

Celebrate Pennsylvania 4-H Awareness Week — March 17-23

4-H Marks 100th Anniversary With National Conversations

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Lauren Annett of Lincoln University, Elizabeth Garduno and Luis Santos of West Chester, and Laurie Szoke, 4-H coordinator, Chester County, were part of 1,200 youth and adults from throughout the country participating in The National Conversation on Youth Development in the 21st Century, a national summit sponsored by 4-H to create a youth-led action plan to improve urban, suburban, and rural communities nationwide.

Seventy-nine 4-H youth and adult delegates participated from Pennsylvania. Comments of the Chester County 4-H'ers follow.

"I want to thank all the people who helped organize this conversation. I'm glad I was able to be a part of the 1,200 youths and adults throughout the country who attended this wonderful conversation. I got to meet really nice people from all around the country, Congressmen, a WNBA Portland Fire player, Gold Medalist Rulon Gardner, and the \$250,000 winner in "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire," Nancy Reed. This conversation was a great opportunity for those who attended to be united since Sept. 11. One of the interesting speakers was Rulon Gardner. He said, "You can never get something if you don't do your best to obtain it." This sort of describes what I'm doing in my community. I help others and then I get help when I need it. 4-H showed me that I can accomplish anything if I put a lot of effort into it" —Luis Santos, West Chester.

List of people Santos got to meet:

- Nancy Reed, winner of \$250,000 on "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?"
- Rulon Gardner, Wrestling Gold Medalist in the Summer Olympics in Sydney
- John Bridgeland, USA Freedom Corps
- Adam Putnam, Congressman in Florida
- Jackie Stiles, WNBA basketball player from the Portland Fire
- Ann Veneman, Secretary of Agriculture
- Jeff Trandahl, Clerk of United States Congress
- Harris Wofford, America's Promise Chairman

"My first year in college has not been so easy. I've had to make a lot of choices...good and bad. I have had my "ups" and "downs." This was one of the times I felt I couldn't go any further. Attending the conversation has not changed my life but it has made a difference. I came out of it with a new perspective and with new ideas of how to be a better person; to work hard for what I believe in. One of the speakers that really motivated me was Rulon Gardner, the captain of the USA wrestling team. He said that no matter how tough it can be that we can make it better. To always change a "can't" to a "can." Now, I'm ready to go back to college and start working to be a better person and to achieve my goals; to come and help my community in



a better way." —Elizabeth Garduno, West Chester.

The National Conversation's findings, which will be tabulated using instant polling technology, will be presented to President Bush, members of Congress and other political and community leaders in April.

Speaking at the National Conversation, USA Freedom Corps director John Bridgeland said the purpose of President Bush's new volunteer initiative "is to ask every American to stop, to pause, to ask the question, 'What will be my great service to my neighbor, my community, my country and the world?'"

Bridgeland hailed the youth participating in the National Conversation, as well as the millions of 4-H members throughout the country: "You are the rising generation, and I know with your commitment to public service, you can in fact become the next greatest generation."

Also speaking at the 4-H summit was Harris Wofford, chairman of America's Promise, who described the youth in attendance

as "the promise in America." Further, he underscored importance of their role in USA Freedom Corps: "You are vital parts of those armies of compassion that President Bush has called into action."

"Power Of YOUth Pledge" Campaign

4-H youth presented Bridgeland and Wofford with a large check representing more than 1.3 million hours committed thus far by 100,000 youth and adults to the "Power of YOUth Pledge" Campaign, a volunteerism drive aimed at improving communities nationwide. The individual commitments were made to address a variety of community needs including:

- Helping a younger person (17,641 pledges totaling 282,221 hours);
- Improving my community (14,096 pledges totaling 187,748 hours);
- Helping an older person (16,723 pledges totaling 178,826 hours);
- Mentoring and tutoring (8,496 pledges totaling 137,905 hours);
- Building respect and tolerance (10,165 pledges totaling 136,954 hours);
- Improving the environment (12,110 pledges totaling 119,333 hours).

