



# *Tri-State 4-H Growth and Expansion Report*

January 23-24, 2007

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
University Extension

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University of Wisconsin-Extension

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**Tri-State 4-H Growth and Expansion Retreat**  
**Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin**  
**January 23-24, 2007**

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# Tri-State 4-H Club Growth and Expansion Retreat

## January 23-24, 2007

### Executive Summary

#### Need

The 4-H club program holds the best promise of reaching our positive youth development goals in that it has both the context of youth development coupled with the content of the land-grant university system knowledge. Increasing club membership is a national goal that Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin have adopted. In order to achieve our goals we need to use the wisdom and resources available to do this.

#### Purpose

- Share, support and grow each state's vision for 4-H Club growth & expansion;
- Learn from each state's experiences so that individually and/or collectively each state's agenda is advanced;
- Discover common interests that would advance the work and make wise use of scarce resources;
- Apply learnings from the retreat to specific applications within each state; and
- To identify any multi-state outcomes that could include: commitments to share tools, staff development, media pieces, etc. and interstate work teams on specific needs/tasks

#### Process

Thirty-one selected Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Staff members met on January 23-24, 2007. The meeting was held at the Kahler Hotel, Rochester Minnesota. Three tracks identified by the Planning Committee as methods to expand the 4-H club program were: *Partnerships Recruitment/Marketing Retention*

Participants were assigned tracks prior to attending the meeting and given a set of readings identified for each track in preparation. For each track, participants shared their state's current situation, developed definitions to create common language concerning the track methods, identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), identified strategies to move forward and created action plans.

#### Results

All three state's participants felt strongly that their first priority was to ensure that all club experiences are of high quality; this was coined "The Green Guarantee." Each state also committed to sharing resources through a tri-state portal so each state could benefit from both the state's individual work and tri-state efforts. In addition, top priority actions to address gaps were identified within each track.

##### ➤ **Partnerships**

Addressing the potential for forming and sustaining partnerships as a method of engaging new young people and volunteers in 4-H clubs and club-like programs.

- Gaps: Do we have the data to share with policy makers and potential partners the value of 4-H to youth, the community and to them? Can we connect 4-H in terms of value to the community? Are staff and volunteers merit/reward system can be developed that encourages risks/failures in the system in regards to developing partnerships?
- Strategies
  - Twenty-six strategies were identified under the following categories: Identification of Partners, Education for Key Policy Makers, Human and Financial Resources, Staff Training/Tools, and Merit System.
- Top Priority Actions Identified for Tri-State Effort
  1. Develop/refine tools and training so 4-H staff will be better equipped to develop partnerships that will expand the 4-H experiences to new audiences.
  2. Explore a research study measuring the 4-H club contribution to communities in order to assist staff in helping the public understand why growing the club program is a worthy endeavor.

##### ➤ **Recruitment/Marketing**

Addressing the systems and supports that recruit 4-H members.

- Gaps: What data should we collect in order to better serve new families who are recruited to the 4-H program? Are staff and volunteers prepared to "make the ask" when it comes to recruiting new families into our 4-H program? Should Extension employ an overall marketing strategy when it comes to new member recruitment? Which comes first, the new volunteers or the new members? How does our 4-H system simplify the processes and paperwork so that it is "easier" to be a 4-H member?

- Strategies
  - Forty-nine strategies were identified under the following categories: Increased Technology, Use of Alumni, Recruitment/Marketing Planning Committee/Process, Clientele as Recruiters, Marketing—Tangible Tools, Tailoring Opportunities for Volunteers, National Spokesperson, Training in Sales/Asking, Utilize College Students, Miscellaneous
- Top Priority Actions Identified for Tri-State Effort
  1. Explore professional assistance/internal expertise/funds/willingness to share marketing pieces to extend the resources of all three state 4-H programs through a formal shared agreement with each state program leader.
  2. Review and design a targeted marketing strategy. Hold focus groups to assess the impact of marketing pieces and recruitment endeavors on the client.
  3. Design and train staff in sales/making the ask. Resources for training identified are: Steve McCurley as a speaker and reprinting *4-H PR: Blueprint for Expansion*.

## ➤ Retention

Building the systems and supports that retain 4-H club members.

- Gaps: Do we have a standard way to measure 4-H member retention rates? Is there a benefit to measure this consistently? What are the factors that are affecting youth retention rates? Why do strategies to strengthen the 4-H club seem to be cyclic and still not make an impact on retention? Some states have gone to standardized 4-H club support tools (i.e., Family guides, required volunteer training, etc.). What results have happened as a result of this work? In recognition of the changing volunteering patterns, family needs, and youth needs, how can we better meet the needs of new 4-H members and families?
- Strategies
  - Fifty-five strategies were identified under the following categories: New Member Focus, Technology and Websites, Understanding Why Youth Leave (Assessment), Customer Service, Training Volunteers, Structure and Flexibility, Diversity, Paid staff training, Project and Activity Support, Youth Focused and Driven, Collaboration, Recruitment and Promotion
- Top Priority Actions Identified for Tri-State Effort
  1. Create a training plan for paid and volunteer staff focused on customer service: The train the trainer approach is targeted
  2. Provide and evaluate resources to support new families and members by: sharing a host of current statewide resources from all three states on the web site; focus on new family mentoring; transition clover buds and parents to a club setting; and creating a new 4-H Family orientation plan.
  3. Assess each state and counties data collection methods and further survey parent and members on why youth leave.

## Evaluation

Overwhelmingly the participants were in strong agreement that this opportunity gave them greater depth to their discussion/review of the issues and stimulated a high level of strategy setting for 4-H Club Growth and Expansion. Participants and program directors reported a strong commitment to share tools, staff development and media pieces as a result of the experience.

## Next Steps

Staffs from the three states are committed to the actions steps outlined in this report. A portal is now available for participants to share working documents, research, reports and plans with participants. Trainings are being planned and developed by tri-state participants on 4-H partnerships and volunteer retention and recruitment. The NC Region State 4-H Directors have begun exploration of a research project with the North Central Region Center for Rural Development to measure 4-H clubs contributions to their communities. States are applying what was learned from the Tri-state meetings to further their own agendas and staffs, who have previously not made connections before, are working together on important projects to expand the club program.

The complete proceedings of the Tri-State Meeting is located at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4H/Documents/TriStateReport.pdf>

Planning committee: *Tamie Bremseth, MN; Jim Deidrick, MN; Carol Ehlers, IA; Vanette Grover, IA; Judy Levings, IA; Sue Pleskac, WI*



# Tri-State 4-H Growth & Expansion Retreat

## Proceedings Report

Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin  
January 23-24, 2007  
Kahler Hotel, Rochester Minnesota

### Purpose and Framework

#### 1. Planning Team

- Iowa: Carol Ehlers, Vanette Grover, Judy Levings
- Minnesota: Tamie Bremseth, Jim Deidrick
- Wisconsin: Sue Pleskac

#### 2. Background

- Purpose:  
All three of our states (IA, MN, WS) have initiatives targeting the growth and expansion of 4-H Club programs. Each state is at a different stage of development with their plans. Even though each state has unique programs, cultures and systems, it is time for sharing, learning and cooperating so that implementation strategies can be accelerated to increase quality positive youth development experiences for more youth.
- Goals:
  - Share, support and grow each state's vision for 4-H Club growth & expansion.
  - Learn from each state's experiences so that individually and/or collectively each state's agenda is advanced.
  - Discover common interests that will advance the work and make wise use of scarce resources.
  - Apply what was learned from this retreat to specific applications within each state.
  - Consider implementing multi-state applications outcomes may include:
    - ◆ Commitments to share tools, staff development, media pieces, etc.
    - ◆ Interstate work teams on specific needs/tasks.
- Tracks:  
Three tracks, representing methods to expand the 4-H program, were identified by the Planning Committee as areas of focus for the meeting:
  - Partnerships
  - Member Recruitment/Marketing
  - Member Retention
- Participant Preparation:  
Participants were assigned tracks prior to attending the meeting and given a set of additional questions to consider and background information to read that was identified for each track. (Refer to Appendix )

#### 3. Agenda

##### Tuesday, January 23, 2007

11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Arrival at the Kahler Hotel, Rochester

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Lunch

Welcome, Goals, Program Purpose, Introductions

State Presentation (PowerPoint Presentations Posted at: [LINK](#))

State Presentations covered the following questions:

- What is your state's vision for 4-H Growth & Expansion?
- What goals have you identified for this initiative in your state?
- What progress have you made:
  - ▼ Best Practices?
  - ▼ Results?
  - ▼ Impacts?
- What plans (short and long range) do you have?
- What specific things are you hoping to gain from this retreat?

Tuesday, January 23, 2007 (continued)

	National Presentation (Greg Hutchins)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How does this work connect with regional and national goals, initiatives and perspectives?</li></ul>
1:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Transition to Tracks
1:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Break out Session A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What is the current situation in each state regarding (insert track name) including strategies tried, challenges encountered, and successes achieved?</li></ul>
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.	Break Out Session B
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What gaps exist between what is happening now and the ability to achieve membership growth goals through (insert track name)?</li><li>What are the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities that have/could occur in address the issue of (insert track name)?</li><li>What strategies need to be implemented to close the gap?</li></ul>
5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Check into Hotel
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Dinner
	Informal Evening/Networking Event

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast and preliminary reports from break out groups
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What are the common themes?</li></ul>
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	State Team Discussions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What is that our state can contribute?</li><li>Where should we be investing?</li><li>What are the priorities for our state?</li></ul>
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Break & Check out
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Break Out Session C
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What are the priorities from each state related to this track?</li><li>What are priorities for more than one state?</li><li>What steps need to be taken? (Develop action plans)</li></ul>
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Lunch and Closing
	Track Reports with Outcomes
	Reflection Discussion

4. Session A Focus

- Current strategies used in each state: Strategies, Obstacles, Successes, Goals.
- What would be gaps identified by each state from what has been implemented vs. goals/outcomes involved?

Session B Focus

- What are the common gaps between states and what states have solved a gap experienced by others?
- What can be done to close identified gaps?

Session C Focus

- What steps need to be taken?

