



# 4-H Volunteer Recruitment & Retention

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## The Path To Get Here

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- NIFA and National 4-H Council partnered to commission a comprehensive national study among current and prospective 4-H volunteers.
- Harris Interactive was hired to conduct the two-phased research project:
  - One-on-one telephone interviews with volunteer specialists
  - Online focus group sessions with current 4-H volunteers
  - Survey of volunteers (both current and prospective volunteers)
- The resulting work was then tested via telephone focus group session with volunteer specialists.



# Goals of the Project

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- The research sought to explore a number of important areas:
  - What drives people to become volunteers
  - What does a positive volunteer experience look like
  - What attachment is there to volunteering with 4-H (emotional and rational factors)
  - What aspects of the 4-H mission appeal to potential volunteers
  - Which segments of current and potential volunteers are most promising (and which are not)



**This Work Was Made Possible By:**

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MONSANTO







# 4-H Volunteer Segmentation

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# Methodology

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- This survey was conducted online within the United States
- Field Dates: August 16-September 10, 2010
- Totals: 2771 total completes split into three groups:
  - 4-H Sample (N=1024)
  - Current volunteers (N=1506), U.S. adults 18+ who have volunteered in the last year.
  - Future volunteers (N=241), U.S. adults 18+ who plan to volunteer in the next year.
- Sample for current and future volunteers came from the Harris Poll online database and were weighted for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income to be representative of the US general population of adults 18+. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.
- The 4-H sample came directly from 33 state 4-H programs.



# Executive Summary

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- Current and future volunteers tend to volunteer for the same kinds of organizations as do 4-H volunteers, though in smaller numbers. Yet, these groups volunteer less than 4-H volunteers do, and less than they'd reportedly like to volunteer.
- While 4-H, current and future volunteers values related to volunteering are similar, 4-H'ers actual experience comes much closer to that ideal than does the volunteering experience of current volunteers.
- Majorities of all groups agreed that organizations focusing on “life skills” would be most effective in benefiting the country, employers and the economy. Further, relatively few agree that young people today are learning the life skills they need to reach their full potential.



# Executive Summary

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- Familiarity with 4-H is low compared to other organizations in the competitive set, however favorability and trust were measured closer to the competitive set.
- Top of mind descriptions of 4-H continue to reflect the historical origins of the organization – with majorities of current and future volunteers citing “agriculture/animal husbandry” first.
  - In contrast, 4-Hers first mention the focus on education and not the content of that education.
- The proportion who are likely to volunteer for 4-H nearly doubles after learning a little about the organization



# Conclusions/Recommendations

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- Focus on getting the right message out about the organization – more education about **how and why** you do what you do and less on the specific subject areas
- Leverage “**word of mouth**” as method of recruitment – via current, and future participants as well as local organizations, churches, schools, etc.



# Conclusions/Recommendations

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- Leverage the current national discussion on education - position 4-H as an organization/way for young people to **develop life skills** that everyone believes are important and needed and relatively few actually think young people are getting
- Provide more opportunities for **episodic volunteering** – current volunteers more likely to describe positive volunteering as “giving back to the needy” perhaps suggesting a shorter term, instant impact event (i.e. serving meals in a soup kitchen) rather than having a longer-term impact. Diverse opportunities may help get people in the door to learn about 4-H.
  - Steer people into different kinds of opportunities based on their interests and motivations





# Volunteer Segmentation

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# Segmentation Parameters

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- Attitudes toward 4-H
  - Familiarity
  - Favorability
- Skill sets
- Motivation for volunteering





# Recommendations

| <i>Segment</i> | <i>How familiar?</i> | <i>How favorable?</i> | <i>How motivated?</i> | <i>How much do they volunteer already?</i> | <i>Our Recommendation</i>           |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1              | High                 | High                  | Medium                | High                                       | Recruit for leadership/volunteerism |
| 2              | Medium               | Very Low              | Medium                | High                                       | Recruit for volunteerism            |
| 3              | Medium               | Medium                | Low                   | Medium                                     | Recruit for volunteerism            |
| 4              | Low                  | Low                   | Low                   | Medium                                     | Recruit/Educate                     |
| 5              | Low                  | Very Low              | Low                   | Low  | Educate                             |
| 6              | Low                  | Low                   | Low                   | Low  | Ignore                              |
| 7              | Low                  | Low                   | Very Low              | Very Low                                   | Ignore                              |
| 8              | Very Low             | Very Low              | Very Low              | Low  | Ignore                              |



