



# Oklahoma 4-H National Conference

## National Conference-

### Purpose

National 4-H Conference is a working conference and a training ground for youth who are focused and committed to the Oklahoma 4-H program. Funds are being invested in training delegates to return to Oklahoma for the maintenance and implementation of 4-H programming.

Oklahoma's delegates must be team players. The delegation will function as a team for approximately two years from the time the individual attends conference until the Back Home Action Plan is completed. Pre- and post-conference work is mandatory. Delegates will work cooperatively with previous teams in learning, maintaining and coordinating existing programs.

National Conference is an opportunity for youth and adults to solicit input from a diverse cross-section of the Cooperative Extension System and to strengthen and expand the 4-H Youth Development Program at local, state and national levels. National Conference is an intense week of committee work, workshops, legislative visits and presentations. Delegates will contact and meet with Oklahoma decision makers during their time in our nation's capital.

### Expectations of Delegates

- This is approximately a two-year commitment, beginning the year an individual attends conference. Delegates should plan on committing a minimum of 2 hours per week or 8 hours per month to fulfill duties and expectations. Responsibilities of this trip do not end when delegates arrive home!
- A delegate will be responsible for two-thirds of the initial transportation, lodging and registration expenses. If he/she fulfills duties and expectations they will be reimbursed.
- Pre- and post-conference activities may require incurring expenses that are the individual's responsibility (travel, phone calls, registration, etc.).
- Delegate must attend National 4-H Conference, typically scheduled between the middle of March and April each year.
- Participate fully in the National Conference. This includes gathering data before the conference, bringing issues and ideas to the table on behalf of Oklahoma's youth, and participating in pre-conference "chat" sessions online.
- Attend a pre-conference orientation session.

### Duties of Delegates

- Delegates will be responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating an Oklahoma Back Home Action Plan that will be of benefit to the Oklahoma 4-H Program. This team action plan must be in writing and approved by the assistant specialist of leadership development in the state 4-H office. A final report of the Back Home Action Plan must be completed and approved by the assistant specialist of leadership development before reimbursement of conference expenses will be made.
- Provide significant leadership and maintain the following state programs: Discovery Unlimited, Kicks4Kids, Work in Progress Conference, present a workshop at State Leadership Conference and State 4-H Round Up. Not necessarily required but will be asked to serve as facilitators for Kansas City Global Conference. There will be some personal expenses required.

- Be available to present workshops at county, district and/or state events (the topic must have approval of the state advisor).
- This is not an all inclusive list of duties and expectations. Delegates should recognize that there will be other functions and responsibilities in which participation is required.
- Complete reports and communications in a timely manner.

### **Selected Applicants Will Be Provided:**

- Technical support to carry out assignments and implement action plans.
- One-third of the approximate cost (\$1,200) of transportation, lodging and registration to attend National 4-H Conference will be funded by the state 4-H office prior to conference. Only if the delegate fulfills the duties and expectations they have assumed in their written and agreed upon action plan will the two-thirds (approximately \$800) invested by the delegate will be reimbursed. The state 4-H office will make all arrangements (transportation, lodging and registration) because the group travels as a delegation.

### **Who Can Apply**

4-H members who will be a freshman, sophomore or junior in high school on Sept. 1 of the year of application. *\*If a selected applicant is a high school senior on Sept. 1 of the year of application, he or she will be expected to complete up to a two-year commitment to the program. He/she is encouraged to reside in Oklahoma during that time.*

### **Application Package Must Include:**

- Clip/paperclip all materials together. Do not put in a folder with 2/3 brads.
- Application form. The form may be reproduced and completed on a computer, but each item is limited to the amount of space stated on the application form. The form can be found on the Oklahoma 4-H website, as can all other awards program application forms.
- Applicant's Oklahoma Report Form, Sections I through V; no photo section or story.
- Applicant's reference letters and reference forms. References are required from two individuals as follows:
  - One reference must be from the applicant's county Extension educator or district 4-H program specialist.
  - One reference must be from another individual who is not a family member such as a 4-H leader, minister, teacher or neighbor.
- One copy of the signed certification form.

### **Selection Process**

- Only complete (all required materials as noted above) application packages received by the published deadline will be considered. Applications must be submitted to the state office with county record books or at the designated time.
- A panel of judges will screen application packages. A second panel of judges will conduct interviews. The interview panel will be composed of one past national conference delegate, the state adviser, and a minimum of one county educator.
- Finalists for interviews will be notified of their selection.
- The committee reserves the right to re-advertise for applications if the committee does not feel finalists possesses the qualities necessary to fulfill the duties and expectations or does not follow the application or presentation guidelines.
- Finalists will be required to participate in an interview session and make their oral presentation at the designated time.

## Presentations

During National 4-H Conference, delegates will be asked to participate in town hall meetings. Town hall meetings handled in the form of round table discussions provide delegates an opportunity to discuss and formulate recommendations related to 4-H marketing, youth-adult partnerships and youth in governance. As a result of these town hall meetings issues and needs are identified and shared with the Secretary of Agriculture, national Extension program leaders, and others who determine 4-H programs. The experience is a step-by step process to gather and share information, resources, and opinions and develop ideas for solutions on the topic.

Delegates must exhibit the ability to think, plan and reason as they represent the Oklahoma 4-H program. Through a presentation you develop, you will be evaluated based on the ability to take one of the listed topics, prepare a presentation using research and facts collected, interview people about the topic, and present your findings and thoughts in a 5-7 minute talk/illustrated talk/demonstration. Visuals and handouts may be used. No later than one week prior to the presentation, please notify the state office if special equipment (chart stands, LCD projector, computer, zip drive, etc.) will be needed.

### Use one of the following focus topics for developing your presentation:

- **Youth-Adult Partnerships – Having a Voice and Making It Count** The ideals of 4-H – youth-adult partnerships, access for all, a focus on life skills, a place to make new friends and have fun, etc. – are important foundations of our success. Sometimes, however, youth may not experience all of these ideals in their 4-H experience. How can we help make the real experience of 4-H more closely match the ideal?
- **Marketing 101** The 4-H Clover is one of the most recognizable images in the nation, although there are many who only think of “cows and cooking” when they hear about 4-H. As we begin our 102<sup>nd</sup> year, how can we help make the 4-H image more current to help people recognize both the breadth and scope of today’s 4-H program and encourage greater participation?
- **Make a Difference in Your Community** Citizenship has always been a strong component of the 4-H movement. Service-learning provides an opportunity to take service to another level. How can this action-oriented model advance the 4-H movement in the public’s eye and enhance the development of our members?
- **Staying Focused** To stay relevant, 4-H will need to change in some ways, whether that is in program areas, types of clubs, etc. We all react to change in distinctly different ways, and it can be difficult to lead change. How can 4-H hold onto the best parts of the program and change the others? How can we encourage youth and adult leaders who understand the importance of anticipating, accepting and using change to improve 4-H?

***Application packets must be received in the state 4-H office by July 1 each year. NO EXCEPTIONS.***