food choices immediately drew in the judges. So much so that Gordon Ramsay asked her Dad if his long beard was real, and even invited himself to come hunt with the Barker family on their Live Oak County property.



"She wanted to take and represent herself, her background, and her community on a national stage. It showed in her traits and personalities but also in her dishes," Rae's Dad, Mr. Barker, said. "With the fried venison, I mean that's our Christmas dish right there. That's south Texas in a dish. It kind of caught them off guard, but that's what she wanted to do. She wanted to take South Texas and show them what it was about.

In the finale episode of Master Chef Jr, for Rae's final dish she prepared fried venison with biscuits and gravy, a cranberry reduction, and green beans. Rae mentioned that she was shocked Gordon Ramsey had never even heard of fried venison tenders, telling her that she had created "the new thing" to secure the limited-edition snow globe trophy.

"Getting to be there and getting to meet and cook with other kids- that was amazing. We made lifelong friends from that," Rae said. "We were in the car about to head back home, and I was crying and said "Mom, Dad, I don't want to leave yet because I don't want to go home, and this be all a dream. To me, it felt like it was too good to be true."

Rae plans to continue her journey in the competitive barbeque world, alongside her participation in various 4-H activities. However, she will remain true to the reason she started her culinary journey in the first place – she is just a kid who enjoys it.

"It's fun because of all the different food and all the different cooking styles like grilling, smoking, live fire, indoor kitchen, and baking. All of it is fun for me because I'm basically doing chemistry and cooking and I get to eat it, so it's fun for me that way," Rae said. "It's something that I love to do and that makes me just enjoy everything. This has a lot of creativity, and I say the plate is a canvas and your food is what you're painting on it."



While Rae's story of achievement is impressive, her real journey lies in the work she put in, the dedication she has shown, and the commitment to her trade - all life skills gained through 4-H programming.

"So, I want to say to other kids – If you want to cook, or start a career in cooking, or gymnastics or anything, if it's something you really want to do, keep going," Rae said. "Push through even if you get cuts and scrapes and burns because in the long run, if it's something you want to do and you work hard and do it right, you're going to get there and it's going to happen. If you really, really work for it, it's going to be amazing, and it will help you in the long run."

**Photos:**

- 1 Rae showing her steer at the county show.
- 2 Rae and her food challenge team.
- 3 Rae and her prizes from Master Chef Jr.
- 4 Rae and her lamb at the county fair.
- 5 Rae and her family after winning Master Chef Jr.
- 6 Rae at one of her first cook offs.
- 7 Rae being coached at a cook off.
- 8 Rae's winning dish in the final round of Master Chef Jr.
- 9 Rae getting to pie Gordon Ramsay at Master Chef Jr.



# Serve and Support as a 4-H ALUMNI

The Texas 4-H Foundation is proud to continue the Texas 4-H Clover Club bringing together all Friends and Alumni in support of Texas 4-H Youth and Programs. Scan the QR code to learn more or join Clover Club today! Save the date for the 2025 **Clover Club Gala** to be held in College Station on June 5, 2025.



## *Why give back?*

“I continue to support 4-H as it's truly the best youth development program available. Volunteers coming together to help children of varied backgrounds and ages learn life skills that will set them apart from their peers throughout high school, college and beyond is well worth being part of.

I personally thrived from my time in 4-H and have witnessed firsthand the positive effects being an active member has had on my kids as well. Gaining responsibility while learning budgeting and financial planning through 4-H livestock projects is one of the biggest advantages of the livestock program that prepares kids for real life.



Food Challenge and Duds to Dazzle were not available when I was in 4-H, but I continuously recommend them to families that are not familiar with 4-H as the project starts in the home and gives youth the opportunity to influence their families while they learn. These projects in addition to Consumer Decision Making are valuable beyond measure and help solidify kids' ability to defend their reason for making a specific dish, upcycling a particular item or selecting the best option based on the information provided.

The growth and development of youth active in the 4-H program are steppingstones for their future and 4-Hers are more likely to get involved and volunteer on boards and committees as young adults and adults in their local communities thanks to the time and service they witnessed as youth. 4-H also provides lifelong friendships because youth are around people with similar values, interests and activities to learn alongside. Often these friends are ones that have been competitors and cheerleaders for each other throughout their lives.

It's an honor to support the 4-H program both financially and as a volunteer!”

*- Suzanne S Sexton*

# TEXAS 4-H UNDER OUR WINGS: QUILTS OF VALOR



**T**exas 4-H Under Our Wings: Quilts of Valor Program combines civic engagement, community service, and new opportunities for 4-H youth across the state. In this meaningful and impactful project, youth and accompanying volunteers craft quilts for veterans and present the quilts to the veterans in a meaningful ceremony of recognition.

In Texas, 77 total quilts were crafted and awarded to veterans through the 4-H program. Kaufman, Parmer, Lamb, Wood, Rusk, and Nacogdoches Counties are at the top of the leaderboard for quilts crafted.

According to the Texas 4-H website, A Quilt of Valor® (QOV) is a quality, handmade quilt that is machine or hand quilted. It is awarded to a Service Member or Veteran who has been touched by war. The Quilt says unequivocally, “Thank you for your service and sacrifice in serving our nation.” To use the term Quilt of Valor, Quilts of Valor or QOV, the quilt must be a specific size, must have a label with required information, it must be awarded (it is not a gift) and it must be recorded. Texas 4-H members make “blocks” for the quilt either on their own, or in groups, often with the assistance of a local seamstress or experienced quilter.

Kathy Lastroh, Lamb County Family and Community Health Extension Agent and Ashley Fuller, Wood County 4-H volunteer provided some insight for the program in their areas. Lastroh’s answers are noted as “answer A” and Fuller’s answers are noted as “answer B.”

***Are there key players in your county crafting these quilts?***

*A.* We really had four youth who made our quilts with a couple of adults stepping in to help as needed. One of our senior-level members who had experience sewing worked with her grandmother to learn to make the quilt top. She then shared that knowledge with the three other young ladies who made the quilts. After sharing about the project with one of our community clubs, their members decided to also participate, and each made a couple of quilt blocks. They also came to one of the other workdays we had scheduled and helped with cutting, sewing, and laying out the quilt blocks before putting them together for the top.

*B.* We had three young ladies who crafted quilts this past (2023-2024) year. The youngest of the three (Emma Schutler) quilted one to be gifted to her uncle. The other two young ladies (my daughters- Austyn and Kynlee Fuller) quilted FIVE quilts. They also worked with our local Home Owners Association and created an event that was held at our community Fourth of July celebration over the summer. We had tremendous help from Quilts of Valor Foundation Leader Suzanne DiCarlo, who was paramount in helping our project move forward and we are so thankful for her help. Not only did she help guide my girls with their projects, but she also long armed all five quilts in time for our event.

***How did you get started in the Quilts of Valor program?***

*A.* I originally learned about the project at the TAE4-HYDP conference last summer. After that, another agent asked if our county would be participating. I had never pieced a quilt, so I worked with our member and her grandmother to learn the process.

*B.* I saw a flier on Facebook for the Official kick-off of the QOV program in Conroe, Texas, in September 2023. We couldn't attend, but after interest from myself and another 4-H mom, we were able to get our agent to look more into what we could do as a county with this project. Thankfully, we were able to move forward, and our agent even scheduled and planned a QOV event in our area at a local fabric shop and other counties in our district were invited to attend as well.



***What has been the most rewarding part of this experience?***

*A.* By far, the best part of the project has been seeing the impact on the veterans who received the quilts. The first was given at a school assembly to a community member who was known by all the students and community members. He was unaware that he was coming to the school for that purpose (the youth had worked with his family to arrange the presentation). The gratitude and pride he showed was such a blessing for all of those in attendance. The original member who taught the others made a quilt to give to her grandfather. He was humbled and so excited to receive the quilt not only because it was made for him because he was a veteran but because she made it.

*B.* Responses from various participants in Wood County:  
Austyn- "The reactions from the veterans when receiving the honorable gifts."

Kynlee- "The entirety of the project from start to finish. Seeing the quilts come together, organizing the event, and then being able to honor our veterans and seeing their reactions."

Ashley- "As a mother, the most rewarding part of this project was watching my girls work to create something that would be very impactful to the recipients; that while they were having fun and learning new skills, they were also participating in a project that in the end would create some of the most memorable moments for those who'd be receiving these quilts, that they thought long and hard about the importance of quality in their work because they would be giving these to someone else and they wanted them to last, and be the family heirloom they've heard others talk about and know they had a part in that history. Also, watching them perform the ceremony and step out of their comfort zone, because neither has had much experience in front of a crowd, but they did splendidly."



