



# Missouri 4-H Legislative Academy

## Program Summary—February 17-19, 2020

**Premier Sponsors:** FCS Financial, First State Community Bank, and Missouri Pork Association

**Delegate Sponsors:** Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, Axiom Strategies, Carson & Coil, Missouri Automobile Dealers, Missouri Corn Merchandising Council, and Nelda Godfrey



Fifteen 4-H teens completed the University of Missouri Extension 4-H Legislative Academy, Feb 17-19, in Jefferson City, MO. The teens were selected for the 14<sup>th</sup> annual academy through a 4-H statewide application process.

“The academy introduces 4-H teens to public service through direct interaction with their state officials,” said Steve Henness, University of Missouri 4-H Center for Youth Development Campus Specialist. “Experiencing a day of life inside each of the three branches of state government, 4-H teens are exposed to a wide range of careers, and often

lock in their own plans for future civic engagement,” added Henness.

4-H delegates were introduced on the Missouri Senate and House floors by Senator Mike Bernskoetter (S-06) and Rep. Jeff Knight (H-129), legislative hosts of the 2020 Academy. They met and shadowed their State Senators and Representatives during afternoon sessions and hearings.

At an evening banquet sponsored by the Jim Russell Foundation and the Missouri 4-H Foundation, they grew their network of contacts, dining with legislators, agricultural leaders, and award recipients. Don Nikodim, Executive Vice President of the Missouri Pork Association, received the Peter Myers Distinguished Service Award for leadership in agriculture and public service.

4-H delegates met with state elected officials and staff from the Offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, and Attorney General. They explored the role of state agencies and 4-H partnerships through visits to the Missouri Department of Agriculture and the Missouri Department of Conservation.



During a judicial education session, 4-H delegates applied critical thinking skills to First Amendment cases, issuing their opinions as mock Supreme Court justices. Governor’s Mansion, State Capitol, and Supreme Court tours rounded out the experience, giving 4-H delegates an in-depth look at three historic buildings.

4-H youth delegate highlights and survey results are included on the following page.

# RESULTS

**What youth delegates said they took away MOST from the 4-H Legislative Academy experience:**

- Networking/Relationships/Connections
- Knowledge/Understanding of State Government
- Respect for Lawmakers/Legislative Process
- Confidence/Familiarity with State Leaders
- Communication Skills

**93% said the experience connected them to their future education and/or career plans. 80% said they are “more likely” to pursue a role in public leadership and service as a result of the Academy:**

“This experience caused me to evaluate how my future career might involve government, and how the government impacts different careers.”

“I am more likely to be involved in government because this trip showed me how citizens can make an impact by being in touch with legislators.”

Youth Survey Results, N=14 (1=not like me at all, 4=very much like me) *significance beyond the 99% confidence level	Before	After	Change
4-H Common Measures			
Citizenship Skills Index (Grades 8-12)	2.95	3.58	0.63*
Teamwork—Communication Index	3.11	3.71	0.60*
Teamwork—Diversity Index	3.20	3.67	0.47*
Decision Making Problem Solving—Career Index	3.18	3.70	0.52*
4-H Legislative Academy Objectives			
Promoting the 4-H program to partners and stakeholders	3.07	3.64	0.57*
Communicating effectively with state legislators	2.36	3.50	1.14*
Understanding my role as a citizen of Missouri	2.50	3.57	1.07*
Explaining to others how Missouri state government works	2.64	3.43	0.79*
Making decisions about my future education and career choices	3.21	3.79	0.58*

*(Photos courtesy of Missouri General Assembly, Office of the Governor, MU Extension, and University of Missouri Extension 4-H Center for Youth Development)*

