



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAYETTE COUNTY 4-H EDUCATOR RECOGNIZED FOR LONGSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS

Uniontown, PA – A few months ago, Jennifer Deichert celebrated 10 years as a Fayette County 4-H educator, marking a decade of dedication to the development and education of the county’s youth.

Deichert has earned several accolades in that time, the most recent awarded during the 2023 National Association of Extension (NAE) 4-H Youth Development Professionals Conference where she won the Citizenship in 4-H Youth Development Award and the Jim Kahler Excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Award.

“It was an honor,” Deichert said of winning the NAE 4-H awards. “It kind of reflects on the quality of programming that’s being done at the local level. To have that recognition at the state level for the things we’re doing here in Fayette County was validating, for sure.”

According to information provided by Penn State Extension Client Relation Manager Cheyenne Filous,

- The Citizenship in 4-H Youth Development Award is to encourage and recognize the efforts of Extension staff developing and/or conducting programs and/or projects for youth that focus on increasing knowledge and skills of understanding, challenging and engaging with the main pillars of our democracy: politics, the economy and the law.
- The purpose of the Jim Kahler Excellence in STEM Award is to recognize outstanding effort by NAE4-HYDP members in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics programming, curriculum, projects or events.

Area 6 4-H Educator Suzanne Boarts is Deichert’s supervisor.

“Jennifer is by far one of our most outstanding 4-H educators in Pennsylvania,” Boarts said, adding she was not at all surprised to hear of Deichert’s awards. “She does a great job working with her 4-H community, her volunteers and youth, and engaging people in making the programs work as a whole.”

Deichert noted she won her awards at the state level. She explained that 4-H educators can submit projects or programs they have completed for award consideration if they feel their work is meritorious. The citizenship award was bestowed for her work on the Good Citizens Club, while she earned the Kahler award for the Fayette County 4-H Robotics Race Day program.

Deichert said she also has garnered regional recognition as part of an award-winning ensemble.

“Oftentimes, we’re on teams. You can submit for team awards, so (we won for) different initiatives I’ve been a part of related to STEM and healthy living,” she said.

She also has been recognized for her length of service to 4-H. The first level of recognition is given to educators who have served the organization for three to seven years. The second level is for those who have served for 10 years or more, a threshold Deichert said she reached in June.

Not bad for someone who didn’t grow up involved in 4-H clubs.

“I wasn’t (a 4-H kid). I graduated from Penn State with a degree in engineering, and I worked for the Natural Resources Conservation Service for about six years (in West Virginia),” Deichert said.

She then transitioned into a role as a stay-at-home mom, moving with her family back to Pennsylvania in 2000. She became involved in her children’s school activities, such as parent-teacher organizations, which then led to an opportunity working as a teacher’s aide in a computer lab. There, Deichert took part in a program helping kids who were struggling with their reading skills.

“After that, I worked with a math and science grant for three years,” she said. “That was a state-level opportunity. We partnered with NASA. And then, this job opened up.”

Deichert said she loves helping Fayette County’s youth find their niches.

“I really enjoy working with the youth and helping them to kind of find their spark and what their interest is, and helping them build on that,” she said.

Deichert said 4-H offers more than just local opportunities. There are regional camps, state leadership conferences and national summits for young members to attend.

Even locally, though, a lot is happening with 4-H. A new family orientation event will be held from 7-8 p.m. Jan. 10 at the Penn State Extension office, 34 W. Peter St., Uniontown, and Ag Literacy Week is coming up in March.

A new rocketry club has started, as well as a horse club for both riders and those who don’t own a horse. And Deichert said a good many kids have signed up for the upcoming Pennsylvania Farm Show, which kicks off this weekend in Harrisburg.

Deichert said though you sometimes don’t see the effect 4-H has right away, when you see a shy kid bloom into a confident adult or an unfocused child find their passion, it’s worth it.

“It’s all about the kids, really,” she said.

For more information about Fayette County 4-H programs, visit <https://extension.psu.edu/programs/4-h/counties/fayette>.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.fayettedcountypa.org.

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