Illinois 4-H Citizen Scientist Program begins in March

This new program merges community service and science as teams of 4-H Citizen Scientists are properly trained to collect data on scientific issues related to water quality and environmental science. Through a partnership with Illinois RiverWatch, 4-H Citizen Scientists will serve an active role in providing scientific data pertaining to the environmental quality of Illinois streams. This program is not being offered statewide; however, interested junior/senior high 4-H members are encouraged to contact their local Extension office to see if this focus is in their plan of work and for training dates and locations. The first training is scheduled for March 2, 2013.

Invest an Acre – 4-H Responds to Food Security and Hunger

Feeding and Growing Our Communities is the objective behind Illinois 4-H clubs as they respond to food security and hunger issues in their communities. Funding from the Howard G. Buffet Foundation will provide Challenge Grants to 4-H clubs as they become part of the solution by raising a vegetable garden or conduct other hunger awareness/alleviation activities. Illinois’ goal is to engage 500 youth and 100 adult volunteers in 10,000 hours of service addressing hunger. Grant recipients will pledge a percentage of their production to local food pantries or other organizations serving individuals and families in need. This opportunity is being offered to a limited number of counties – if interested, please contact your local office to see if your county is included.

2013 Changes for 4-H Memorial Camp

2013 will bring some exciting changes and new opportunities to 4-H Memorial Camp near Monticello! Current year 4-Her’s will register for their county’s selected camp session directly with their local Extension office and non-4-Her’s will register with the 4-H Camp office itself. Visit the 4-H Memorial Camp website at http://extension.uiuc.edu/4hmemorialcamp for county schedules. Registration begins February 1st!

Also new to the 4-H Memorial Camp schedule in July is Camp Corral. This is a camp session specifically tailored for children of brave soldiers who have been injured or fallen protecting our freedoms. More information can be found at www.campcorral.org.

The 5th Annual State 4-H Robotics Competition

The 5th Annual State 4-H Robotics Competition will be held April 20, 2013 at UIUC campus. This event is free to all 4-H members, ages 9-14. Details will be posted February 1st on the Illinois State 4-H website in the events section. http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/4hroboticschallenge2013.cfm Questions? Contact Dr. Lisa Bouillion Diaz, lbdiaz@illinois.edu, 217-333-0910.
The 2013 Illini Summer Academies are Coming!

We’re in the process of finalizing the **2013 Illini Summer Academies**! ISA is scheduled for June 23-26, 2013 on the University of Illinois Champaign/Urbana campus. So far, we’ve confirmed two NEW Academies – **Creative Writing** and **Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences**. Plus several Academies from previous years have already signed on – **Veterinary Medicine**, **Art & Design**, **Crop Sciences**, and several others.

ISA is open to any Illinois high school student, ages 14-18 by September 1, 2013 and offers youth a chance to explore college life, check out the University of Illinois, and get hands-on experience in classes and labs of a specific college department. Registration will open March 1. Our website will be updated at that time with all the 2013 information: [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/summeracademies.cfm](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/events/summeracademies.cfm).

Governor’s Service Awards Announced

The Serve Illinois Commission has announced the **Fourth Annual Governor’s Service Awards**. Visit [www.Serve.Illinois.gov](http://www.Serve.Illinois.gov) for more information. Nominations will be accepted until **February 15, 2013 by 5:00 p.m.** The awards ceremony will be at the Executive Mansion in Springfield on **April 18, 2013**.

Individual awards will be provided to one youth (18 and under), one adult (19-54), and one retiree/senior (55+ years) in each of the Commission’s five service regions across the state. Within each age category, applications will be given special priority based on the areas defined by the Corporation for National and Community Service. 4-H would fit under the **Education** Category.

We have had several 4-H members and leaders selected in the past so consider nominating a 4-H member or leader yourself this year. If you have questions, contact the Serve Illinois Commission at [www.Serve.Illinois.gov](http://www.Serve.Illinois.gov) or Denise Legvold at dlegvold@illinois.edu.

Host Families Needed for Exchange Programs

**Japanese Exchange Program** – The summer 4-H exchange program involves Japanese youth (ages 12-16) living with a family for approximately one month from July 25 through August 23, 2013. Families have opportunities to learn about Japanese life and culture and share their own culture. For more information about the Japanese and other hosting opportunities, visit [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/international](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/international) or contact your local Extension office. Consider expanding your intercultural knowledge and apply to host a Japanese youth this summer!

**Final SFI4-H Training For Spring....**

The Illinois 4-H Youth Leadership Team is offering the final **Speaking for Illinois 4-H (SFI4-H)** Training for this spring on Saturday, March 2 in Pontiac. **SFI4-H** is an advanced public presentations training that prepares older 4-H members (14 and above) to work with their local Extension offices in recruiting volunteers, securing donations, and providing presentations to local civic groups and elected officials. The teens who attend the training are also invited to assist with the 4-H Legislative Connection at the State Capitol, meeting with state legislators to share the Illinois 4-H story. In order to stay on the **SFI4-H** roster, teens must attend an annual update session, in addition to the original training.

Registration closes February 20 for the March training – no late registrations are accepted. For more information on the program or to register for the March 2 training, visit the **SFI4-H** website page: [http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/leadership_sfi4h.cfm](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state4h/members/leadership_sfi4h.cfm).