“Welcome to the Extension ‘Cord, a monthly briefing paper from WSU Snohomish County Extension. Even though we have existed for over 100 years, we have realized that too many people are unaware of the diversity and impact of our programs. Each issue will highlight the purpose, activities and results of one particular program. The ‘Cord will showcase the work of our 1,000 volunteers and 25 staff. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our staff for more information.”

Curt Moulton, Extension Director

Building Tomorrow’s Leaders...
Meeting the needs of youth today

The 4-H youth development program in Snohomish County provides safe, appropriate activities for youth ages 5-19. Programming targets assist in meeting their needs for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity while developing integral life skills. All youth strive to meet those needs; 4-H strives to create positive experiences to assist in that quest. Trained, enthusiastic volunteers are the backbone of the 4-H program. 4-H also works in partnership with the Snohomish County Parks Department, community agencies and schools to provide positive activities for the youth of Snohomish County.

National Teams Competition

Throughout the 4-H program year, young people participate in projects that lead to gaining important knowledge about their animals, sport, or activities. The culmination of each year brings healthy competitive events designed to allow youth the opportunity to showcase their growth. Snohomish County youth are generally quite proficient in their fields and often represent the county at state and national competitions. The 2009-2010 program year ended with fifteen youth having qualified for their respective events. They include Kathryn Dunham, Marcy Betelheimer, Dairy Quiz Bowl; Kevin Morano, Archery; Katie Harris, D. D. Latimore, Miriam Lobb, and Maggie Phillips, Equine Hippology; Allison Brown, MacKenzie Cleary, Tara Gerde, Shannon Harris, and Kira Mazzola, Horse Quiz Bowl; Katelyn Keelan, Horse Judging; Emily Beebe, Aaron Furrer and Abby Lohman, Dairy Judging; and Jenaya Newhouse, Livestock Judging. The achievements of these youth involve skill in responsibility, time management, and goal setting. Their dedication to the project of their choice, along with leadership by dedicated volunteers, has resulted in an experience they will never forget. We are privileged to have these fifteen young people representing our county and our program.
Photography Program

Young people in the 4-H Photography program acquire life skills through learning about picture composition, using various cameras, and digitally creating the perfect shot. Each year, over 150 youth participate in photo shoots, workshops, and skill sessions designed to assist them not only in the acquisition of photography skills, but also the development of life skills such as decision making, use of resources, problem solving, and contributing to group efforts. For the past two years, these young people have had the opportunity to display their work at the Arts of Snohomish gallery in Snohomish. As a result, they have been able to sell some of their photos; entrepreneurial activities such as this are credited with assisting youth in the development of future careers. Research demonstrates youth-adult partnerships, such as the 4-H Photography program, contribute to higher academic skills and preventing the participation in risky behaviors such as substance abuse.

4-H Alumni

In the past few years, many 4-H youth who have graduated from the program have furthered their education and assumed leadership positions in their community and the 4-H program. A recent survey indicates that 84% of a random sample of 50 4-H alumni has entered a course of study beyond high school. Additionally, three alumni are currently participating in leadership positions. Susie (Vollandt) Halsey graduated from the 4-H program 6 years ago and attended college in West Virginia. Since returning to Snohomish County, she now serves as the 4-H Dressage Committee Chair and the 4-H Horse Show Treasurer. Kevin Morano, who graduated from the program last year is attending college in Everett and has recently become an archery instructor and assumed leadership of a major committee for the annual train show. Kim Chubbuck, a 4-H Alumni, serves as Program Leader for the Vet Science Program and is also serving as a leader of a train show committee. Research demonstrates the 4-H program contributes to academic success and future contributions to communities.