Note From the Editor

Thank you, Arkansas CES, for allowing me to serve as an AmeriCorps* VISTA and to work with an organization that helped me develop, expand and adopt new ideas. This edition is the last opportunity for Tasha and I to say farewell before our service ends on July 21. I have enjoyed applying my degree in cultural leadership in the 4-H realm. As a young professional, I have learned some valuable lessons to help better myself from you all. I am leaving in August to pursue my master’s degree in global communication at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. I know the 4-H program will welcome whoever serves next, so together we all can keep “Making the Best Better.”

A Farewell Note

The time has come for the end of my service with Arkansas 4-H Afterschool. I have enjoyed working with and meeting new people from all backgrounds. As I write this farewell to the people I have met and connected with this past year, I want you to know Arkansas 4-H Afterschool has been a space shuttle ride at the beginning of my professional career. As I leave this service year, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for the support and the opportunity to serve as an AmeriCorps* VISTA. The University of Arkansas System has given me tools and networking opportunities that strengthen the commitment I have for youth in the State of Arkansas. With this opportunity and the years I spent earning my bachelor’s degree from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, I think I am ready to open my own business. Thank you for the memories!!!

Wishing everyone in Arkansas 4-H the best!

New Grants for Afterschool Providers: J.C. Penney Minigrants -

National 4-H Council provides at least 550 J. C. Penney Afterschool Fund minigrants totaling $250,000 to county-based 4-H programs to increase access for youth currently not in after-school programs or on the verge of leaving after-school programs due to a lack of funds. These 550 slots are for young people in kindergarten through twelfth grade (ages 5 to 18). For more information, go to http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/grants-awards/opportunities/jcpenney-minigrants/.
Enhancing Your Afterschool Program With 4-H

After-school programs that organize and maintain a 4-H club offer a world of opportunity for participating youth. Collaborating with your local county Extension Service office is an excellent way to enrich your after-school programming efforts with practical, research-based information and activities. Youth participating in an Afterschool 4-H club are eligible to participate in all 4-H programs on the county, state and national level.

One goal for county extension agents is for Afterschool 4-H club members to transition and participate in 4-H programs beyond the local Afterschool 4-H club level. Hard work and commitment makes this goal attainable. Here are a few ideas to assist in successfully engaging Afterschool 4-H clubs:

- **Build** enthusiasm for 4-H in the afterschool 4-H club leader(s).
- **Provide** the afterschool 4-H club leader with information on county, state and national 4-H programming.
- **Invite** afterschool 4-H club leaders to observe or participate in county 4-H activities.
- **Get to know** the members of the club and their interests.

Engage members’ parents and help them to become knowledgeable about 4-H. Parent involvement is essential to a successful transition.

Building a personal relationship with the leader of the afterschool 4-H club is necessary if the goal is to increase participation beyond the local club level. Typically, the afterschool 4-H club leader has a long, established relationship with youth and their parents and has earned their trust. He or she will be instrumental in motivating youth and parents to progress through 4-H.

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To Camp or not to camp, that is a great question!!!

Based on a survey conducted by the American Camping Association (ACA), campers identified their greatest gains from camp in the areas of positive identification, making friends and adventure/exploration.

Campers do not think about these benefits. The youth are having a great time. Parents can take comfort in their child’s experiencing these benefits and enjoying themselves. Camp offers campers a chance to do things they may have never done before, to be apart from parents and siblings, to really see just how much they can do on their own and to meet new people. This benefits their overall growth and development.

**Types of Camps**

- AOS Day Camp
- Weeklong Camp
- Entrepreneur Camp
- Junior Camp (9-12 years olds) (theme changes each year)
- Adventure and Challenge (13-15 years old)
- Cloverbud Camp (5-9 years old)
- Equine Camp (12-18 years old)
- Military Kids Camps

- High Adventure Trip (eight-day out-of-state adventure camping program)

For more information, go to http://www.kidsarus.org/go4it/Opportunities/Camps/default.htm.

