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4-16-16

Remarks by Carol James, 1000 North Vail Street
Alexandria City Council Public Session, April 16, 2016

It is especially timely today to speak with you about open space at Patrick Henry. Tomorrow begins observance of National Environmental Education Week, April 17 - 23. Earth Day will be Friday, April 22.

A month ago, I had the honor of attending the Thomas Jefferson Awards in Waynesboro, where the Virginia Museum of Natural History honored a friend and fellow Alexandrian, Dr. Oliver S. Flint, with its very highest recognition: The Thomas Jefferson Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Natural Science. Dr. Flint is an internationally acclaimed entomologist at the Smithsonian and volunteers as a tree steward here.

Joining Dr. Flint on that stage in recognition of her work as an educator was Lisa Robinson Deaton, a forestry specialist, who was singled out for a program new to me: "No Child Left Inside." That phrase resonated with me. No Child Left Inside. Those words sum up what our community consistently tells our elected officials. It says concisely what I meant when I spoke here February 20.

Since then, when I spoke about proposed plans to take away open space from children and the neighborhood surrounding Patrick Henry, a new plan - designated A 1 - has been put forth. It further reduces green space in contradiction to the city's own requirements in its Long Range Educational Facilities Plan (June 2015). Yet, when removal of open space along Latham was pointed out during a work session with stakeholders this month, a consultant responded that a row of trees will be planted as landscape beside the street.

Landscaping, while attractive, just is not the same as open space. It does not invite play by children and recreational use by neighborhood residents.

Furthermore, funding now has been included in the Patrick Henry budget request for artificial turf for a restricted-use athletic field along Taney. This despite studies currently underway by multiple federal agencies investigating reported problems regarding the safety of artificial turf for playgrounds and athletic fields used by children.

Criticize me for being too literal, but rubber and plastic do not constitute "ground" or even "field" in my usage of my native language.

To restate the obvious: The site proposal is inconsistent with the City's own needs assessment surveys, which in November 2015 determined that walking paths, natural areas, wildlife habitats, trails, open lands and landscapes top the list of needs studied and are uses residents most support in their willingness to expend tax dollars. Nowhere is this Number One Community Criterion reflected in A 1.

So, here's a challenge for National Environmental Education Week: The Patrick Henry site contains a strip of several state champion trees along its eastern perimeter. The

ridge adjacent to the site to the north consists of rarely-found Potomac terracing, soils and strata which contribute to unique biomes and unusual specimen plants. The Patrick Henry site and our neighborhood are optimum for environmental education and experiencing the wonders of the natural world should we have the foresight to envision it and the skillset to embrace a future where No Child is Left Inside.

References:

Education

For 4-H, a campaign to reach beyond corn fields and into cities

By T. Rees Shapiro April 8

For more than a century, boys and girls with an abiding curiosity about harvesting corn and raising cattle found refuge in 4-H clubs, which developed deep roots in the farming communities that make up the fruited plains between America's coastal population centers.

But a new effort, slated to begin this month, is seeking to broaden the group's traditional scope beyond agriculture, aiming to push it into the 21st century by forging more of a connection with the nation's urban youth. The local organizations want to move from the countryside into the cities.

"We just know we need to break out of this limited view that people have of 4-H," said Jennifer Sirangelo, chief executive of the National 4-H Council. "We're still connected to our roots in agriculture, but we are so much more."

The campaign to rebrand 4-H is part of a strategy to increase membership and diversity in the historically white and rural leadership development club, which dates to 1902.

By 2025, the group aims to add 4 million members, largely by doubling the number of black and Hispanic children who participate in 4-H activities by expanding the group's reach into urban and suburban communities.

Part of the transformation will involve emphasizing 4-H projects surrounding science, technology, engineering and math — the STEM fields — promoting activities such as rocketry or building drones.

"What has happened is very quietly, in an under-the-radar, very humble way, we've evolved into an organization with a global reach," Sirangelo said. "We just believe that 4-H has been a secret for far too long."

Sirangelo said that typical 4-H activities include hands-on work such as growing lettuce in a hydroponics lab, then having children learn about nutrition by preparing a salad and selling leftover greens to teach entrepreneurial skills.

"They come out of 4-H with confidence and resilience and the ability to overcome obstacles," Sirangelo said.

There are about 6 million children from kindergarten to high school who take part in activities sponsored by 4-H, with white children making up more than half of the total membership. Sirangelo said that by 2025, the group wants

to enroll 10 million students annually. The plan, she said, is for many of the newest members to come from minority families. Today, there are 1.7 million 4-H members who are black or Hispanic, and the group seeks a total of 4.2 million within the next decade.

Sirangelo said that demographic data collected by the organization shows that there are about 30 million children in the country who are underserved and could benefit from leadership development programs such as 4-H.