5. Track Descriptors and Charge

- Partnerships
  - Description: Addressing the potential for forming new partnerships as a method of engaging new young people and volunteers in the 4-H club program.
  - Outcomes:
    - ◆ Colleagues will gain understanding of the work done and issues that exist within the 3 states regarding building partnerships for the purpose of membership growth.
    - ◆ Colleagues will identify gaps and develop strategies to address partnership building within their own state, forming interstate partnerships as common issues are identified.

- Participants: Tamie Bremseth (MN), facilitator; Marisue Hartung (IA); Mary Tewinkel (IA); Judy Levings (IA); Chuck Morris (IA), Dorothy Freeman (MN); Samantha Grant (MN); Kim Reaman (WI); Bob Matysik (WI); Greg Hutchins (WI)
- Recruitment/Marketing
  - Description: Addressing the systems and supports that recruit 4-H members.
  - Outcomes:
    - ◆ Colleagues will gain understanding of the work done and issues that exist within the 3 states regarding 4-H member recruitment.
    - ◆ Colleagues will identify gaps and develop strategies to address increasing 4-H member recruitment within their own state, forming interstate partnerships as common issues are identified.
  - Participants: Vanette Grover (IA) and Carol Ehlers (IA) facilitators; Jeff Macomber (IA); Earl McAlexander (IA); Kia Harries (MN); Becky Harrington (MN); Anita Walz (MN); Katy Forsythe (WI); Chris Viau (WI); and Judy Kennedy (WI)
- Retention
  - Description: Addressing the systems and supports that retain 4-H members.
  - Outcomes:
    - ◆ Colleagues will gain understanding of the work done and issues that exist within the 3 states regarding 4-H member retention.
    - ◆ Colleagues will identify gaps and develop strategies to address increasing 4-H member retention within their own state, forming interstate partnerships as common issues are identified.
  - Participants: Sue Pleskac (WI), facilitator; Mitch Hoyer (IA); Bryan Whaley (IA); Karen Pattison (IA); Kendra Crooks (IA); Trisha Sheehan (MN); Melissa Persing (MN); Jessica Jens (WI); Rosanne Schleif (WI); and Jeanne Baum (WI)

## Track Proceedings and Action Plans

### Partnerships Track Proceedings

- A. Partnership Questions to be addressed
  - What is the current situation regarding partnership building among 4-H staff and volunteers and other organizations and businesses in each state? What strategies have been implemented to identify and address issues that would increase the likelihood of partnerships resulting in membership growth? What obstacles have arisen? What successes have been achieved?
  - What gaps exist that prevent us from building meaningful partnerships that would help us engage more young people in quality 4-H youth development clubs?
  - What needs to be done to close the gap?
- B. Definition of Partnership track description as agreed upon by the group
  - Description: Addressing the potential for forming and sustaining partnerships as a method of engaging new young people and volunteers in 4-H club-like programs.
  - Additional Definitions:
    - What are the characteristics of a "club-like" experience?
      - ◆ Optimum learning environment
      - ◆ Caring adult(s) facilitating learning opportunities
      - ◆ Youth developing and demonstrating competencies in leadership, citizenship (involved in the democratic processes and providing service) and life skills.
      - ◆ An on-going long term experience that has both content and context, and diversity of experience.

- What is a partnership?
  - ◆ Reading material titled "A Continuum of Possible Partnerships" by James and Pamela Toole lists five types of partnerships (Networking, Coordination, Cooperation, Collaboration, Community) and their critical attributes.
  - ◆ Partnerships are sustained relationships with agencies, business, educational institutions and/or organizations.
  - ◆ Potential partners, in this instance, are strategically selected because of the opportunity to strengthen both the 4-H program and the potential partners program; it is a value added agenda.

### C. State Reports

- **Iowa:** Has partnerships with several state networks - Iowa 4-H operates 23 AmeriCorps sites across the state and they would not preclude having clubs. Iowa 4-H is an active partner with the Iowa Coalition for Youth Development. They look to 4-H as a critical vehicle to carrying out Advancing Youth Development training to other youth serving agency/program staff. We have a variety of formal and informal partnerships across the state; most are not focused to grow the club program. A concern we have is our need to work on quality before developing partnerships. Filipino club program in one county, a few Hispanic clubs, in the past some Bosnian clubs. Des Moines area has many partnerships with schools, county conservation board, but not designed to increase club membership. Shooting Sports could be a new vehicle for us, but many counties aren't offering it as an independent club opportunity.
- **Wisconsin:** Coalition work around issues, not necessarily developing 4-H clubs. Across the state is very situational. Milwaukee County Zoo is a true partnership, with other community groups. DPI partnership with VISTA - 16 year long and 25 summer youth work on club programs. State Department of Public Instruction - co-leads a coalition to provide afterschool programs. Wisconsin Department of Positive Youth Development
- **Minnesota:**
  - Expanded club definition to include community, project, afterschool, and site-based models; afterschool and site-based models encourage partnership building.
  - Introduced "adventures" which are hooks for 4-H programs; advertise and/or sell these to partners.
  - Defined the attributes of partnerships we want to build (utilized the tool "Schools and Youth organizations: a continuum of possible partnerships" (Toole, 1996)), established a set of "benefits for partnering with 4-H", and created a list of "non-negotiable program components."
  - Created a display and brochure titled "Make 4-H... Your \_\_\_\_\_ (name of partner – i.e. afterschool, homeschool) Partner! This is utilized at conferences, forums, etc. to inform potential partnership audiences about who we are as a 4-H Youth Development organization and ways we can partner together. The display and brochure highlight opportunities (Adventures, Clubs and Fair), unique features of 4-H experiences (experiential learning and life skill development), and benefits of partnerships (program support, staff development training, opportunities for Involvement).
  - Developed and facilitated a pilot training for county and regional faculty on partnership building for the purpose of growth utilizing the continuum of Possible Partnerships tool and Community Mapping Process.
  - Developed "Urban Youth Learn." Urban Youth Learn is a partnership between Minnesota Urban 4-H Youth Development and other youth-serving organizations, that is designed to help volunteers and program leaders create, strengthen, and advance urban youth programs that occur during nonschool hours. Partners enter an agreement and pay a fee; the agreement includes a resource guide, training, support/consultation, access to University interns, connections to the larger 4-H program and evaluation of the learning environment.
  - Offered \$5,000 mini grants to regions of the state to implement and evaluate strategies for growing the 4-H program that had the possibility of being replicated statewide. Four grants focused on partnership building.
  - Colleagues in Community Youth Development presented workshop to youth development professionals from partnering organizations titled "How Do We Get Kids in the Door? And Keep Them There?"

- Working to intentionally ask other agencies, organizations, educational institutions and businesses to be in a partnership with us. We invite them to sit at table with us, share who we are and our self interest o grow the program by starting up new clubs, ask about their self interest and if there is a match invite them to become a full partner (resources, staff, etc.) Utilize Memorandum of Understanding to formalize partnership. Statewide examples include:
  - ◆ ACE (An African American Group) who need assistance in managing their youth program
  - ◆ MN Department of Health has students willing to serve as volunteers to create clubs for young people to learn about careers in health; 4-H provides training on youth development and creating an learning environments
  - ◆ Big Brothers and Sisters, MN Science Museum and 4-H train mentors and create learning experiences.
  - ◆ Native American Reservations: adding staff to partner in providing culturally sound youth experiences
  - ◆ OMK (Operation Military Kids): adding short-term staff to deliver curriculum based programming.
  - ◆ Minnesota School Age Child Care Association and DARE each have 4-H professionals on their statewide boards and are looking at statewide partnering options
  - ◆ Minnesota Association of Christian Home Educators are particularly interested in curriculum
  - ◆ Community Education is a local partner in many communities so considering statewide partnership
- From a regional perspective, a Regional Extension Educator in Rochester is working on the following partnerships:
  - United Way and four youth serving organizations to provide Afterschool programs.
  - Community Education - do exchange for services and programs and use of volunteers.
  - Title 1 funds in schools for Afterschool Academies to provide programming.
  - 21st Century Learning Grants - Partnerships have been created that are willing to purchase staff to do this type of programming because of our ability to hire, handle financials, etc.
- As new initiatives are started (i.e. Intercultural Competence, Science and Technology) potential partners are identified early in the process and asked to be at the table because of their potential to contribute knowledge, human resources, financial resources, etc.

D. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Participants actively engaged in a SWOT analysis that internally and externally influenced the work to improve development of partnerships for the purpose of growing the 4-H club program. The following is a record of participant ideas.

<b>Strengths (Internal to Organization)</b>	<b>Weaknesses (Internal to Organization)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common language in the research base programs and curriculum.</li> <li>• Existing proven partnerships. Exceptional partnerships with agriculture community.</li> <li>• Recognize diversity of backgrounds of ideas and talents that come from partnerships.</li> <li>• Youth Development emphasis/context crosses many interests - subject matter, issues, etc.</li> <li>• History of volunteerism (adults, youth, in leadership roles etc.)</li> <li>• Diversity of ideas/Talents of Partners in the process</li> <li>• Knowledge and skills to look at and address issues (i.e. Animal Science)</li> <li>• Quality curriculum</li> <li>• Program Support</li> <li>• Staff Development training</li> <li>• Policies and Procedures</li> <li>• Tradition/ volunteers</li> <li>• A system to handle finances, hire staff, outreach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time</li> <li>• Number of Staff</li> <li>• Change issue - inability to get out of current paradigm</li> <li>• Lots of policies and procedures provide extra work for outside organizations (University system, and 4-H accountability) and difficult for some audience groups.</li> <li>• Tradition - focus on community club being 4-H/ fear of changes, fear of loss - (unspoken idea of what a community club is that people have difficulty in articulating)</li> <li>• Volunteers who want the club program to stay the same as it was when they were 4-H'ers – the same club leaders for 5 years and have to continue it - heritage – other groups have shorter term volunteers.</li> <li>• Clarity of the goal of the partnerships - do staff know what it is and will or can they develop the skills to create partnerships - need for staff training and accountability.</li> <li>• Do reporting requirements meet needs?</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities (External to Organization)</b>	<b>Threats (External to Organization)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More resources - financial and human</li> <li>• Marketing our brand, image</li> <li>• Youth development programming in communities is needed and wanted.</li> <li>• Open subject matter-</li> <li>• Teach key decision makers how youth development brings about change in individuals and communities. Develops community (public value).</li> <li>• Creative thinking = resources, programming reaching youth not there.</li> <li>• Provides opportunities for reaching youth that would not be reached - hard to reach youth in a place they are coming.</li> <li>• New volunteers, connections.</li> <li>• People who know about us can be champions for us.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will people want to commit to volunteering for 4-H given the time commitment?</li> <li>• Are there really enough resources with partners?</li> <li>• Is our goal to “grow the program” self-serving? Will the public or partners buy into this concept or do we need re-frame our goal.</li> <li>• Will funders or potential partners suspect that our organization is floundering once they hear our goal of doubling the membership?</li> <li>• What is the benefit to the partner?</li> <li>• Will they follow through with the commitment?</li> <li>• Is there a loss of identity for 4-H or the partner if we partner?</li> <li>• How do we address the issue of duplication?</li> <li>• Developing partnerships is a slow process - Are we patient enough? One good partnership may take staff a year or more to cultivate if there are no immediate results will our supervisors think we are doing our jobs?</li> <li>• How do we overcome the image of 4-H: Why is 4-H doing this; What does 4-H know about the inner city, etc?</li> </ul>

