Meet Senior 4-H Member Shelbi McCall as she prepares for life as a 4-H Alumna
From the Florida 4-H Foundation

4-H Alumni and Friends,
As the 2014-2015 Florida 4-H Foundation President, and a 4-H Alumna, I am excited to welcome you all to the new 4-H year! The Florida 4-H Foundation was established more than 50 years ago with the sole purpose of supporting the statewide 4-H Youth Development Program. This endeavor involves developing long-term financial support, as well as increasing the awareness and understanding of 4-H throughout the state. I am honored to be one of the leaders of an organization that truly makes a positive impact on the lives of youth.

The Florida 4-H Foundation is made up of dedicated individuals who all have a common passion for 4-H. I am eager for the year ahead as the Board continues to work in a positive direction to create opportunities that benefit the Florida 4-H program and the 200,000 youth it caters to. I encourage you, as former 4-H members and supporters, to share your ideas on how we can continue to “Make the Best, Better” within our role as a Board of Directors. Thank you for your ideas and your continued support of Florida 4-H!

Dr. Hannah Carter
President, Florida 4-H Club Foundation, Inc.

One Cup of Lemonade

“I REMEMBER BEING 5 YEARS OLD, this little tiny kid at the county fair carrying this huge rabbit. Well, the rabbit fell from out of my arms and I remember yelling to everyone that could hear me; go get it! We all took off after the rabbit. It seemed like everyone was helping. That is what I like most about 4-H. Everyone looks out for you. Everyone cares about each other. I’ve been a member of other organizations but I’ve never been a part of any other that is this much of a community.”

Shelbi McCall has been a member of 4-H since five years young and it was at that very age that she begin learning to be an entrepreneur.

“I sold lemonade, so much so that I eventually saved enough to buy my first dairy calf.”

Shelbi then earned and saved enough money from the dairy calf to buy two beef heifers and just like that Shelbi had developed herself a business model and established herself a business in the beef industry.

“Most of my entrepreneurial skills I have to credit to 4-H. I’ve learned leadership and public speaking skills, and people skills. I appreciate that 4-H has provided those skills for me.”

Recognizing that she is on the verge of becoming a 4-H Alumni, Shelbi wants to keep the community she fell in love with at age five together.

“There are several people I look up to in the dairy and beef industries and I humbly hope to be able to be a resource for 4-H youth as I become an alumna.

“4-H is full of career development opportunities and no matter what you choose to go into, you are always going to need public speaking skills, interviewing skills, and people skills. I appreciate that 4-H has provided those skills for me.”

“I am looking forward to interacting with 4-H alumni and getting lots of wisdom. It is obvious to me that the future of agriculture; the future leaders are coming out of this organization.”

To anyone who may be working to start your own business I would say start small, one cup at a time. 4-H is full of career and getting lots of wisdom.

“It is the heartbeat of our economy and culture is the center of agriculturalists. “Six generations of our family have been involved in the beef industry of some sort. I believe in the importance of agriculture, I believe agriculture is the center of our economy and it is the heartbeat of this organization.”

Shelbi believes that 4-H provides value to any future career.

Join us at the 2015 4-H SHOWCASE Saturday, February 7, 2015 Florida State Fairgrounds, Tampa, FL
Today, 4-H’ers are stepping up to make positive changes in our communities, across the country, and all over the world. But behind every success story, there is a mentor—someone just like you. As a 4-H volunteer, you can share your skills and experience to help transform a new generation of confident young leaders.

Through the ability of alumni and friends to give back to the Florida 4-H program, we are able to continue the strong programming efforts at the local, county, district, and state levels.

Barbara Nagle began her 4-H career as a parent volunteer in Brevard County more than 20 years ago, and has continued on in various roles such as Horse Judging coach, Advisory member, and mentor at both the district and state levels. Barbara has been a driving force at Advisory meet competitions, proving she has an excellent ability to help individuals to Florida State Championship titles in the great outdoors. She has been highly respected by her peers and is known for her ability to speak to the youth, and not at them. Colan has a passion for teaching youth all about the talk, but he walks the walk. He is well known for his ability to speak to the youth, and not at them. Colan has a passion for teaching youth all about the 4-H and the great outdoors. He has his own way of connecting fun with food, family, and friends. He can often be found sitting on the dock, eating ham sandwiches and sharing jokes with the kids.

Mr. Coody has been employed by Union County Extension for twenty years, but has been a 4-H volunteer for much longer than that. Not only is he being recognized for his dedication to 4-H in his local community of Lake Butler, but for his guidance and support to new 4-H Agents.