*Please share any cool stories about the veterans who have received your quilts.*

*B.* We had so many wonderful veterans for this first event. Our first veteran was a WWII gentleman who was beyond grateful to have received such a thing. He had been honored before for the amazing things he did, but his one request was that when telling his story, we call him a "survivor" because that's what he was. He participated in some of the most crucial battles of the war that are still talked about to this day. Our second veteran was a Coast Guard member and dear friend. He was honored not only for his service to our country, but to also highlight the importance of an often overlooked branch in our military. Our third and fourth veterans were both Vietnam veterans who held some of the most intense positions in their branches, one was tasked to locate buried bombs in Vietnam. But more important than anything, neither of these men had ever received any recognition for their time in service in such a horrific war. This was the first time either one had been honored or recognized in any way for their sacrifice and not only were those of us in the crowd emotional, but both men were as well. Their families couldn't stop telling our girls how thankful they were to have a younger generation thanking them and honoring them in such a way that they never could have imagined.

Our last veteran was their own dad. He served two tours in Iraq, was an infantryman in the Army, and is a disabled veteran. When talking with Suzanne, she said that with a project like this you have to find your "why", their dad is their reason why. It was such an honor to have him not only receive one of these quilts, but being Dad, he also got to watch his daughters from start to finish in the process of making each and every one. It was a truly memorable moment for our entire family.

*How have you seen the youth react to this project?*

*A.* The youth who participated in the project were very excited to learn a new skill while also serving others and supporting local veterans. They have plans to continue building on the project and gifting more quilts this coming year.

*B.* From my personal perspectives, because most of the project was done at home and we did not have a group participating, I can only speak for how I saw my daughters react to this project. But, both girls were very in-tune to the process and the importance of what these quilts would mean to our veterans. They really did put their heart and soul into making them and remembered their "why" the entire time. While their dad is a veteran, they also have two uncles that are veterans; it's what they've grown up with; it's a big part of who they are. So, for them to see this as an opportunity to honor men like their dad and uncles, and to be able to give back to them was very special. Also, not only did they make the quilts, but they helped organize an entire event for these men, with assistance from myself and their grandmother as needed. From making the quilts, to working with Suzanne to make sure things were getting done, to communicating with our local HOA general manager, who also happens to be a veteran, creating a time and place to hold the event in conjunction with our local community golf cart parade, to scheduling times and getting the local Kiwani's club to help make announcements. This was a labor of love and I'm beyond proud of them. Since then, they have already started a set of quilts for this year. They have another goal of five, maybe six quilts. We've been approached by a few residents in our community who have asked if they could be on our list for their spouse to receive a quilt. They have helped promote this program and have even another NEW young lady who just joined 4-H this year participating in sewing a quilt. It is their goal to continue this program and encourage others for the remaining years that we are members of 4-H. It has also encouraged my younger daughter who is 13 to potentially apply for the Fashion and Design Ambassadorship so she can help promote this project and others to those around us. Simply put, they have done more than I ever thought possible and am so very proud of them for their hard work and understanding the important work they have done.

To learn more about the program, contact the 4-H lead, Angela McCorkle.

**Photos:**

- 1 Quilt awarded to Jill Markley at Texas 4-H Roundup.
- 2 Quilt awarded in Nacogdoches County.
- 3 Quilt awarded in Parmer/Lamb County.
- 4 Quilt awarded to Dr. Ray Brooks in Rusk County.
- 5 Quilt awarded to James Couch in Kaufman County.



# data driven results

## RECENT TEXAS 4-H PUBLICATIONS

Data provides a tangible way to display the impact 4-H can make. Texas 4-H believes in the methods of data collection and reporting. Within the last five years, publications to come out of the Texas 4-H program include...

S. Sprayberry, X. Li, W. Zanolini, D. Goebel, and J. Wang (2024). **Growing Together with Wheat: Evaluation of the Norman Borlaug Youth in Agriculture Program.** American Association of Agricultural Education Southern Region Conference. Distinguished Manuscript 2024 American Association of Agricultural Education Southern Region Conference.

Gary Ellis, Alexandra Skrocki, Dottie Goebel, Kaylee Janes, Darlene Locke, Emily Catalan & William Zanolini (2024). **Youth development travel programs: Facilitating engagement, deep experience, and “sparks” through self-relevance and stories,** Journal of Leisure Research, DOI: 10.1080/00222216.2023.229585.

S. Sprayberry, X. Li, W. Zanolini, D. Goebel, and J. Wang (2024). **Cultivating Cohesion: Nurturing Knowledge and Collaboration in the Norman Borlaug Youth in Agriculture Program.** Journal of Agricultural Education.

X. Li, S. Kaur, L. Kandi, A. Prasetyo, W. Zanolini, D. Goebel, K.E. Dooley, J. Wang (2024). **Influences of an Agriculture Program on Rural-Urban Relationships and Agricultural Literacy Among Youth: A Mixed Methods Study.** Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education.

Goebel, D., Briers, G., Zanolini, W.F., Ahn, J., Cummings, S., Ripley, J. (2023). **Educational and Life Skill Development and Intrinsic and Extrinsic Returns of Texas 4-H and FFA Livestock Show Projects: Perceptions of County Extension Agents, Agricultural Science Teachers, and Livestock Exhibitors.** AAAE National Conference, Raleigh, NC.

Allison G. Drabek A., Xin Li B., Barbara Bolick B., Darlene H. Locke A., Julie G. Gardner A., Gary E. Briers B., Jun Wang: **Youth leadership development in the 4-H Foods and Nutrition program.**

Skrocki, A., Ellis, G., Etekal, A., & Locke, D. (2024). **Youth Sparks via 4-H: Relations with Program Quality, Dosage, and Involvement.** Journal of Human Sciences and Extension, 12(1), 2.

Wang, J., Drabek, A. G., Li, X., Locke, D. H., & Gardner, J. G. (2023). **Assessing Foods and Nutrition Competencies in Youth.** Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, 55(5), 354-362.

Skrocki, A., Locke, D., Ellis, G., & Williams, M. (2023). **Academic Performance of Texas 4-H Alumni.** Journal of Human Sciences and Extension, 11(2), 14.

Ellis, G., Jorgensen, K., Jiang, J., & Locke, D. (2023). **Evaluating Participant Experience Journeys: Peak-End Moments, Global Summaries, Dispersion, and Pattern.** Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, 41(2).

Ellis, G. D., Jiang, J., Locke, D., Freeman, P. A., & Jorgensen, K. (2022). **Experience journey map: A new experience design tool for structuring youth activities.** Journal of Youth Development, 17(1), 158-174.

Ellis, G. D., Locke, D., Jorgensen, K., Jiang, J., & Williams, M. (2022). **Enriching Intentional Youth Program Experiences Through Preflection, Action, and Reflection.** Journal of Youth Development, 17(1), 83-101.

Ellis, G., Jiang, J., Locke, D., & Snider, C. (2021). **Youth program activity impacts: A model of camp activities, psychological needs, and immersion.** Children and Youth Services Review, 121, 105842.

Ellis, G. D., Lacanienta, A., Zanolini, W. F., Locke, D., & Jiang, J. (2020). **Mindful Learning Experiences Through Structured Reflections During a Youth Travel-Abroad Program.** Journal of Youth Development, 15(5), 172-185.

Merten, K., Locke, D., Williams, M., Carter, M., & Lehman, K. (2014). **Impact of 4-H on alumni's community involvement.** The Journal of Extension, 52(5), 4.



## THE TEXAS 4-H CHAMPION SCHOOL PROGRAM...

is a partnership between local schools and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service’s 4-H Youth Development Program. This partnership is designed to improve the lives of young Texans and their families with experiential learning in a school setting. The goal of the Texas 4-H Champion School Program goes beyond the classroom through development of school-based 4-H clubs where life skills such as responsibility, public speaking, career investigation, and healthy habits are developed.

Ware East Texas Montessori Academy began their journey as a Texas 4-H Champion School in October 2019 and continues to utilize 4-H programming on their journey to help students soar.

“Ms. Arvitta Scott introduced me to the 4-H program,” Mrs. Faith Greer, Head of School at Ware East Texas Montessori Academy said. “She presented at the Principal’s meeting, and I was very impressed with its many programs and the positive impact it could have on my learning community.”

According to their website, Ware East Texas Montessori Academy aims to provide a setting of life-long learning and opportunities to grow physically and culturally, aligning directly with the goal of the 4-H program to teach life skills and create opportunity for all.

“Committing to the 4-H program was a priority for our campus,” Greer said. “Ensuring we met regularly and gained feedback from all stakeholders allowed us to become a Champion School.”

Schools may learn about the Champion School program through AgriLife Extension personnel in their county, or from other school leadership teams. If a school does find interest in bringing the program to their establishment, their first point of contact should be their local County Extension Agent.

“We have an excellent relationship with our County Extension Agents,” Greer said. “They are a part of our learning community. We look forward to working with them year to year.”

While the agent gets the program started for the community, it is then up to school leadership to take the curriculum provided by the 4-H program and build it into their educational programming.

