



# The Arkansas

## 4-H Foundation Newsletter

Vol. 1, No. 1.

### Arkansas 4-H scholarships drive students to excel

By Benjamin Waldrum

LITTLE ROCK – Much like the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child,” Arkansas 4-H mentors and educators are dedicated to making the best better by fostering opportunities through college scholarships.

Each year, Arkansas 4-H youth receive from \$40,000 to \$60,000 in college scholarships at the state level for their 4-H work, said Dr. Brad Davis, executive director of the Arkansas 4-H Foundation. It’s a number he’d like to see go up.

“The more we can raise toward scholarships, the more kids we can help,” he said. “My personal goal for the Foundation is to give more than \$1 million a year in



Steely receives the Governor’s award trophy from Anne Sortor, interim assistant director for 4-H in Arkansas.

scholarships.”

Sydney Steely, a Pike County native, won the 2009 Arkansas 4-H Governor’s Award, which comes with a \$1,000 scholarship. She credited her success to hard work.

Steely said 4-H gave her opportunities to succeed and grow through volunteering, networking and pursuing projects. She, in turn, plans to give back to 4-H.

“It’s my turn now to help the organization grow and to make sure that other 4-H’ers have the opportunities I’ve had over the years,” she said.

Steely encouraged other 4-H’ers to set goals and work towards achieving them. “Don’t ever give up, because you never know what is going to happen,” she said. 🍀

### Note from the Executive Director

I have had the privilege to be the Executive Director of the Arkansas 4-H Foundation for the past two years. The Arkansas 4-H Foundation is what makes Arkansas better. The C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in Ferndale, west of Little Rock, is the nation’s premier 4-H conference center. The center will soon be celebrating its 30th year anniversary. The multi-million dollar facility was provided by and for loyal 4-H members, 4-H alumni, 4-H parents, 4-H leaders, and 4-H donors. The 4-H Center has grown dramatically over the years, thanks to the loyal supporters such as you. I would like to thank you for your support of the Arkansas 4-H Foundation to make the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center a reality.



C.A. Vines 4-H Center

Sincerely,

Brad Davis Ed.D  
Executive Director



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# National 4-H Congress opens eyes to opportunities

By Benjamin Waldrum

LITTLE ROCK – Imagine a chance to represent Arkansas on a national stage while analyzing current issues alongside the country’s best and brightest.

This Thanksgiving, 42 Arkansas 4-H’ers will get to do just that.

The National 4-H Congress serves as the capstone event in many young leaders’ 4-H experience as they prepare for the next stage in their lives. Held annually in Atlanta, congress exemplifies the educational philosophy of 4-H: learn by doing.

“It’s a great opportunity for the kids,” said Brad Davis, executive director of the Arkansas 4-H Foundation.

Congress is the pinnacle of the 4-H experience for many members.

Delegates interact with national community leaders, speakers, and educators in a variety of discussion groups and seminars addressing current youth issues.

Arkansas 4-H Foundation seeks funding from loyal donors that pays for the delegates’ transportation, food, and lodging. “We’re the only state that does that,” said Davis. “I think it shows the state cares about sending outstanding 4-H’ers to National 4-H Congress,” he said.

For many, the congress is an eye-opening experience.

Taylor Gohman, 17, a Russellville native, attended last year and said the congress helped him branch out of his

comfort zone.

He was one of 13 delegates selected nationwide for the National Youth Leadership Team, whose members address congress directly. “It’s really neat when the assembly’s in your hands and everyone’s watching you,” he said.


Gohman will graduate Russellville High School in 2010 and plans to attend the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, where he will major in biology with a possible minor in Spanish, math or music.

Victoria Bell, 17, a Mena native, will attend this year. “I think that being selected to attend the National 4-H Congress is an absolutely amazing opportunity,” she said.

Bell will graduate Mena High School in 2010 and plans to attend Washington University in St. Louis, where she will major in international relations—with a focus on the Middle East. “4-H helped open my eyes to how big the world is,” she said.

Congress provides youth ages 14-19 an educational and cross-cultural experience that exceeds what any state independently can provide.

It’s a reminder that 4-H encompasses everyone, said Gohman.

“It doesn’t matter about your past, but where the future will lead you,” he said. “4-H has opened me up to a more realistic world.” 

## Arkansas 4-H Foundation Newsletter Info

We’ve created this newsletter to let you know what is happening at the Arkansas 4-H Foundation. Whether you are a former 4-H member, former or current 4-H leader, former or current 4-H supporter, or someone who cares about the 4-H program, we hope you will enjoy the newsletter. If you wish to continue to get information from the Arkansas 4-H Foundation, please mail in the enclosed response form or go online to [www.arkansas4hfoundation.org](http://www.arkansas4hfoundation.org).

### Did you know?

Arkansas 4-H awards  
between \$40,000 and  
\$60,000 in scholarships  
each year?