

FARM: Imperial County youth to celebrate National 4-H Week

By Shanna Abatti, Special to this Newspaper | Posted: Thursday, September 28, 2017 12:15 am

For over a 100 consecutive years, millions of youth, parents, volunteers and alumni across the country have been celebrating National 4-H Week during the first full week of October. Imperial County 4-H will leverage National 4-H Week this year by showcasing the incredible experiences that 4-H offers young people, and will highlight the remarkable 4-H youth in our community who work each day to make a positive impact on those around them.

Imperial County 4-H's first club, Holtville 4-H, was chartered in 1914 and is still in operation today. There are 15 active community clubs, an active after-school and in-school program, 4-H Day Camps, as well as a robust local military program. This year our county program will be painting the Valley green. Local youth in each city are reaching out to city councils and will be receiving proclamations pronouncing Oct. 1-7 as National 4-H Week. Youth will also be hanging posters celebrating 4-H and the countywide BBQ in local businesses, and working with Tractor Supply to host a fun-filled Farmers' Market at the store on Oct. 7.

Imperial County 4-H offers limitless opportunities for friendship, growth, fun and development. By engaging youth and adults in meaningful partnerships, 4-H helps young people reach their full potential as competent, confident, leaders of character who contribute and are connected to their communities. 4-H is an educational program of the University of California Cooperative Extension. The program combines the efforts of youth, volunteer leaders and University staff and faculty to create a fun, hands-on learning approach to non-formal education.

4-H alumni around the country are always the first to acknowledge the significant, positive impact 4-H had on them as young people; the opportunities and experiences that 4-H provides youth empowers them to become true leaders. In fact, research has shown that young people in 4-H are almost four times as likely to contribute to their communities, and are twice as likely to engage in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs in their free time. In Imperial County, more than 7,000 4-H youth and 275 volunteers from the community are involved in 4-H (there is always room for more).

One of the most anticipated events of National 4-H Week every year is 4-H National Youth Science Day, which sees hundreds of thousands of youth across the nation taking part in the world's largest youth-led science challenge. The exciting theme for this year's challenge is Incredible Wearables. On Oct. 7, youth will use the engineering design process to build a prototype wearable technology that will gather data to help solve a real-world problem. Wearable

technologies are now used in industries around the globe, from education and sport, to health, fashion, entertainment, transportation and communication.

4-H, the nation's largest youth development and empowerment organization, cultivates confident kids who tackle the issues that matter most in their communities right now. In the United States, 4-H programs empower six million young people through the 110 land-grant universities and Cooperative Extension in more than 3,000 local offices serving every county and parish in the country. Outside the United States, independent, country-led 4-H organizations empower one million young people in more than 50 countries. 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). To learn more about 4-H go to www.ceimperial.ucanr.edu/4h, find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Imperialcounty4h and on Twitter @ImperialCo_4h

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