



The New York State 4-H Foundation Newsletter

Fall 2011

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.

OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED



Front Row: Rebecca Smith, Elizabeth Spoth, Miranda Hughes. **Back Row:** Kathryn Lawson, Andrew Kittleson, Katherine DeWitt. **Not Pictured:** Erica Freeman, Courtney Luckman. **Photo By:** Monroe Payne of IthacaStock.

Eight youth from across the State have been selected as the 2011 4-H Opportunity Scholarship recipients awarded by The New York State 4-H Foundation. Seven 4-H'ers will receive \$1,000 scholarships and one 4-H'er will receive a \$3,000 scholarship. The achievements of all of the 47 4-H'ers who submitted applications and were considered for the scholarships show the great work that is being accomplished by our young people in 4-H.

Recipients attended a reception and award ceremony at Cornell University on June 28. They were presented certificates by Foundation Board Chair, Tom Facer, and introduced at the opening ceremony of Career Explorations where more than 500 4-H'ers from across the state applauded their accomplishments. The NY State 4-H Foundation Opportunity Scholarships are awarded annually.

(Recipient bios—page 2)

Congratulations to the recipients!

NYS 4-H Foundation Receives \$5,000 Grant for 4-H Choose Health Initiative

The NYS 4-H Foundation has received a \$5,000 grant from the Buffalo Bills Youth Foundation to support the 4-H Choose Health Club Officer Program.



“We are thrilled to receive this support from the Buffalo Bills Youth Foundation,” says Josephine Swanson, a member of the NYS 4-H State Leadership Team. “This program helps young people develop healthy eating and exercise habits through

peer education, leadership, support and encouragement. This grant will enable us to engage 5,000 more youth in this life-improving program.”

The 4-H Choose Health Club Officer Program brings the Choose Health initiative into the traditional Cornell Coopera-

tive Extension 4-H club setting, with selected youth leaders educating their peers about how to incorporate healthy living habits into their daily lives. The Buffalo Bills Youth Foundation has partnered with the NYS 4-H Foundation for the past two years in creating and launching this program, supporting the development of program curriculum, training, and comprehensive evaluation plan, as well as completing the pilot phase of the program.

For more information about the NYS 4-H Choose Health Club Officer Program, visit www.cce.cornell.edu and scroll down to the “Healthy Lifestyles” link, or contact nys4h@cornell.edu. For more information about the Buffalo Bills Youth Foundation, visit www.buffalobills.com.

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Katherine DeWitt, Ulster County—\$1,000 Award

Katherine is a 10-year 4-H member who has held numerous leadership roles in several different 4-H Clubs, ranging from livestock to dog shows. Katherine was selected to be the Ulster County Dairy Princess, and serves as the Ulster County Dairy Ambassador. Katherine's many accomplishments and experiences with 4-H have prepared her well for her future. Now her goal of becoming a large animal veterinarian is one step closer, as she is studying in the Animal Science program at Cornell University.

Erica Freeman, Steuben County—\$1,000 Award

Erica is an 8-year 4-H member who has focused much of her time in the areas of equestrian arts, and fine arts and crafts. As her 4-H Club's Quizbowl Team Captain, she led her Hippology team to participate in the Eastern National competition in Kentucky. In addition, Erica's art awards at both the County Fair, and the State Fair, include high premiums and best of show. Erica has begun college at Cornell University, where she is studying Industrial and Labor Relations.

Miranda Hughes, Saratoga County—\$1,000 Award

Miranda is a 13-year 4-H member who attributes her confidence, sense of responsibility and leadership skills to 4-H. Miranda has held numerous leadership positions in 4-H, and has also worked with Operation Military Kids and Adopt-A-Soldier. Miranda's desire to become a designer is due in part to her participation in clothing and textiles, and art, where she has won a variety of photography awards at the county, state and national levels. Miranda is studying Graphic Design at SUNY Purchase.

Andrew Kittleson, Wayne County—\$1,000 Award

Andrew is a 10-year 4-H member who has been involved in many areas of 4-H. Andrew's expertise in GPS/GIS led him to join the National 4-H GPS/GIS Leadership Team, where he served as a youth representative from New York to the ESRI Educators and Users Conferences in San Diego in 2009 and 2010. Andrew graduated as Valedictorian of the Class of 2011 from Wayne Central Schools. Andrew is studying Music Education and Sound Recording Technology at Lebanon Valley College.

