

researchers found that legislators have a higher perception of school-based agricultural education if they receive invitations to school-based agricultural education programs. Even though society is living in a digital age, some generations still prefer to receive hard copies of letters and cards. The average age of the legislators falls in the category of Generation X. Michael Fleischer (2006) reported that 86% of Generation Xers bring in the mail the day it's delivered. Generation X consumers rate 75% of the mail they receive as valuable. From the research, this is still important to send paper copies to Generation Xers. When legislators did receive invitations to school-based agricultural education activities, it did affect their perception of school-based agricultural education. It is important to point out that legislators prefer to receive information about school-based agricultural education through different media outlets. The qualitative strengthened this finding because legislators prefer to see information about events happening in their community through various media outlets.

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TRACK: EDUCATION AND YOUTH

Establishing the Ohio 4-H LGBT Summit

At the annual Ohio 4-H Volunteer Conference in 2015, a session was hosted to provide attendees with an introductory knowledge base of creating inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ identifying individuals in 4-H. Pre-conference registration revealed approximately 20 participants enrolled to attend the session. When the session began, there was standing room only with over 50 individuals filling the room. This change in expected audience posed the question, Why didn't many of these attendees pre-register for this session? While the answer may vary for individuals, one idea is that participants needed to submit their session selections to their county office in order to be registered for the conference. The uncertainty of how a county Extension staff member may respond to an individual expressing interest in a topic related to LGBTQ+ community was determined as a potential deterrent to registering for the session. Regardless of the reason, the young adults presenting the session and the 4-H educator hosting the room recognized a need for further conversation. From this, the Ohio 4-H LGBTQ+ Summit was born. The Summit will bring together 4-H affiliated adults, Extension staff, and volunteers for Professional Development Day and young people between the ages of 13–19 for the Youth Summit.

A committee composed of 4-H alumni and Ohio 4-H staff members began meeting regularly in August of 2017 after many initial conversations had happened informally over the past year. The design of the Ohio 4-H LGBTQ+ Summit was determined to offer a safe and inclusive space for adults and youth. Due to the emotional security and privacy concerns of youth participants, the committee decided it would be best to offer specific tracks for the participants—a youth day and an adult day. The committee worked hard to recognize local LGBTQ+ organizations and resources that would be supportive of the event. These resources were secured as session presenters on a variety of topics. Additional local resources were contacted about providing additional support, such as hosting an educational table at the summit or providing material giveaways to conference attendees. The committee applied for and received funding through the Ohio 4-H

Foundation and Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences Office of Equity & Inclusion. Prominent names in LGBTQ+ community and in Extension were discussed when selecting keynote speakers for the event. Accepting the invitation included Glenda Humiston, of University of California and Ash Beckham, an engaging equality speaker.

The ultimate result of the Ohio 4-H LGBTQ+ Summit is yet unknown, as the event will be hosted in Columbus, Ohio on April 27-28, 2018. At the time of this proposal, a few outcomes can already be identified. These include a creation of a safe space to discuss LGBTQ+ specific needs in the Ohio 4-H program. Interactions between state staff, county educators, and young people who seek more information on how to create an inclusive environment or how to respond to LGBTQ+ topics have grown more comfortable. This change in culture is a positive turn for folks recognizing that some topics are difficult to initiate in conversation. There are now recognizable safe people in the Ohio 4-H program to support these conversations and “walk the talk” that is necessary in setting up inclusive programs. Additional outcomes include new topics presented at professional development events such as Ohio 4-H Camp Directors Inservice and Ohio 4-H State Update. The Ohio 4-H Teen Leadership Council has been motivated to support local LGBTQ+ youth centers by creating rainbow bracelets at multiple community service events including at the State Fair and Ohio 4-H Day of Service.

In conclusion, the founding of the Ohio 4-H LGBTQ+ Summit is recognized as the first of its kind for a specific 4-H-based audience. The arrangement of the summit has been a learning experience for all committee members and state 4-H administration involved. Potential outcomes of the summit include seeing a similar program replicated in other states or at a national level, given the positive response from 4-H colleagues in other states and at National 4-H Council. Additional outcomes include the learning that takes place and causes a ripple effect for summit participants to take the knowledge they have learned to continue to create inclusivity in their local 4-H programs and communities. The committee has learned first-hand the positive outcomes and support of young people, volunteers, and educators who seek new information on LGBTQ+ and supportive ally topics. The initiative of hosting the Ohio 4-H LGBTQ+ Summit has also come with learning that there is controversial pushback from some members of the 4-H community. The committee's awareness of the potential negative responses has allowed the team to formulate appropriate replies when these difficult conversations arise. Due to the overall success and support of the program, the positives outweigh any of the roadblocks, though the committee did have to recognize that there would be some hurdles along the way. Ultimately, the opportunity to support young people in their quest to be accepted for who they are, the experience to host a safe event for youth and adults, and the outcomes of knowledge learned and social connections forged will be the true positive outcome of this event.