Bridgeland described the "Power of YOUth Pledge" Campaign as "an engine of humanity that can change our country and the world" and "a great gift to America."

4-H Marks

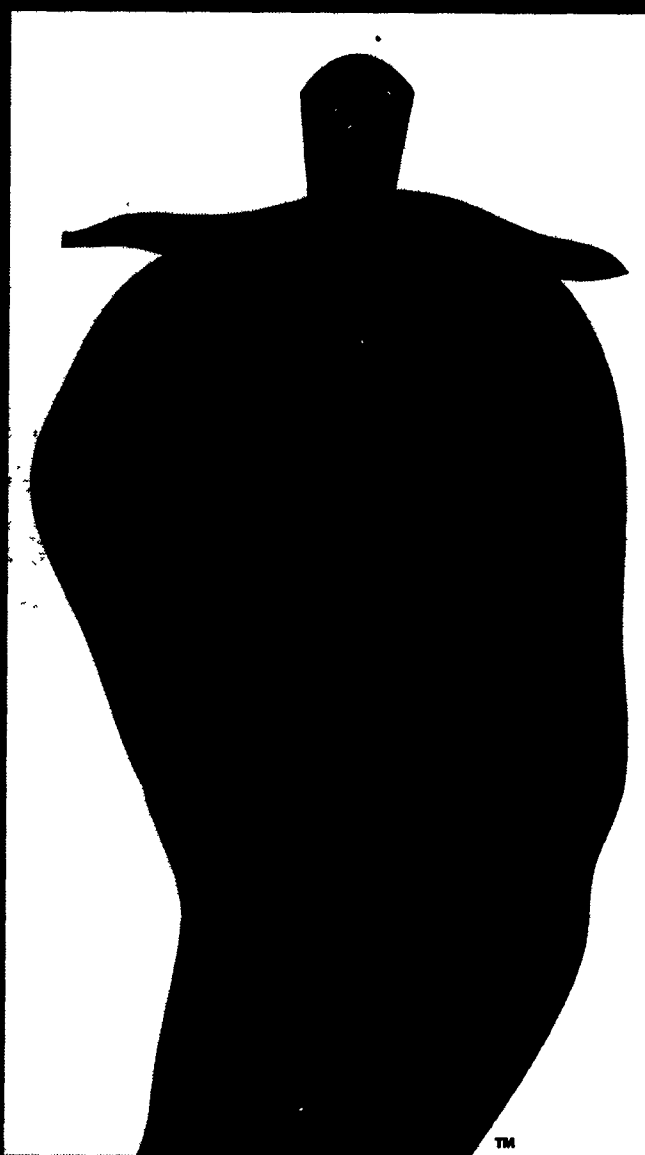
Centennial Anniversary
4-H is sponsoring both the National Conversation on Youth Development in the 21st Century and the "Power of YOUth Pledge" Campaign to mark its 100th anniversary.

"Rather than erect a monument to ourselves, we decided to make a gift to America by identifying the needs of our communities nationwide and to develop a youth-led action plan that addresses these needs," said Donald T. Floyd Jr., president and CEO of National 4-H Council. "The Conversations will identify how to make America better and the Power of Youth Pledge Campaign will provide some of the resources to get the job done."

4-H is grateful for the generous donations of its many partners to support both initiatives: American Honda Motor Co., Inc., American Income Life Insurance Co., AOL Time Warner Foundation, Best Buy Children's Foundation, Coca-Cola Fountain, ConAgra Foods, Eastman Kodak Company, Fleischmann's Yeast, General Mills, Inc., Hilton, J.C. Penney Company, Inc., John Deere, Kraft Foods North America, Lutheran Brotherhood, Montanto, The Pew Charitable Trusts, Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., Precious Moments, Sodexo, and USDA — Rural Business Cooperative Services.

"The generous support of our public and private partners is a strong indication that America has heard President Bush's call to service loudly and clearly," said Floyd.

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