- E. What gaps exist between what we are doing in partnerships and what we want to do?
- Do we have the data to share with policy makers and potential partners the value of 4-H to youth, the community and to them?
  - Is the goal to grow our program self-serving? How can we relate this goal to them in terms of value to the community?
  - Are staff and volunteers prepared to develop relationships and have the tools to create the types of partnerships that will grow our program? Do they know what they are selling?
  - What resources do we need? It takes staff to do this, but can we afford not to? - Have we created a Merit/reward system that encourages risks/failures in the system in regards to developing partnerships?
- F. Strategies in no prioritized order:
- Merit System
    - Reward success, Reward risk
    - Set aside percent of pay plan and dedicate it to staff who have taken a risk, determine by lessons learned.
    - Establish a multi-level incentive plan for trying, confirming, succeeding, etc.
    - Publicly celebrate the first steps/examples on partnership building to serve as an example.
  - Resources
    - Define our hedgehog concept, narrowing what we do well, and not try to be everything to everyone.
    - Create a system of demand, possibly cut something so there is demand for the supply.
    - Prioritize and find an area where you are already skilled in to build partnerships.
    - Leverage resources, provided to gain extra resources, including in-kind.
    - Create a pilot program; work with one or two counties to create a prototype.
    - Hire people that have experience working with diverse audiences and create
  - Educate Key Policy Makers
    - Begin conversations about what 4-H is and how and why we want to partner.
    - Find partners in high places and ask them to be our advocates.
    - Encourage and build interaction between 4-H, clientele and funders to build relationships.
    - Educate policy makers by regularly contacting them on program accomplishments.
    - Investigate personal interests/concerns/hot buttons of policy makers, write reports and develop promotional materials in a way that fits.
    - Use language that resonates with policy makers.
    - Sell the 4-H PYD to stakeholders, be intentional about the impact, do this at a time you are not asking for money/ during non crisis funding times.
  - Staff Training/Tools
    - Conduct training of staff on how to develop partnerships.
      - ◆ Develop a 4-H concept paper and a related training
      - ◆ Apply basic 4-H 101 concept and its implications getting everyone on the same page.
    - Create a Partnership Mentor System.
      - ◆ Build capacity of small teams of personnel focused on local partnership development.
    - Develop training/marketing tools to sell partnerships.
      - ◆ Make sure all staff and volunteers can voice the mission and vision example (printed on business cards).
      - ◆ Value success and traditions and incorporate them in the positioning statement and communicate how the lessons learned from the traditions can be used with new issues.
      - ◆ Tell the story, marketing-innovative strategies.
      - ◆ Develop a marketing piece on partnering with 4-H "what are the benefits of this partnership."
    - Develop regular on-going training for staff and volunteers on the 4-H Brand.
      - ◆ Develop a committee to provide a script for presenting the value of 4-H.
      - ◆ Get everyone straight on what clubs look-like clubs = all club models.
    - Meet with 3 key leaders in next 6 months, tell them our story, and ask for their support, ideas and commitment.

- Identification of Partners
  - Conduct county SWOT/priorities so they can target partners.
    - ◆ Ask current volunteers about opportunities they may see for partnerships.
    - ◆ Hire a consultant to get an external perspective to refine a list of partners and strategies.
    - ◆ Share successes with staff about partner possibilities.
    - ◆ Create state-level partnerships or MOUS so local-level partners are encouraged to partner. State defines partnership, goals of partnership and begins plans on how this would look like.
  - Develop a list of potential partners and how we can work together.
    - ◆ Prioritize audience group and identify partners to work with them.
    - ◆ Prioritize subject matter and identify partners to work with them.
    - ◆ Identify issues: workforce prep, health, financial management to approach potentials with driven by common interest.
  - Form a state-wide think-tank to identify strategies/partners.
  - Partnership Wrap-up
  - Youth Teaching Youth - Evidence-based programming (SAMSA)
  - On a National based program: Can 4-H get Evidence-based program

G. After State Discussions Priorities Break-out:

- Wisconsin:
  - Need to work on the green guarantee - shift to the standardization and this is what clubs and 4-H is. How we are defining a club - this is what we guarantee if youth join.
  - Raise quality of project learning to guarantee the content.
- Iowa
  - Every partnership needs to increase clubs. Have clear goals to increase the partners.
  - Staff development - what does partnership mean - MOUS-
  - Think tanks for brainstorming partners and strategies - we need to be more creative in our thinking. Toolkit for guided discussions.
  - Be in a position to deliver quality.
- Minnesota
  - Develop a toolkit and staff development training on understanding, developing, and sustaining partnerships which includes the following:
    - ◆ Guide for regional educators to lead a discussion with 4-H program coordinators/directors on who will assume what roles with this partner
    - ◆ Guide for conversation with the partners that shows the value of 4-H , what we offer, and the negotiable and non-negotiable items.
    - ◆ MOU information.

H. Priority Discussion:

- Training for staff
- Working with others on creating the green guarantee
- Are we selling growth for growth's sake or should we sell value and growth? Research project on the public value: engage a sociologist around this piece, identified NC Region for Rural Development; What is the value of 4-H clubs on communities? This is how many dollars we save or value 4-H gives to communities. Can they fund this type of research?
  - What value volunteers provide via our YD training in 4-H?
  - What is the role of club and volunteers in the community? Giving evidence of the effectiveness.
  - Is it possible to measure the learning of 4-H (ability to lead, service, communicate, etc.)? Does it lead to community contribution and what is the impact?

# TEAM ACTION PLAN 1

## *Partnership Staff Development*

<p><b>Goal Statement:</b></p> <p>By October 2007, the "Partnership Staff Development" work team will develop/refine tools and training so 4-H staff will be better equipped to develop partnerships that will expand the 4-H experiences to new audiences.</p> <p><b>Observable Indicator/Outcome:</b> Breeze Training, with tools, October 2007</p> <p><b>Members of Team:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* MN - Tamie Bremeseth &amp; Samantha Grant plus members of the MN "Grow Green" team who are not participating in the conference</li> <li>* IA - By 2/27/07 IA will determine if staff will be involved in the development of these materials with Minnesota and if so, who the contacts will be: Marisue Hartung and Judy Levings</li> <li>* WI - WI will select key staff to participate in the Oct 2007 Breeze presentation.</li> </ul>
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Steps to reach this goal:	By Whom? Or what group?	By when?
Determine who will participate in the development of the training and tools (MN or MN/IA)	Marisue will contact Tamie.	2/27/07
Gather by conference call to refine the steps and how each step will be accomplished – by whom?	Tamie - All other steps hinge on who is involved.	3/07
Develop clear definition of characteristics associated with a club (club like) experience		
Clearly define Partnerships - levels of partnerships, difference between coalitions and partnerships, how partnership can grow the 4-H experience, benefits of partnering with 4-H, expectations of partnering with 4-H (non-negotiable and flexible aspects)		
Develop a toolkit that reflects definitions of "club" and "partnerships" and appropriate tools (i.e. Memorandum of Agreements for utilizing with potential partners)		
Develop a process (on Breeze) for educating 4-H staff on utilizing partnerships to grow the 4-H program		
Invite staff from the tri-state area to participate in the training		
Deliver training		10/07
Evaluate results and implement locally		

## TEAM ACTION PLAN 2

### *Partnerships*

<p><b>Goal Statement:</b> Explore a research study measuring 4-H club contributions to their communities</p> <p><b>Members of Team:</b> Bob Matysik, Dorothy Freeman, Kim Reaman, Judy Levings, Chuck Morris</p> <p><b>Members to be Recruited:</b></p>		
<b>Steps to reach this goal:</b>	<b>By whom? Or what group?</b>	<b>By when?</b>
Possible sources: NC Regional Rural Development Center Ag & Home Econ. Experiment Station USDA	IA members will connect with NC Region Rural Development Center staff to explore the possible.	March 2007
Form regional task force to design	Ask representative from NCRDC to attend the summer 4-H NC Program Directors meeting to be held in Iowa.	
Questions: Does participation in 4-H Club make a contribution to their communities?		
<p>What is the value of 4-H Clubs to their community?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiential learning related to citizenship/leadership situations</li> <li>• Government, democratic values – other parts of this life</li> <li>• Volunteer training provided through Extension 4-H to community</li> <li>• Are youth involved with community issues?</li> <li>• Measure value of ed. learning in a club to the community</li> </ul> <p>- Parliamentary procedure - Leadership Roles</p>		
Invite folks to summer director's meeting to explore, gain commitment (Nebraska city meeting)		
Remember TUFFS study concepts		
Share results		
Develop marketing strategy		