Kathryn Lawson, Ontario County—\$3,000 Award

Kathryn is a 12-year 4-H member. Kathryn's many

achievements include placing 1st at the NY State Avian Quiz Bowl. She excels in Poultry Judging, and traveled to Louisville in 2008 and 2010 to represent New York State, where her team placed in the top ten in the nation. Kathryn graduated as Valedictorian of the Midlakes High School Class of 2011. Kathryn is attending Clarkson University and she plans to pursue a career in environmental or chemical engineering. She credits 4-H with helping her to discover her career choice.

Courtney Luckman, Niagara County—\$1,000 Award

Courtney is an 8-year 4-H member who has been involved in a long list of animal project areas including swine, beef, sheep and rabbit. She has competed in the 4-H Livestock Skillathon, from 2003 to 2010, and competed nationally at the North American International Livestock Exposition in Kentucky. Courtney won the New York Pork Producer Scholarship, and she was also named the New York State Empire Market Hog Project Champion, both in 2010. Courtney is studying education at Niagara University.

Rebecca Smith, Oswego County—\$1,000 Award

Rebecca is an 11-year 4-H member whose diverse experiences in 4-H include clothing and textiles, food and nutrition, and Public Presentations. In addition, Rebecca has held numerous 4-H leadership positions. She has served as Cloverbud Public Presentation Judge and Assistant Judge at county and state fairs. Rebecca is a member of National Honor Society, and has been a member of "Top 25" of her class for all four years of high school. Rebecca is pursuing a music education degree at Roberts Wesleyan College.

Elizabeth Spoth, Erie County—\$1,000 Award

Elizabeth is an 11-year 4-H member who enjoys educating the public about farming and agriculture, and being involved in politics. Elizabeth has participated with the Erie County Textile Review, given county and district-level Public Presentations, showed beef cattle and lambs, and has also functioned as Judge's Assistant. Elizabeth has been a delegate at Capitol Days in Albany, and was selected to be a delegate at the National 4-H Conference in 2010. Elizabeth is attending Cornell University where she is studying communications.

Contact the New York State 4-H Foundation

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The 4-H Way of Life — Betsey McKenna's 4-H Story

By Debbie Grusenmeyer

When Betsey McKenna, a 4-H'er from Orleans County, was asked what 4-H meant to her, she said "It is a way of life, I can't imagine what my life would be if I was raised any other way."

Betsey's parents, George and Iva McKenna, were both raised on dairy farms and they wanted their four daughters, Caton, Kerri, Betsey and Jenny, to have the 4-H experience. When George finished vet school, he and Iva returned home to Albion to reoccupy the family farm, Wee Kin Farms (little family farm). Wee Kin Farms became the residence of their veterinary practice, Country Lane Veterinarian Services, and home to their daughters' 4-H projects.



Betsey (right) learns how to properly handle frozen semen when preparing to artificially inseminate a cow.

As their girls became old enough to show animals in 4-H fairs, Both George and Iva "wanted our children to experience the pleasures we had, and create their own dairy farm adventures." And, although Wee Kin Farms was home to several breeds of registered goats,

chickens, rabbits, pigs, dogs and cats, the girls spent a great deal of time showing their registered Guernsey dairy cows.

During the summer, the girls practiced in the backyard as Dad was the judge. George helped the girls learn to show the cows, and Iva managed to find time to engrave wood name signs and help groom. Wee Kin Farm was truly a family affair.

Head One of Betsey's show heifers, "Betsy Ross," became ill one year and died. Although these complications were beyond her control, a life lesson was taught and Betsey learned the hardships that accompany farming. A little over a year after the devastating loss of her heifer, Betsey's county agent sent out applications for "The Guernsey Scholarship Calf." Even though one of her sisters shared her heifer with Betsey, the possibility of winning this calf offered hope again for a future in showing. This hope was turned into a reality one Saturday night, when the phone call came in saying Betsey had been chosen as the recipient of the scholarship calf. George and Iva encouraged Betsey to not give up on her dreams and, even though she sorely missed her "Betsy Ross," she should take the calf and make the best of the situation. Betsey was able to clear her mind enough to take advantage of this opportunity, and benefit from this and other experiences provided through 4-H.

