

2012 **Regional Early-Career Service Award**-Courtney Latour
Epsilon Sigma Phi, Alpha Zeta Chapter – Texas

Nominee's Name: Courtney Latour

Title: County Extension Agent- Family and Consumer Sciences

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Year Initiated into ESP: 2008

Position and Dates of Extension Employment:

County Extension Agent- Family & Consumer Sciences/4-H & Youth Development- Brazoria County- June 6, 2007- Present.

Education:

- Bachelor's of Science- Agricultural Development, Spring of 1989- Texas A&M University

- Masters of Science- Child and family Development, Anticipated Graduation, Spring 2014- Stephen F. Austin State University.

Outstanding Professional Accomplishments: Improving the Lives of Texans is an absolute passion for Courtney Latour. Serving in a dual role as County Extension Agent for Family & Consumer Sciences and 4-H & Youth Development, Mrs. Latour has aided in upholding that mission by several different programs not only in Brazoria County but throughout the state of Texas as well. Courtney began her career as an Extension Agent in Brazoria County on June 20, 2007. She serves on several committees such as the Food Challenge committee for State Roundup, the District 9 Share the Fun chairman, and also the District 9 Council officer for the past two years. In 2008, in cooperation with the Brazoria County Parks Department, Brazoria County Extension Staff, and the Brazoria County 4-H Parent and Adult Leaders Committee, Courtney was instrumental in starting the annual County 4-H Camp at Camp Mohawk in Alvin, Texas. Over that past four years Courtney has reached at total of three hundred and five (305) youth at the five, Annual 4-H County Camps, for an average of 61 youth attending the County Camp each year. In 2009, Courtney began her cooperation with the Brazoria County Office of Emergency Management to develop an emergency preparedness plan for the registration and handling of companion animals for special need evacuees. This plan involves the assistance from 4-H members and parents who would assist with the two evacuation HUBs in the event that elderly and people with special needs are evacuated to Bell County in the event of a mandatory hurricane evacuation. In 2011, Courtney went above and beyond the call for assistance collecting donating water and sport drinks for the "Operation Supply Drop" for the Bastrop and Waller County wildfires. Her efforts to advertise, collect, and deliver the donations not only brought aid to those in need, but it brought about an awareness in the local community of 4-H and Texas AgriLife Extension. Donors who had never previously been associated with Extension and 4-H became aware of our educational and community services through Courtney's marketing and promotion of Operation Supply Drop. Since October of 2010, the 4-H position has had two agents vacate the position, again leaving several 4-H responsibilities unattended to. Mrs. Latour has provided leadership to the entire 4-H program in Brazoria County while not sacrificing any of her Family and Consumer Sciences programs. And while working tirelessly to support the 4-H program in Brazoria County, Courtney has also excelled with her Child Passenger Safety and Safe Rider Outcome program.