## Recruitment Track Proceedings

- A. Member Retention Questions to be addressed
- What is the current situation regarding 4-H member recruitment in each state? What strategies have been implemented to identify and address issues that would increase 4-H member recruitment? What obstacles have arisen? What successes have been achieved?
  - What are the gaps that exist that would increase 4-H member recruitment and achieving recruitment goals?
  - What needs to be done to close the gap?
- B. Definition of Recruitment track description as agreed upon by the group
- Description: Addressing the systems and supports that recruit 4-H members.
  - Definition ideas on recruitment identified by the group:
    - Actively seeking individuals to be part of a club
    - "New" members/individuals sought out
    - "New" in terms of "roles" – process
    - Accessing gaps and targeting
    - Identifying needs
    - Tools/techniques for visibility/ Marketing
    - Be intentional about the recruitment effort
    - Roles as educators - recruitment needs to be realized by stakeholders
    - The who: of recruitment - club members, volunteers
    - Who does the recruiting?
    - Why: what is the goal/purpose; you need to buy into the "why"
    - "Match" between who and what you are recruiting them into - and is it a good fit
    - Recruiting - do you put "quality" before the ask
    - Uniform recruiting message and resources
- C. Research Feedback and State Reports
- References and articles provided to the participants (in the Appendix) were discussed. These are the recorded comments.
    - Working with volunteers focus on "specific" opportunities instead of the "general" what you can do as a volunteer - which overwhelms the volunteer
    - Marketing to the families!
    - Viewing 4-H'ers/families as our "customers" and how we sell our services, promote and treat them.
    - Blueprint booklet is very well done.
    - Recruiting is marketing and marketing is recruiting – want to talk about them as 2 separate things - but is one approach, and it is that systematic approach that we don't have.
    - Public relations is the science which "tells" not "sells" we try to make it do more than what we need to.
    - West Virginia - article marketing methods that are most effective - "word of mouth" validating that - and add "internet/web" technology as effective ways.
    - Wisconsin web sites do not have reasons or messages as to "why" members should join but rather what they will get if they do join.
    - Quality of club experience - does it need to come first - signature service within our clubs
    - Craig H. "strive to give them choices of Yes" rather than Yes/No; retention requires attention-relationship within 4-H; issues of rules/regs have to be overwhelming ?????
    - Promoting 4-H is everyone's responsibility
    - Florida - named names for recruitment - processes; roles defined
    - What's your "personal" reason for why you do what you do - marketing message
    - The Asking Book - "The Vision" not the \$'s or Building... but how will it help people-benefits to kids
    - Enthusiasm works over "technique" every time

- Wisconsin "Recruiting For Your Club" Having clubs involved in marketing - kids asking kids
- Harrison - Scratch multiple itches - retention
- Minnesota - Get Green Presentation
  - One night - "Get Green Night"- statewide
  - Community Mapping - focus positive youth development – where are the gaps?
  - Grow Green Committees - with business plan - overall team - with sub-committees (4-5 people) partnerships (home school, afterschool, community ed.) retention - New family handbook, make new 4-H'ers welcome, cloverbud cards, 4 club types defined, 4-H Adventures,
  - 4-H Adventures (short term mini-blasts of fun) 1 – 1.5 hours based on 4-H curriculum; nutrition educators, master gardeners - has a business plan
  - Focus – grow all counties together-
  - Grow Green-
  - Interns of Color - (wk 10 weeks) Dean/Director paid for; local office provide office and supervision;
  - Native American - task force to hire specialist to work w/ this population tie w/ Ext. and Reservations;
  - SWOT – Analysis - look at internal/external environments

## D.Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis

Strengths (Internal to Organization)	Weaknesses (Internal to Organization)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life Skill Development</li> <li>• Impact to communities</li> <li>• Youth/Adult Partnerships</li> <li>• 4-H Brand</li> <li>• Tradition</li> <li>• Model - variety of opportunities- to find success</li> <li>• Passion of 4-H people for the program/ multi-generational connections</li> <li>• County Fair</li> <li>• Alumni</li> <li>• Stakeholder Support</li> <li>• Family Involvement</li> <li>• Life Skills: Leadership &amp; Communications</li> <li>• Validated program with participant results/ impact</li> <li>• Research based program</li> <li>• Volunteers-</li> <li>• Intergenerational between youth/adults with differing ages</li> <li>• Group/Individualized learning - different learning styles/Experiential learning</li> <li>• Word of Mouth</li> <li>• Lots of Hands</li> <li>• National 4-H Week - dedicated week</li> <li>• Clover- brand- symbol 100 years old/ recognition</li> <li>• Opportunity/ camping-to animals for youth/adults</li> <li>• Rich History with 4-H past</li> <li>• Reputation</li> <li>• Social network-</li> <li>• Legacy – children of former 4-H'ers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tradition - doesn't allow to look beyond</li> <li>• Rules-too many</li> <li>• Take "Brand" for granted- assumption everyone knows what clover/ four- H's are...</li> <li>• Assumptions- that you know (staff, members, parents, volunteers) and that you just "get it!"</li> <li>• Are we moving with the times...tradition...</li> <li>• Multitude of options—too many choices; which may not be provided for through learning experiences or project workshops</li> <li>• Competition—in the way of potential...constant static...and in the way of positive youth development</li> <li>• Paperwork</li> <li>• Language</li> <li>• Culture—expecting that everyone understands and can do it—may be why we lose first year members</li> <li>• Image/perspective - rural</li> <li>• Financial/corporate partners - (John Deere) image for 4-H product</li> <li>• Lack of funding to market</li> <li>• Lack of multi-methods recruitment plan</li> <li>• Limited understanding of potential volunteers/ 4-H part of urban landscape</li> <li>• 4-H has become "un-cool"</li> <li>• Family expectations - when the "whole" family cannot be there - 2 parent - intact expectation-we are very user-friendly for single-parent families</li> <li>• Volunteers much less time to give than in the past</li> <li>• County Fair</li> <li>• Internally – staff narrow definition of clubs; "club-like experience"</li> <li>• (Is that why we don't have as many clubs because of not clear/ defined definition of club - "charter" list)</li> <li>• Volunteer Availability/Commitment - vs Youth Need - Scheduling</li> <li>• Image – cows/cooking</li> <li>• No Recruitment Plan</li> <li>• Funding to carry out marketing and recruitment</li> <li>• Consistent message - to stay on task with a campaign</li> <li>• Continuing momentum of a campaign</li> <li>• Resources/ Time to "be there" to recruit</li> <li>• Poor use of Volunteers to recruit/ follow-up</li> <li>• 4-H'ers/Clubs don't see that they are to recruit</li> <li>• Overwhelming "stuff stack" that is a part of 4-H...</li> <li>• Not High-Tech enough</li> <li>• Websites are not designed to "market/recruit!"</li> <li>• Access to county extension office/ staff</li> <li>• County staff don't see their role in recruiting</li> <li>• Clubs won't take new members - they are maxed out in #'s</li> <li>• Support staff that don't understand/value volunteers - youth</li> <li>• Lack of feedback/input from youth who don't re-enroll—and then county doesn't respond;</li> <li>• Lack of "high-touch" with youth who have enrolled</li> <li>• What appeals to kids - leaving out the youth in the youth/adult partnership</li> <li>• Classroom recruitment—may not show any results because the parents aren't part of that ask</li> <li>• Current marketing is not appealing to a sophisticated market/audience</li> <li>• Model/process doesn't exist to capture market trends/opportunities and react to them</li> <li>• Program Ratio, Adult:Youth - system needed</li> <li>• Volunteer – time frame/ job description - etc. structure the opportunity</li> </ul>

Opportunities (External to Organization)	Threats (External to Organization)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4-H Alumni - share their legacy - to their kids - don't wait till they have children; groom this group towards longer term – giving back to 4-H;</li> <li>• Collegiate 4-H - give them a "vision" for their future and support of 4-H- groom them during this "transition"</li> <li>• Special Interest Camps as "intro" to 4-H (Kids &amp; Canine – for non-4-H'ers lead by 4-H'ers)</li> <li>• 4-H/Campus Recruitment Team for 4-H membership- "This is your first class to the University."</li> <li>• Neighborhood Association partners – community development needs</li> <li>• Grow 4-H - vision each housing sub-division should have a 4-H club</li> <li>• non-traditional 4-H audiences - correctional institution – "behind the walls" club style;</li> <li>• Spokesperson - "famous" person that encourages membership</li> <li>• National campaign - more than a slogan;</li> <li>• Famous 4-H Alumni - spokesperson that can speak well of 4-H experiences</li> <li>• PBS- RFDTV</li> <li>• Use of "technology" U-tube (public digital video images) - simple messages out - if done right - let the kids design the message - generate the buzz...</li> <li>• Youth Tech Teams - include them in marketing campaign development -</li> <li>• Web and the high usage of youth 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade (87%) that go to a web site 3 times or more</li> <li>• I-pod- downloads</li> <li>• Targeted Volunteer Recruitment &amp; messages that appeal based on the need</li> <li>• Growing retired based population</li> <li>• Ask kids what they want/ how they want to be recruited</li> <li>• Diversity - new audiences - Hispanic and others</li> <li>• Unique clubs – based on topic "Car Audio Club" ; based on culture</li> <li>• Where kids are "already" gathering - School Age Childcare, Parks &amp; Rec, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Grants, B&amp;G clubs, Libraries, - etc.</li> <li>• Transition opportunities "Adventures 4-H" to introduce families to 4-H (MN)</li> <li>• Non-school athletics – summer softball/soccer, summer softball club; some kind of sports club; - consider market trends - look at the group's needs</li> <li>• Marketing Club - that helps look at future trends; how to reach kids</li> <li>• Maximize local media - make 4-H/FFA contacts within media markets; "4-H On The Air"</li> <li>• Incentives for volunteers/members to recruit new members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stereotypes</li> <li>• More members/ more volunteers, more work and I'm overworked already</li> <li>• Shrinking resources - financial (from gov. partners)</li> <li>• Accountability to resources/ funding partners - request more out of programs</li> <li>• Grant/Contract funds come earmarked - impacting what program looks like, what it is called...</li> <li>• Time and energy to develop and sustain comprehensive targeted Marketing Plan</li> <li>• What's the incentive to increase those numbers to staff...volunteers</li> <li>• Chasing grant dollars</li> <li>• Families lack of understanding of our program</li> <li>• "What's in it for my kids" and lack of family desire to invest in the program...</li> <li>• Potential growth could be threat if it is unmanaged</li> <li>• # vol. that a staff person can manage 1:7 (scope of control based on U.S. Military)</li> <li>• Risk Management - neglect vs. over analysis of liability - we go to the extreme</li> </ul>