Heart The four McKenna girls worked hard each year preparing for their fair competitions. Each of them had her cow family, goat herds and chickens to be evaluated. Although they bickered over which cow was going to win which class, and whose chicken laid better eggs, they considered each other to be "friendly competition." When asked her views on the issue, Betsey smiled. "We don't mean anything by it," she said. "But it sure does make you want to do the best you can all year 'round. I will never forget one time in the ring each one of us girls had a cow, and Dad had one too. I don't think I had ever shown so hard in my entire life, trying to prove to the judge my heifer was the winner. Even though (my sister) Jenny won the class, we all won in reality because it's a family affair. We are all in this together. My heart is of greater loyalty to my family."

This past year Betsey aged out of 4-H. Her last year was one of great success as Master Showman of Goats and Dairy Cows. She was also part of Master Showmanship. This show consists of each of the eight areas; Dairy Cows, Dairy Goats, Meat Goats, Beef, Llamas, Swine, Horse (English and Western), and Sheep. "This is my favorite show to watch and even more so to be a part of. I love being able to try new things, and 4-H has fostered this passion."

Hands As her 4-H career drew to a close, Betsey knew she wouldn't be far from the fairgrounds, for she is in it for life. "I have a lot to give back now because I was given so much." Betsey used her knowledge of 4-H and the dairy industry to develop a workshop called "Delighted about Dairy." This is a group of fifteen kids who are interested in showing dairy cows, but do not have the resources. The youth are paired up with calves leased from local farms and they work under Betsey's supervision. Just as her father was able to show along with his daughters, Betsey says that she now understands how wonderful it is to inspire others to share your passion. Between attending Cornell University and working, Betsey has found time to meet with the youth monthly to teach them pertinent information about the dairy industry. "I am finally able to share my joy through the hands of larger service."

Health Over the years, Betsey and her sisters participated in Public Presentations, Talent Show, Horticulture and Wildlife ID, Home Economic Bowl, and fair royalty. "This involvement has made me the diversified person that I am today. I know how to sew buttons, track a raccoon, propagate a gladiola, and speak publicly. 4-H provided the tools for me to make something of my life and that is just what I am planning to do because I pledge my health to better living."

This is Betsey's 4-H Story. "I have been blessed to have wonderful parents to support my sisters and me, and a wonderful organization to grow and develop within my community, my country, and my world. 4-H is 4-Life."



The New York State 4-H Foundation, Inc.
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Sunshine Abounds at 23rd Annual 4-H Golf Open \$18,000+ Raised for 4-H in NYS

The NYS 4-H Foundation's 23rd Annual Golf Open was held on June 3 with 20 teams enjoying a beautiful day of golf at the Country Club of Ithaca while raising more than \$18,000 (net) to support 4-H programs throughout the State.

As an added treat, the event provided an exciting opportunity to showcase a project that the Foundation is funding this year. The project comes out of Genesee County Cornell Cooperative Extension and is called the "4-H Renewable Energy Lab." The lab has solar, wind and bio-fuel components so that 4-H youth can experience how each of these are converted into usable energy. During the golf tournament, the unit's solar panels were used to collect energy that was converted into electricity, which powered a blender to mix smoothies for golfers. It was a great chance to demonstrate the type of 4-H projects that are supported by the Golf Open.

Jamie Ferris chaired the volunteer committee that organized this outstanding event. Barb Schirmer, recently retired State Program Leader for 4-H Youth Development at Cornell, was recognized as the Honorary Chair.

Team Kionix (Kyle and Chad Supek, Gary Reynolds and Ben Lapier) was recognized with the Pratt Award for having the lowest overall net score. This award is named for Jim Pratt, previous Director of the NYS 4-H Foundation and long term donor.

First place teams included John Mitchell & Friends, Preferred Mutual Insurance Team, and CDLM & Company Team.



Pratt Award Winners, Team Kionix, pictured with Jim Pratt (Kyle Supek, Ben LaPierre, Jim Pratt, Chad Supek, and Gary Reynolds). Photo by Monroe Payne of IthacaStock.

The Foundation gratefully acknowledges the major sponsors of this year's Open: PW Wood, Signature Sponsor; Kionix, Super-Major Sponsor; NY Farm Bureau, Trophy Sponsor; John Mitchell and Farm Credit East, Major Sponsors; Patron Sponsors Dairy Marketing, Elanco Animal Health, George Bailey Ins., Gramco, Holtz Nelson Dairy Consultants, Inco-dema, Susan Lynch, Philadelphia Insurance Companies, Preferred Mutual Insurance Company, Seneca Foods, Support Services Alliance, and The Voss Group; and Bangs Ambulance, Hole-In-One Sponsor.

Save The Date!
24th Annual
4-H Golf Open
June 1, 2012