Missouri 4-H Legislative Academy

Program Summary—February 19-21, 2018

Delegate Sponsors: Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, Clout Public Affairs, Missouri Automobile Dealers, Missouri Cattleman’s Association, Missouri Corn Merchandising Council, Missouri Trucking Association, Nelda S. Godfrey, Polsinelli PC
Meal Sponsors: Ameren, Missouri Agribusiness Association, MO-AG’s Jim Russell Foundation

Missouri 4-H youth delegates gathered at the State Capitol for the 14th annual University of Missouri Extension 4-H Legislative Academy, February 19-21. Fifteen high school students selected statewide represented Missouri 4-H in the Capitol City, immersed in three branches of Missouri state government over three days.

To prepare for the academy, delegates learned about rural broadband in Missouri, gathered feedback from local youth and adults, and presented findings and firsthand experiences to Missouri Farm Bureau and state agency representatives on the last day.

While in the Capitol, youth delegates were hosted by Sen. Brian Munzlinger, Sen. Sandy Crawford, and Rep. Tom Hurst. Delegates received resolutions and introductions on the Missouri House and Senate floors, and spent an afternoon shadowing legislators from their home districts. The teens also joined in a “behind the scenes” State Capitol tour with Rep. Mike Kelley.

Dr. Tony Simones, Civic Education Director for the Missouri Bar, placed delegates in the role of justices deciding the outcomes of historical first amendment cases. The group toured the Missouri Supreme Court and met with Justice Mary Rhodes Russell to gain perspective on the justice system and Missouri’s highest court.

Youth delegates joined a large crowd of legislators and guests at the MO-AG legislative banquet, sponsored by the Missouri Agribusiness Association, MO-AG’s Jim Russell Foundation and the Missouri 4-H Foundation. Senator Brian Munzlinger was honored by Missouri 4-H for his years as host of the 4-H Legislative Academy. He presented four leaders with the Peter C. Myers Distinguished Service Award—Keith Dietzschold, Jo Manhart, Gary Marshall, Jim McCann—and by a turn of events, received the award himself from prior recipient, Bill Jackson.

On the final day, youth delegates learned about partnerships from Missouri Department of Agriculture and Missouri Department of Conservation officials, as well as internships and opportunities with Missouri Farm Bureau and the state’s agricultural commodity groups: Missouri Beef Merchandising Council, Missouri Cattleman’s Association, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Pork Association, and Missouri Soybean Association.

The Academy group rounded out their three-day experience with visits to the offices of Secretary of State, Lieutenant Governor, and the Governor of Missouri.
Top 3 things youth delegates said they took away from the Academy experience...

1. Networking/Relationships
2. Knowledge/Understanding of Government and State Issues
3. Opportunities for Young Leaders

Top 3 things delegates learned from the 4-H Youth Voice: Rural Broadband Initiative...

1. Broader Awareness of the Issue
2. Motivation To Become Involved
3. How to Work Together as a Team

80% said the Academy connected them to future education and/or career plans. 90% said they are “more likely” to pursue a role in public leadership and service as a result:

- “I am much more likely to pursue a career in public service, most likely agricultural policy.”
- “Absolutely, volunteering (public service) is already a top priority for me, and this event just reinforced that for me.”

Self-rated 4-H youth citizenship skills (1 = very low, 5 = very high):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (N=10)</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting 4-H to partners and stakeholders</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating effectively with state legislators</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding my role as a citizen of Missouri</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining to others how Missouri state government works</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making decisions about my future education/career</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
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More than 55,000 members strong. Missouri 4-H is an active, dynamic organization of young people who are learning, growing and preparing to be the leaders of today and tomorrow — making a real difference in their community, country and world. 4-H is the youth development program of the University of Missouri and the nation’s Cooperative Extension System. For more information, please visit http://4h.missouri.edu.