

## Unit 1: History

Understanding where we have been and how that helps shape where we are going will lay the foundation for "What 4-H is all about." The basic history and philosophy of the Missouri 4-H program is covered in this unit.

### Learning objectives:

1. You will understand the development of America's land grant universities and their connection to community-based education.
2. You will understand 4-H and how it fits into the University of Missouri system.
3. You will be able to identify the main partners of the 4-H organization.
4. You will understand the proper use of the Clover and who has authority over how the Clover is used.

### In the beginning: educators attempt to extend the knowledge

Around 1904, university educators began to ask themselves, "How does our research help farmers in the rural areas?" Many educators were already reaching and teaching citizens the latest corn growing techniques. Some farmers were not open to these new ideas – especially from university staff they did not know. This is why many university educators focused on teaching the youth. Youth were more than willing to participate in school-based Corn Clubs for boys and Canning Clubs for girls. Did you know that by 1912, 73,000 boys and 23,000 girls were already enrolled in club work nationwide? The youth shared what they had learned with their parents. Through this effort, the latest techniques and technology began to move from campus labs to counties. Missouri's first recorded Corn Club was organized in Iron County in 1914.

### Key dates and events:

Late 1850's - few colleges in our country

1862 - President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act to grant land to every state to create "land grant" universities to teach low income citizens practical education (e.g., agriculture and home economics).

1870 - University of Missouri (MU) awarded land-grant university status

1890 - Morrill Act Amendment added historically Black colleges such as Lincoln University (LU) in Jefferson City

1866 - Lincoln Institute officially founded by members of the 62nd and 65th United States Colored Infantry

University educators became key agents in extending the knowledge of the university. In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act formalized and connected this outreach service as a core mission of all land grant universities. The outreach education later became known as University Extension. Today, county Extension offices serve as the local, front door to the University of Missouri system.

## **From Corn Clubs to 4-H: the early days of youth development**

Because the Corn Clubs for boys and the Canning Clubs for girls had successfully taught adults through teaching their youth, these clubs were included in University Extension. No one individual is credited with originating the 4-H program but rather the program was founded through collective efforts of several individuals over the course of a few years.

## **Head, Heart, Hands and Hustle?**

Around 1908, the first emblem used nationally was designed by O.H. Benson as a three-leaf clover. It stood for head, heart, and hands. In 1911, Benson suggested that the fourth H should be hustle, and the 4-H design was adopted. Later O.B. Martin suggested that health replace hustle. There have been several changes to the Clover that will be described later in this unit, but the 4-H emblem still stands for head, heart, hands, and health.

As a highly recognized image, the 4-H Name and Emblem has been given a federal mark in the same category as the Presidential Seal and the Olympic emblem. This federal protection is greater than trademark or copyright protection. Our U.S. Congress charges the Secretary of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to oversee the use of the 4-H Name and Emblem. If you look closely at an official 4-H clover below, you will see the congressional code 18 U.S.C. 707 to the right of the base of the stem or below the lower right leaf. As you might guess, there are rules regarding the use and display of the 4-H clover. 4-H clubs in Missouri must submit an annual 4-H Name and Emblem Request Form Y633 in order to use and display the 4-H Name and Emblem. With such a long history and prestigious status, today's youth and adult 4-H leaders can be proud to wear the 4-H Clover.

4-H partners and decision-making

Through the years the 4-H program has developed into a huge organization reaching six million people worldwide each year. So who makes up today's complex 4-H program?

- It all starts at the **local** level, where 4-H involves volunteers, parents, youth, staff, 4-H Councils, county and regional Extension Councils.
- On the **state** level, 4-H includes individuals such as the state program leader, state specialists, vice-provost of Extension, university president, legislators and the Missouri 4-H Foundation.
- At the **national** level, 4-H involves the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), National 4-H Council and the United States Congress.
- It also involves other partners who impact the 4-H program such as USDA's Children, Youth and Families at Risk Initiative.

When you serve as a 4-H volunteer you are acting on behalf of the University of Missouri and, by extension, the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The University supports your efforts as long as you adhere to what is appropriate to support the program. Decisions governing the program are made by those employed by the University. Making a decision in 4-H is often like making a

decision as a family. Patience and time are required and sometimes the outcome does not make everyone happy.

Are you thinking, "This family has a lot of rules!" Actually, county 4-H programs have lots of flexibility in designing the program. Those decisions are made through the youth development staff, the County 4-H Council, the County Extension Council, and the youth themselves. Local due dates, county scholarships, and county fair requirements are examples of some of the policies established locally.

### **Is there any benefit to being part of this big 4-H family?**

4-H began primarily as a youth education program. That is still true today! 4-H offers youth over 100 project areas from which to choose as well as many diverse campus based conferences, contests and camps such as Teen Conference, Camp Food and Fitness, Fashion Revue, Architectural and Interior Design Workshop and more. Educators on both the University of Missouri (MU) and Lincoln University campuses teach the newest technology and techniques during workshops at these and other events to thousands of 4-H members each year. Through the experiences on campus, many youth choose to attend college at MU where Mizzou Collegiate 4-H, a college-level 4-H group, thrives.

### **4-H looks different**

Just as families differ, the 4-H program can look different according to the location. Regardless of the delivery format, all 4-H programs should include experiential learning and the four essentials of youth development that will be described in Unit 2: mastery, belonging, generosity and independence. Some of Missouri's 4-H programs include:

- Community clubs (multi-project clubs)
- Operation Military Kids for children of military parents
- Home School Clubs
- Choices 4-H Program for special needs children in St Louis
- Afterschool 4-H programs throughout the state
- 4-H LIFE program for children of offenders
- Special interest or single project clubs
- Competitive Events such as fairs and judging
- Non-Competitive Events such as dances and lock-ins

Regardless of how today's 4-H program looks or where it meets, 4-H still focuses on the youth being served and what will benefit them.