

Lincoln Parish 4-H welcomes the youth of Lincoln Parish to participate in a “learning-by-doing” environment where they are able to actively participate in hands-on experiences and make a lasting impact in their communities. 4-H focuses on the following three national initiative areas: Science, Engineering, and Technology (SET), Healthy Living, and Citizenship. The Louisiana 4-H Youth Development program is an invaluable and essential source of non-formal education. Through non-formal, research based, experiential education activities, 4-H participants gain knowledge and life skills enabling them to become positive, productive, capable and compassionate members of their communities.

A goal of the 4-H Youth Development program is that the program provides a positive educational experience which targets the specific needs of our parish. To be able to accomplish this goal, we enlist the help of the Lincoln Parish 4-H Advisory Council to identify the needs of Lincoln Parish that should be addressed through the efforts of the Lincoln Parish 4-H Youth Development program. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to obtain stakeholder input, leadership development, and create public awareness of the value of 4-H and its programs. The members of the Lincoln Parish 4-H Advisory Council are chosen because they possess the following qualities: leadership, respected, expertise, and connectedness. The Advisory Council is asked to represent their peers in the community, identify needs and issues facing their peers, provide program direction, identify opportunities for collaboration, be active, understand 4-H, and share their skills and talents. The Lincoln Parish 4-H Advisory Council members have sincere interest in their community, have knowledge of issues important to their parish, have a rapport with local clientele, and have the ability to function within a group.

Lincoln Parish 4-H held the Lincoln Parish 4-H Advisory Council meeting on March 24, 2015 in Ruston. A total of 20 Advisory Council members, including adults and youth, attended the meeting. The Council was asked to answer three questions: What are the educational needs of Lincoln Parish, What are some activities that are needed in Lincoln Parish, and what are some ways to market the 4-H Program to a larger audience. The following are the answers given by the council members in response to the three questions:

Educational Needs

- Gun safety
- Respect
- Leadership
- Environment (Sparta) (Recycle)
- Teamwork
- Continue current educational programming and build upon it
- Job shadowing
- Work with high school administration/scheduling to have more time so that educational programming may be presented

Needed Parish Activities

- Anti-littering campaign and supporting activities
- Adopt a grandparent – taking care of becoming aware of the needs of elderly within community
- Community Service Activities (for Jr. Leaders) – example: Volunteer at 4 Paws, Wagon Tails, etc. Buddy Ball, Special Olympics, Call Bingo @ Assisted Living/Nursing Home.

Marketing the 4-H Program to Larger Audience

- Radio & T.V. (news about 4-H)
- Social Media

- 4-H Marathon
- Community eat and greets
- Drawings (free) at area businesses
- Poster displays
- Network with other organizations (United Way)
- Incentives for members to bring in new members
- Ruston Christmas Parade involvement

The LSU AgCenter 4-H Youth Development agents and staff of Lincoln Parish sincerely appreciate the 20 members that attended the Lincoln Parish 4-H Advisory Council meeting. The information they offered us is very valuable to the 4-H program here in Lincoln Parish and is required for us to be able to direct our programming to meet the needs of our clientele in our parish. Thank you all so much for your time, input, and support. We look forward to working with all of you to “Make the Best Better”.