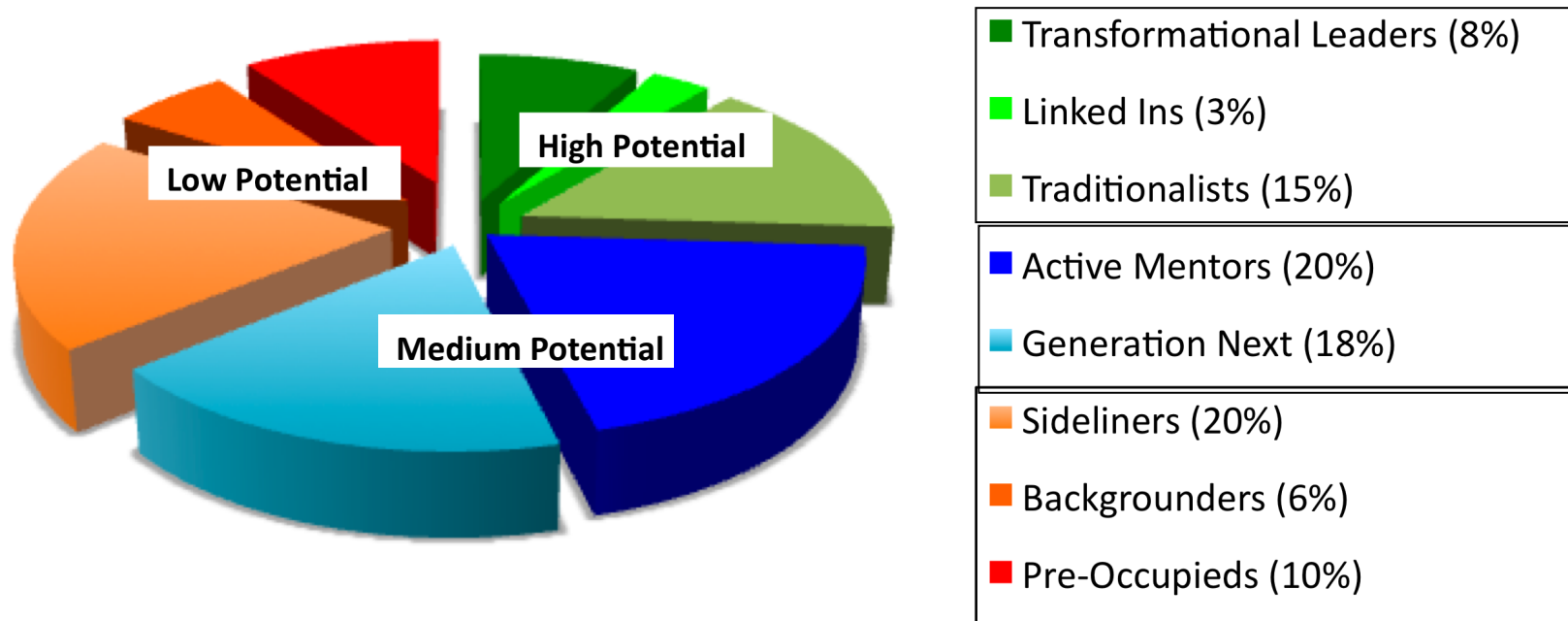
# Volunteer Engagement & Activation Resource (VEAR)





# Volunteer Segments

## % of Volunteer Population



Source: Harris Interactive Segmentation Study, September 2010



# Volunteer Engagement & Activation Resource

## Prime Targets

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### COMMON MOTIVATORS

- Teach kids enduring life skills
- Have a positive impact on the next generation
- Apply what I've learned through hands-on experience