**Ten Reasons Why Camp Is Important for Child Development**

According to Dr. Barry Garst, director of research and application for the American Camp Association, there are 10 reasons why camp is important for child development. Dr. Garst gives these:

- Positive identity
- Independence
- Leadership
- Make friends
- Feel secure
- Peer relations
- Adventure/exploration
- Environmental awareness
- Values/decisions
- Spirituality

At the C.A. Vines 4-H Center, the staff creates quality experiences. With degrees in outdoor and education fields, the staff have both the academic and real-world experience to make a camp experience a great one. The 4-H Center offers a variety of summer camps from June through August and can provide specialty camps during the year. For further information, contact Shannon Caldwell, 4-H Center camping coordinator, at scaldwell@uaex.edu.
Let's Talk: Sonya
University of Arkansas OMK AmeriCorps* VISTA

How would you describe yourself in two words?
Driven, cool

List three words that describe your character.
Atypical, tenacious, introvert

If someone wrote a biography about you, what do you think the title should be?
The title would be “My Playground: Multifaceted Snippets of the Life of a Wanna Be.”

Although many of my former substitute teaching students consider me to be old, I have come to realize that learning from and sharing my past and current life experiences, does NOT make me too old to be:
• Successful in MY own way at HIS time
• Blessed
• At peace
• Content
• Happy
• A positive role model
• A productive citizen,
• A super VISTA girl-type hero by day (LOL!) and an awesome mom the majority of the time
• Diverse, educated and respectfully appreciated
• To to be continued... another journey has just begun!

Which super power would you like to have and why?
As I said previously, I would like to be Super VISTA Girl! I’m still mulling over the entire super hero package. I see the VISTA symbol as a person showing the two-finger peace sign and raising their fingers up in the air checking off a significant fete in his/her journey of VISTA service, PEACE UP, VISTA Girl!!

What is the theme song for your life?
Bombshell’s “Fight Like a Girl” (when I’m battling against societal stereotypes.)

Let’s Talk 4-H: Chanell

How has 4-H influenced your life?
4-H has given me a better sense of right and wrong. 4-H has also helped me to become more involved with my community.

What’s your favorite part of the after-school program?
My favorite part about my after-school program is hanging out with some of the other members.

Do you feel like a better person because of 4-H?
Yes because I am more involved with my community. I also feel that I have better people skills because of 4-H.

What is your favorite thing about 4-H?
My favorite thing about 4-H is 4-H Summer Camp.

Is there anything else you want to say?
4-H is a really cool organization! You can learn things and meet new people. It has pushed me to break out of my shell and accept new challenges.

What is one thing you will tell other youth about 4-H?
That being in 4-H is a good experience and that you will learn new things and meet new people.

Do You Want to Become an AmeriCorps* VISTA?
Arkansas 4-H Afterschool is preparing for a new and exciting year and with that the recruitment of four new AmeriCorps’ VISTA volunteers. AmeriCorps’ VISTA allows you to sign up to give one year of service to help America. VISTAs work with nonprofit and government agencies to help strengthen infrastructure and create sustainable change in the community while getting a firsthand look at poverty. If you or anyone you know would like the unique experience of working with nonprofits and the UofA system, are looking for ways to strengthen your résumé or you are really passionate about spreading 4-H youth development ties across the state of Arkansas, please contact Ida Collier at 4Hafterschoolvista@uaex.edu to find out how to become an AmeriCorps’ VISTA with the University of Arkansas 4-H Afterschool Program.
Adult Technology Gap -

I’ve come up with a set of rules that describe our reactions to technologies:
1. Anything that is in the world when you’re born is normal and ordinary and is just a natural part to the way the world works.
2. Anything that’s invented between when you’re 15 and 35 is new and exciting and revolutionary and you can probably get a career in it.
3. Anything invented after you’re 35 is against the natural order of things.

– Douglas Adams, The Salmon of Doubt

The world, along with our youth and children, is changing daily, monthly and yearly. It seems only a few years ago cell phones were used only by adults. Now wireless technology/communication is used by all ages. My niece Kennedi, who will be two years old in August, can look at her mother’s iPhone and tap the game she is interested in playing.