Barbara Nagle

Barbara Nagle has the ability to change the lives of the youth she coaches by teaching them valuable leadership skills to youth.

Colan Coody

It has been said that Colan Coody doesn’t just talk the talk, but he walks the walk. He is well known for his ability to speak to the youth, and not at them. Colan has a passion for teaching youth all about 4-H and the great outdoors. He has his own way of connecting fun with food, family, and friends. He can often be found sitting on the dock, eating ham sandwiches and sharing jokes with the kids.

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Bobbi Watson

Bobbi Watson has been an active 4-H Member and volunteer in Putnam County for 23 years, fulfilling roles as co-leader, organizational leader, middle management volunteer, and has been named ‘Volunteer of the Year’ multiple times. To aid in her mission to provide opportunities to all youth, regardless of family financial status, Bobbi organizes an annual fundraising event to provide scholarships that enable youth to attend camp as well as support local awards and recognition programming. Bobbi Watson serves in roles on Putnam County Advisory Committee and County 4-H Association, where she always brings in new ideas for the program. She can always be counted on to promote 4-H wherever she goes. Ms. Bobbi Watson is an example for others to follow and represents a volunteer that is truly the “heart of 4-H.”

Shelda Wilkens

Shelda Wilkens was a 4-H Agent in Seminole County for 26 years, attributing her success to a “hands off approach,” which may have seemed a little unorthodox to some, but it made her one of the state’s most successful 4-H Agents. She has received IFAS Gold and Silver Image Awards and countless FAE4-HA Search for Excellence and Communicator Awards. Over her career she was able to raise over 1 million dollars in funding for awards, camps, scholarships and trips to participate in regional and national competitions, proving she has an excellent ability to get local businesses and private donors to contribute to the 4-H program, thus increasing resources for youth. Shelda had a hand in starting the 4-H/ Tropicana Public Speaking program in Seminole County, which today reaches approximately 85% of all 6th graders in the county. Shelda has always been highly respected by her peers and is known for giving positive support and mentorship to new 4-H Agents and decision making, communication, and leadership skills to youth.
4-H Homecoming

The inaugural 4-H Homecoming Alumni and Friends Reception began an hour before the 4-H University (formerly known as Congress) Awards and Recognition Banquet, and was a huge success! On Thursday, July 31, 2014 over 100 Alumni and Friends of 4-H from around the state gathered in the Reitz Union Arredondo Room on the University of Florida campus. The event was a wonderful opportunity to see old friends and colleagues and make new connections based on a common passion for 4-H.

There were faces there that had seen the very first Florida 4-H Congress as youth, 50 years ago! Others included original Florida 4-H Hall of Fame members, as well as those being inducted that very night, 4-H events, ranging from 70 years ago to present time. They were able to point out friends and reminiscence with each other about memories at camp, Congress, Legislature, National 4-H Conference, and Poultry Judging competitions. The program began with a warm welcome from the Interim Florida 4-H Program Leader, Dr. Brian Myers, and proceeded onto individually recognizing each graduating 4-H member and presenting them with their Senior Pin. The room was buzzing with excitement and pride as 60 new individuals were welcomed into the Florida 4-H Alumni family. It is our hope that this event becomes a tradition and serves as an occasion that all look forward to attending each and every year.

Throughout the reception, alumni and friends could view tabletop photos that were from past 4-H events, ranging from 70 years ago to present time. They were able to point out friends and reminisce with each other about memories at camp, Congress, Legislature, National 4-H Conference, and Poultry Judging competitions. The program began with a warm welcome from the Interim Florida 4-H Program Leader, Dr. Brian Myers, and proceeded onto individually recognizing each graduating 4-H member and presenting them with their Senior Pin. The room was buzzing with excitement and pride as 60 new individuals were welcomed into the Florida 4-H Alumni family. It is our hope that this event becomes a tradition and serves as an occasion that all look forward to attending each and every year.

A Bold Young Leader

Every year Earth Island Institute’s New Leaders Initiative recognizes young environmental activists from North America for their outstanding efforts to promote ecological sustainability and social justice. This year Sarasota County 4-H Alumnus Sean Russell is being recognized for launching an educational campaign about marine debris.

