

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

by James Grieshop, Ph.D.

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As we come to the end of the current academic year and the 14th year of accomplishments of the 4-H Center for Youth Development, it is the right time to feature and acknowledge this year's work of the excellent staff. As in past years, CYD staff members have worked to carry out research and educational activities important to the development and advancement of youth education. They have carried out the mission of the 4-H CYD while collaborating with 4-H Youth Advisors, with the state-wide 4-H Program, with work groups, with students and with faculty on campus. Let me highlight a range of research and educational activities and the people responsible.

The state-wide Pilot Leadership Project: The 4-H CYD, in collaboration with the statewide 4-H Program, regional Academic Coordinators/Youth Advisors and ANR, took on the role for evaluating the innovative and emerging Pilot Leadership effort. This 3 year effort will lead to needed and creative changes in programming, leadership and staffing in the 4-H Youth Development area. This collaborative evaluation is already leading to increased awareness and changes in these areas and will continue to lead to innovations in the youth development areas as well as in the larger Extension efforts. Credit goes to Dr. Aarti Subramaniam and Pascale Dennerly for their creative, focused, and collaborative work with the Advisors, the YDP, and the leadership of Cooperative

Extension. Their work and the products will get even better in the coming years.

Tufts Study on Positive Youth Development: This national study, led by Tufts University, came to California in the last 3 months. Through the joint efforts of the statewide YDP, Advisors in 15 counties, along with the contributions of Ramona Carlos and Katherine Heck of the CYD, California 4-H is leaving its positive print on this national effort. Approximately 150 youth in California are expected to complete the survey.

Research Projects: One of the important functions of the 4-H CYD is to conduct and collaborate with youth development research work in the state. A number of these merit special acknowledgement.

Shasta and Trinity Counties 4-H Record Book Project: While record books are an expected requirement for youth participating in 4-H clubs, in fact too little attention has been paid to the impacts and outcomes found in these record books. In a collaborative, ground breaking effort, Katherine Heck, Ramona Carlos, and Thi Nguyen, all with the 4-H CYD, have done excellent work with Cooperative Extension in Shasta and Trinity Counties. Over 300 record books were reviewed, transcribed, coded and analyzed as one means to understand the significance of these books and processes. As of this month, the analysis has resulted in a draft article that will be submitted to *California*

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Agriculture for possible publication. This research will also result in CYD reports and outreach work to other counties.

Teen Driving Research Project:

This effort, led by Katherine Heck, a 4-H CYD Specialist in the Agricultural Experiment Station, and Carla Sousa, 4-H Youth Development Advisor in Tulare County, and the Teen Decision Making Group has been a highly successful research project involving 5 advisors and 7 counties. Since its start in 2006, over 2100 teenagers have been interviewed and multiple reports and presentations have been made in state-wide, national, and international meetings. Overall results from this study will be presented in a future *CYD Report*. Two peer-reviewed articles will also be published this fall in the *Journal of Safety Research* and *Traffic Injury Journal*.

Workgroup Projects: As in past years CYD staff and UC Davis students have worked directly with a number of ANR workgroups on applied research efforts. The After School Workgroup, involving Fe Moncloa and Shelly Murdock, Youth Advisors in Santa Clara and Contra Costa counties, has benefited from the direct and on-going participation of Thi Nguyen, Junior Specialist with the Center, and Stacy Schwartz Olagundoye, a recent Master's graduate in Community Development. The Camping Program Work Group, headed by Marianne Bird, Youth Advisor in Sacramento County, has profited from the on-going and direct contributions of Aarti Subramanian and Pascale Dennerly.

UC Davis Seminar Series on Youth Development: For the third year in a row the 4-H CYD has organized a Spring Quarter Seminar Series open to undergraduate and graduate students from UC Davis. The aims of this series have been to incorporate the work and direct involvement of county based youth

advisors in these classes, providing a needed opportunity to present the findings of their individual and/or work group efforts around youth development. In each of these series about half of the 8 weekly presentations have been offered by Youth Advisors. In the current quarter series that was organized and taught by Dr. Nicki King, campus Specialist, supported by Ramona Carlos, Academic Coordinator with the 4-H CYD, and Carrie Matthews, Administrative Assistant with the CYD, the theme was Youth and Culture. And, as in the previous years, the series has been a success.

4-H CYD Publications: The CYD continues to produce its quarterly publications, *CYD Update*, and *Research You May Have Missed*. These publications are written by CYD staff members and edited by Ramona Carlos. Also, Carrie Matthews, Administrative Assistant to the CYD, alternates with Starla Speich, Assistant to the CD Specialists, to produce *Fountain of Youth Facts*, a compilation of current statistics relevant to youth, which is produced monthly. In addition, several *CYD Reports* have been published this year, and in May a new monograph, *Social Capital and Implications for Positive Youth Development*, written by Richard Enfield, County Director and Youth Development Advisor for San Luis Obispo County, was published.

These highlighted efforts are only some of the many projects and activities that have been carried out over the years. Many more will be undertaken in the months and years ahead. In all cases acknowledgement for the breadth, quality and usefulness of these efforts must be given to the excellent personnel of the ANR and UC Davis Department of Human and Community Development's 4-H Center for Youth Development. Thank you. ■

4-H Center for Youth Development

"The 4-H Center for Youth Development fosters collaborations in research and evaluation among UC Cooperative Extension professionals and UC campus-based scientists that deepen our understanding of youth development in the contexts of family and community."

