



# CLOVER CHRONICLE

News and features written by Pennsylvania 4-H Members.

Pennsylvania 4-H • <http://extension.psu.edu/4-h> • PATHWAY TO THE FUTURE • #WeArePA4H



## 4-H State Council Recaps Busy Spring

**GRACE ZIEGMONT**

Communications Committee

As summer peeks around the corner, the Pennsylvania 4-H State Council is looking forward to a busy season.

State competitions and day camps have already begun, showing a promising year brimming full of 4-H passion to follow.

Pennsylvania 4-H's various social media pages have provided a sneak peek at our team in action at several events, but for those who may prefer reading, we'd like to give you a closer look at what we've been up to, and how we've become better people because of it.

If you remember back to our team's first article, you'll recall our induction at the PA 4-H State Leadership Conference, a 300-youth weekend retreat where teens get the inside scoop on becoming strong leaders in their future.

Almost immediately after we left, to quote our outreach committee, we "hit the ground running" and haven't stopped since!

The beginning of spring marks an important milestone, as it's usually the time 4-H clubs elect a new batch of officers. These officer positions are open to any youths participating in the club, from first-year members up to youths who have held a position for years but want to serve in a different one.

As State Council, we want to support the youths who are trying their best to fill those shoes, which is why we offer a myriad of activities for our officer training workshops, which are highly requested during the aforementioned busy start to spring.

Three members serving on State Council said that their most impactful event so far was an officer training.

"I went into the event only expecting to share a presentation, but walked away from it learning something myself," said Grace Ziegmont of the communications committee.

Grace had a slight error in her presentation and had to correct her course, while still keeping the kids engaged and educating them.

"On the spot, I had to improvise — I ended up pivoting and going over the SMART Goal workshop as well, focusing on how to use them in a club officer role," she said, citing how she enjoyed the unexpected challenge.

SMART Goals — which stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely — are commonly used to teach youths how to plan, orient and complete goals they have set for themselves. In the capacity of 4-H, they are usually used for things like a club's yearly goal, organizing a fundraiser or tracking progress when completing a project.

Caitlyn Shrodo, of the events committee, has been a pioneer in both officer training and goal setting workshops, with her first one taking place less than a week after being elected to her position.

"I enjoy facilitating officer trainings because it is nice to see kids as they start to figure out how the puzzle is solved, working together with all their different skills to find a unified solution" she said, citing one of the activities she presented to the youth.

Caitlyn has had a lot of fun thus far, and she can't wait to continue



Submitted photos

State 4-H Council at Farm City Day.

broadening her horizons across many future events.

Sometimes, however, officer training workshops aren't just a single-county affair.

Ariana Cook, also of the communications committee, was quick to cite the Susquehanna & Wyoming Dual-County Officer Training event as her favorite so far.

"It was my first official State Council request outside of my county," said Ariana, "And I introduced someone to the SPA program."

The program she refers to is State Project Ambassador — an opportunity for youths ages 13 to 18 to have a voice in the future of their 4-H passion project area.

Like a few other officers this year, Ariana has completed multiple officer training events statewide, but this was her only one featuring multiple counties.

"The dual-county event was trickier to lead (versus a single-county one) because it was only me there to help four groups," Ariana said. "I had to do a lot of bouncing around to balance helping all of them equally."

Despite this setback, Ariana still enjoyed the challenge and was satisfied with the outcome.

Sami Jo Hayman, of the events committee, said it felt monumental to host an Officer Training within her own county.

"I know that I am playing a role in the future of 4-H, as well as 4-H careers," she said.

Sami Jo cleared the event with flying colors, with the organizers citing how she had grown and stepped into the role.

Within the swing of spring, a few more events came into play. Requests came in for things like 4-H Week Proclamations, ag breakfasts, 4-H banquets, forums, conferences ... and did I mention 4-H Week Proclamations? No, seriously!

This year, we got requests to attend 7-plus counties' 4-H Week Proclamation — a meeting in which a county's commissioners agree to recognize



State 4-H Council at Grange Conference.

March 17-23 as Pennsylvania 4-H Week.

