

NOMINATION FOR
Southern Region Team Diversity Multicultural Recognition
Epsilon Sigma Phi, Alpha Zeta Chapter – Texas

Team's Name: Texas 4-H Building Community Inclusion (BCI) Team
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TEAM MEMBERS:

Dr. Darlene Locke - Assist. Professor & Extension 4-H & Youth Development Specialist - Team Ldr.
Laurinda Boyd - 4-H Program Assistant, Kerr County
Lillianne Goeders - County Extension Agent - Urban Youth Development, Travis County
Dr. Jeff Howard - Assoc. State 4-H Program Leader
Kelli Lehman - Extension Program Specialist - 4-H & Youth Development, District 3
Sheryl Nolen - County Extension Agent - Urban Youth Development, Montgomery County

Nomination Narrative Summary

The climate of Texas 4-H is making marked changes as a result of this diversity inclusion effort by the Texas 4-H Building Community Inclusion (BCI) Team. During Summer 2005, one-half of the youth registered to participate in Mission Possible at the Texas 4-H Center indicated they have special accommodation needs, a historic first for the Center. The county programming efforts are beginning to domino because each inclusion training that is conducted leads to more of an appreciation for the strength of having a program with diverse groups of people. The inclusions trainings that have been conducted in public schools lead to a climate where people with disabilities are more accepted and understood. Most people have either heard about, or personally witnessed, the taunting and bullying that special needs children are subjected to at school!

The image of Texas 4-H to the general public is critical to the continued funding of Texas AgriLife Extension Service. The efforts being conducted are particularly important as the general public and elected officials observe how 4-H values diversity and the BCI Team is leading the way to make 4-H more accommodating and welcoming to all people.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Funding sources:

Dr. Jeff Howard, Associate State 4-H Program Leader, and Dr. Darlene Locke, Director, Texas 4-H Center, submitted and were awarded a \$9,600 grant through National 4-H Council and MEAF to support a Texas inclusion effort. The \$9,600 grant included training funds to allow each of the eight county groups to send three (3) representatives (at least one youth and at least one disabled person) to a weekend Inclusion training program at the Texas 4-H Center. The grant also allowed for a Leadership Inclusion Camp called Mission Possible conducted at the Texas 4-H Center in June, 2005 allowing up to 45 youth with and without disabilities to participate together in an inclusive camping environment.

Texas' Building Community Inclusion effort:

Seven county programs completed mini-grant applications and were accepted into the program. Counties represented include Montgomery, Travis (4 groups), Collin and Kerr. County governance groups have representatives from County 4-H Councils, Lions Club, religious organizations, Texas School for the Blind, Texas School for the Deaf, 4-H Ambassador groups, Student Councils, local March of Dimes organizations, Community colleges and neighborhood centers.

Inclusion Training:

Seven county governance groups made up of Youth and Adults, with and without disabilities participated in a weekend Train the Trainer program held at the Texas 4-H Center. Workshops included Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships using the National 4-H Creating Youth/Adult Partnerships curriculum, Disability Awareness, Disability Etiquette and Including Youth with Disabilities in Recreation programs. 37 individuals participated in the 1 ½ hour Train the Trainer program. Additionally, 111 participants of the Ambassador and Recreation Team Training participated in the Disability Awareness and Inclusion workshops.

County Impact Highlights:

Montgomery County: The participation in the Special Olympics program was a highlight of the BCI team. Their workshop prepared 50 youth and six adults volunteers prepare to assist with the Special Olympics program. The volunteers recruited an additional 26 youth and 4 adults and the Special Olympics event reached a total of 258 youth and 115 adults with disabilities. Additionally, BCI team members volunteered their support to assist with Special Education entries in the Montgomery County Youth Fair, the team financially supported the program with a \$200 donation.

Travis County: The BCI teams focused their efforts on including disabled youth in traditional 4-H club programs. Youth with and without disabilities are partnering in after school and service learning projects that benefit residents of the Baptist Children's Home in Round Rock. Youth from the Texas School for the Blind 4-H Club and the Davis Elementary 4-H Club participate together in a program called "Cultural Rhythms" using drumming exercises. 4-H club members from Brooke Elementary in Travis County are participating with youth from the Special Education program using a "Call and Response" method of drumming from Kenya Masalie's *Rhythm Play* book. Youth with and without disabilities have learned a great deal about one another through this activity. Fifteen Perdez Elementary 4-H Club members in Travis County have partnered with 18 disabled youth from the Galindo Elementary Life Skill's Class in stepping and drumming programs.

Summer Camp Highlights:

Mission Possible, a camp for youth with and without disabilities. Since the first camp in 2005, when 14 youth with physical disabilities and eleven 4-H youth, participated in an inclusive camp environment, the 4-H Conference Center has continued to promote inclusion. The camp in 2006 hosted 36 youth, 23 campers and 13 mentors. Mission Possible 2007, saw 18 campers with special needs and eleven 4-H mentors. The 4-H mentors are 4-H youth ages 14 to 18 who participate through an application process and are selected based on their previous leadership experiences and their desire to work with diverse audiences. The Mentors also participate in a one-day training prior to camp to learn more about disabilities, communication skills and working as a team. County Extension Agents and 4-H Adult Volunteers continue to be an integral part of the success of this program. Youth that were members of the first Building Community Inclusion teams in 2005 are still active in the role of training other youth.

Building Community Inclusion Outcomes, State-wide:

- ▶ 50 4-H Youth participated in BCI educational efforts
- ▶ 570 Non 4-H Youth participated in BCI programs conducted by County Governance teams
- ▶ 14 4-H Adult volunteers participated in BCI educational programs
- ▶ 24 Non 4-H Adults participated in BCI programs conducted by County Governance teams
- ▶ 363 youth with disabilities participated in BCI educational programs and activities
- ▶ 1030 youth without disabilities participated in BCI educational programs and activities
- ▶ 120 adults with disabilities participated in BCI educational programs and activities
- ▶ 31 adults without disabilities participated in BCI educational programs and activities

Support Statement

The 4-H program and State 4-H Center activities in Texas have changed for the better due to the efforts of the BCI Teams. Learning to appreciate the strength gained in programs involving diverse groups of people is an important step in eliminating social bias. This team is very deserving of this recognition.