“I am the building principal, and I work with the agents to schedule our students and create the program schedule for students to engage in the learning,” Greer said.

While Principal Greer oversees the program schedule, in most schools, teachers and parents are relied on for the educational component. At Trivium Academy in Carrollton, Texas, Melissa Ramirez has served in both the teacher and parent role for the Trivium 4-H Club.

“Up until this school year [2024-25], I was a lead parent volunteer for the program and now I am a 7th grade science teacher at the school,” Ramirez said.

As a parent, Ramirez led the gardening project, co- led the poultry project, and assisted with the food show, food challenge, and quiz bowl teams. Four of her children have participated in the program, with involvement in the gardening and poultry projects, and food and nutrition projects, competing in food show, food challenge, and quiz bowl.

“From a parent perspective, it’s been amazing. The 4-H program has completely aligned with the Trivium founding charter of exploring your passions, improving oracy, and trying new things,” Ramirez said. “It’s been an amazing chance for my kids to get involved in things that they might not have been otherwise able to at their age like doing a version of Kids “Chopped” in Food Challenge, which helped them become a better team. The food show has really allowed them to take ownership and practice their oracy by presenting gathered or learned information in front of an unbiased audience in a timed manner, professionally.”

At Trivium Academy, the 4-H projects are offered as extracurricular activities, rather than part of the school day, which some Champion Schools employ. At Trivium, the youth meet after school or on weekends and have opportunity to gather in their teams or groups during the day on their own time as part of lunch or study hall.

“It is worth the time put in,” Ramirez said. “It has also allowed my kids to build relationships with students they might not have otherwise had exposure to because of grade level differences and has allowed them to become leaders. Taking lead of a process or a group or even teaching younger children and mentoring them.”

Teachers are a critical part of the Champion School program success, even if they are not the ones providing instruction on the different project areas. Ramirez mentioned she will now be able to sponsor kids in the program and provide her classroom for team meetings and practices. Teachers who want to provide that opportunity at their school, should start the conversation with their school principal.

“I think success is defined as trying something new, learning from your mistakes, and applying that knowledge and making it better,” Ramirez said. “I have seen two students in both the food challenge, as well as the public speaking program that we had the past two years go from being incredibly shy and reserved and unable to speak in front of people, to being able to effectively communicate, in front of strangers, information that they want to convey in a professional manner without a lot of “ums” and “fillers.”



While the school leadership and county Extension agent are the individuals who should start the conversation of setting up a Champion School, parent involvement has been found to be pertinent to the success of a program.

“It’s been very well received in both the elementary and middle school because we’ve had high parent involvement and parents who are willing to lead,” Ramirez said.

However, it is important to note that while there are guidelines for Champion Schools, no two programs will look the same and no two sets of participants will engage in the same way.

“There are some families who sign up and kind of dabble their toes. They are not highly active, but they are there. I think we have 65-70 total kids per year and of those, 40-50 are highly active,” Ramirez said. “But the kids who get involved in it – they enjoy it and it’s something that they can personally direct. Trivium has kids take ownership of their learning rather than parents being so highly involved and hovering. 4-H allows them to direct those interests and gives a way to express those interests so it fits perfectly.”

To learn more about the 4-H Champion School program, contact Texas 4-H Curriculum Specialist, Alex Kabli at alex.kabli@ag.tamu.edu or visit [texas4-h.tamu.edu/resources/](http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/resources/).

**Photos:**

- 1 Ware Elementary Champion School group photo with 4-H members and banner.
- 2 Trivium Academy Quiz Bowl practice.
- 3 Trivium Academy Food Challenge practice.
- 4 Ware Elementary educational day about rabbit project.

# TEXAS 4-H 2023



Travis Barrett  
Leon County | District 8  
President



Trapper Feuerbacher  
Victoria County | District 11  
1st Vice President



Audri Poage  
At Large Delegate  
2nd Vice President



Justin Hill  
Moore County  
District 1



Brindle Harper  
Lamb County  
District 2



CW Johnson  
Swisher County  
District 2



Burklie Manney  
Hardeman County  
District 3



Olivia Clifton  
Rusk County  
District 5



Brylon Frerich  
Glasscock County  
District 6



Levi Easterling  
Glasscock County  
District 6



McKenzie Evans  
Burnet County  
District 7



Brylie Roeder  
Gillespie County  
District 10



Wesley Bocanegra  
Travis County  
District 10



Naomi Macmanus  
Cameron County  
District 12



Gabriella Rodriguez  
Willacy County  
District 12



# COUNCIL

2024



Riley Wallis  
At Large Delegate  
Secretary



Kade Lawrence  
Randall County | District 1  
Public Relations Officer



Cooper Mau  
Fayette County | District 11  
Health & Safety Officer



Brodie Childs  
Wise County  
District 3



Anna Magnuson  
Collin County  
District 4



Camryn Craddock  
Grayson County  
District 4



Dylan Lynch  
Jasper County  
District 5



Jake Pfeuffer  
Tom Green County  
District 7



Cayleigh Coursey  
Coryell County  
District 8



Riley Stokes  
Brazos County  
District 9



Emme Dallmeyer  
Lee County  
District 9



Dylan Wunderlich  
At Large Delegate



Aiden Hunter  
At Large Delegate



Madison Chaloupka  
At Large Delegate



Emi Schooler  
At Large Delegate

# TEXAS 4-H COUNCIL



The Texas 4-H Council is a team of 4-H members elected by their peers from across the state of Texas. Serving as ambassadors for the Texas 4-H Program, members represent the organization statewide while collaborating with Extension faculty to plan, coordinate, and facilitate activities and events. Council members are expected to be engaged in regularly scheduled business and planning meetings, serve as positive role models for other 4-H members, uphold the high ideals, values and standards of the Texas 4-H Program, work with Extension faculty in planning and conducting District and State events and activities, seek opportunities to expand and diversify audiences and programs of the Texas 4-H Youth Development Program, be committed to the Council and work to fulfill the selected goals and responsibilities, and be dedicated to personal development while having fun and respecting the differences in others.

Of the 2023-2024 team, 97% had fun, 93% made new friends, and 91% would encourage a friend to participate in the future. Various members said...

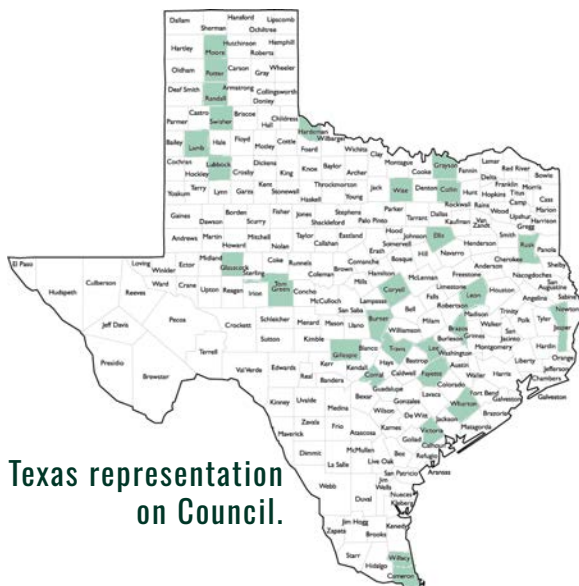
- “Texas 4-H Council is an excellent opportunity to leave an impact on members in the program while recruiting new members to 4-H.”
- “Serving on Council allows you to grow your leadership capabilities, which will help you develop skills and build your network with others.
- “The Texas 4-H Council is a group like no other and it is where I have found some of my closest friends, made unforgettable memories, and became a role model for the entire state program.”
- “The friends and memories I made in a year are going to stay with me my entire life!”
- “I learned so much in the short amount of time on council about leadership, serving others, communicating, and so many other skills that will be beneficial to me in the future.”
- “I feel like this prepared me for the real world when having to work with others in future jobs.”

*“It changed my life for the better as I now have a group of friends across the state that I can always count on. I developed skills that I truly otherwise would not have, and I got to be a part of something that was meaningful.”*

*- Audri Poage, Council 2023-24*



**Audri is currently serving as the Freshman Body Class President at Texas A&M University.**



# TEXAS 4-H CONGRESS

gives up-close look at state's legislative process

In July 2024, Texas 4-H hosted Texas 4-H Congress in Austin. Texas 4-H Congress is a four-day mock legislative event for senior level 4-H members. In 2024, 255 youth and 39 adults attended the event held in The Downright Austin Hotel and the Texas Capitol. Thirty of those youth served on the leadership team.



**E**very two years, during the Texas 4-H Congress, senior Texas 4-H members travel to Austin, engage/learn from politicians and learn firsthand how the Texas Legislature works.

Texas 4-H Congress is a four-day mock legislative experience held inside the Texas Capitol led by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service/ Texas 4-H Program. Typically, about 250 Texas 4-H members in grades 9-12 participate in the event, assuming the roles of legislators, lobbyists and members of the media to better understand the state legislative process.