### KEY MESSAGES

- You can have a positive impact on the next generation in your community by sharing your experience and knowledge.
- Help fuel the extraordinary efforts of our youth by joining the Revolution of Responsibility



# Segment Details

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# Transformational Leaders



## Primary Motivators

- Want to be leaders/mentors for future generations
- Like working with young people
- Believe in the importance of teaching life skills
- Like having longer-term engagements
- Want to build relationships with kids
- Like to set an example

## 4-H Relationship

- Extremely familiar with 4-H (72%)
- Extremely favorable to what 4-H offers (70%)
- 1/3 say it never occurred to them to volunteer with 4-H

## Demographics

- 70% Female and 49% are 50+
- Live in urban/suburban areas
- Spend a lot of time volunteering already (26.7 hrs./month)
- Most ethnically diverse segment (24% Black, 9% Hispanic)

## Lifestyle Interpretation

|                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Experiences over things     | Active lifestyles              |
| Care about multiple causes  | Highly organized               |
| Natural leader, responsible | Invest in what they believe in |
| Connected/in the know       |                                |



# Transformational Leaders

8%

## Primary Motivators

- Want to be leaders/mentors for future generations
- Like working with young people
- Believe in the importance of teaching life skills
- Like having longer-term engagements
- Want to build relationships with kids
- Like to set an example

## Key Messages

- Commit to leading the next generation by teaching them how to make a meaningful contribution
- Join the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community and every community in the country

## Touch Points\*

**Community:** Libraries, church, restaurants, grocery stores, gardening stores, parks

**Online:** MapQuest, photo share sites, recipe sites, medical sites, travel sites

**TV:** Weather channel, FOX news, CNN, Food Network, Lifetime, HGTV, Hallmark, NCIS

**Magazines:** AARP, Better Homes and Gardens, Good Housekeeping

**Other:** AM radio, direct mail to home

\*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of women 50+ who have volunteered in the past 12 months)



# Linked Ins



## Primary Motivators

- Like to share their experiences/make an impact
- Want to apply what they've learned
- Like action and fun
- Inclined to episodic and virtual volunteering

## 4-H Relationship

- Low familiarity with 4-H
- 62% have volunteered with youth organizations in the past
- Interest in 4-H rises when learn more about organization

## Demographics

- 58% Male
- Highest educated (84% college+) – skills in SET
- Highest income segment
- High concentration of <50-year-olds
- Highest representation of Hispanics at 16%
- Already volunteering about 22 hours/month

## Lifestyle Interpretation

- Highly engaged parents
- Attend church regularly
- Life revolves around their children
- Volunteer at child's school
- Draw on own childhood
- High value on family time





# Linked Ins

3%

## Primary Motivators

- Like to share their experiences/make an impact
- Want to apply what they've learned
- Like action and fun
- Inclined to episodic and virtual volunteering

## Key Messages

- Apply your (SET) passions to the next generation
- Make a contribution for positive change in your community
- Take an active part in the Revolution of Responsibility in your community

## Touch Points\*

**Community:** Restaurants, fitness centers, parent events, kids sports, home shows

**Online:** Facebook, YouTube, Weather.com, Google Maps/MapQuest, Amazon, Wikipedia, gmail, ESPN

**TV:** Discovery, History, ESPN/ESPN2, TBS, TNT, Comedy Channel

\*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of men 25-49 with college degrees who have volunteered in the past 12 months)



# Traditionalists



## Primary Motivators

Interested in learning new skills  
Like working with different generations

## 4-H Relationship

Average familiarity with 4-H (53%)  
Above average favorability to what 4-H offers (62%)  
4-H is already highly visible in their community

## Demographics

32% rural residents  
51% are 50+  
66% Female  
Least educated segment (46% HS grad or less)  
Work/job responsibilities are an obstacle for volunteering  
but do so 18 hrs./month

## Lifestyle Interpretation

Practical people  
Blue-collar  
Economic pressure

Bargain shoppers  
Willing to roll up sleeves  
Community is important



# Traditionalists

15%

## • Primary Motivators

- Interested in learning new skills
- Like working with different generations

## • Key Messages

- Learn, grow and work with the next generation
- Join the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community

