

Elizabeth (Beth) Smith
OSU Extension Educator III
4-H Youth Development Mahoning County

Biographical Statement

In January 2017, I became the 4-H Youth Development Educator in Mahoning County with specializations in Volunteer and Teen Development. I hold a bachelor's degree of Music Education from the University of Mount Union and a master's degree in education with emphasis on instruction and curriculum design from the University of Phoenix. I have a well-versed background including teaching youth and business management which aids me in addressing and fulfilling the needs of 4-H in the county.

My stewardship roles within Mahoning County Extension include: Resource Management and Planning Steward, County Plan of Work, Fiscal Steward, Government Relations Steward being the liaison between the County Commissioners and the Extension and assisting in the budget development proposals.

Mahoning County is in North Eastern Ohio and includes rural, towns, and an urban city areas with a total population of 228,683; of the population 80.3% are white, 16.1% are black, and 19.9% of the population are youth ages 5 – 18 (according to the 2019 US Census data). The 2019-2020 4-H ES237 report indicates Mahoning County served 996 youth with 48 4-H community clubs and 224 4-H certified volunteers. We also served an additional 271 youth through school enrichment programs, 4-H special interest programs, and after-school programs (due to COVID restrictions, additional youth served decreased compared to previous 2 years; additional youth served in 2018-19 was 1280 and 2017-18 was 1032).

Program/Teaching/Service/Creative Works Major Accomplishments

Volunteer Development (35%)

Delivering the required yearly training of Child Abuse/Neglect Recognition & Reporting has provided an opportunity to have round table discussions of the volunteers' role in our youths' lives. This yearly training has led to the volunteers feeling comfortable asking questions and contacting me for advice and guidance in dealing with the youth. Each volunteer participates in two additional volunteer competency trainings yearly. In 2020, I offered trainings on effective communication, club leadership, officer training, and parental involvement.

Volunteers attend the Ohio 4-H Conference to further enhance their skills. In 2017, four volunteers attended conference; in 2019, 54 volunteers attended and in 2020 we had 68 volunteers registered to attend the Ohio 4-H Conference. Continued learning and leading has become a priority for the volunteers.

The new 4-H volunteers go through an orientation in which they are provided with a binder of volunteer resources that I have put together based on feedback from current volunteers. The binder serves as a resource for questions they may encounter throughout their volunteer service and provides documents needed to run an effective club. In 2018, the 4-H Foundation provided a grant of \$800 to help in the cost of providing this resource.

To prepare our volunteers to use and train their families on the 4-H Online System, I offered multiple trainings to ensure they were prepared to teach the information. I authored and edited many resources available to them on our website, including "Returning Youth Member Re-Enrollment Instruction", "New Youth Member Enrollment Instructions", "Returning Volunteer Enrollment Instructions", and "Adding a New Member to an Existing Family".

I have taught sessions at the Ohio 4-H Conference that are for volunteer development, including: 2018 4-H Club Perpetuation and Planning, maintaining your club into the future; 2019 Effective Club Management, from agendas to finances; and 2020 Captivating the Crowd, using the fair crowds as a recruitment tool.

The Mahoning County Endowment Committee is composed of volunteers and community leaders who want to see our program thrive in the future. In January of 2017, we had a balance of \$23,635 in our Endowment Fund. We started our large Endowment Fundraiser in 2017 of a dinner and auction event. We have over 300 people purchase tickets to attend our event each year. After an event in 2017, 2018, 2019, and a mailing event in 2020, we have \$87,448 in our Endowment Fund. The interest gained by our fund each year has allowed us to use the funds to give 40-50 partial camp scholarships each year to attend our county 4-H camp, send volunteers and teens to the Ohio 4-H Conference, provide 4-H resources to clubs, and provide promotional 4-H marketing materials.

At the 4-H Professionals In-Service on Money Management in February 2020, I co-presented a session to our peers on how to plan and execute an endowment event and idea starters for raising money in your county.

Teen Leadership and Youth Development (30%)

I provide leadership to our county camp counselors through a camping partnership with Portage County. In 2017, we had 8 counselors from Mahoning County and 30 Mahoning campers attending our combined camp. Through trainings and effective promotion, we have grown to in 2019 having 19 Mahoning Counselors and 65 Mahoning youth attending camp. Results from the 2018 and 2019 Counselor Evaluations show: 100% feel they made a great contribution to our camping program, 100% gained teamwork skills, 96% gained skills to understand and lead youth in different ages and stages, 94% had the opportunity to lead peers in learning and activities, and 89% gained leadership skills to lead peers.

