

In a world where it can be difficult to find positive role models for young people, the 4-H youth organization stands out as a beacon of hope. Founded over a century ago with a mission to help rural youth learn new skills and grow into responsible adults, 4-H has evolved to serve youth in all walks of life, in both rural and urban areas.

And now, as a new group of young people graduates and goes out into the world, the values and lessons they learned in 4-H will help guide them on their journey. One of the core values of 4-H is leadership, and it's easy to see how that value is put into action when you talk to the organization's young members.

Through 4-H projects and activities, members learn how to communicate effectively, make decisions, work as a team, and take on leadership roles. "4-H has taught me how to be a leader and how to work with others," says 18-year-old Rachel, who has been a member of her local 4-H club for the past eight years. "I've learned how to communicate effectively, how to delegate tasks, and how to motivate people to work toward a common goal."

Another key value of 4-H is community service. Members of the organization are encouraged to give back to their communities through volunteer work, and many take that lesson to heart. "4-H has helped me develop a sense of responsibility and a desire to make a positive difference in the world," says 17-year-old David. "Through community service projects, I've learned that even small actions can have a big impact." Graduating seniors can take the leadership skills they've developed through 4-H and use them to make a positive impact in their communities.

4-H offers members the chance to explore different career paths through hands-on projects and experiences. This can help graduating seniors gain a better understanding of their interests and strengths and help them make informed decisions about their future career paths.

Through 4-H, members have the opportunity to build relationships with other young people, as well as with adult volunteers and professionals in various fields. These relationships can be valuable resources as they begin their careers or pursue further education.

As 4-H members graduate from high school and move on to the next chapter of their lives, many of them will be going out on their own for the first time. But they won't be doing it alone. "The skills and values I learned in 4-H will stay with me for the rest of my life," says 19-year-old Sarah. "I know that I can always rely on the lessons I learned in 4-H to help me navigate whatever challenges come my way."

For many 4-H members, the organization is more than just a club or an extracurricular activity. It's a community, a family, and a support system. As they leave that community and strike out on their own, they will take with them the values and lessons they learned in 4-H, and they will carry those values with them wherever they go. In a world that can sometimes be harsh and unforgiving, the 4-H youth organization offers a glimmer of hope and a reminder that there are still good people doing good things in the world.

Overall, being a 4-H member can provide a strong foundation for graduating high school seniors as they start the next chapter of their lives.

Information in this article was gathered from several data-based research sites.

Congratulations to our Twin Creeks Extension District 4-H member high school graduates in Decatur, Graham, Norton and Sheridan counties! We encourage you to reach out to your 4-H family in your communities for support as you venture away from what is familiar to a new and challenging career pathway, whether that is a secondary education or the beginning of your job career.

Contact 4-H Youth Development Agent, Patsy L. Maddy, at your local Twin Creeks Extension District office in Decatur, Graham, Norton or Sheridan counties to take advantage of the benefits of positive youth development as a participant of our 4-H program. We welcome both youth participants and adult volunteers to help lead our program. (pmaddy@ksu.edu, 785-877-5755)

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“Chasing Clovers”

By Patsy L. Maddy

Twin Creeks Extension District
4-H Youth Development Agent