Fostering Positive Youth Development

Positive youth development is an intentional approach to promote positive outcomes for young people through family and community youth engagement for the benefit of society. Positive youth development focuses on building relationships while delivering learning content, ultimately giving youth the skillsets they need to navigate socially: respect, teamwork, and self care. NIFA prioritizes positive youth development programming to ensure the future employability of America’s children and support our nation’s economy.

**Employability Skills**

- Positive Relationships: Effective Relationships
- Positive Experiences: Applied Knowledge
- Positive Environments: Workplace Skills
- Positive Risk-Taking: Navigating Challenges

**Filling the Gap**

**EMPLOYABILITY ASSETS APPLICANTS LACK**
- Professionalism & Ethics
- Experience
- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Digital Competency
- Technical Competencies
- Leadership
- Communication
- Ability to work in diverse groups

45 PERCENT of all U.S. employers reported difficulties in filling jobs in 2016.

40% Projected proportion of unfilled jobs in the food and agricultural system.

**A Century of Success**

The 4-H Youth Development Program serves as a model program for the practice of positive youth development. NIFA and its predecessor agencies have more than a 100-year history of providing federal leadership for the National 4-H Program in partnership with the land-grant university-based Cooperative Extension System. The National 4-H Council provides additional private support.

The ratio of youth enrolled in 4-H who are more likely to report healthier habits and participate in after-school science, engineering, or computer technology programs.

6 OUT OF 10

NIFA is committed to strengthening the agricultural workforce.

4-H is the Youth Development Program of the Cooperative Extension System

**Sources:**
- 2016-2017 Talent Shortage Survey. www.manpower.com
- 4-H and NASA: Empowering Today’s True Leaders. www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdRpsnRA5k

PEGGY WHITSON | Iowa 4-H Alum
Commander of the International Space Station

As a member of 4-H...most importantly for me, a very shy kid, was learning that I was able to do public speaking. 4-H helped me to overcome my own hurdles to become a team player and a leader.

NIFA invests in and advances agricultural research, education, and extension and promotes transformative discoveries that solve societal challenges. www.nifa.usda.gov