The event also provides hands-on experience with bill writing and helps the 4-H'ers develop their leadership, parliamentary procedure, public speaking, and debate skills. They also learn the importance of working together and respecting different opinions.

“This is a unique opportunity for 4-H members from throughout the state to put what they have learned about civics and leadership to practical use,” said Montza Williams, Ed.D., AgriLife Extension’s state 4-H Program Director. “Delegates are asked to write a youth-oriented bill and to take on the role of key figures involved in the various aspects of that bill. It is an exercise in civic engagement they will remember for the rest of their lives.”



All Texas 4-H Congress participants are required to submit a bill, but any 4-H member may submit a bill for consideration and debate. The bills written and sponsored by 4-H members focus on issues concerning Texas and Texas youth.

“Writing and submitting a bill provides each 4-H member the opportunity to participate in an interesting and educational exercise in how legislation is introduced, debated and brought to a vote,” said Megan Logan, 4-H Youth Development Program Specialist,

Bryan-College Station.

Participants then act as members of the following committees:

Agriculture and Livestock;  
Education;  
Energy and Environment;  
Government, Finance and Appropriations;  
Homeland Security and Public Safety;  
Judiciary and Juvenile Justice;  
Public Health and Welfare.



In the mock session, bills are assigned to the appropriate committee, debated in committee meetings, and, if passed, then further debated on the floor of the House or Senate.

**Of 264 bills submitted by youth, eight were passed and signed by the 4-H Governor, to be placed on the Texas Governor’s desk. Those include: Grades 6-12 Human Trafficking Education Act; Minor Gender Determinations Act; State-Owned Firefighting Fleet & Supporting Infrastructure Act; State Elected Official Term Limits Act; Secure Borders and Immigration Reform; Standards of Excellence in Labeling Dairy Substitutes; Youth Livestock Show Tax Protections; Restaurant Truth in Labeling of Seafood.**



“If a bill is successful in negotiation and the legislative debate in all three stages, it is delivered to the governor of Texas 4-H Congress for a signature or veto,” Logan said. “We also provide copies of all the bills signed into law during the event to the Office of the Governor for review.”

During Texas 4-H Congress, participants represent the legislators, communicators and influencers who provide input toward the passage of bills and development of political policy.



The opportunity to serve in one of the leadership roles is generally open to Texas 4-H members who have or are currently serving on the Texas 4-H Council or District Council or as ambassadors of various Texas 4-H programs, Logan said.

The Youth Leadership Team members serve in various legislative roles, including but not limited to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House and floor leaders.

The Press Corps prepares a daily news report and works jointly with Texas 4-H STEM Ambassadors to

obtain information, photographs and updates and post them to the Texas 4-H Congress website in a timely manner.

Lobbyists select specific bills and lobby for their passage or failure. By explaining the positives and negatives during the lobbyists’ reception event and through individual conversations, lobbyists try to persuade members to vote in a certain way.

“Texas 4-H Congress truly makes a lasting and often life-changing impact on the youth who attend,” Logan said. “We have heard from several members over the years who had a very different trajectory planned for their career but then switched to some aspect of politics after participating. The youth who participate leave the event with a fire under them to make change for their community and the knowledge of how to do that.”

*Author: Paul Schattenberg, Texas A&M AgriLife Marketing and Communications*

**Photos:**

- 1 Gavel on a bill book.
- 2 Committee chair, Travis Barrett, and committee secretary.
- 3 Leadership team in front of the Capitol.
- 4 Governor Dylan Wunderlich presiding over the legislators.
- 5 House committee meeting.
- 6 Participants dressed up for the theme night banquet - Great Gatsby.

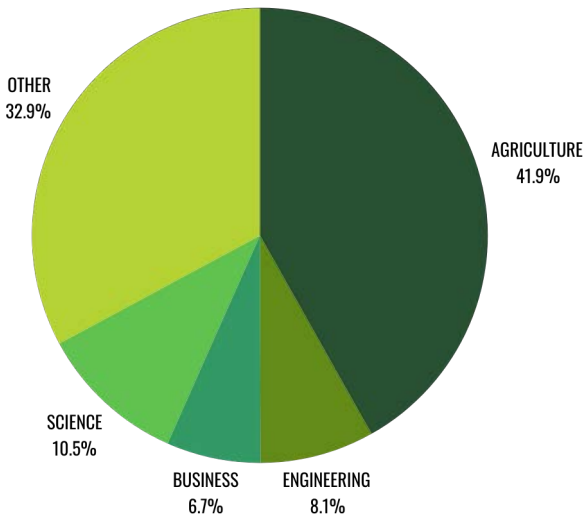
# Texas 4-H Youth Development Foundation



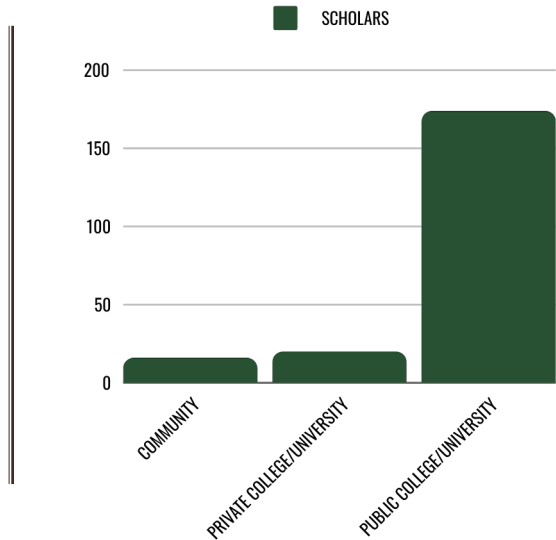
Gave **\$116,000** in grants to county and district programs.

Brought in **\$2.1 million** to support 4-H programs and **\$2.1 million** went back to 4-H programs.

COLLEGE MAJORS OF 2024 SCHOLARS



HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF 2024 SCHOLARS



Average GPA of recipients:  
**95.2**



David White - Executive Director  
 Bailee Wright - Program Manager: Scholarships, Grants, and Alumni  
 Sydney Pennington - Senior Administrative Assistant

# Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo

Aaron Chaloupka  
Addison Schramme  
Aiden Hunter  
Alexis Macik  
Andres Cantu  
Ashley Perry  
Ava Harborth  
Avery Detten  
Blair Dahl  
Brazos Beck  
Brenna Francis  
Brindle Harper  
Brodie Childs  
Brooke Reininger  
Brooke Kingston  
Brylie Roeder  
Caitlyn Faust  
Caleb Rappolee  
Camryn Green  
Carlton Luke Bauer  
Cash Smith  
Chloe Jones  
Chrislin Roden  
Claire Poage  
Cooper Mau  
Cooper Caswell  
Dalton Winkelmann  
Dylan Wunderlich  
Dylan Lynch  
Elizabeth McFarland  
Emily Schooler  
Emma Lyon  
Emma Belzung  
Emma Talley  
Evelynn Landry  
Garrett La Deau  
Georgia Bezner  
Hadley Stultz  
Harlie Groom  
Jolie Bowers  
Justin Hill  
Justyne Covarrubias  
Kade Lawrence  
Kambell Stewart  
Kase Weishuhn  
Kase Kelso  
Keona Ellis  
Kylan Canon  
Kyndall Houchin  
Kyndall Kopplin  
Lauren Callaway  
Lauren Klawinsky  
Laynee Unterkircher  
Madalyn Moerbe  
Madison Moran  
Maggie Mayes  
Mia Meehan  
Naomi Macmanus  
Olivia Sommerfeld  
Payton Branham  
Peyton Wirebaugh  
Rebecca "Faith" Fry  
Riley Wallis  
Riley McBride  
Rylie Carroll

Sylee Peterson  
Taryn O'Brien  
Turner Sanders  
Vanessa Beltran  
Whitley Anderson

# San Antonio Livestock Exposition

Bradley Bakken  
Carson Wood  
Coen Hefley  
Devyn Rios  
Emily Fish  
Emme Dallmeyer  
Evelynn Caraway  
Holden Hagen  
Isabelle Hildebrandt  
John Walker Baker  
Kaylee Hensley  
Kelsey Block  
Krissie Feller  
Kylar Wendt  
Leeland Chandler  
Morgan Carnes  
Rance Mangum  
Seth Stephens  
Slade Saha  
Thomas Chacko  
Tristan Jones  
Tyler Parkinson  
Wes Shaw  
Yancey Parson  
Zachary Henke