Outstanding Programmatic Accomplishments: In the short time Courtney has been employed with Extension she has had excellent programmatic accomplishments with significant results including the following. **Child Passenger Safety in Brazoria County:** Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for children 3-14 years of age. Courtney is responsible for three major program efforts implemented in Brazoria County to impact child passenger safety. Education was provided to 174 parents through inspection stations, individual appointments, checkup events, and classes. Child safety seat checkups routinely discover that four out of five children are not properly restrained in appropriate child safety seats or safety belt systems. Numerous compatibility problems between child safety seats and motor vehicles exist. Saving lives and reducing injuries to children in motor vehicle crashes is the primary goal of child passenger safety technicians. The Safe Riders Seat Distribution Program, with the support of the Texas Department of State Health Services and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of Brazoria County, is able to provide 63 car seats to low income families. In order to receive a free seat parents must attend an educational class, have a vehicle with working seat belts in the household, and have a financial need. The Roll-Over Convincer Program was presented to 459 audience members at TW Ogg Elementary, Primrose Academy, and Salute to First Responders Event. Excuses for not wearing safety belts, dangers of unrestrained occupants, hazards of pick-up trucks and rollovers, proper safety belt fit and booster seats are among the items presented during the passenger safety demonstration. The proper use of child safety seats reduces the risk of injury and death, leading to reduced medical costs, avoidance of lost future earnings, and improved quality of life. These economic benefits are an estimated \$1,820 per child age 0-4 and \$2,130 per child age 4-7 for new seats distributed, and \$505 per child for seat misuse corrected (based on a formula from the Children's Safety Network Economics and Data Analysis Resource Center). Agent Latour and the Brazoria County Leadership Advisory Board provide direction for these and other programs that impact the quality of life in the county. AgriLife is also fortunate to have strong collaborations with Pearland EMS, Safe Kids Greater Houston Coalition, Angleton Police Department, Brazosport Independent School District, Alvin, Angleton, and Manvel High Schools which help broaden our outreach and strengthen our impacts, of which Latour is a major facilitator. Working with Pearland, Brazoria-Columbia, and Sweeny ISD, AgriLife Extension will continue to offer passenger safety programs to elementary students with the roll over convincer demonstration. In addition collaborations with Angleton Police Department and Safe Kids will continue to organize a monthly inspection station and conduct checkup events. **Youth Consumer and Family Sciences in Brazoria County:** Youth need a variety of projects and activities to help them develop into contributing members of society. 4-H volunteers provide leadership for project and activities. Brazoria County 4-H FCS projects expose young people to the academic disciplines through projects such as clothing & textiles, food & nutrition, consumer education, family life, and health & safety. These areas are within Latour's major work responsibilities. County workshops and contests as well as club project groups meet throughout the year to provide educational opportunities for members. Projects and activities will help members develop into contributing members of society. 4-H volunteers provide leadership for project and activities in cooperation with Latour. Under her supervision the following was accomplished: Consumer Education – 9 educational experiences were provided for 79 youth participants in the areas of money management, and consumer decision making; Clothing & Textiles – 25 educational experiences were provided for 207 youth participants in the areas of construction, textiles use, and design; Food & Nutrition – 10 educational experiences were provided for 186 youth participants in the areas of My Pyramid, food safety, food preparation, and cultural awareness; Entrepreneurial – 6 educational experiences were provided for 53 youth participants in the areas of identifying opportunities, production, record keeping, and marketing. Through educational activities, field trips, workshops, and contests youth learned and practiced developmentally appropriate life skills that will contribute in forming productive citizens. Older youth were able to demonstrate leadership by sharing their knowledge and experiences with younger members. Youth are able to choose a healthy diet with plenty of physical activity. Youth are able to be wise stewards of their finances and identify money making opportunities. **Brazoria County 4-H Youth and Adult Leadership:** Latour coordinates trainings, workshops and meetings for the following groups: Leadership Labs, Leadership Institute, County Camp, County Council, Ambassadors, HLS&R Ag Awareness Day, Youth Advisory Board, Parent and Adult Leaders Association, Club Manager Training, Volunteer Trainings and Officer Trainings, informational mail-outs, and face to face meetings. These activities and meetings reached a total of 450 youth and adults who participated. Through these different activities youth and adults learned decision making skills, character education, leadership, community service, project goals, sportsmanship, and record keeping and public speaking skills. The participants were satisfied with the outcomes of the activities and agreed through client feedback that

the business conducted was valuable and a level of knowledge was gained from attending the meetings or events. By achieving their goals of having a successful meeting and completing the event(s) participants gained the skills required to move forward with new personal goals and the determination to complete the assignments and goals put before them.

Support Statement (approximately 75 words): Perseverance, dedication and the willingness to succeed are adjectives to describe Courtney Latour. She exemplifies the real spirit of Extension with her can-do attitude, and her passion for the health and safety of clientele. Courtney gives tirelessly of her time and is committed to giving her clients the very best in education to promote their wellbeing. She is a prime example of how Extension is making a difference in the lives of Texans!