“We want to ensure that our program has a welcome mat in every community,” Sirangelo said. “We know if we don’t get them ready for leadership, we may have a huge leadership void affecting every industry and sector in the future.”

In Damascus, Md., on Thursday, more than a dozen 4-H members crammed into pews at a Methodist church for a monthly meeting that began with a gavel knock and the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H pledge: “I pledge my head to clearer thinking; my heart to greater loyalty; my hands to larger service; and my health to better living for my club, my community, my country and my world.”

The Montgomery County students listened to presentations on the history of popcorn — including that kernels as ancient as 1,000 years old can still be popped for consumption — and they learned about sewing a throw pillow from scratch, and how to sharpen kitchen knives with a whetstone and steel.

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Kumar Thotapally said that he saw how 4-H made his children better leaders and more confident in themselves. His daughter Shreya, a 15-year-old at Clarksburg High, is now the club’s treasurer and has learned about fundraising and accounting.

“When I was young, I used to be shy and I didn’t like public speaking,” Shreya said. “Now, I got a first place in a publicspeaking competition.”

Shreya said that 4-H also has expanded her horizons and allowed her to learn new skills such as stitching garments for a fashion show and cooking chili for a country fair. She said she thinks people often think of 4-H as just “the farm type and the cattle. Our group is more broad.”

Sirangelo said that the new campaign aims to show that the club’s offerings are diverse and that there is something in 4-H for millions of students, regardless of their interests.

“I truly believe that every young person has the potential to be a true leader,” Sirangelo said, adding that 4-H can

make it a reality. “We really believe they have power today to change our world and make it better.”

T. Rees Shapiro is an education reporter.



The Positive Development of Youth: Comprehensive Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development

The first-of-its-kind research defined and measured positive youth development. The result is a model that is driving new thinking and approaches to youth development around the world.

For more than a decade, preeminent youth development scholars, Drs. Richard M. Lerner and Jacqueline V. Lerner, and the team at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, Medford, MA, partnered with faculty at America's land-grant universities to conduct this groundbreaking research.

The final report, *The Positive Development of Youth: Comprehensive Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development*, reviews the multi-year research findings.

RESEARCH SHOWS 4-H YOUTH EXCEL BEYOND THEIR PEERS

The longitudinal study discovered that the structured out-of-school time learning, leadership experiences, and adult mentoring that young people receive through their participation in 4-H plays a vital role in helping them achieve success.

Compared to their peers, the findings show that youth involved in 4-H programs excel in several areas:

Contribution/Civic Engagement

- 4-H'ers are nearly 4 times more likely to make contributions to their communities (Grades 7-12)
- 4-H'ers are about 2 times more likely to be civically active (Grades 8-12)

Academic Achievement

- 4-H young people are nearly 2 times more likely to participate in Science, Engineering and Computer Technology programs during out-of-school time (Grades 10 - 12)
- 4-H girls are 2 times more likely (Grade 10) and nearly 3 times more likely (Grade 12) to take part in science programs compared to girls in other out-of-school time activities. (Data found in Science, Engineering and Computer Technology (SECT) section of report)

Healthy Living

- 4-H'ers are nearly 2 times more likely to make healthier choices (Grade 7)

4-H'ers Excel

- Nearly **4x more** likely to make contributions to their communities
- About **2x more** likely to be civically active
- Nearly **2x more** likely to participate in science programs during out-of-school time
- **2x more** likely (Grade 10) and nearly **3x more** likely (Grade 12) to take part in science programs compared to girls in other out-of-school time activities
- Nearly **2x more** likely to make healthier choices

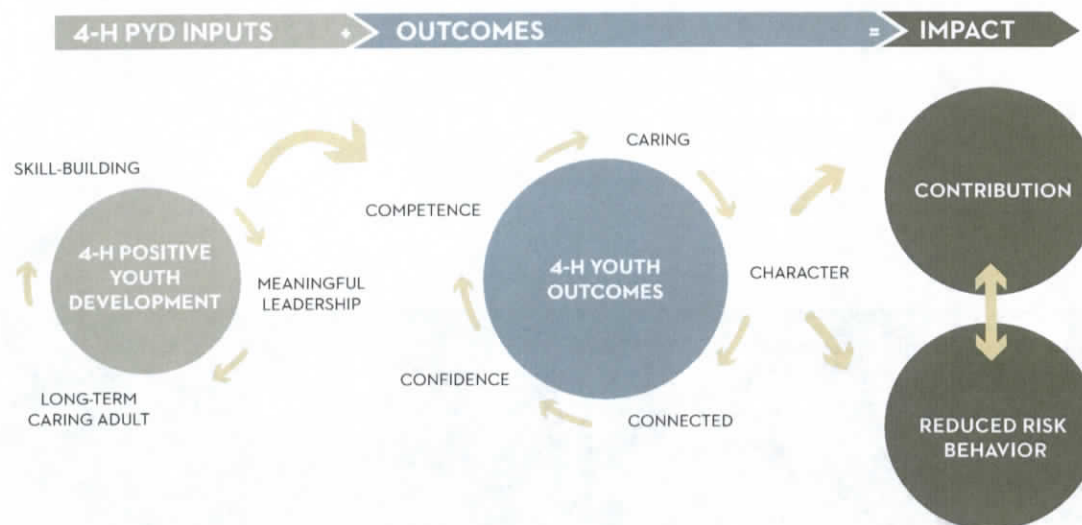
THE POWER OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The research is helping families, schools, communities and youth programs develop strategies to support children and adolescents. Effective youth development programs like 4-H are putting the research to work by focusing on three important areas:

- Positive and sustained relationships between youth and adults
- Activities that build important life skills
- Opportunities for youth to use these skills as participants and leaders in valued community activities

The study assessed the key characteristics of PYD – competence, confidence, character, connection and caring – followed by the impact of valued community programs, including 4-H.

4-H FORMULA FOR SUCCESS



BACKGROUND

The *4-H Study of Positive Youth Development* is a longitudinal study that began in 2002 and was repeated annually for eight years, surveying more than 7,000 adolescents from diverse backgrounds across 42 U.S. states.

The first wave of research began with fifth graders during the 2002-2003 school year and ended with twelfth graders (Wave eight) in 2010. More recently, the Tufts research team examined all eight waves of data and conducted new and more rigorous analyses in order to produce the latest comprehensive report of findings. The new report, while sometimes diverging from earlier results, provides powerful evidence of the impact of 4-H participation throughout Grades 5-12.

"The potential for change is a core strength of all youth – a strength that can be built upon. This strength is cause for optimism for it means we can positively influence the life paths of all children." Lerner et al., 2013



About 4-H

4-H is a community of seven million young people around the world learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. National 4-H Council is the private sector, non-profit partner of the Cooperative Extension System and 4-H National Headquarters located at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In the United States, 4-H programs are implemented by the 109 land-grant universities and Cooperative Extension through more than 3,000 local offices serving every county and parish in the country. Outside the United States, 4-H programs operate through independent, country-led organizations in more than 50 countries.

Learn more about 4-H at www.4-H.org, find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/4-H and Twitter at <https://twitter.com/4H>.

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December 2013



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Extension in 2015

Arlington County & the City of Alexandria

Energy Masters
now in Alexandria



Gardeners' eNewsletter launched to provide
year-round advice to vegetable gardeners

Food fermentation classes added to the
already popular food preservation series

Grant funding provides 11 slow cookers
and food preparation classes to low
income families

New full-time financial coach at Arlington-
VCE

New SNAP FCS agent to provide services
to SNAP recipients

74,090

community participants

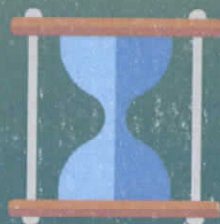
1,419

public education programs



812

Volunteers
at work in Arlington & the
City of Alexandria



\$852,750

Dollar value of time
donated by volunteers

41,326

Number of volunteer hours in the
community



Virginia Cooperative Extension

Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

2015 Program Highlights

Finance

\$13,000

Amount of savings reported by Money Talk course participants in 2015

\$406,000

Money Talk participant savings since 2006

\$6,000

Savings reported by low-income participants in Money Smarts Pay



Agriculture & Natural Resources

Inaugural Urban Agriculture Symposium

15 speakers

72 attendees

8 educational displays

Keynote Speaker Dr. Marcus Comer from Virginia State University on the Harding St. Urban Agriculture Center in Petersburg VA



Nutrition

14 new program locations

18% increased demand for programming

31 sites where volunteers provided nutrition education

Energy Conservation

\$101,555

utility cost savings in Arlington apartments where Energy Masters made improvements

474

apartments retrofitted by Energy Masters since 2011



4-H Youth Development

Programs and partnerships with the following:

Be Proud, Be Responsible

Cora Kelly & Patrick Henry Elementary Schools
T.C Williams International Academy Internship Program