## E. Possible Strategies

- Increased Technology
  - Create tri-state website for sharing information
  - State websites developed with recruitment in mind.
  - High-end technology as part of marketing effort.
  - Improved websites.
- Use of Alumni
  - Alumni gatherings to solicit short-term volunteers.
  - Collegiate program growth and development at any college.
  - Target 4-H alumni for volunteer roles and next generation of 4-Hers.
- Recruitment/Marketing Planning Committee/Process
  - Define opportunities in a recruitment/marketing process.
  - Set a vision for growing 4-H from the 4-H'ers to volunteers to staff to alumni. (Feedback process to hear and respond to 4-H experiences/recruitment).
  - Set-up local growth/expansion/marketing group using youth/adult partnerships.
  - Identify and use marketing tools that work—may need research.
  - Survey previous members—why didn't they re-enroll this year?
  - Establish a process/system to market, plan, and deliver up-to-date youth clubs.
  - Coordinate recruitment efforts across each state.
  - Have county and state youth leadership teams, for one month, do written articles, radio, posters, table tents, etc., to promote 4-H events.
  - Be specific about what you want--# of 4-H members, volunteer for X role.
  - New club ideas—audio club, sport club, etc...
  - Get staff on board with your plan—frontline support is key.
- Clientele as Recruiters
  - Create local 4-H Recruitment Team—youth and adults that meeting with kids and their families to promote their involvement in 4-H.
  - Staff and volunteer team training in recruitment/marketing/making “the ask.”
  - Incentives to staff/volunteers—high quality “club of the year” or best rate of growth/retention.
  - Youth as developers of marketing and recruitment campaign.
  - Work with clubs to do more FUN activities and then tell their friends.
  - Research—what do families want out of 4-H.
  - Use county and state youth leadership groups to send recruitment postcards to Clover Kids age youth.
- Marketing—Tangible Tools
  - Marketing campaigns on state or national level.
  - Be accessible—yellow pages, signage, etc.
  - State funded print and/or glossy material.
  - Find effective yet SIMPLE ways to communicate 4-H to new families/volunteers.
- Tailoring Opportunities for Volunteers
  - Go back to current job descriptions and rewrite. Put SHORT TIME FRAME when possible to hook volunteers and then introduce them to longer-term possibilities.
  - Create want ads for volunteers—targeted descriptions.
  - Develop new job descriptions articulating purpose and benefits of volunteering.
  - Master volunteer program/model.
- National Spokesperson
  - Local, regional, state, multi-state, national spokesperson campaign.
  - Look for a national spokesperson, even just in the tri-state area, who has a compelling message for volunteering in 4-H or becoming a member in 4-H.
- Training in Sales/Asking
  - Train staff, youth and volunteers in making “the ask.”
  - Work on post-sales service.

- New—Orientation—Transition
  - Offer volunteer trainings—clarify roles, how are you available, etc?
  - Hold new member event/orientation.
  - Follow-up with new recruits—how are they doing? Any questions?
  - 4-H Findouts for volunteers and families.
  - Transition component—experience 4-H in small components.
  - Use 4-H projects to offer events/activities/camps as a hook to expose folks to 4-H.
- Utilize College Students
  - Create marketing internships with colleges or high schools for 4-H program.
  - Utilize campus or college-based students to teach marketing and evaluation and fine-tune amateur campaigns.
- Miscellaneous
  - Re-publish the 4-H Public Relations: A Blueprint for Expansion.
  - Create tri-state list of recruitment best practices.
  - Hire someone through a grant to strictly write grants.
  - One person at the state level to recruit and train volunteers.

#### F. State Discussions on Recruitment - Detailed Priorities Report from States

- Increased Technology
  - Tri-State Staff Website for Sharing Resources - WI
  - Public Website - more inviting, exciting, front page and beyond - MN
  - Tri-state portal for sharing - MN
  - Explore tri-state opening website for recruitment-IA
  - Share Data Analysis as it pertains to recruitment/retention from Iowa
  - Volunteer Training Recognition - share out from Iowa
- Recruit/Marketing Planning Committee/Process
  - Marketing/Recruitment Process & Strategy and System - clientele as Recruiters - IA
- Marketing Tangible Tools
  - Explore/Purchase/Share Marketing Materials - WI and MN
  - Targeted Marketing Materials to specific demographics (Somalian, Hispanic) Partnerships - IA
  - Coordination of Marketing Campaign - Promo Pieces - IA
  - Republish 4-H Public Relations : A Blueprint For Expansion-IA
- National Spokesperson
  - National/State Spokesperson for Marketing (for both youth/parents) - IA
- Training in Sales/Asking
  - Tools/training to help better communicate our vision/mission - Making the Ask - MN
- Miscellaneous
  - Explore Use of 4-H Plus - Interview Minnesota stuff - WI
  - Standardization of "Clubs" - WI
  - More information from MN on Green Guarantee - WI (what 4-H Clubs guarantee's to offer) Minnesota 4-H Charter Application-
- Technology
  - MN is setting up a portal for sharing and then USE IT (timeline of soon with use over a year's time to be evaluated on use and impact)--Tamie
  - May be able to include chat room, blogs, and more
  - Know and understand what possibilities are for joint pages or replicated pages on each state site.
  - 4-H Recruitment using tech—see marketing
- Marketing Pieces
  - Initial conversations sound like MN (statewide) and WI (Judy Kennedy) are willing to share
  - Whatever is developed product or process wise, we need to simplify.
  - Where can we make biggest impact?

- MN spent more time talking about how to help families transfer from stage to stage of 4-H (today's discussion). In last 3-5 years...staff have been given permission to do the work they need to do...they have permission to get it going. Grow Green design team has been the group to lead some efforts along with different committees, counties, or groups of people.
- WI—plans to work on retention first and how to improve quality and fill gaps...that will in turn increase recruitment.
- MN state decision today-fall training on empowering volunteers via Breeze. What people can do to continue the great things they are doing..."we trust you, we empower you, go forth and do great things" regarding marketing and recruitment (the goal. Articulating the vision and mission of MN 4-H to fire them up to grow the program.). Dorothy will be the speaker/fire up. The quality pieces of the Makes Clubs Fun, Welcoming, etc., have really brought people on board.
- WI priorities in recruitment—create consistency across some definitions, policies etc. Interested in the "Green Guarantee"—what a club is and what it will do in every club in every county in the state. Real focus on quality club initiative which is seen as a cultural change as each county is autonomous. (MN uses this analogy—when you think of your mom and pop restaurant, it is different at each one. But when you think of a franchise, you know what will be the same, what to expect, what the flavor will be. So, when I join in 4-H in any county, the program delivery will be the same—the type of clubs available and how they are delivered.) WI wants to interview MN on 4-H Plus. They will develop the 4-H brand in a way to promote the program and recruit. They would like to use standard marketing pieces to connect things. Something that is a marketing piece externally can also be a teaching piece internally. WI going to provide leadership in exploring a shared website for joining 4-H.
- IA priorities seem to be focusing on the quality of the club experience through volunteer education and ways to reach new audiences. In regard to marketing, IA would like to move forward with the promotional pieces and tie them to standardized volunteer education that we are requiring. IA will be looking into republishing the *4-H Public Relations: A Blueprint for Expansion*.
- Training in Sales/Asking
  - MN in beginning stages. It will be an emphasis for fall volunteer education. Staff development may be provided in pockets across the state in making **"the ask."**
  - IA may have some things to share in the future. A pocket of counties is working on this. Also, with the reprint of PR booklet, IA may naturally provide staff development around this.
  - WI is interested in staff development including support staff in customer service (fish philosophy type). WI also is interested in **"making the ask."**
- Miscellaneous from WI
  - Blurred line between recruitment and retention
  - Explore use of 4-H Plus (interview MN staff)
  - Green Guarantee

# TEAM ACTION PLAN

## *Recruitment Track*

<p><b>Goal Statement:</b>          By Fall 2007, the "Recruitment" work team will work on objectives listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore professional assistance/internal expertise/funds/willingness to share marketing pieces across the three states.</li> <li>• Review and design a targeted marketing strategy.</li> <li>• Design and train staff in sales/making the ask.</li> </ul> <p><b>Members of Team:</b>          Vanette Grover, Carol Ehlers, Earl McAlexander, Jeff Macomber, Kia Harries, Becky Harrington, Katy Forsythe, Judy Kennedy, Chris Viau, Anita Walz</p> <p><b>Members to be Recruited:</b></p>		
Objectives	By Whom? Or what group?	By when?
<p><b>Marketing Plans—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore professional assistance/internal expertise/funds/willingness to share marketing pieces to extend the resources of all three state 4-H programs through a formal shared agreement with each of the state program leaders.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cost/Benefit of marketing pieces—use funds and time for the greatest impact.</li> <li>2. Explore professional assistance in looking at targeted marketing/recruitment strategies and impact of marketing/ recruitment pieces.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Review and design a targeted marketing strategy. Hold focus groups to assess the impact of marketing pieces and recruitment endeavors on the client.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emphasis on youth and volunteer input.</li> <li>2. Marketing and recruitment via technology.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p><b>Training Plans-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Design and train staff</b> in sales/making the ask. Resources for training identified are: Steve McCurley as a speaker and reprinting <i>4-H PR: Blueprint for Expansion</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Carol and Anita</p> <p>← Ask State Leaders</p> <p>Judy, Vanette, Kia</p> <p>Vanette, Kia, Jeff</p> <p>Chris and Katy          Judy and Sue Pleskac          Earl and Carol</p>	

G. Committee Wants/Needs

- Need Portal - for sharing of resources for the three states.
- Previous Member survey – WI - Judy; Iowa - Vanette
- 1<sup>st</sup> Year Member Satisfaction Surveys - IA
- Letter of Support from University President - WI. (First University Class your kids will take is 4-H)
- Inventors and Entrepreneur's club - WI
- Male Volunteers - Survey/Research in Minnesota- why did they get involved.
- Minnesota Business Plans - Grow Green, 4-H Adventures.

## Retention Track Proceedings

### A. Member Retention Overall Questions to be addressed:

- What is the current situation regarding 4-H member retention in each state. What strategies have been implemented to identify and address issues that would increase 4-H member retention? What obstacles have arisen? What successes have been achieved?
- What are the gaps that exist between increasing 4-H member retention and achieving it?
- What needs to be done to close the gap?