## Touch Points\*

**Community:** Libraries, church, restaurants, grocery stores, gardening stores, parks

**Online:** MapQuest, photo share sites, recipe sites, medical sites, travel sites

**TV:** Weather channel, FOX news, CNN, Food Network, Lifetime, HGTV, Hallmark, NCIS

**Magazines:** AARP, Better Homes and Gardens, Good Housekeeping

**Other:** AM radio, direct mail to home

\*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of women 50+ yrs who have volunteered in the past 12 months)



# Active Mentors



## Primary Motivators

Want to pass on the skills they've learned in life

## 4-H Relationship

Average familiarity with 4-H (47%)

Average favorability to what 4-H offers (49%)

## Demographics

Fairly equally balanced men/women

Oldest segment (52% are 50+)

Many retired (31%)

Beginning to have more time to volunteer than others

Average volunteering 17 hrs./month

35% are rural residents

## Lifestyle Interpretation

Experience has given them strong opinions

Concerned about kids today – don't have skills needed

Active grandparents  
Loyal church-goers



# Active Mentors

20%

## • Primary Motivators

- Want to pass on the skills they've learned in life

## • Key Messages

- Leave a legacy of responsibility in your community
- Use your skills to push our country forward
- Empower kids with your knowledge by joining the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community

## Touch Points\*

**Community:** Church, community banks, gardening stores, parks, traditional American events, hair salons, barber shops, insurance agencies

**TV:** Weather Channel, Fox News, CNN, Lifetime, Hallmark, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

**Magazines:** AARP, financial magazines

**Online:** None

**Other:** AM radio, direct mail to home, coupons

\*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of men 50+ yrs who have volunteered in the past 12 months)



# Generation Next



## Primary Motivators

Want to teach skills to kids/be a mentor

## 4-H Relationship

Not very familiar with 4-H (30%)

## Demographics

70% Female

Youngest segment (41% 18-29 yrs.) (40% 30-49 yrs.)

On the verge of starting families, many students in this group

Fairly diverse group (15% Black, 12% Hispanic)

Highest concentration of urban dwellers (35%)

Low volunteering pattern (12 hrs./month)

## Lifestyle Interpretation

Parents-in-training

Working at first “real” job

Trying to figure it all out

Have many priorities

Believe the future will be better than the past

Altruistic –improve the world

Care about a variety of issues



# Generation Next

18%

## • Primary Motivators

- Want to teach skills to kids/be a mentor

## • Key Messages

- Use your skills to help kids explore and discover what matters to them so they can make an impact today and for the future
- Use your experience to fuel the Revolution of Responsibility happening right now in your community

## Touch Points\*

**Community:** church, school related activities, parades, grocery stores, fitness centers, pet stores/vets

**Online:** Facebook, YouTube, Weather.com, MapQuest, Amazon, Wikipedia

**TV:** Food Network, A&E, Lifetime, ABC Family, TLC, HGTV, Disney, E!, Academy Awards

**Magazines:** People, Better Homes & Gardens

**Radio:** Contemporary and urban FM stations

\*Source: MRI Fall 2010 (activities/interests of women 25-49 who have volunteered in the past 12 months)





# Sideliners



## Primary Motivators

Not very interested in youth-related organizations  
Prefer episodic volunteering  
Don't believe volunteering can open doors to opportunities

## 4-H Relationship

Low familiarity with 4-H (45%)  
Low favorability of 4-H (44%)  
Committed to what they are already doing  
Lowest SET skills

## Demographics

Low volunteering pattern (12 hrs./month)  
60% Female, 56% are <50 years old  
70% White  
Lower education levels (44% HS or less)

## Lifestyle Interpretation

Weekend volunteers  
Volunteering is social activity  
Giving back is a "duty"  
Having fun is a priority





# Backgrounders



## Primary Motivators

- Not very interested in youth-related organizations
- Not at all interested in mentoring
- Uninterested in learning new skills through volunteering
- Don't believe volunteering can open doors to opportunities

