



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National 4-H Volunteer Initiative Expands Through \$1.5 Million Monsanto Donation

Grant to Support Call for New 4-H Volunteers

CHEVY CHASE, MD— (June 18, 2009) National 4-H Council has received a \$1.5 million award from the Monsanto Company to drive the expansion of the National 4-H Volunteer Initiative. This new grant will fuel the expansion of vital volunteer training programs and fund the development of new volunteer recruitment and retention strategies. This announcement also launches a new national call for 4-H volunteers to lend their time in order to further positive youth development nationwide.

The National 4-H Volunteer Initiative provides 4-H's network of more than 514,000 existing volunteers with extensive hands-on training experience. 4-H volunteers work in their communities to mentor youth and provide opportunities to learn leadership, citizenship and important life skills. In addition to training, the initiative also hosts regional and state 4-H volunteer forum events that allow 4-H volunteers to network and learn about new 4-H program information and share best practices. The information and learning gathered at these forums can then be implemented by the volunteers back in their local 4-H community programs.

"Volunteers have always been the strong backbone of the 4-H system, and in today's tough economic times, volunteerism is more important than ever," said Donald T. Floyd, Jr., National 4-H Council president and CEO. "Generous partners like Monsanto continue to make it possible for 4-H to thrive in today's economy and to continue build our extensive network of well-trained volunteers, ensuring that our nation's youth have the positive mentoring, guidance and hands-on learning they need to become future workforce leaders and active citizens."

A unique aspect of the National 4-H Volunteer Initiative is the development of a national 4-H online volunteer management system. *Everyone Ready*[®] is a new Web-based system that provides 4-H volunteer specialists and 4-H county educators with the resources they need to efficiently manage and recruit new volunteers. Through *Everyone Ready*[®], 4-H county educators can use the "Best Practices in Volunteer Recruitment and Retention" survey to identify and recruit future volunteers via the latest market research. This innovative system will be unveiled at the National Conference on Volunteerism in April 2009.

"As a 4-H volunteer myself, I am proud that Monsanto can continue our strong relationship with 4-H," said Carl M. Casale, executive vice president, Monsanto. "At this time, we ask Americans around the nation to join in and become a 4-H volunteer to mentor the youth in your community. Your time is needed to help guide today's youth so we can build a strong, skilled future American workforce."

“We are proud to support the dedication of 4-H volunteers across the country as they help youth become active citizens and community leaders,” said Ernesto Fajardo, vice president of Monsanto's U.S. commercial division. “As a company 100 percent focused on agriculture, Monsanto is committed to investing in our youth who represent the future of the agriculture industry.”

About 4-H:

4-H is a community of six million young people across America learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills. National 4-H Council is the private sector, non-profit partner of National 4-H Headquarters (USDA). The 4-H programs are implemented by the 106 Land Grant Universities and the Cooperative Extension System through their 3,100 local Extension offices across the country. Learn more about 4-H at www.4-h.org.

About Monsanto:

Monsanto Company is a leading global provider of technology-based solutions and agricultural products that improve farm productivity and food quality. Monsanto remains focused on enabling both small-holder and large-scale farmers to produce more from their land while conserving more of our world's natural resources such as water and energy. To learn more about our business and our commitments, please visit: <http://www.monsanto.com>.

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For an image to accompany this story, please click here:
<https://www.yousendit.com/download/cmczRFFRUzhiV3dLSkE9PQ>

Photo Caption: "From left to right: Donald T. Floyd, Jr., National 4-H Council president and CEO and Ernesto Fajardo, vice president of Monsanto's U.S. commercial division."