### B. Definition of Member Retention as agreed upon by the group:

- Building the systems and supports that retain 4-H club members. Includes long-term commitment and staff (paid and volunteer) involvement

### C. State Reports

The states reported strategies, obstacles, successes and goals of the work with member retention initiatives. This is a brief outline of those reports.

#### Minnesota

Strategies	Obstacles	Successes	Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified why members leave through surveys and interviews</li> <li>• Reviewing policies for accessibility</li> <li>• Development of 4-H Mgt Guide</li> <li>• Charter process and recharter application</li> <li>• Leader training..online</li> <li>• Tool Kit for Clubs to use</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Statewide Family Handbook</li> <li>• On Your Back Packs for Project Resources</li> <li>• Adventure Experiences that lead members to clubs</li> <li>• Grow Green Funds Grant program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paperwork takes too much time</li> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Staff caught in delivery: no "system" for training volunteers to deliver program</li> <li>• Staff Learning Customer Service</li> <li>• Too many policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuity across state club to club</li> <li>• Volunteers better prepared, evidence is coming</li> <li>• Increasing awareness of 4-H by all audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on transition of kids to members</li> <li>• Developing systems to help staff train volunteers for delivery</li> <li>• 4-H membership card</li> <li>• 4-H for ME enrollment on-line</li> </ul>

#### Iowa

Strategies	Obstacles	Successes	Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working on consistent and accurate enrollment data</li> <li>• Helping counties analyze local trends</li> <li>• Set goal of growing 4-H membership by 3%</li> <li>• Developing strategies with a team</li> <li>• Potential exit interviews surveys and 1<sup>st</sup> year member survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent and inaccurate enrollment data</li> <li>• Loss of membership</li> <li>• Consistency not there between counties and in programs and materials</li> <li>• Staff time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate success with pilots on exit interview strategies</li> <li>• Personal contacts are working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow 4-H membership by 3%</li> <li>• County based plans</li> </ul>

Wisconsin

Strategies	Obstacles	Successes	Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide Work team focusing on this work. Includes 28 plus members</li> <li>• Focus on member retention: mentoring, service learning, assessment, family handbook, discussed exit interview.</li> <li>• 4-H Community Club website</li> <li>• Regional volunteer training</li> <li>• Staff training</li> <li>• Grow 4-H initiative with targeted communities</li> <li>• Focus on youth as leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of consistency in how we count and report members, working on it.</li> <li>• Autonomy of county level programs</li> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Volunteers lack training or acknowledge they are part of situation</li> <li>• Reaching diverse audiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website development with consistent tools for staff and volunteers. Site being used</li> <li>• Training for volunteer and paid staff</li> <li>• 'Increased awareness of 4-H</li> <li>• Learning from new initiatives</li> <li>• High performing work team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth and adults in leadership roles in clubs</li> <li>• Saw a slight decrease in retention numbers</li> <li>• Need study on retention issue</li> <li>• Tools needed for local counties to use and communicate local information.</li> <li>• Reaching diverse audiences.</li> </ul>

D. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Participants actively engaged in a SWOT analysis, identifying the internal strengths, external opportunities, internal weakness and external threats influencing the work to improve member retention. This is a record of this work.

Strengths (Internal) and Opportunities (External)

- We have good research and experience working with youth in organized programs
- Need to know what was learned from working with parents (Kansas work)
- Website development focusing on club tools and resources for staff and volunteers
- Web use for customer service and education delivery
- Success in use of technology for training, resources, tools, etc.
- Success in emailing newsletters...the numbers of requests are increasing
- Nice start on variety of tools available
- Past the barrier of "state-owned" materials. There is interest in working together and sharing resources.
- Consistency of materials/tools could help families and reduce the feeling of 4-H being overwhelming. "demystifying 4-H"
- Opportunity to promote 4-H nationwide
- Volunteers are multigenerational
- We have the opportunity to empower 4-H volunteers.
- Great staff
- Rich and successful history
- Our states really are at similar points
- Empower volunteers to be part of the solution of member retention
- Partnering with others: Organizations and groups
- Template for support staff and staff to use when greeting new families
- Can we rethink our structures to meet family needs (issues of transportation need to drop off youth and then engage parents later, etc.)
- Working within our own organization

- We have the means to enroll members and leaders and count them
- Opportunity to maximize use of the data we already collect
- Use the data to see what is happening and to communicate where we are
- We have access to more data than we are using
- Should be easier to get members that left back if we know why they left
- Research...does it give us answers for what members are looking for? Do we need more? Have we used what exists?
- There is value in membership
- We have many opportunities to appeal to a wide variety of kids
- Opportunity to work with youth after first year: Targeting intentional mentoring, focus opportunities for specific populations
- Opportunities for training and support
- We can learn from each other (states)
- We can retain members

#### Weakness (Internal) and Threats (External)

- Help traditional program increase in flexibility...embracing the traditions while developing flexibility
- How do we treat new people that are interested to help them see that starting new clubs is a positive alternative
- Support staff may not be part of the solution nor understand the vision.
- Customer service! How do we explain 4-H and introducing the process to be a 4-H member
- How do we describe 4-H...sounds like too much work
- Old mindset and old image
- Do we need a standardized way to measure retention
- We may have different ways to measure enrolments of clubs and members and we need to not make this a barrier or a competition
- Do not assume people leave because 4-H was a negative experience
- Helping volunteers understand this is a problem: issue of creating a welcoming environment and that volunteers are part of the solution
- Mobilize the masses
- Volunteers/Leaders do not ask others to join.
- Not set up to reach diverse audiences
- Need opportunities for recruiting and funding diverse staff
- Do traditional structures fit youth and families with a variety of interests and needs?
- How do we reach the new generation? We need new strategies
- WE must put the supports in place so kids get a quality experience
- Needs alternative ways to measure a successful experience for youth
- Do policies and paper work create barriers
- Staff time going toward management rather than educational programming
- Resources Needed: Staff time, staff numbers, volunteer time, staff turnover.

#### E. Strategies Identified

The group used a snow card process to identify potential strategies and ideas, grouped them together and assigned titles to the categories. Strategies in no prioritized order:

- New Member Focus
  - Handbook/Orientation
    - ◆ Special Focus on New Members
    - ◆ New Member/Family
    - ◆ Book – Day – Orientation
    - ◆ Family Handbook
    - ◆ Promote better orientation resources for new families

- ◆ Focus group of 1-2 year 4-H Families to align their needs with information in 4-H family handbooks
- Cloverbuds
  - ◆ Transition cloverbuds into club structure
  - ◆ Increasing support for cloverbuds
  - ◆ Strategies to engage cloverbuds
- Mentoring
  - ◆ Mentoring new 4-H Families
  - ◆ First year member/family mentors
- Welcoming Environment
  - ◆ Increase club skills in creating welcoming environment
  - ◆ Personal connection with new families from local office
  - ◆ Create check points (touch points) throughout the year with new members
- Technology and Websites
  - Utilize and websites for training, and management
  - Interstate info site
  - Create a tri-state Grow Green Membership enhancement Web Site that is accessible to all staff in 3 states to share resources.
- Understanding Why Youth Leave (Assessment)
  - Survey those that left...find out why and then set strategies to address those concerns
  - Calling committee to invite members back
  - Reconnect with members that have not reenrolled
  - Study local data and understand why leave
  - Learn more about 1 and 2 year leaving and create supports
- Customer Service
  - Increase customer service abilities for staff and support staff and volunteers
  - Training for staff and volunteers and support staff on strategies
- Training Volunteers
  - Volunteer training on creating clubs
  - Train volunteers to help them understand they are part of the solution and strategies to help them be part of the solution
  - Get the grass roots support through training and retention issues
- Structure and Flexibility
  - Consistent 4-H policies...across county and potentially across state lines
  - Better club experience
  - Clean up image that 4-H is too much work
  - Awareness of different family situation
  - Flexibility of 4-H club rules and total 4-H program
  - Continuous enrollment
  - Focus less on structure and more on educational program and activities
  - Increase accessibility for youth with a variety of needs
- Diversity
  - More diverse clubs include project focus
  - Targeting underserved and diverse staff and volunteers
  - Increase volunteer support to those with diverse members
- Paid staff training
  - Invest in tri state development opportunity—conference totally focused on aspects of retention/partnership building and recruitment, etc.....
  - Make sure all staff are aware of retention data and issue
  - Continued support and staff training on visions and strategies of 4-H

- Project and Activity Support
  - Project focuses—technology and science and what kids are into and where they are at?
  - Increase project support for youth
  - Quality Programs relevant to youth needs (multiple programs and activities)
- Youth Focused and Driven
  - Youth directed club meeting and programs
  - Encourage attendance on regular basis
  - Empower youth...youth leadership impacts
  - Youth in control of 4-H meetings and experience
- Collaboration
  - Money for tri-state study on retention and tool creation
  - Talk to other states to where they are in these efforts
  - Utilize regional media sites to promote 4-H to server sites – good for recruitment and pride from current members.
  - Data collection with purpose...Redefine
  - Share the fun both in clubs and across the state lines
  - Pursue opportunities to hire staff that would focus their work on Growing the 4-H club program in the tri-state region
  - Understand our niche and promote it
  - Tri-state II...what we know now and what we need...good, bad, ugly
  - Avoid re-inventing the wheel to save staff time and open sharing of tools to help staff time.
- Recruitment and Promotion
  - Ask youth that leave to re join
  - More 4-H Promotion (youth say "That's My Club)
  - Grassroots promotion and emphasis
  - Preparing a common, simple language to describe the 4-H program
  - Provide current members with materials to recruit new members...increases knowledge to resolve for program
  - Club/county award for retention and members
  - Not only promote...but recruit
  - Paid staff needs to work with new club designs. This could be interns or assistants.

#### F. State Priorities

- Top three priorities identified as strategies for a joint state effort:
  - Training Volunteers and Customer Service
  - New Member Focus
  - Assessment of youth: Why do youth leave?
- Other priorities in order:
  - Technology and websites (MN, WI, IA)
  - Structure with flexibility (WI, IA)
  - Project and activity support (MN, IA)
  - Diversity
  - Paid staff training
  - Youth focused and driven
  - Collaborations
- Recruitment and Promotion was a high priority for all states, but felt the track on Recruitment should take the lead.
- Parking Lot
  - Exit Interview/Survey...has the survey made a difference?
  - Assessing success on tools implemented
  - Quality of experience vs. Quantity of members.

