4-H Teaches Student Responsibility

*Joel Butler, Lucky Eleven 4-H, Republic*

My experiences with 4-H began at age six when I was a clover kid showing cattle. My 4-H project is raising and showing beef cattle. I have been showing Polled Hereford cattle for thirteen years at local, state, and national cattle shows. My father purchased my first Hereford heifer for me when I was eight years old. Since then, my sister and I have expanded our operation of Polled Hereford cattle to about 40 head.

My 4-H project of showing cattle has enhanced my personal growth and development as an individual. I have learned many things that are very valuable in life. One of the most important things that showing cattle has taught me is responsibility. I have to take responsibility for my cattle by giving them proper nutrition every day, giving them monthly vaccinations, bathing them in preparation for each show, and providing them with a safe environment to live. With responsibility comes competitiveness in and out of the cattle show ring. I have developed a very competitive edge, that has helped me excel. The competitiveness has taught me to be honest and fair in the show ring as well as in the game of life. ...

Throughout my 4-H experiences of showing cattle, I have built character, self-esteem, and leadership qualities that will help me all throughout my life. The character, self-esteem, and leadership qualities have helped me hold 4-H, FFA, and Missouri Junior Hereford Association offices and committees. I have learned and taken very seriously the principles of hard work, patience, and dedication which are keys to having a successful operation and being successful at anything in life. I have also been able to meet new people and new lifelong friends at many cattle show all across the United States.

All of these experiences have taught me very important lessons that I have used in 4-H, school, church and other organizations. Most importantly, the skills that I have acquired now will help me out with anything that I do in life. ...
Being in 4-H Broadened Students Knowledge of Farm Life

Ryan Jones, Sho-Me 4-H Club, Fair Grove

I have become a better leader, role model, and all around better person because of 4-H. I have been in 4-H for nine years and I have been active in my club and project groups. My most significant 4-H project area is shooting sports. I have traveled the United States to shoot in 4-H. I have been on the state team and have participated in the national competition three times. Shooting sports requires patience and positive sportsmanship even when I am not doing my personal best in the competition I have learned to still cheer others on, give them encouragement and be a positive teammate. One of my most memorable experiences in shooting sports occurred when our local team visited the youth ranger camp and taught troubled and abused children how to shoot and properly handle air rifles. I was humbled to realize that not all children are allowed the same opportunities available to me. The experience was fun and rewarding.

Another important opportunity I had in 4-H was being a part of the beef group and showing my cattle at the 4-H fair and other local shows. I have grown up on a farm and I have been around cattle my entire life. Being in 4-H helped broaden my knowledge of farm life. Growing up all my family had was commercial cattle and when I started showing and judging through 4-H I realized that the purebred industry is a completely different facet that I had not encountered when it comes to showing and marketing cattle. Along with showing cattle in 4-H, I also became involved in judging livestock of all breeds and kinds and it has helped me to become a better cattle buyer and a better beef farmer in general. The livestock judging skills I learned through 4-H have also helped me throughout high school being on the livestock judging team in FFA and now that I am a part of the NEO livestock judging team. Although not directly a part of the veterinary science project group, being involved with the beef project group at times overlapped and has helped me prepare for my future as I plan to major in veterinary sciences.

These are the major projects which I have been involved with and have had the most impact upon my life. Also, I have been involved in numerous other projects such as welding, bowling, rabbits, cake decorating, and sport fishing all of these projects have and will help me in the future. 4-H has greatly impacted my life and it will always be a part of me. The skills and traits I have learned through 4-H will greatly benefit me in the future, and as I take the next step in my life, someday I hope that my children will have the same opportunities that I had. All of these experiences have shaped me into a more responsible and dependable person.

“4-H has impacted my life and it will always be a part of me … 4-H has shaped me into a more responsible and dependable person.”
4-H Prepares Student for His Future

Robert Jones, Sho-Me 4-H Club, Fair Grove

I have discovered numerous talents and abilities I never knew I had because of my time in 4-H. I initially started 4-H to make friends and have fun. It has turned into a lot more and I have learned many important life skills and lessons. My first year in 4-H I started out with a few bottle calves and shooting archery. Now I have a small beef herd and have competed on the state shooting teams traveling around the United States competing at the national competition. I have competed on three competitive shooting state teams in 4-H. The small-bore rifle team, the muzzle loading team, and the small bore pistol team all of which I went and competed at the national competition. Shooting sports involves a lot of patience, dedication, and hard work. Shooting on a team takes a lot of sportsmanship and trust, even when you might be having an off day it is critical that you maintain a positive attitude, to encourage and show support to your teammates. One of my most memorable experiences in shooting sports is being a teen leader and working with the younger kids and being an example for them as they are just beginning. All these skills I have learned will help me pursue my goals and dreams in the future.

Another main project area of mine in 4-H is beef cattle. I have shown cattle in the 4-H fair for many years and have learned many valuable skills through my showing experience. Growing up on a beef farm has influenced me greatly and has helped me further my knowledge of the beef cattle industry. Growing up on a commercial beef cattle farm made me realize the differences between the commercial, the showing, and the purebred business. I got involved in showing cattle through involvement in my 4-H clubs beef cattle project area. It prompted me to buy a show calf and pushed me to put in the hard work and dedication to produce a well-trained show calf. Through this experience it taught me skills about marketing and producing cattle. By showing cattle it led me to new opportunities and one of these is livestock judging. I pursued livestock judging in high school in my FFA chapter as well as in 4-H. Now I’m on the NEO livestock judging team.

These are the major projects that I am directly involved with on a daily basis and have impacted me the most. I am involved in several other projects such as bowling, welding, forestry, sport fishing, and dog. All these project areas have prepared me for the future and have taught me many valuable and priceless skills that I may have not have learned otherwise. I hope someday I will be able to use my abilities and talents to give back to those who have helped me in the past and help those who are leaders of the future.

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