Most youth and children have developed the skills and acquired the knowledge to freely and easily interact in a digital environment because the World Wide Web has grown with them. Young people can say they really have the world at their fingertips without ever leaving their home. They are able to master the art of multitasking, allowing them to watch television, text friends, listen to music, chat on Facebook, surf the Web, watch YouTube videos and more all at the same time.

Adults, however, often struggle to keep up with technology that changes by the day or month. Technology gaps now exist between today’s youth and many of today’s adults. Since they did not grow up in a computerized environment, adults have to play catchup or they just barely hang on.

When lost or you have a question – how to program a smart phone, how to set up a computer or how to surf the Web – it’s very likely if you have kids from grade school to high school, you have your very own technology guru living under your roof.

– Debra Johnson

We will work for 4-H volunteers.

Since 1902 4-H Youth Development has had the remarkable legacy of building character and making communities stronger by providing hands-on service. Volunteers are the energy and motivation behind 4-H. Adult and teen volunteers engage in life skill training by using 4-H curriculum and projects to teach youth lessons that literally fly off the page!

We need volunteers. 4-H volunteers help 4-Hers to:
• Learn by doing.
• Develop leadership and life skills.
• Make new friends.
• Give back to the community.
• Build connections with others – prepare, do and share.

To learn more about what you can do as a volunteer with 4-H, please contact your local county extension office or contact Noah Washburn, 4-H youth development program director, nwashburn@uaex.edu.

The National 4-H Council has established six competency areas to ensure volunteers are prepared to serve. These areas include communications, organization, 4-H program management, educational design and delivery, positive youth development and interpersonal skills. Please visit www.4-h.org.

County staff are highly encouraged to provide and support their volunteer programs with these training opportunities to ensure that all Arkansas youth are actively engaged in targeted life skill development.
The 21st century is bringing us closer and closer together. Technology is breaking down cultural barriers and producing new ways to interact with our neighbors. However, we are growing apart, and we are missing opportunities to stay connected. We are isolating ourselves by choosing to compete with each other rather than connecting and working as a team to enhance life. This article seeks to challenge you to reflect upon all of your connections and to promote social interactions. This author hopes to offer small suggestions to promote social connections and to encourage you to see that there the greater benefit in collaborative partnerships versus insulated individuals.

Research suggests having strong social ties may lead to a longer and healthier life. The most socially connected seniors report very good or excellent health, fewer colds, lower blood pressure and heart rates and appear to delay memory problems (Alberts, Pam).

As developing youth, we were exposed to many different social connections without realizing their importance. If you were ever on a sport’s team, played in a band, belonged to a league, were a member of a 4-H club or any youth group, I bet you can think of at least one person to whom you were closely connected. Now stop and think. This person probably has another close friend. Because of your intial friendship, you now have access to an easy connection. As we age, we are meeting friends through high school, college and the workplace as well as other gathering places. We are making wiser connections based on common interests and common goals. We will also meeting others who have different ideas and ways of doing things. These are special opportunities to learn different cultures and make strong connections.

Civilization grew in the beginning from the minute that we had communication – particularly communication by sea that enabled people to get inspiration and ideas from each other and to exchange basic raw materials.

– Thor Heyerdahl

We are also connected as children to our family, students to schools, residents to a community, members to groups, workers to businesses, citizens to a nation and our nation to the world. Think about the groups that heavily influence your life. Now think about the communities you fondly remember for whatever reason – the location, the people, the shared heritage. Even though you fondly remember the groups and the communities, when was the last time you made an effort to extend a connection? If you made a connection, you could use the skills you have acquired in life to influence someone else and make the area, group and/or state better.

How Do I Stay Connected?