# Texas 4-H Foundation

Adam Tijerina  
Aidan Ehrlich  
Alexandria Salazar  
Allison Martin  
Amanda Janak  
Anna Magnuson  
Anna Haffelfinger  
Antonie Martinez  
Aubree Phillips  
Aubrey Ellis  
Audrey Upham  
Audianna Poage  
Ava Clark  
Ava Allensworth  
Ava Lackey  
Avery Smith  
Bailey Nobles  
Barrett Bezner  
Ben Hensley  
Benjamin Caperton  
Brandon White  
Brooklyn Wiley  
Brooklynn Ayscue  
Bryce Parish  
Brycen Epperson  
Cameron Capistran  
Cannon Cody  
Carlee Hoffmann

Cassia Hernandez  
Cayleigh Coursey  
Charli Olfers  
Claire Schaeferkoeter  
Clayton Gregory  
Colton Hemphill  
Colton Hopkins  
Corley Callahan  
Dakota Pieniasek  
Davin Pena  
Dean Holtkamp  
Elleigh Campbell  
Ellen Boness  
Emalee Parrott  
Emily Lamb  
Emily Glaze  
Emily Shaw  
Emma Pool  
Gabriela Ramirez  
Garrit Burton  
Gracie Cox  
Grayson Downs  
Hadley Dear  
Hagen Pate  
Hayden Harris  
Henslie Hohertz  
Hunter Fox  
Isabelle Jarzombek  
Jace Jennings  
Jace Burkholder  
Jackson Bragg  
Jacob Singer  
Jacy Welch  
Jake Pfeuffer  
Jalee Tiller  
Jalynn Urbanosky  
James Leman  
Jaydee Foster  
Jenna Lee  
Jesse Holden  
Jhett Davis  
Joeli Hardy  
Joseph Fisher  
Joseph Bryan  
Joshua Hayes  
Joshua Green  
Juan Rocha  
Justin Hruska  
Kade Kubecka  
Kaitlin DeLarm  
Kasey Burns  
Kayla Kembro  
Kayle Lott  
Kylee Land  
Landri Ottmers  
Laney Lastly  
Lucas Walker  
Luke Alexander  
Luke Anderson  
Mackenzie Gardner  
Madelyn Williams  
Madison Moran  
Madyson McAshlan  
Makayla Kimich  
Maliyah Ann Loa  
Mallory Dwyer  
Margaret Ogea  
Mary Gomulak  
McKenzie Duggin  
Montana Woods  
Morgan Griffith  
Myla Mahalite  
Natalie Bean  
Nolan Kinsey  
O Gaston

O'Brien Underwood  
Ofilia Gonzalez  
Owen Anthony  
Railey Nieto  
Reese Royce  
Reid Warner  
Rexie Sanders  
Richard Black  
Robert Miller  
Ruth Nieto  
Ryan Marsh  
Sadie Bassham  
Skylar Brown  
Susannah Berry  
Taylor Crenshaw  
Tiffany Sellers  
Timothy Murphy  
Trapper Feuerbacher  
Trista Pennington  
Turner Matkin  
Tyler Racca  
Whitney Kennedy  
William Muck  
William Philipello  
William Smith  
Wyatt Terrell  
Wyatt Hagedorn  
Wyatt Bingham  
Zachary Smith  
Zane Aschenbeck  
Zoe Gribble

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Texas Farm Bureau  
Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo  
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Agents  
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Heart O' Texas Fair & Rodeo  
San Antonio School Tours  
Texas 4-H Foundation  
McLean Estate  
Gov. Bill & Vara Faye Daniels  
KHC Family Foundation

# 2024

# TEXAS 4-H FOUNDATION SCHOLARS





# Grace Real

## 2023 HLSR Scholar

I am beyond humbled and grateful for the Texas 4-H Foundation's support in furthering my education and allowing me the opportunity to further myself as a professional candidate. I am currently a sophomore Animal Science and Agricultural Communications and Journalism Major at Texas A&M University. Outside of academics, I currently serve the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences as a member of C.O.A.L.S. Council and am actively involved in Collegiate Farm Bureau and the Meat Science and Technology Association. I am working diligently to become a part of the 2025 Fighting Texas Aggie Meats Judging Team and have found an outlet to fuel my passion of advocating for agriculture by serving as the Saddle & Sirloin Club Public Relations Officer. The financial support from the Texas 4-H Foundation has given me the ability and financial freedom to become diligently involved in these extracurricular activities where I have made countless friendships, continued to grow my practical knowledge and skillset, and developed a network of industry professionals. I have been given the gracious opportunity to pursue my dreams of supporting the agricultural industry as a result of the generosity of this Foundation, and I cannot express how truly thankful I am for the investment made in my future.

# Kyler Wendt

## 2024 SALE Scholar

Howdy! I am a freshman at Texas A&M University majoring in Animal Science. I am very thankful for the Texas 4-H Foundation scholarship. This scholarship has not only helped me financially to achieve my goals in continuing my education, but also has given me the opportunity to meet many new people. I am working on getting plugged in by practicing for the wool judging team, joining student organizations such as Saddle and Sirloin, and attending Breakaway. I also have goals of being on the Livestock Judging team, participating in study abroad opportunities and internships in the future. All of this would not be possible without the support of the Texas 4-H Foundation, the San Antonio Livestock Show and Rodeo, and all the many skills and knowledge that I learned while in 4-H.

EMMA BELZUNG



### SOUTHERN SHRIMP SALTINES

Appetizer / Bexar County / District 10  
Prep Time: 20 Minutes / Cook Time: 30 Minutes / Cost: \$16.27

**Ingredients:**

**Seasoned Crackers:**

- About 35 saltine crackers
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

**Shrimp:**

- 24 jumbo peeled, deveined raw shrimp (about 1 pound)
- 1 t kosher salt
- 1 t black pepper
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 T chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, plus more for garnish
- 2 T fresh lemon juice
- 1 T chopped fresh chives, plus more for garnish
- 1 T chopped fresh dill, plus more for garnish

**Additional Ingredients:**

- ½ cup cream cheese, room temperature
- ¼ cup red pepper jelly, room temperature

**Instructions:**

1. Prepare the Seasoned Crackers: Stack crackers upright (as they are packaged in the sleeve) in an airtight container in a single layer. Whisk remaining 6 ingredients in a bowl; pour mixture evenly over all crackers. Put lid on container; let stand 10 minutes. Flip container; let stand 10 minutes. Repeat until oil and seasoning have soaked into crackers, about an additional 10 minutes.
2. Prepare the Shrimp: Stir together shrimp, salt, and pepper in a bowl until evenly coated. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high. Arrange shrimp in 1 layer inside skillet. Cook until shrimp just turn pink and firm, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a large bowl; cool slightly, about 5 minutes. Add parsley, lemon juice, chives, and dill; stir together until shrimp are evenly coated.
3. Arrange 24 seasoned crackers on a platter. Spread 1 t cream cheese on each cracker. Top each cracker with 1 shrimp, and spoon ½ t pepper jelly onto each shrimp. Garnish with additional herbs. Serve immediately & enjoy!

ANNABELLA PERK



### 1960'S SMOKED DUCK

Main Dish / Denton County / District 4  
Prep Time: 30 Minutes / Cook Time: 1.5 hours / Cost: \$58

**Ingredients:**

- Duck:
- 2 smoked duck breasts
- 1 stick salted butter
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- Herbs of your choice

**Pea Puree:**

- 1 bag of fresh peas
- 1 bag of fresh spinach
- 1 T white chocolate
- Salt to taste
- 1 whole lemon
- Water

**Pickled Apples:**

- 3 oz apple cider vinegar
- 3 oz white wine vinegar
- 2 T sugar
- 1 apple
- Pickling spice as desired

**Sides:**

- 2/3 cup couscous
- 1 yellow squash, cut in small pieces
- 1 zucchini, cut in small pieces
- 1 shallot, diced
- 1 ¼ cup chicken broth
- 1 container balsamic pearls
- Micro greens or herbs for garnish

**Ingredients:**

1. In a medium saucepan, boil chicken broth. Add 1 T of butter to the broth. Add the couscous to the boiling liquid and let simmer for 8 to 10 minutes stirring occasionally. Add salt to taste and fluff with a fork.
2. Blanch and shock your fresh peas and spinach, purée in a blender add the peas, spinach, white chocolate, and juice of a lemon, make sure to add water as needed to reach desired consistency. Season with salt to taste. Set aside until ready to plate.
3. Make pickling liquid from apple cider, wine, sugar, and desired pickling spices in a pot. Heat on a gentle simmer until sugar is dissolved. Let the mixture cool and then pour over sliced apples. Set aside until ready to plate.
4. Pat the duck breast until dry with a paper towel. Then score the skin side of the duck. Add desired seasoning as well as salt and pepper to the duck. Sear duck breast by placing seasoned duck breast skin side down in cold sauté pan, bring to medium heat to help render fat. Once skin is crisp, flip duck over and baste in butter with garlic and herbs - finish on stove top.
5. Sauté shallots in butter until tender and add remaining veggies to the pan. Season to taste.
6. Finally, plate and garnish the dish. Top with Micro Greens or herbs