"This was and has been a huge step for Pennsylvania 4-H," said Patricia Shively of the communications committee. "It allows both State Council, as well as all 4-H youth to establish that crucial link of civic engagement."

After having participated in her home county's proclamation, Patricia said she hopes to see the number of invites grow with future councils.

A few of us had the opportunity to attend a first-time conference this year: The Rural Horizons Youth Leadership Conference, hosted by the Pennsylvania Grange. Besides being incredibly hospitable and gracious hosts, they gave us an excellent taste of the networking to come this year.

"We got to hear from fantastic presenters on networking, advocacy and many other interesting topics like mental health," said State Council President Giuseppe Schiano Di Cola. "We also got to hear from State Treasurer Stacy Garrity and Secretary of

Agriculture Russell Redding."

Giuseppe's favorite part of the conference, however, was the socialization among his peers. Getting to hear from and meet State Officers from other organizations like Grange, Dairy Princess and FFA gave him a new perspective, and he hopes to see them again at upcoming events in the future!

By the time we hit the middle of April, we took a different turn — all the way to a completely different part of the map. April 10-16 marked the annual National 4-H Conference in Washington D.C.

After an application process, John Bruner of the outreach committee was selected as a delegate to get a week's worth of education in the House of Representatives. Serving on the Committee of Agriculture at the event, John said he was "able to connect with other youth leaders from across the country."

He and a group of fellow 4-H members were able to sit in on a

round table and create a presentation, specifically related to 4-H's place in agriculture.

"I spoke on the topic of why it is important to keep funding youth development organizations like the 4-H program," John said. He felt it was a rewarding opportunity to represent State Council in this capacity.

Back home, kids geared up for the beginning of outdoor-style state competitions. 4-H'ers competed in several different marksmanship competitions — ranging from muzzleloader to shotgun to archery to air firearms.

May started off with Farm City Day, a two-day event in which school children can head to the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg to learn all about what agriculture is, does and means. Over 1,200 youth were in attendance for the experience, and State Council had the chance to hold a booth there.

"It was so exciting to see their little faces," said Kaylee Baker, of the outreach committee, reflecting back on the activity. "We taught kids about the ag world by showing them how to plant a bean."

Youths were guided by State Council to watch a bean sprout using a clear bag, a bean and a moist cotton ball. They were encouraged to take it home, leave it somewhere with lots of light and plant it in a pot, window box or garden once it had sprouted.

If you step back for a moment, you'd bump right into Animal Science Camp. Boasting three in-depth tracks of livestock, dairy and equine, May 16-18 was a weekend packed full of knowledge, delivered straight to 4-H youths.

Though State Council wasn't requested in particular, some of our members attended to learn with others.

Helayna Hollobaugh, of the events committee, jumped at the chance to speak on the event, citing that it was her favorite event of the 4-H year. She's been in attendance for over five years — keen on learning in-depth knowledge of the horse world.

"We got to learn about manure management, body scoring, a horse's rights and also got to see the anatomy of a horse's leg," Helayna said. She plans to further herself in the agriculture world, taking her 4-H career that she has had growing up and transferring it into a career as an ag teacher.

Alyssa Bergenstock, our state secretary, believes that this year has already been an incredible experience. "I have been able to attend events out of my project areas," said Alyssa, who had already been participating in a significant amount of projects throughout her 4-H career. "I am very excited to be able to advocate for the Pennsylvania 4-H program because it's something I love so much."

As we continue our term, we'd like to thank you as our readers. We do see your support, and it's great to have such a large demographic of people take an interest in the 4-H program.

On the flip side of that, we're excited to work more with the 4-H youths in our lives that make this council worth being a part of. We hope you've enjoyed this summary, and we'll see you next month!

Administered in Pennsylvania by Penn State Extension, 4-H is a community of more than 6 million young people across America learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. Penn State Extension 4-H youth development educators in all 67 counties throughout the commonwealth administer local 4-H programs through non-formal education and outreach. To find your local program, visit the Penn State Extension website at <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/4-h>.



**PennState Extension**