## TEAM ACTION PLAN 1

### *Retention Track*

<p><b>Goal Statement:</b> Focus on Training for Paid and Volunteer Staff</p> <p><b>Observable Indicator/Outcome:</b> Training Plan for Paid and Volunteer Staff</p> <p><b>Members of Team:</b> Brenda Shafer, Bryan Whaley, and Jeanne Baum</p> <p><b>Members to be Recruited:</b> None listed. Jeanne will be joining another team on data collection.</p>		
Steps to Reach This Goal	By Whom? Or what group?	By when?
Focus on Customer Service: Using the train the trainer approach, provide training to a team from each state that will then provide training to 4-H Youth Development staff, potentially office support staff and possible other Extension professionals. Iowa and Wisconsin will send colleagues to Minnesota for training.	VMN, Community Vitality—Ext Service or permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Brenda in MN will check with Leadership of Community Vitality Capacity Area who offers the training and outline the possibilities and next steps</li> <li>b. Investigate if program leaders in each state will fund the training for staff in WI and IA.</li> <li>c. Develop a timeline that will work for all</li> </ul>
Volunteer Leader Training: Have state post training modules on welcoming environment, supporting new members, project training, and customer service. A state team would select the ones they would use and prepare for each year.	All State will post	Post as soon as portal in place

## TEAM ACTION PLAN 2

### *Retention Track*

<p><b>Goal Statement:</b> New Member Focus</p> <p><b>Observable Indicator/Outcome:</b> Provide and evaluate resources to support new families and members</p> <p><b>Members of Team:</b> Jessica Jens, Karen Pattison, Kendra Crooks, Melissa Persing</p> <p><b>Members to be Recruited:</b> None listed.</p>		
Steps to Reach This Goal	By whom? Or what group?	By when?
Sharing current statewide resources on portal site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MN Family Handbook</li> <li>• MN Clover bud Newsletter</li> <li>• IA Clover kid Newsletter</li> <li>• WI Welcoming Environment Lesson Plans</li> <li>• WI PPT for new member orientation</li> <li>• WI new member handbook</li> <li>• MN Welcoming Environment Staff Training Packet</li> <li>• Lesson plans for Clover buds or new members</li> </ul>	All	As soon as portal is set
New Family Mentoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WI work team results</li> <li>• Role Descriptions</li> <li>• Support materials for mentors</li> <li>• 6 Lessons from Kansas</li> </ul>	WI	
Transition clover buds and parents to a club setting	IA	
New 4-H Family Orientation Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research best practices</li> <li>• 1 page newsletter to 4-H families</li> <li>• Build in check points with new family during the year</li> </ul>	MN	

## TEAM ACTION PLAN 3

### *Retention Track*

<p><b>Goal Statement:</b>Data Collection and Retention Assessment</p> <p><b>Observable Indicator/Outcome:</b> Data collection and retention assessment</p> <p><b>Members of Team:</b> Mitch Hoyer, Trish Sheehan, Rosanne Schlief</p> <p><b>Members to be Recruited:</b> tech people, evaluation people, staff interested</p>		
Steps to Reach This Goal	By whom? Or what group?	By when?
Consistency of data collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the value of collecting data</li> <li>• What would data be used for?</li> <li>• Collection timelines</li> <li>• Saving info on initiatives</li> <li>• Evaluate data management systems</li> </ul>	Each state discuss and list they want to know	Determine if this would be workable for tri-state by Fall 07
Dissemination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who needs it?</li> <li>• Templates to aid using it</li> <li>• What does this mean for your county—strategic planning? Timelines?</li> </ul>	Mitch: IA – Becky Nibe generate tools WI – Nancy Eisele MN – Todd Mehrkins	To follow action 2
Survey first year members that exit organization	Rosanne WI – Ellen Taylor-Powel	February
Parent Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mail or Phone...Random Selection or all</li> <li>• Return rates—validity</li> <li>• Consistent questions</li> <li>• Yes—value to have data able to aggregated</li> </ul>	Trish MN Practice and inactives Technology	Early summer to conduct Dec/Jan 08

## Conclusions and Future Work

1. Closing Session and Reflection Responses (Tri-State 4-H Expansion and Growth Retreat, January 23-24, 2007)  
During the closing session, retreat goals were reviewed. Each track presented their action plan information to the total group.

**Reflection responses from the three program leaders followed.** Key points from their responses are listed:

- This is a partnership. We need to have the right people to bear on the issue and that seems to have been achieved.
- There needs to be ownership for the process and people committed to do the work so it can move forward.
- Thank you for bringing us together
- Had fun and observed this in others
- Observed energy to work toward goals
- Well worth the investment
- The three states have such excellent professionals and they demonstrate the quality of the program
- This has been the best place to talk about this issue.
- Would like to investigate with the other program leaders the idea of bringing other teams together over issues with the goal of sharing ideas and considering potential relationships that can further the work
- We need to hold each other accountable
- What a privilege to be part of this group and this organization
- Concepts of change and the need to pick up pieces and move forward are important. Keep the focus!

**Participants completed “community puzzle squares”** which documented their names and ideas and concepts that resonated with them as they worked through the last two days. The puzzle pieces were assembled and participants observed the connection their piece of the puzzle adds to the whole. Responses are included in Appendix 2.

2. Evaluations

Twenty-six of the 31 participants completed the retreat evaluation tool (Appendix 3). The participants were in strong agreement 81% that the 24-hour retreat supported their state’s vision for 4-H Club growth and expansion. The participants reported a strong commitment to share tools, staff development and media pieces as a result of their experience. The format’s ability for participants to connect with professionals, apply learning and support interstate work ranged from 40-60% of respondents agreeing that the objectives had been met with 60-40% in strong agreement on meeting the three objectives.

The participants reported Professional Growth in the arenas of 4-H Member Recruitment, Retention and Partnerships with 61% self-reporting their understanding in the “Basic to Good” range and 39% in the “Sound” category. All participants reported a shift in professional growth with 73% reporting a “Sound” understanding and 20% placing themselves at the “Expert” level.

On-The-Job Confidence was rated at 65% Agree and 34% Strong Agree that having completed the retreat the Extension Professionals are able to give leadership to setting strategies, support best practices and move daily operations toward State/National 4-H Club Expansion goals.

The Tri-State strategy of providing clear pre-retreat objectives, specific questions to be addressed and background research/information found 54% in agreement and 38% in strong agreement of this being an effective method. Some 88% of the participants were in strong agreement that this opportunity gave Extension staff greater depth to their discussion/review of the issues and stimulated a high level of strategy setting for 4-H Club Growth and Expansion.

### 3. Commitments/Next Steps

- The Design Team has a meeting scheduled to compile a full proceedings report for participant use. An executive summary will be developed as well. This will be posted for access by all participants.
- Investigation into a portal hosted by Minnesota is underway. Participants involved in the retreat and future action plans will be able to post shared documents, communicate on progress of action plans, conduct business, etc. through this portal site.
- Individual state will be reviewing this data and begin to address the action steps that are critical.
- Multi-state efforts and communication has begun.

## Appendix 1: Resource List for Each Track

### Background Information in Preparation for Tracks.

#### Partnerships

- Definition of “partnership building” as a strategy for membership growth.
- Benson, P. (1997). Uniting Communities around Youth: Seven Essential Goals. Chapter 6 in All Kids are Our Kids, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Colorado Springs Assets for Youth. Selected Action Planning Tools: “Benefits of Partnerships” and “Key Questions for Partnering.” [www.csay.org](http://www.csay.org)
- National League of Cities. Youth Participation and Youth Service. [www.ncl.org](http://www.ncl.org)
- National Research Council (2002). The Landscape of Community Programs for Youth. Chapter 5 in Community Programs to Promote Youth Development, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., National Academy of Sciences. <http://www.nap.edu>
- Hobbs (1999). Increasing the 4-H Participation of Youth from High-Risk Environments. <http://www.joe.org/joe/1999august/rb1.html>
- (Ohio State) (2005). Building a Collaboration for Youth Development: The “Club-Within-A-Club” <http://www.joe.org/joe/2005fe3/21/20073/21/2007bruary/>
- Strieter, L. and Blalock, L. (2006). Journey to Successful Collaborations: <http://www.joe.org/joe/2006february/tt4.shtml> ,
- Skuza et al. (2005): Urban Youth Learn. Overview. <http://www.fourh.umn.edu/urban/learn.html>
- Toole, J. and P. (1992, 1996) Schools and Youth Organizations: A Continuum of Potential Partnerships. (Compass Institute, St. Paul)

#### Member Recruitment

- Baillere, J. and Mozenter-Spiegel, M: *4-H Public Relations: a Blueprint for Expansion*. National 4-H Source Book, 7100 Connecticut Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815-4997. Web: [www.4-Hmall.org](http://www.4-Hmall.org) (to order) Book review: <http://4h.uwex.edu/wae4hydp/documents/winter2002.pdf>
- Chatwood, K. (2000): Planning for the Future: Massachusetts 4-H benchmarking Study. (See 4-H program business plan- marketing approaches, pg. 65). verview <http://www.mass4h.org/planning/benchmark.html>  
[http://www.mass4h.org/documents/benchmark\\_title\\_toc.pdf](http://www.mass4h.org/documents/benchmark_title_toc.pdf)
- Harrison (2001): Retention: Keeping the Relationship Reciprocal: <http://www.expressionsofexcellence.com/ARTICLES/retention.html>
- Harrison (2003): Choice Gives Voice to Your Customers: <http://www.expressionsofexcellence.com/ARTICLES/choice.htm>
- Harrison (2003): Signature Service Sets You Apart! [http://www.expressionsofexcellence.com/ARTICLES/signature\\_service.htm](http://www.expressionsofexcellence.com/ARTICLES/signature_service.htm)
- NC 4-H Youth Development: Marketing 4-H Clubs Examples (family involvement): <http://www.nc4h.org/extension/clubs/ads.php>
- Recruiting for Your Club: 4-H Club Management Lesson Plan. University of Wisconsin-Extension 4-H Community Club Central: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=4049>
- Panas (2002): Asking: A 59-minute Guide to Everything Board Members, Volunteers, and Staff Must Know to Secure the Gift. Emerson & Church, Medfield, MA.
- Recruitment of Volunteers- Florida State University Extension, <https://4h.ifas.ufl.edu/FacultyStaffOnly/4HProgramHandbook2001/Section6/identification.htm>
- Smith, S. and Finley, J. (2004): Targeted Recruitment of 4-H Volunteers involves Understanding Who Currently Volunteers and Why. <http://www.joe.org/joe/2004august/a6.shtml>