KINLEIGH GARR



### CRANBERRY ORANGE BREAD

Healthy Desserts / Jim Wells County / District 12  
Prep Time: 20 Minutes / Cook Time: 60-70 Minutes / Cost: \$11.83

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Ingredient:                                  | Orange Glaze:                         |
| Cranberry Orange Bread Batter:               | ¾ cup confectioners' sugar substitute |
| 2 ½ cups of finely milled almond flour       | 3 T freshly squeezed lemon juice      |
| 1 cup sugar substitute                       | 2 T heavy whipping cream              |
| 2 t baking powder                            | 1 t orange extract                    |
| ½ t sea salt                                 | 2 t orange zest                       |
| 8 eggs                                       |                                       |
| 8 oz full-fat cream cheese, room temperature |                                       |
| 2 t orange extract                           |                                       |
| ¼ cup unsweetened applesauce                 |                                       |
| ¼ cup unsalted butter                        |                                       |
| 2 cups fresh or frozen whole cranberries     |                                       |
| 1 T orange zest                              |                                       |

#### Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and line with parchment paper a 10-inch loaf pan.
- In a medium-sized bowl measure then sift the almond flour. To the sifted almond flour add the baking powder, sea salt, and stir. Set this aside.
- In a large bowl using an electric hand-held mixer or stand-up mixer blend the unsweetened applesauce, butter, cream cheese, orange extract, orange zest, and sugar substitute until the mixture is light and fluffy.
- Add the eggs one at a time, making sure to scrape the bowl several times. To the wet batter, add the dry ingredients and combine until well incorporated.
- Fold the fresh or frozen cranberries into the batter. Note that if using frozen, you do not need to defrost before. Spread the batter into the prepared loaf pan. Bake for 60-70 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean.
- Allow the loaf to cool in the pan for about 30 minutes before taking it out of the pan. Then let the pan cool on a baking rack for another 30 minutes before adding the icing or freezing. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 5 days or freeze for up to 3 weeks.
- In a small mixing bowl, whisk the confectioner's sugar substitute, lemon juice, orange zest, orange extract, and heavy cream. Stir until fully combined. Drizzle the icing over the top of the cooled keto cranberry bread.

LEELAND CHANDLER



### TASTY GRILLED VEGETABLE SALAD

Side Dishes / Matagorda County / District 11

Prep Time: 20 minutes / Cook Time: 15 minutes / Cost: \$10.74

- Ingredients:
- 1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed
  - 2 zucchini, ends trimmed and halved lengthwise
  - 2 yellow squash, ends trimmed and halved lengthwise
  - 1 large red onion, sliced into 1/2-inch thick slices
  - 2 red bell peppers, halved and seeded
  - ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
  - ¼ cup red wine vinegar
  - 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
  - 1 clove garlic, minced
  - salt and ground black pepper to taste

#### Instructions:

- Preheat grill for medium heat and lightly oil the grate. If using grill pan, lightly oil pan and heat on medium heat.
- Arrange asparagus, zucchini, yellow squash, red onion, and red bell peppers on preheated grill; cook until vegetables are tender and slightly charred, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove vegetables from grill and cut into bite-sized pieces.
- Whisk olive oil, red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, garlic, salt, and black pepper together in a bowl to make the dressing. Toss vegetables with dressing in a bowl. Serve warm or at room temperature.
- Note: If using a grill pan, you may need to cook several batches





## TEXAS 4-H DOG SHOW

When most think of the 4-H Livestock and Agriculture project area, they think about cattle or farming, but in Texas, other four-legged friends are included. In 2025, Texas 4-H will host the 53rd annual State 4-H Dog Show.

About 1,200 4-H members, project leaders and Clover kids enroll in the Dog Care and Training project annually. This project teaches youth how to care for and train a companion animal. Youth who choose to do so can take their experience to the next level by attending the State 4-H Dog Show. For the 2023 State Show, 109 4-H members entered 141 dogs for a total of 600 class/event entries. Around 300 total people attended the event.

“I think it is a unique project because if they already have a dog, there is very little cost. They don’t have to have a specific type of dog. And they don’t really have to even own a dog; they can foster a dog, teach it obedience, and make it more adoptable,” project leader and state show coordinator, Montgomery County 4-H Extension Agent, Michelle Mihalek said.

As with all projects, the goal in the Dog Care & Training project is that youth will learn something new and apply it to their lives in a way that benefits them in the long run. Many parents have reported an increase in confidence in their child following participation in the dog project.



“Personally, I’ve seen a junior member go from hiding behind Mom at 4-H events to competing in the National Fashion Show. Having their four-legged friend there to break the ice and practice talking to people carries across all their projects,” Mihalek said. “Having success teaching their dog builds their confidence to try and succeed at other projects.” One participant who has experienced the growth opportunities provided in the dog project is Christian Claire Gonzales from Jim Wells County 4-H.



“I have five dogs. A mastiff/American bulldog named Violet, a Belgian Malinois named Tag, and the three dogs I show,” Gonzales said. “The three I show are, a male border collie named Jace, a female border collie named Sweetheart, and a male dachshund named Chili Dog.”

Gonzales has participated in the Dog Care and Training project for two years and has competed at the state dog show twice. In 2023, she was 1st in Costume and 5th in Tricks, and in 2024, she placed 1st in Tricks, 2nd in Costume, 4th in Obedience, and won the Silver Medal in Dog Olympics.

“But my favorite memory was winning costume for the first time because it was a fun sewing project with my grandma BB,” Gonzales said. “This project is unique because the dog is eager to please and has more fun practicing and showing than traditional livestock.”

According to recent evaluations, through participation in the dog project and show, youth increased their knowledge and gained/enhanced skills in the following areas:

- Understanding the responsibilities of dog ownership
- Feeding, care, handling and grooming of dogs
- Ability to train dogs
- Knowledge of dog health regulations
- Understanding basic animal science principles
- Ability to respect the decision of the judge
- Set personal goals

Gonzales said. “I enjoy the Dog Project because of the bond built with my dogs,” Gonzales said. “Also, it’s fun training and teaching new behaviors and tricks!”

All 4-H projects require hard work and dedication to succeed, and properly training a dog in the 4-H Dog Project is no different. To accomplish that, there are many different training styles participants can follow.

“There are numerous options currently available for training resources,” Mihalek said. “Book stores and libraries have a wall of books on dog training. Internet resources are also available. The AKC website has some good training videos and examples of performance classes. The large pet stores have classes as well. In most populated areas, there are dog trainers.”

Mihalek offered some advice for families looking to jump into the Dog Care and Training project, “Contact your local County Extension Office to see if there is an active dog project in your county or surrounding counties. If not, it can easily be a self-directed project with a plethora of resources available.”

Learn more about the project at <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/projects/dog-care-training/> or the state show at <https://texas4-h.tamu.edu/events/dogshow/>.

### Photos

- 1 Photo of Christian and her fur friends: Jace, Chili Dog, and Sweetheart.
- 2 Photo from 2021 State Dog Show on a challenge course.
- 3 Photo from 2021 State Dog Show costume contest.

## EQUINE

**32 active ambassadors | 2,034 volunteer & educational hours  
26,296 individuals reached**



### ***Cayle Cannon – Burleson County – 3rd Year Ambassador***

“The TYLA Equine Ambassador Short Course was one of the highlights of my year. I made new friends, learned more about the industry that I love, and learned the true meaning of being an ambassador. I am so happy to be able to serve my community and others through this amazing organization.”

## FASHION & INTERIOR DESIGN

**20 active ambassadors | 1,165 volunteer & educational hours**



### ***Graycie Montfort – Navarro County – 3rd year ambassador***

“I do not hide it that my 4-H Fashion and Interior Design project is my favorite! This project started out as just something I could do with my grandmother who learned how to sew from her grandmother, but it has evolved into SO much more. It gave me the sewing skills to start my own small business/charity, “Super Ears for Super Kids,” where I sew and sell headbands and scrunchies to raise money for the UT Callier Center for kids who need hearing aids like me. I wanted to be an ambassador so I can lead by example showing that a disability can’t slow someone down, and most importantly, so I can showcase how a simple 4-H project can be used to serve others and make a BIG difference. I have absolutely loved getting to serve on the Texas 4-H Re-Fashion Retreat committee for the last two years. Getting to do the two things I love, sewing and helping younger 4-H’ers, always makes for a fun event! My favorite part of this retreat, however, is helping junior 4-H’ers with minimum sewing experience gain confidence with their sewing machine skills and walk away from the retreat with a newly lit spark for the 4-H Fashion and Interior Design Project!”