I provide leadership for our teen facilitators and attendees for our CARTEENS Program and our S.T.O.P. Tobacco/Vaping Class. In our pre and post CARTEENS evaluations, teens have increased knowledge in distracted driving, change blindness, the effect their driving has on others, and the importance of driving with more caution. S.T.O.P. class is for youth offenders from use of tobacco products or vaping. Pre and post evaluations show increased knowledge of the short term and long-term effects of smoking/vaping, the effects their choice has on others, and increased general knowledge about vaping and vaping products. Teen facilitators of the program gain public speaking and peer leadership skills. I have received two 4-H Foundation grants for our CARTEENS program; in 2018, received \$1802 and in 2020, received \$2709.

The Achievement Award Application provides youth the opportunity to organize their 4-H experience, community service, leadership development opportunities, and service they do through organizations in school. I provide workshops for teens to learn how to organize and prioritize their activities and thoughts into the application. These workshops have led to Mahoning teens being selected yearly as state winners.

Other youth development teaching I complete yearly is the Quality Assurance Program, Equine Sportsmanship and Ethics, and Helmet Safety for Equine youth. I visit our community clubs regularly and do presentation on parliamentary procedure, officer responsibilities, camp recruiting, and state 4-H opportunities for youth. Our 4-H Open House is a yearly event open to the public where members showcase their projects to show what is available in 4-H. Cloverbud Day Camp is opportunity to reach young members of the community ages 5-8.

I taught two sessions at the 2020 Ohio Fair Manager's Conference for teens and adults; "Choosing Fair Royalty" which taught how the teen royalty can be an effective 4-H promotional tool to people who do not understand what 4-H is and "Captivating the Crowd" involving the fair crowd into junior fair activities. This session was co-taught by our Mahoning County teen leaders.

When arriving in the county in 2017, I saw a need and opportunity for taking our Community Club based 4-H program that was mostly in rural and town areas of Mahoning County to starting non-traditional 4-H programming in the city of Youngstown. The in-school enrichment program, ChickQuest, was introduced in the Youngstown City Schools. Because of an awarded equipment grant from the 4-H Foundation of \$2642, I was able

to complete ChickQuest in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 (virtually). In 2019, we offered a Container Vegetable Garden program for youth at Youngstown Summer Day Camps. In 2020, I received a 4-H Foundation grant for \$2677 to fund a robotics SPIN club in Youngstown. Mahoning County is also part of a state-wide Apple grant that focuses on bringing computer science programming to schools with the use of 25 iPads and curriculum.

Service and Awards

I serve on the Camp Whitewood Board of Directors and serve on the Long-Range Planning Committee and the Finance and Audit Committee. I was voted to be the President-Elect in 2021 and will serve as President of the board in 2022.

I was chosen to serve on the Ohio 4-H Foundation Board as the NAE4-HYDP representative for 2020-2022. On the board, I am part of the County Endowments Committee which has given me the opportunity to co-present with other board members at the Ohio 4-H Conference on “Ohio 4-H Foundation: Learn How it Impacts 4-H Locally”.

I am a part of the Ohio 4-H Conference Planning Committee and serve as the head of the Silent Auction Committee and on the Awards Committee.

I have been on the State Ohio 4-H Achievement Award Committee in which we select the Ohio winners of each category for the Achievement Awards.

I am part of the 4-H Professionals Design Team for Volunteerism and Community Clubs. In 2020, I designed a Qualtrics survey for the Ohio 4-H New Volunteer Application, Reference Form, and Background Check Reimbursement which are now being used across the state. I also helped in the development of the new hardcopy of the New Volunteer Application. Designing the Qualtrics tools allowed me to be a co-presenter with our design team on the December 2020 Hot Topics to our peers.

I was awarded the 2020 Ohio NAE4-HYDP Volunteerism Team Award with Ashley Hughey for the development of our Camp Counselor Training and Resources.

I was awarded the 2020 Ohio NAE4-HYDP Education Piece Team Award with Angie Keshock for the development of our resource “County Project Resources” which are now included inside every project book in Mahoning and Columbiana Counties.

I was awarded third place in the 2020 Ohio JCEP Individual Promotional Package for my Endowment Event Resources which include the event flyer, event program, donation letter, donation form, and support opportunities form.

Plans for the Future

The 4-H program focus for the coming years is: continue providing volunteer competency training to increase the knowledge and skills of our 4-H volunteers; provide more teen training and workshops in peer leadership, public speaking, role modeling, and workforce prep; continue my work with our state design team which will aid in the volunteer training as we are creating resources and curriculum for the volunteer competency training to make available for all counties; continue to evolve our 4-H program by keeping our traditional community clubs strong but also including more short-term SPIN clubs and in-school 4-H opportunities including the Apple coding program; become more active in NAE4-HYDP by submitting for more awards and state and national presentations, and seeking leadership opportunities; collaborate with other Extension professionals to provide area wide trainings for our volunteers and teens.