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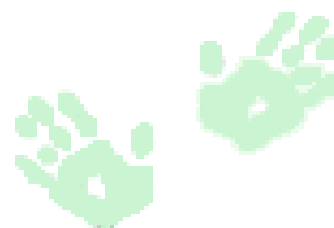
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4-H Pilot Leadership Evaluation: Findings from Year 1

by Aarti Subramaniam

In the summer of 2007, the 4-H Pilot Leadership Team began implementing and evaluating a new staff structure in each of the three UC ANR/CE Regions as part of the 4-H YDP Pilot Leadership Staffing Plan. Essentially, the new staffing plan incorporates two key elements, i) coordinator role - an advisor from each of the three regions takes on a dual role as academic coordinator, ii) cluster grouping - counties are grouped together in a cluster or regional basis for the purpose of increased administrative collaboration.

Each of the three regions developed different strategies to meet their desired objectives. In the North Coast Region there was a heavy emphasis on the use of online communication technology to provide a platform for shared communication among program representatives and to share resources, with the academic coordinator as key facilitator bringing people together. In the Central Valley Region, 4-H youth members and adult volunteers were involved along with advisors and program reps in the form of a taskforce to create a shared vision in programming across county lines. In the Central Coast and Southern Region cluster personnel were brought together in the form of a workgroup to increase program representative effectiveness through training and increased resource sharing.

In Year 1, the evaluation focused on the following key questions:

- What is the understanding and overall impression of the new staffing structure among cluster personnel?
- What are the effects and impacts of the staffing plan in the first year?
- How do cluster personnel see the role of the academic coordinator and the new working relationships with the program reps, county directors and advisors?
- What are some of the promising practices as well as challenges, issues and concerns for counties participating in the new staffing structure?

Data was gathered through observation of cluster events, surveys, interviews with academic coordinators and interviews with cluster personnel.

The following were key findings overall:

- In all three regions there was an increase in communication and engagement of program representatives through decrease in feeling of isolation and a more open and friendly atmosphere to ask for help and resources from each other.
- Increase in communication and consistency in policy interpretation through cluster-wide meetings and through the three academic coordinators working in concert with the State 4-H YDP Office.
- The role of the academic coordinator as well as the lines of authority and administrative boundaries among cluster personnel needs further clarification.
- Some promising practices were: the use of technology in the NCMR region; the alignment of the academic coordinators work with the State 4-H Office; and cross cluster trainings.
- Some challenges, issues and concerns that were brought up included; program representative FTE disparity; the lack of clarity with regard to the advisor role in the cluster; and inadequate systematic communication about the implementation of the pilot plan across clusters and statewide.
- Overall, there was a positive impression of the plan in the North Coast and Mountain Region while in the Central Valley Region and in the Central Coast and Southern Region cluster personnel were either optimistic or in a "wait and see" mode.

Based on the findings, the Pilot Leadership Team is putting forward recommendations to address some of the issues identified that will allow smoother implementation of the plan in the following years as well as set the stage for a smoother transition into a new staffing structure. A more detailed report about the Year 1 findings will be shared this summer. ■

Project Updates and General Information (continued from page 3)

Youth Development Seminar Series

by Ramona Carlos

The CYD sponsored its third Youth Development Seminar Series for graduate and undergraduate students, this Spring 2008. Nicki King, Specialist in Cooperative Extension, was the Instructor of Record. The theme for the series was 'Youth and Culture' and the topics (and presenters) included Sexually Exploited Youth (Dr. Charles Go, Youth Development Advisor in Alameda

County); Youth and the Foster Care System (Steve Dasher, MA, Youth Development Advisor in San Diego County); African American Youth and Identity (Dr. Carolyn Murray, Professor, UC Riverside); Youth and Bullying (Dr. Adrienne Nishina, UC Davis and Katherine Heck, MPH, Specialist in AES, UCD); Immigrant Youth and Language Acquisition (Vanessa Girard, Director, Instructional

Support, Elk Grove USD); Asians: the Model Minority (Dr. Nicki King, CE Specialist, UCD); Resilience (Dr. Nicki King, CE Specialist, UCD); Youth Narratives: Cross-Border Stories (Marcie Rodriguez, CRD, UCD graduate student); and Hip-Hop and Youth (Dr. Keith Nathaniel, Youth Development Advisor in Los Angeles County). The CYD anticipates offering this series again in Spring 2009. ■

After-School Workgroup

by Thi Nguyen

The after-school workgroup has been meeting monthly since January to work on data analysis of interview data gathered with regard to the role of after-school programs in promoting life skills and academic success. CYD staff is providing assistance with data analysis, literature review, and dissemination of findings. The workgroup hopes to complete the report by the end of August. ■

4-H Record Book Evaluation

by Katherine Heck

The CYD has been working with Larry Forero and Pat Weliver of Shasta and Trinity counties on an evaluation of the 4-H program using club members' record books for the 2005-06 4-H year. The team entered the record book Personal Development

Report (PDR) data as well as the "My 4-H Story" narratives electronically into Word and Excel to be used as the data for analysis. They developed a method for coding the data based on the guiding principles and goals of the 4-H

program. An article is currently in development based on the team's findings. This project could serve as a model for other counties wishing to use existing record book data for evaluating their program. ■



update

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