## HEALTHY TEXAS YOUTH

**149 active ambassadors | 7,015 volunteer & educational hours  
100,502 individuals reached**



### ***Rylee Barrett – Tom Green County – 2nd year Ambassador***

“I first discovered the program through my county agent, Hayley Myers, who highly recommended it to me after being involved with Food and Nutrition projects since 3rd grade. I love the food and nutrition aspect of 4-H, and after looking at what the HTYA program is and what opportunities it offered, I immediately applied to join it. One major opportunity that HTYA offers its members is a yearly international trip. This past summer, I had the opportunity to travel to Italy for 10 days to learn more about their history, culture, and especially to try their delicious food! It was incredible, well put together, and a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget.”

## LIVESTOCK | 177 active ambassadors | 16,650 volunteer & educational hours 344,577 individuals reached



### *Kylan Cannon – Burleson County Alumni – Four-Year Ambassador*

“Joining TYLA was easily the best decision I have ever made and I am incredibly grateful for every experience it has provided me. Through this program I have become more educated, a better leader, a better advocate, and overall a better person. I am looking forward to all of the new experiences and other transformations I am certain I will go through in the coming years with this amazing program that has changed my life for the better.”

## PHOTOGRAPHY | 30 active ambassadors



### *Lauren Edwards - Galveston County - 3rd Year Ambassador*

“I joined the Photography Ambassador program to learn more about photography, promote the project area, and meet other photographers. I was also interested in the teaching and outreach opportunities. I’m so grateful to have this community! My favorite memory is the annual senior photoshoot! After a posing workshop, ambassadors are paired up with a graduating ambassador and sent into beautiful downtown Belton, TX. My first year was my first experience with portrait photography and I had the honor of photographing an amazing friend of mine. It inspired me to pursue a career in event and portrait photography. This year, I am a senior, the model, and a mentor. It was my first photoshoot on the other side of the camera and a moment to reflect on how far I’d come. I have been blessed by 4-H and grown so much in the photography program.”

## POULTRY | 18 active ambassadors | 1,215 volunteer & educational hours 17,084 individuals reached



### *Ella Porter - Montgomery County - 2nd Year Ambassador*

“I applied to become a Texas 4-H Poultry Ambassador because I was already mentoring other poultry exhibitors and I wanted to expand my knowledge and reach and learn how to best advocate for the poultry industry. My favorite memory from my time as an ambassador has been serving as a short course mentor this past summer. My sister and cousin attended the short course, and they were some of the first exhibitors I mentored as they were beginning their 4-H careers. I loved spending the week with them and the other new ambassadors. Getting to work with all of them was an amazing milestone that I was so happy to share with them as they took the next step in their leadership!”

# SHOOTING SPORTS

## 43 active ambassadors



### **Cooper Smith – Brazos County – 3rd year ambassador**

“When I went to my first Texas 4-H State Games in sixth grade, this was the first experience I had with any state level ambassador. The way that they carried themselves and how helpful they were towards me made a lasting impact on me. From then on, I had the opportunity to take on responsibilities in my archery club and begin promoting shooting sports locally. In my sophomore year, I had the opportunity to begin serving as an ambassador and have enjoyed every minute since. Throughout my time as an ambassador, I have been able to help with different shoots, help coach, and give presentations to clubs about shooting sports. My favorite part of being a Shooting Sports Ambassador has been helping with State Games. While at State Games, I have been able to help younger members through the field and 3D courses, do the opening ceremonies, and present awards. Through all of these experiences, I strive to be a positive example to the other competitors and hopefully inspire the next generation of shooting sports ambassadors.”

# STEM

## 23 active ambassadors



### **Spencer Acker - Castro County – 3rd year ambassador**

“I originally joined because I thought it would be a great way to learn about STEM from people from all across the state and it was, but it is so much more. After the first day of being there I made countless friends that I will never forget. Every year since I’ve made even more friends. I’ve also found that my leadership skills have increased significantly since I started. The most important aspect for me personally is that it is a way that I can break out of the bubble of the small community I am a part of. I’ve of course made tons of memories from the meetings and Roundup, but my favorite was from a camp I taught back home. I was teaching a two-day rocketry camp and the day we tried to launch, the igniters failed because it was too hot. We came back in a couple days though and they all flew. It was the best moment to see them launch, until I saw the kids’ faces. Then it became even better.”

# WATER

## 75 active ambassadors | 2,972 volunteer & educational hours 38,578 individuals reached



### **Ocean Landreneau – Brazoria County – 1st year ambassador**

“I’ve always had a love for nature. If I’m not doing school or art, I’m usually outside near water and animals. Over the past few years, I have become more involved in environmental conservation, but I didn’t know much about water issues before joining the program. Living by the coast, I knew that joining the program would open my eyes to a lot of topics and issues that I wasn’t previously aware of. Picking one favorite memory from my involvement in the program is challenging as there have been so many great memories made, even in the short amount of time I’ve been a 4-H Water Ambassador. One of favorite experiences has been leading a Water Day class at a summer camp. During a week-long summer camp, I was able to lead a whole day on water-related topics. To start the day off, we fished. Afterward, I led a presentation on the water cycle, groundwater, aquifers, and why it’s important to conserve water and not litter. The edible aquifer game gave them a visual of what aquifers look like. Afterward, we all headed outside and played water games. The best part of this event was getting to see all the kids have fun learning and engaging during the lesson and activities.”





HTYA in Europe, August 2024.

The **Healthy South Texas Roadtrip** was a collaborative effort among several South Texas counties. Ambassadors from Aransas, San Patricio, Neuces, Goliad, Refugio, DeWitt, Calhoun, Jackson, Gonzales, Wharton, Victoria, Lavaca and Kelberg-Kenedy traveled together across the South region to learn more about agriculture and health in their part of the state. On the road trip, experience youth explored a pecan house, a dairy farm, a meat packing plant, mariculture and floriculture and other diverse industries in their counties. Youth were further engaged in physical activity through yoga, kayaking, a high ropes course, and nature hikes. Plus, they explored careers by visiting the Pharmacy School & Kinesiology Dept at TAMU Kingsville. Youth gave their hands to larger service in community service activities such as, park cleanups, food distribution at the food pantry, and beach cleanups.



Equine Ambassador media training.



TYLA Ambassadors on Mountain West Trip.

4-H Water Ambassadors led/taught the first-ever **Lone Star 4-H Splash Camp** for 42 6th-8th graders April 26-27 at the 4-H Center in Brownwood. Water Ambassadors were tasked with organizing and leading social and water education experiences including a water fair, model building, fishing, kayaking and macroinvertebrate collection and identification activity. The participants also went through the ropes course. The purpose of the camp was 1) to give water ambassadors an opportunity to share what they had learned throughout the year, 2) to educate younger students about water, and 3) to promote the 4-H Water Ambassadors Program to potential applicants.



FID Ambassadors in New York, July 2024.

**STEM Ambassadors** are currently planning a trip to Germany, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Austria in 2025. **Photography Ambassadors** and JMPs will be going to Ireland and Scotland in 2025.



Photography Ambassadors at an event.

**The Texas 4-H Fashion and Interior Design Ambassadors recently traveled to New York City** for an inspiring, hands-on experience in the world of art, design, and fashion. Highlights of the trip included a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MET) to view iconic works of art, a stop at Mood Designer Fabrics, and an exclusive tour of the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT). They explored the intricate world of fabric accessories at M&S Schmalberg and enjoyed a Broadway performance of Wicked. The group also took a walking tour of the Garment District, shopped at Bloomingdale's, and admired the stunning skyline from Top of the Rock. This unforgettable journey offered invaluable insights into the professional world of fashion and design. A highlight of the trip was spending July 4th at One World Trade Center, where they watched fireworks from the 100th floor of One World Observatory, making for an extraordinary celebration.

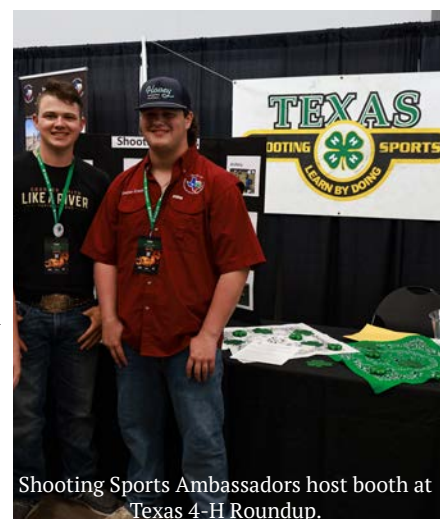


Poultry shourtcourse June 2024.



Water Ambassadors teaching younger kids.

Thirty-five selected **Equine, Livestock, and Poultry Ambassadors** embarked upon the **Mountain West Trip** in early August. For two weeks, Ambassadors were immersed in agriculture throughout Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and Canada. They visited historic sites like the Cheyenne Frontier Days, toured ranches, farms, and plants, rode Gondolas through the mountains, and much more. They then reflected on their journey in a ten-page experience-based essay.



Shooting Sports Ambassadors host booth at Texas 4-H Roundup.

# TEXAS 4-H ROUNDUP



Roundup is also a time for family, volunteers, and supporters to applaud their 4-H'er's. Photo: proud grandparents watch their grandchild perform on stage.