When he was 16, he created the Stow It-Don’t Throw It Project, an effort to combat the negative impact of marine debris; especially discarded fishing line and gear on marine wildlife. Youth involved with the project turn re-purposed tennis ball containers into fishing line recycling bins and distribute them to anglers while educating them about the importance of proper disposal of their line. Since its launch, the project has expanded to engage youth and partner organizations in 10 states. In 2011 Russell launched the Youth Ocean Conservation Summit at the Mote Lab. This annual summit provides youth with the skills needed to launch their own conservation projects and has inspired hundreds of students across the country to get involved in ocean conservation. A series of satellite summits are starting this year, beginning with the National Aquarium and the Seattle Aquarium.

Sean is being honored as a bold young leader at the 15th annual Brower Youth Awards.

Impacting the Nation

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Caleb Cheng, Palm Beach County 4-H Alumnus has spent the last year serving on the National 4-H Council’s Board of Trustees.

What are your expectations going forward?
My passion for service is only growing, and I plan to take the skills I attained through my leadership experiences in Florida 4-H and the national level in hopes to positively impact a wider array of youth across the country and possibly internationally.

What drives your passion for service?
Many people today fail to realize that service to their community not only benefits those that receive the service, but those that give it. Service has taught me the importance of leadership for the development of crucial life skills and that I can truly make a positive impact on the world around me. Florida 4-H has not only enabled me to serve others, but it has provided an opportunity to develop important skills that are not taught in school. Communication, commitment, and confidence are among the skills I have acquired in experiences serving others. 4-H has taught me that I can truly make an impact on my community in ways I could have never imagined.

What issues did you find yourself gravitating to most?
As a varsity state athlete in two sports and a national USA Water Polo champion, health education is particularly important to me. With childhood obesity on the rise, I feel it is necessary to educate youth on healthy lifestyles. As a trained United Health Care Teen Ambassador, I taught UHC health lessons across the state and worked at the UHC Teen Health Summit to educate youth on the importance of healthy lifestyles.
Youngest Woman Elected

At 23, she’s youngest woman elected to Florida Legislature
Jennifer Sullivan, who was 15 when she organized a Lake County 4-H project that gathered more than 3 tons of peanut butter for Central Florida food banks, will become the youngest female legislator in Florida history and the youngest of any gender since 1996, when Adam Putnam, then 22, won his first statehouse race.

How did you become involved with 4-H? When I was 9 years old, I was at a friend’s house and she was getting ready to go to their first 4-H club meeting and asked if I wanted to join. When I asked her what 4-H was, she said she didn’t really know but her mom wanted her to go. I tagged along and was a 4-H member for the next 9 years.

What was your most memorable moment or experience during your time as a 4-H member? I had no experience speaking in public and during the speaking portion of my demonstration, I stumbled over a word. I was so mortified, I ran out of the room in tears! Two years later, at the age of 12, I decided that I would try again. I made it all the way to the state-level and ended up winning 1st place!

What was the most valuable thing you learned during your time in 4-H? The importance of investing in my community. I was homeschooled and raised with very strong values, but 4-H taught me how to really get out and make connections with the community and to give back. I started a program to collect peanut butter for local food banks and the community became very involved. We ended up collecting about 17,000 jars of peanut butter.

Who or what sparked your interest in politics? My 4-H Agent at the time, Sarah Hensley, encouraged me to attend 4-H Day at the Capitol in Tallahassee. After attending, I became involved in 4-H programs that taught political processes, such as Legislature and County Council. It was always so much fun to write and debate ‘mock’ bills, it was so exciting to be able to see the place where real bills were passed and meet my local Representative. I would not be where I am today if it weren’t for 4-H.

What is the most rewarding part of working in politics? The most rewarding part is getting to meet new people. I really enjoy making personal connections and helping people. I am one of 19 million people in Florida, so when I have the opportunity to make a difference in someone’s life, even if it’s just helping them carry in their groceries, that’s the most rewarding thing.

What message would you give to senior 4-Hers about their future and continued involvement? Do everything that you can within 4-H – go to events that you’ve never been to. The program teaches so much, including many life skills that are not taught in school. I encourage current 4-H members and alumni to use what you learn in 4-H to go out and do great things.

2014-2015 Florida 4-H Events

October

17-19 1st Executive Board

November

8 State Marine & Aquatic Photo Contest
8 State Marine Ecology Event
22 4-H Day at Gator Football

December

6 Horse Judging School

January

9-10 Livestock Eval & Meats Judging Clinic

23 Bartow Fall Classic Dairy Calf Auction

16-18 2nd Executive Board
19 Hog & Ham Workshop
21-23 Youth Development Institute

February

5-16 Florida State Fair (FSF) 2015
7 (FSF) Florida 4-H Showcase