

IMPACT

University of Idaho
Extension

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Generous Giving to the 4-H Endowment Makes a Difference for Youth

The Situation

The Idaho State 4-H Youth Development Program is based at the University of Idaho. Each year more than 33,000 young people from across Idaho participate in the nation's largest youth development program. More than 3,000 youth and adults volunteer their time as leaders. Youth are learning the skills necessary to become self-directed, productive, and contributing members of society. Increased financial support is necessary to maintain and improve the quality of the educational programs in 4-H. Idaho Extension Educators and 4-H volunteers do their best to acquire additional funding from both public (grants) and private (gifts) sources to enhance and strengthen 4-H programming.

Our Response

In 1989 a group of dedicated and caring volunteers, UI faculty, staff, and administrators were concerned about continuing financial support for 4-H Youth Development programming. They decided to raise private funds to start the Idaho 4-H Endowment. Since that time, approximately 2 million dollars has been raised through generous giving from volunteers, 4-H members, businesses, private donors/philanthropists, and community members.

Business leaders, 4-H leaders, and University of Idaho faculty work together to administer the funds and distribute annual interest back to youth and volunteers. The charitable donations have enabled the 4-H Endowment Board to award college

scholarships and to help 4-H members and leaders participate in local, state and national leadership events and life skill development.



Idaho 4-H Endowment supports 4-H camps. Youth build confidence, compassion, leadership and citizenship skills throughout the program.

Program Outcomes

A study of Idaho youth, conducted in 2003, provided proof of just how important 4-H is to the positive development of young people. The research showed that youth who participated in 4-H for two or more years were significantly better off than youth who did not participate in the program. Various 4-H programs such as 4-H Youth Camp, Teen Conference, Know Your Government, Day Camps,

National 4-H Conference, and many others give youth:

- opportunities for self-determination
- positive relationships with caring adults
- an accepting and inclusive environment
- opportunities to contribute through community service
- a safe environment for learning and growing
- opportunities to develop and master skills
- engagement in learning
- opportunities to be an active participant in life—now and in the future.

Many of these programs would be limited and fewer youth would be reached without the additional support of the Idaho 4-H Endowment. From 2000-2007 the 4-H Endowment fund has granted close to \$500,000 in support of increased youth and leader involvement in these programs, which in turn builds confident, compassionate, and caring youth who make contributions to their communities.

A significant donor to the Idaho 4-H Endowment, Erling Johannesen said, “4-H membership opened doors for me. It gave me a taste of belonging and success and led to my career as an Extension Agent and my passion for helping others experience success. Having been involved with 4-H for 75 of my 82 years, I have seen many people develop into enthusiastic and capable leaders.” It is inspirational to know that 4-H made an impact 75 years ago and continues to make an impact today. It is the hope that youth developing today in the 4-H program will also credit their growth and experience to 4-H and give to the endowment in the future.

For More Information

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