## 4-H Relationship

- Low familiarity with 4-H (39%)
- Low favorability of 4-H (42%)

## Demographics

- Lowest rate of volunteering (6 hrs./month)
- Highest concentration of rural residents (37%)
- Least diverse ethnically (81% White)
- 55% Male, 45% Female
- 47% are age 30 to 49, 47% are 50+

## Lifestyle Interpretation

- Live in a small town
- Self-sufficient
- Focused on neighbors
- Less religious

- Low interest in volunteer attributes
- Many are retired



# Pre-Occupieds



## Primary Motivators

Not very interested in youth-related organizations  
Not interested in mentoring  
Not motivated by being involved in youth hands-on learning

## 4-H Relationship

Low familiarity with 4-H (19%)  
Low favorability of 4-H  
Committed to what they are already doing

## Demographics

Low volunteering pattern (11 hrs./month)  
Highest post-graduate educated (24% post-graduate)  
65% White  
64% male, 59% are <49 years old

## Lifestyle Interpretation

Demanding jobs  
Pulled in multiple directions  
No regular schedules – hard for them to commit

Less inclined to support children's activities



## How To Use This Resource

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- Use the **segments** to identify the types of volunteers you are attracting
- Let the provided **key messages** for each segment guide the direction you take with each person you are trying to recruit
- Focus your time on recruiting **the most promising candidates**
- Blend the knowledge provided by this research with the National 4-H **brand campaign** – *Join the Revolution of Responsibility!*



# JOIN | THE REVOLUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY





## The Answer

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Young people in 4-H are uniquely prepared to **step up** to the challenges of a complex, changing world.

# **Brand Essence Video**

# Portland Video



# Campaign Materials



AL CONTACT INFORMATION HERE



[www.4-H.org/revolution](http://www.4-H.org/revolution)

# JOIN THE REVOLUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY





# How to use these materials

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- Recruit volunteers
  - Talk about the impact volunteers can have on youth and on their communities
  - Explain how volunteers can “Join” to help positively impact their communities
  - Share the chance to be part of an active movement across the country
- Embed these video(s) on your website, share them at events



## Our Next Steps

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- Formally launch the **Volunteer Engagement & Activation Resource (VEAR)** and accompanying web site.
- Begin work to develop the following materials to continue to aid in the recruitment and retention of 4-H volunteers:
  - Provide “elevator speeches” for each segment
  - Develop a “Frequently Asked Questions”
  - Provide webinar training sessions to discuss how to use the research and recommendations
  - And more...



# Where to Download This Resource?

[www.4-H.org/information-for/educators-professionals](http://www.4-H.org/information-for/educators-professionals)

The screenshot shows the 4-H website homepage. At the top left is the 4-H logo. To its right is a navigation menu with links for 'Contact us', 'Donate', 'Find 4-H', 'Shop', and 'Search'. Below the logo is a large photo of a smiling young boy with curly hair. To the right of the photo is the heading 'Welcome to 4-H' followed by a paragraph of text describing the organization's mission and a link to 'Learn more about 4-H positive youth development programs'. Below this is a green navigation bar with five tabs: 'HOME', 'ABOUT 4-H', 'PROGRAMS', 'GET INVOLVED', and 'RESOURCE LIBRARY'. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column is titled 'What's New' and lists three items: 'New Robotics Curriculum Order Today!', '4-H National Mentoring Program funded by OJJDP Learn More', and '4-H National Youth Science Day Learn More'. The middle column has a 'Donate to 4-H' section with a call to action 'Donate Today >' and a 'Find Your Local 4-H' section with a search box containing the text '\_e\_XT5w' and the instruction 'Find a 4-H office near you.'. The right column is titled 'Info For...' and lists five categories: 'Parents & Youth', 'Volunteers', '4-H Professionals', 'Donors & Sponsors', and 'Alumni & Friends'. At the bottom right of the page is a photo of a group of people holding a banner.



# Questions?

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**What additional materials or resources can National 4-H Council look to create to help you and your staff?**

**Other questions?**



**4-H is the youth development program of our nation's Cooperative Extension System.**