Groups can send personalized cards or electronic newsletters to former members to keep them informed about what’s happening. Alumni should stay in contact with their former schools or colleges and actively participate in events when possible. Friendships can be maintained by just remembering that because everyone is busy, it is important to call, email, Facebook, tweet or just send a short text to say hello. For example, I have college friends who work on boats, in art positions and other jobs. My current roommate introduced me to Prezi and Animoto, emerging social media programs, after hearing about them from one of his friends.

We work to pay for our own personal needs, but if we spend more time connecting, we change the impossible to the possible. If you are not an expert in a subject but it interests you, find someone who is. Steve Jobs said “creativity is just connecting things.” When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn’t really do it, they just saw something. The idea seemed obvious to them after a while. — Brandon Stegall
The 4-H Afterschool VISTA team and Craighead County 4-H agent Brittany Scott at the Northeast Arkansas Regional AOSN Summit.

Cross County 4-H’ers pose for a picture.

Angie Freel, Saline County agent, teaches a session to after-school providers.

Operation Military Kids campers paint a toad abode.

Operation Military Kids camper enjoying her ice cream.

Saline County 4-H B.B.Q. winner.

Operation Military Kids camper draws a picture using science at the Museum of Discovery.

Operation Military Kids campers make blankets for youth.
Poet-Tree is an activity that is part of Project Learning Tree provided through the Council for Environmental Education and the American Forest Foundation. While 4-H Afterschool utilizes mostly 4-H curriculum from around the nation, we also team up with local partners to cross-train and learn new skills. This curriculum is an engaging way to help youth learn about nature.

The actual Poet-Tree activity invites youth to think about one thing from nature. It can relate to their childhood or they may walk outside to find something they want to write. While also encouraging them to think about their favorite natural moment and embrace their creative side, this activity also teaches them about different styles of writing and poetry.

Below you will find examples of the activity which were produced by the Arkansas 4-H Afterschool VISTA team.

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**Could it be?**

Could it be…It can’t be. Oh the excitement is building now.  
It is!!! But is it enough? And the race of clatters steps begins.  
Turn it on!!! Hang on! This is the most important announcement of the day.  
Please say it!!! Yeah. let’s hear it!!! Will this unique phenomenon make their day?  
Attention! Attention!! Thanks to this winter wonderland school is now canceled.  
Yes!! Yeah thanks!!! Snow for making their day.

- Brandon Stegall

**Nature**

The chiming of the rain  
And the claps of thunder  
The busyness of Nature’s wonders  
As the grass is greener  
And the trees more livelier  
The colors of Nature  
Is even brighter  
From the whistling of the wind  
The calming of the trees  
And even the oxygen that we breathe  
Nature is only a blend.

- Kayla Johnson

**Lightning Storm**

On the ground I see the lightning in the clouds  
Dancing away to its own internal rhythm  
Booming sounds are the aftershocks  
Pointing to one spot on the ground  
Electrifying and mystic how they stay within  
the bounds  
Clouds seem as fragile as the light flashes  
I think I will take cover  

- Ida Collier
# Upcoming 4-H Events and Camps

## Mid-June

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>Teen Leader Conference, 4-H Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>State Dairy Camp</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Ouachita District 4-H O-Rama, Malvern High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ozark District 4-H O-Rama, Batesville Junior High School</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Delta District 4-H O-Rama, East Arkansas Community College, Forrest City</td>
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<tr>
<td>24-30</td>
<td>Weeklong Camp, 4-H Center</td>
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## July

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>4-H State Cloverbud Camp, 4-H Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-14</td>
<td>Citizenship... Washington Focus, Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td>9-11</td>
<td>Junior Camp 1 and Adventure Challenge Camp 1, 4-H Center</td>
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<td>12-14</td>
<td>4-H Shooting Sports State Competition – Range Events, 4-H Center</td>
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<td>16-18</td>
<td>Junior Camp 2 and Adventure Challenge Camp 2, 4-H Center</td>
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<td>25-27</td>
<td>State 4-H O-Rama, Fayetteville</td>
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<tr>
<td>28-Aug 5</td>
<td>Arkansas Adventure Camp</td>
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## 4-H Motto

“Making the Best Better”

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