On the opening night of Roundup, Council hosts "Agents Got Talent" promoting teamwork, encouraging laughter, and celebrating 4-H.



On the opening day of Roundup, there is a College and Career Fair for participants to mingle with colleges and potential job opportunities from across the nation.



**T**exas 4-H Roundup is an annual event that highlights the dedication and hard work of 4-H members. Since 1946, it has grown to attract over 1,600 high school participants, featuring 50 competitive events and educational opportunities focusing on college and career readiness. It serves as a culminating event, bringing together youth from across the state to showcase achievements, compete, and engage in educational activities. The event fosters community, healthy competition, and personal growth, empowering youth for future success.

It is designed to supplement the county 4-H program and provide learning opportunities in the areas of Agriculture & Livestock, Family & Community, Health, Leadership & Citizenship, Natural Resources and STEM. It also serves as a platform to showcase the knowledge and skills of 4-H members through a series of competitive contests held at the County, District, and State levels. Roundup also offers noncompetitive opportunities such as the College/Career Fair and a variety of educational workshops.

Texas 4-H prepares youth to meet life's challenges through structured, long-term educational experiences. By enhancing life skills and developing social, emotional, physical, and cognitive competencies, Texas 4-H fosters personal growth, professional development, and lifelong learning, ensuring all participants benefit from the diverse opportunities available at the Roundup.

In 2024....

- Over 1600 youth attended.
- Theme: IGNITE
- Participants were encouraged to ignite their personal, academic, and career goals.
- 50 diverse competitions, including those related to livestock, equine, robotics, health and wellness, food and nutrition, photography, consumer sciences, public speaking, wildlife, and archery.
- 229 scholarships were awarded to 4-H members from across the state.



Roundup is home to more than 50 invitational and qualifying contests. Many of our winners go on to compete in their respective national contest.



Walking the stage at Texas 4-H Roundup is a coveted reward that many 4-H members dream of throughout their careers.



A trade show allows attendees to shop and speak with various vendors.

# NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

## **Great American Seafood Cook-Off 4-H Edition (held in Louisiana)**

Starr County – Champion Team  
Agueda Garza, Andres Cantu, Steven Perez, Alonzo Trevino

## **Great American Seafood Cook-Off 4-H Edition (held in Louisiana)**

Bell County – Reserve Champion Team  
Emily Anderson, Emma Canales, Abigail Marzo

## **Wool Judging (held at State Fair of Texas)**

Kimble County – Champion Team  
Baylee Plumley, Grant Simon, Ragan Levien, Crue Levien

## **Wool Judging (held at State Fair of Texas)**

Menard County – Reserve Champion Team  
Addy Bannowsky, Roy Brown, Cado Bannowsky

## **Food Challenge (held at State Fair of Texas)**

Runnels County – Champion Team  
Elyse Taubert, Cecelia Fritze, Payton Branham, Peyton Graves

## **Food Challenge (held at State Fair of Texas)**

Tom Green County – Reserve Champion Team  
Ella Dupre, Rylee Barrett, Dakota Yarbrough, Rylie Hunt

## **Horse Educational Presentation (held at All American Quarter Horse Congress)**

Champion – Faith Fry, Schakelford County

## **Livestock Judging (held at the American Royal)**

Champion Team – Kendall County  
Emma Zoeller (High Point Individual, High Point in cattle, Reserve High Point in sheep and goat), Mason Smoot (Reserve High Point Individual, Reserve High Point Individual in swine), Turner Matkin (High Point Individual in sheep and goat), Connor Womble  
Other team awards: High Point Team in Swine, High Point Team in Cattle

## **Meat Judging (held at the American Royal)**

Reserve Champion Team – Guadalupe County  
Emily Chambers, Hunter Stevens, Ava Harboth, Alexis Guthrie

## **Livestock Skillathon (held at NAILE)**

Reserve Champion Team in Identification – Runnels County  
Kaelynn Hoelscher (Reserve Champion High Point Individual), Beth Kellermeier, Rylee Vahlenkamp

## **Livestock Judging (held at NAILE)**

Kaylee Eaton, Bell County – High Point Individual in Performance Cattle, High Point Individual in Reasons

## **FCS Quiz Bowl (held at FCS National Championship and Conference)**

Champion Team – Collin County  
Olivia Callager (Reserve Overall Individual), Kathrin Esposito, Audrey Rathgeb, and Lucie Rathgeb

## **Consumer Decision Making (held at FCS National Championship and Conference)**

Robert Miller II, Milam County – Reserve Overall Individual

## **FCS Educational Presentations (held at FCS National Championship and Conference)**

Riley Wallis, Wharton County – Champion  
Sophia Sexton, Parker County – Reserve Champion

## **Fashion Revue, Purchased Category (held at FCS National Championship and Conference)**

Gabriella Ramirez, Hidalgo County – Champion Overall and Champion Presentation  
Shye Havelka, Bandera County – Reserve Champion Overall and Reserve Champion Presentation

## **Fashion Revue, Construction Category (held at FCS National Championship and Conference)**

Sara Gibbs, Red River County – Champion Presentation

## **Livestock Judging (held at Western National Roundup)**

Waller County – Champion Team in Reasons  
Benjamin Issacks, Kaelyn Dozier, Madison Fischer (High Point Individual), Shyla Wells (High Point Individual in Reasons)

## **Leaders 4 Life Skill-A-Thon (held at Western National Roundup)**

Guadalupe County – Reserve Champion Team  
Grace Vogel, Ava Clark, Jackson Elley, Auburn Frost, Justyne Covarrubias, Kiara Du Preez

## **Meat Judging (held at Western National Roundup)**

Johnson County – Champion Team  
Jhett Davis, Kade Davis, Brecken Shipman, Harlie Groom

## **Livestock Quiz Bowl (held at Western National Roundup)**

Randall County – Champion Team  
Caroline Glegghorn, Sophie Bradshaw, Lathan Lewter, Cash Miller (High Point Individual)



Montza Williams - State 4-H Program Director  
Melvin Atkinson - Texas 4-H Center Director  
Jana Barrett – Competitive Events and Roundup  
Shelby Behm – Rural Student Success Initiative  
Travis Bell – District 6 Specialist  
Garry Branham – District 7 Specialist  
Derrick Bruton – STEM  
Tina Bryant – District 1 Specialist  
Misty Cathey – 4HOnline Manager  
Natalie Cervantes – District 10 Specialist  
Callie Cline – Marketing and Communications  
Dana Cross – Texas 4-H Center  
Julie Gardner – Healthy Lifestyles  
Dottie Goebel – Quality Counts and Validation  
Arnulfo Gonzales – Rural Student Success Initiative  
Seth Hall – District 3 Specialist  
Laura Huebinger – Volunteerism  
Cory Hundl – District 9 Specialist  
Larry Hysmith – Natural Resources  
Alex Kabli – Curriculum Development  
Alec Kiser – Texas 4-H Center Programs  
Taylor LeTourneau – Business Administrator and  
Chartering  
Darlene Locke – Youth Development Initiative  
Megan Logan – Leadership & Citizenship  
Maria Luna-Torres – Program Director- RSSI  
Jill Markley – Business Coordinator- Accounts  
Receivable  
Grace Marshall – District 12 Specialist  
Jt McClellan – District 11 Specialist  
Angela McCorkle – Fashion & Interior Design and  
Financial Education  
Jheri-Lynn McSwain – District 5 Specialist  
Larry Perez – Shooting Sports  
Kelley Ranly – TYLA Ambassador Programs, State  
Horse Show  
Alisia Rodriguez – Rural Student Success Initiative  
Megan Shaffer – District 8 Specialist  
Christy Simmons – Texas 4-H Center  
David Smith – Water Education  
Cari Snider – District 2 Specialist  
Kyleigh Tykal – Business Coordinator – Accounts  
Payable  
Denita Young – District 4 Specialist  
Billy Zanolini – Ag & Livestock



*Texas 4-H*  
*Faculty*



TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION



Cooperative Extension Program

***Texas 4-H Annual Report***  
Managing Editor: Callie Cline

Special Photo Contributions - State Photography Champions (list as name, county, category, page:  
Averie Friesenhahn, Collin, People, back cover | Ryli Hollis, Callahan, Wildlife, back cover | Zachary Smith,  
Brazos, Catch All, back cover | Faith Apodaca, Dallas, Food, page 27 | Jana Elam, Guadalupe, Details & Macro,  
back cover | Alyssa Kidwiler, Palo Pinto, Long Exposure, inside cover | Layton McAdams, Baylor, Elements  
of Design, back cover | Claire Eggemeyer, Glasscock, Shadow/Silhouette, back cover | Raelyn Clinton, Ector,  
Motion/Action, back cover | Hewston Lochte, Gillespie, Plant & Landscape, page 38