Alexandria Recreation Out of School Time Programming

4-H Pet Pals Special Interest Club

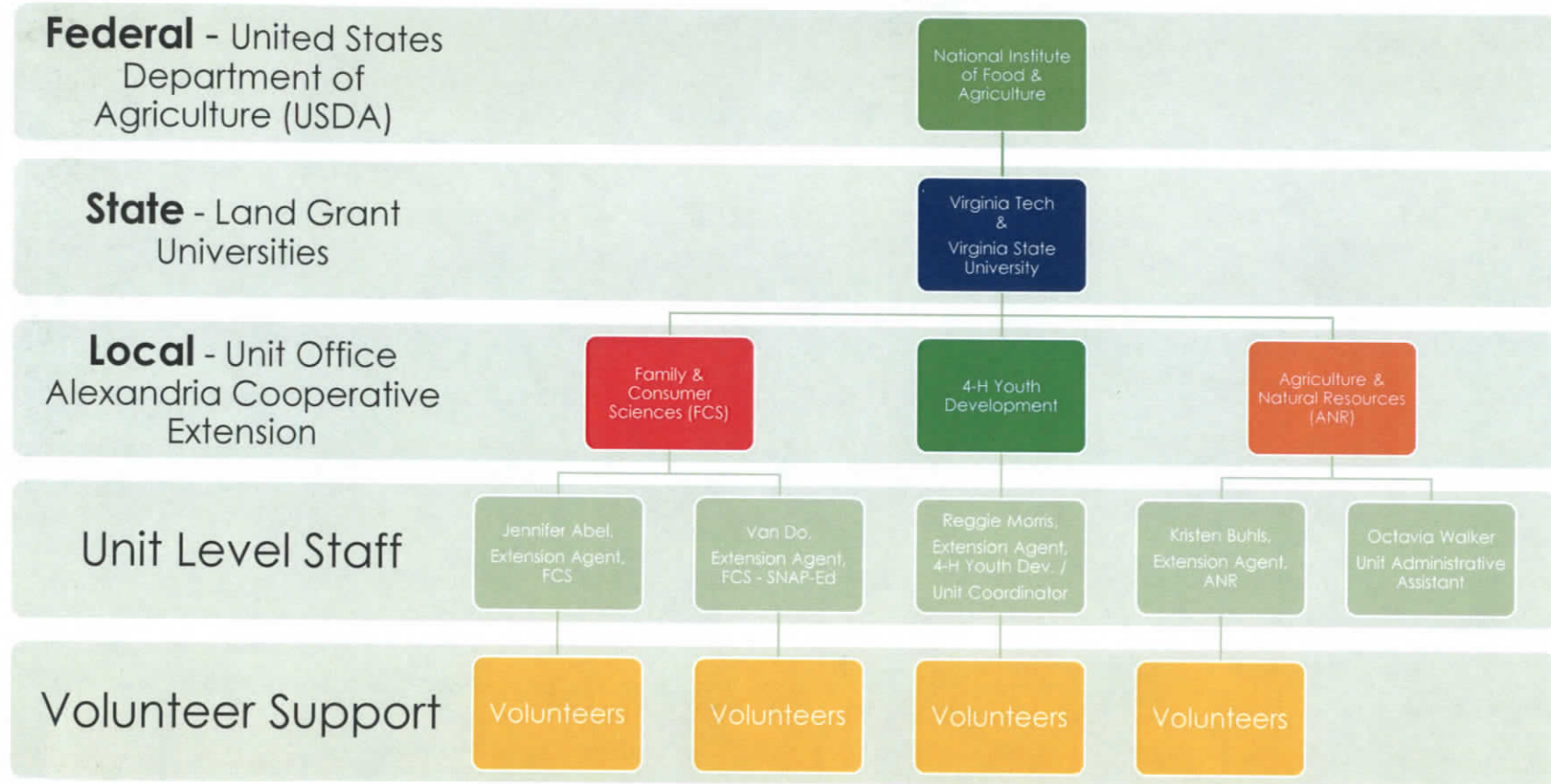
Arlington Junior Master Naturalists

Ft. Myer Military Kids Club

Bridges to Independence Youth Club



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By the numbers

Extension and Research Funding

(funding sources for FY2015)

Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station received

\$189.5 million

from federal, state, and local governments, as well as from grants, contracts, and other sources.



8.2%

Funds from local government



35.9%

State general funds



9.4%

Federal capacity grants



46.5%

Grants and contracts and other funds



Extension and Research Effort

(full-time-equivalent employees)

Total number of faculty and staff members for research and Extension

878 FTEs

Extension

64%

Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station

36%

Location of Research and Extension Faculty

District offices

2.8%

Virginia Tech campus

32.2%

Agricultural Research and Extension Centers

8.5%

4-H educational centers

2.4%

City and county offices

54.1%

Value of Volunteers

In 2014, Virginia Cooperative Extension had

28,732
volunteers

who assisted Extension staff in delivering educational programs.

They contributed

1,116,859
hours

of service that is valued at **\$27,809,789***.

* Based on a rate of \$24.90 per hour, according to the Independent Sector.

Return on Investment

For every \$1 invested by the state, Agency 229 generates an additional

\$1.78



Youth Programs

More than

202,176

Virginia youth enrolled in 4-H in 2014.