GAE4-HA Outstanding Volunteer Leader Program

Do not exceed three page application

County Chattooga

Name of Person(s) Submitting Award Rebecca Thomas

Address 10011 Commerce Street, Summerville, GA 30747

Telephone 706-857-0744 District NW

*Total 4-H Enrollment 1,109 *Total Volunteer Enrollment 32

(*For information only, not a measure for the award.)

Please List methods of recruitment for volunteers. **(20%)**

Volunteers are our nation's most precious resources. Chattooga County 4-H Youth Development Program seeks out energized, enthusiastic volunteers. Ways we recruit are these highly motivated adults are:

Chamber of Commerce - 2014 the Chamber of Commerce underwent a restructure allowing individuals and Businesses to join at a reduced cost, if they donate 50 hours of service to the community. Chattooga County 4-H is the top volunteer opportunity. This allows community officials, dignitaries, and adults an opportunity to serve and partner with youth for the betterment of the community.

Parents - We emphasize that the Chattooga County 4-H Program is a family program and encourage all to become involved. We have a list which highlights areas and activities which we need help with, that they can volunteer for. This is done through the monthly newsletter.

Program Development Team - This past year our PDT assisted in recruiting and seeking out some awesome volunteer leaders. There is a recruitment committee which assists in community involvement and recruitment through one-on-one meetings, Ag week programming, and displays at community functions, to name a few.

Word of Mouth - this is still one of our strongest recruitment tools. Keeping our volunteers excited and enthusiastic and the rest is up to them; let's just say "it spreads like wild fire!"

Please describe volunteer leadership roles utilized in your county. **(20%)**

I am very fortunate to have volunteers serving in the following educational roles:

Junior Master Gardeners – Three Master Gardener Extension Volunteers, conduct bi-monthly JMG classes with 400+ 4th grade students. Held at 3 elementary schools, conducting a total of 42 classroom programs
Judging Team Coaches – Cotton Boll and Consumer Judging Team and Poultry Judging Teams are led and coached completely by two volunteer leaders.
PDT- Program Development Team - Utilize 11 volunteers, two being screened 4-H volunteers, to serve on our program development team. This team has secured over $3,000 in sponsorships over the past 2 years.
Camp / Conference Leaders – 9 parents, teachers and other adults volunteer their time for overnight trips chaperoning 4-H'ers, with one 7th grade teacher who signs up for junior camp each year.
County Council- Assisted by two volunteer leaders, which rotate the activities monthly.
Judges & Classes - Many volunteers assist with judging at District Project Achievement on the District Level. Volunteers also assist with demonstration workshops to prepare 4-H'ers for DPA. Volunteers also teach specialty classes through out the year depending on their personal skills and expertise, i.e. etiquette (State & National Participants), Coordinate the canoes and water route with Rivers Alive and citizenship classes (including to 4-H Club meetings).
S.A.F.E. Coordinator - One volunteer serves as the coordinator for the total S.A.F.E. program with nine volunteers serving as coaches for BB, .22 Team, Archery and Modified Trap.

Please describe leader training (including topics and number of trainings). **(20%)**

Chaperone Training - Each Chattooga County 4-H Volunteer is screened closely before having contact with 4-H'ers. A County Chaperone Training is completed by each volunteer to gain valuable information on what is expected and how to handle youth in overnight situations and events. This is in addition to the on-line certification which is required.

Judge's Orientation - Orientation classes are completed by volunteers who assist with the judging of CPA and / or DPA events. Scoring volunteers are also orientated at the county hosted District modified shotgun competition and qualification match.

Tweets & Treats - Because many volunteers work and are not accessible through the week and on weekends, volunteer training newsletters and tweets are mailed monthly (depending on need and want of volunteer). There is also a Chattooga County 4-H Volunteer Guidebook which is provided to each volunteer after he/she has completed the screening process. This guidebook is a tool to teach the UGA and local mission statements, guidelines for accidents, and positive youth development.

Ambassador Program – 4-H volunteers are selected to attend the State Wide 4-H Ambassador Program. We currently have 2 Health Rock adult ambassadors who each have two youth on their educational instruction team.

Observations – Each 4-H volunteer have an open invitation to observe 4-H staff in School educational meetings, county council, and other educational events, to gain a better understanding. They also co-teach at school meetings.

Please describe methods of recognition for volunteers in your county. **(20%)**

Awards Banquet - Annually the volunteer leaders are recognized at the 4-H Awards Banquet. The receive certificates, pins, and gifts of appreciation for their time and dedication to the youth of Chattooga County. Volunteers also have a spot on the program to highlight their events and projects to inform the total 4-H program. This is recognition which they initiate and take pride acknowledging fellow volunteers for their accomplishments.

Media - Radio and Newspaper outlets are used on a regular basis to highlight volunteers for their part in many 4-H activities. April serves as the monthly where our local newspaper runs ½ page parading 4-H volunteers during National Volunteer Week!

Thank You Notes / Gift Certificates - Volunteers are appropriately thanked by the 4-H staff for each time they perform a service for us. We also give gift certificates from the volunteers favorite restaurants for our judging team coaches, organizational leaders, and specialty events volunteers assist with.

State Wide trainings and Events - Chattooga County 4-H Volunteers are awarded trips to the Southern Region Volunteer Leaders Forum, Fall Forum, and other volunteer trainings. These trips are fully paid by the Chattooga County 4-H Youth Development Program. Money is set aside annually for volunteers to attend workshops and trainings.

County Events - Volunteers are asked to preside as Master of Ceremonies for county events like the annual chicken show and auction, awards banquets, District events coordinated by Chattooga County, Rivers Alive, and many others.

Please list major accomplishments of your county during the past year (concentrate on in-county activities of volunteer leaders). **(20%)**

S.A.F.E. Program – Creation of a SAFE Coordinator position. This volunteer assist with each of the SAFE disciplines, which are offered (BB, Shotgun, .22 Rifle, and Archery). Currently Chattooga County has 12 certified coaches which coordinate these events, and the 138 practices which are held in the county. The SAFE Coordinator is a certified coaches in two of the disciplines with great understanding of all disciplines. This person's responsibility is to assist with set-up of practices, be the liaison between the office and the parents, to lead discussion about 4-H opportunities other than SAFE with parents and youth, assist with collection of required paper work and secure funding sources SAFE. This has been a much needed position which allows the coaches to do what they do best, which is coach, and to has assistance with the management of the team. Many times which is what is dropped in a volunteer led program. For 2015, SAFE has a 44% increase in members and have secured $2,500 from donors.

Cloverleaf Camp Scholarship Program- The local volunteers have secured over $800.00 in local youth scholarship for underprivileged youth to attend cloverleaf camp. These volunteers work all through out the year with various fund raising events, to support the total program. These are the most highly motivated group of adult I have ever worked with.

4-H Program Development Team - The group of volunteers focus on marketing and fund development. They have assisted with news coverage through the local newspaper and the local AM 1180 radio. 4-H members and volunteers have recorded PSA's for the radio to run during national 4-H week, national volunteer week, and during special events. Due to a family emergency, the 2014 annual 4-H Breakfast with Santa fund-raiser was managed completely by our PDT. Two volunteers played the roles of Mr. & Mrs. Santa Clause, while others served as cooks, host and photographers. Through this event the PDT served breakfast to 234 children, bringing in $1,500 to go toward the purchase of a 4-H Bus. This boosted the confidence the team and they are planning a new fund-raising event for 2015, which will be run by this team. They asked that I just reserve the date and serve as greeter. I am very excited to see the outcome of these empowered and passionate volunteers.