- Volunteers: The Backbone of Community Initiatives. Module 4: "The Ask" and Recruitment: <http://preventiontraining.samhsa.gov/CTW18/mod4tr.htm>
- Wilgenbach (1997): Marketing Strategies for Recruiting 4-H Members in West Virginia. <http://pubs.aged.tamu.edu/jae/pdf/vol41/41-01-88.pdf> Feedback pg. 7  
[http://www.mass4h.org/documents/benchmark\\_feedback.pdf](http://www.mass4h.org/documents/benchmark_feedback.pdf)
- What Can You Do to Promote Your Club- The Ohio State University
- <http://advisorshandbook.ohio4h.org/clubmanagement/membership.html>

## Member Retention

- 4-H Member Demographics from each of the 3 states over a 20 year period documenting trends. Statistics should be divided by grade/age.
- Anderson-Butcher, D. (April 2005) Recruitment and Retention in Youth Development Programming. The Prevention Researcher.
- Harder et al. (2005): An In-Depth Look at 4-H Enrollment and Retention: <http://www.joe.org/joe/2005october/rb4.shtml>
- Astroph (1985): The Challenge of Retaining 4-H Members: <http://www.joe.org/joe/1985fall/sa4.html>
- Culp (1997): Motivating and Retaining Adult Volunteer 4-H Leaders: <http://pubs.aged.tamu.edu/jae/pdf/vol38/38-02-01.pdf#search=%224-H%20youth%20member%20retention%22>
- Older Member Retention Survey: California 4-H (2002-2003): <http://www.ca4h.org/leadership/ambassador/02-03/Survey%20Results-Report.doc>
- UW-Extension 4-H Youth Development Club Lesson Series: Keeping Older Members: <http://4h.uwex.edu/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=3109>
- Weiss, Little, and Bouffard. (Spring 2005) Participation in Youth Programs; Enrollment, Attendance, and Engagement. New Directions for Youth Development. Jossey-Bass

## Appendix 2: Reflective Responses by Participants

Participants completed “community puzzle squares” which documented their names and ideas and concepts that resonated with them as they worked through the last two days. The puzzle pieces were assembled and participants observed the connection their piece of the puzzle adds to the whole. Responses are included in Appendix 2. The following list documents reflections on the puzzle pieces:

- Quality before Growth
- Green Guarantee
- Marketing materials
- Make relationships fun and easy
- Customer service
- Clubs are the key intersection of content and context
- Opportunity
- Include “Club” community contributions as part of the partnership benefit
- Emphasizing quality
- 4-H is not the same in every state
- Importance of the club experience
- Group struggle is common
- Pride in MN
- Quality before marketing, partnership and recruitment. We need to be able to deliver the goods
- Recruitment = marketing and vice versa
- We do not market effectively
- Retention = recruitment
- We need to continue to work together
- A TRI-CYCLE IS MORE STABLE THAN A UNICYLCE
- This has been excellent
- Meeting quality people from neighboring states who share passion and commitment for 4-H and the potential of a quality club experience to positively impact the lives of young people, and communities.
- Let’s continue to share and collaborate
- Lots of resources
- Each state has done good stuff
- Definition of partnership
- We can grow the 4-H program
- Be careful what you wish for
- Context of the community sets the context of the club
- The need for planned intentional strategy
- Cross the states sharing of resources and ideas
- Tri-state trainings would work
- Statewide standards for 4-H clubs
- Partnerships lead to new 4-H clubs and more staff
- New partnership ideas
- Standardized “Welcoming New Families”
- De-mystifying 4-H
- Bring policy makers in as allies
- Ask
- Quality and Quantity
- Partnership is not sponsorship
- Willingness to drop the borders
- Customer service=welcoming environment is not just for clubs
- We promote, we should recruit.

- No strong cloverbud programs
- Focus and do very well
- Green Guarantee
- Demystify 4-H
- BHAG
- Vital 1-2 years
- Green Guarantee
- Sweet spot is the clubs
- Tools! Reenergized! Team Work!
- Intentional connections and ability to share work/resources/ideas...all the good stuff is out there
- Visions
- Promo at MN State Fair (from person in WI)
- Quality club experience: What we promise your family will get out of the club experience
- Ask volunteers for partnership opportunities
- Green guarantee
- Exit interviews for non returning members
- Great leadership in the tri-state, good contacts, green guarantee, Awesome combining our resources, marketing together, a lot done in 24 hours, training in the fall
- This was so FUN--to share and learn and meet with others. I am so PSYCHED
- 4-H clubs fulfill the content and context—the sweet spot
- The green guarantee
- Demystifying 4-H
- New ways to orient 4-H members
- Generated thoughts and ideas about common themes among states
- New ideas about partners
- Tri-State...To Make the Best Better
- Shared staff websites / Portal sharing
- Green Guarantee
- Customer service
- Appreciate the tri-state approach
- Clover bud transition
- Volunteer training
- Technology
- Demystify 4-H
- Tri-state website...great idea
- Standardized programs
- Change!
- Intentional partnership with MOU's
- Innovative grants to counties to expand 4-H clubs
- Demystify 4-H
- Share resources and promo items. Stop re-inventing everything
- The green guarantee
- Great to work with other states
- New member success
- Quality first
- Iowa's county charts from membership program
- Check points with new members throughout the year
- Green guarantee

## Appendix 3: Retreat Evaluation Tool and Raw Data

**Guidelines:** Please reply to each section either circling the number or providing a response.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES MET Now that I have completed the retreat, I am able to:	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Support my state's vision for 4-H Club growth & expansion.			1	4	21
Connect with individuals that will advance the work and share resources related to 4-H club expansion.				10	16
Apply learning from this retreat to specific applications within each state.				10	16
Follow-up on commitments to share tools, staff development, media pieces.				16	10
Support interstate work on specific needs/tasks.			1	13	12
PROFESSIONAL GROWTH- RECRUITMENT/MEMBER RETENTION & PARTNERSHIPS	None 1	Basic 2	Good 3	Sound 4	Expert 5
My understanding of the elements of 4-H Club Growth and Expansion <b>before</b> completing the retreat was:		7	9	10	
My understanding of the elements of 4-H Club Growth and Expansion <b>after</b> completing the retreat was:			2	19	5
ON-THE-JOB CONFIDENCE Now that I have completed the retreat, I am confident I will be able to:	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Give leadership to setting strategies that grow 4-H club membership.				17	9
Support best practices for 4-H Club growth and expansion.		1		16	9
Connect daily operations with state, regional and national 4-H Club Expansion goals, issues and perspectives.			2	16	8
EFFECTIVENESS OF MATERIALS & METHODS	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
The pre-retreat objectives and expectations were clear and easy to accomplish.			2	14	10
The break-out session outcomes, questions and background information resulted in a productive work group.				12	14
The cooperative effort of three states gave greater depth to the discussion and review of the issues.				6	20
The work groups stimulated a high level of energy, ideas and strategy setting.				3	23

**How will your 4-H Club expansion efforts be different as a result of your participation in this retreat?**

- Work on engaging current youth/adult participants to create a plan and “make the ask.”
- Ability to see impact/progress of work (in relation to my area).
- New and different ideas of how to go about this task. Good to share ideas and materials.
- Great ideas for some new types of clubs to start.
- Partnership concept is a new idea that I can help grow.
- Know what other states are working on and what is coming.
- More intentional and deliberate actions.
- Will allow me to think about more broadly about what affects membership and strategies to employ.
- Increase partnerships to form clubs.
- Will continue outreach and quality efforts full steam ahead...
- Focus on quality club experience.
- More emphasis on new member/family success.
- Work on customer service philosophy with county programs.
- Be more conscious of other ideas and options—what has been done and what we can do together!
- Learned more about other states and the resource they may be.
- New directions—focus on work team level.
- More confidence in moving staff and committee work to the next level.
- Gave some focus to our efforts. Validated themes identified in our state.
- Gave me a wider of variety of understanding and target audiences we need to focus. Generate ideas/thoughts/ways to develop more clubs.
- Be involved with exploration of and implementing the “Green Guarantee.”
- More focused, directed based on State Priorities.

**What did you find most valuable about this retreat? Please indicate why.**

- The process—opportunity to give input—identify needs—create strategies.
- Connections—the idea sharing was key.
- Seeing recruitment materials that MN and WI have developed.
- Networking on a deeper level.
- Learning what is going on in other states. Opportunity to share ideas and formulate new tasks/goals.
- At first all the state reports.
- Depth of discussions.
- Tri-state discussions followed by state discussions—WI found a focus.
- Sharing between states.
- The potential to share real marketing ideas and initiatives.
- Networking and sharing—re-energized.
- Sharing with other states.
- Openness of everyone. All the sharing and networking—saves time and energy as well as program and professional development.
- Interaction with other states.
- Was re-energized and excited to work across state lines.
- Having other people wrestle with issues that influence me.
- Ability to talk/discuss/share face-to-face. Will facilitate future dialogue.
- To hear-see-touch resources—people with a common focus and passion.
- Connecting with co-workers in other states—identified common interests. Now know other folks I can contact for info.
- Sharing of ideas (find common practices amongst three states.) Gaining information on reasons why we need to develop a better overall plan to expand this topic outside our state.
- “Stepping back” and thinking about quality and retention in relation to growth.
- State “huddle” using the track ideas to focus efforts.

**What did you find least valuable about this retreat? Please indicate why.**

- It was all valuable—just too much sitting time.
- How short the time was. It was just over 24 hours.
- Least valuable was the after dinner mixing—maybe just too much after a long day.
- Very rewarding experience!
- Opening powerpoints of states.
- The pre-conference materials were good, but we did not refer to them or utilize them as effectively as I thought we could in our retention track.
- “Overload” but I don’t know how to get around this.

**Overall Comments**

- Excellent agenda—Facilitators were well prepared! Thank you!
- Great connections—to hear where others are at and sharing ideas. Let’s keep it going!
- I would like to see either this group or a similar group get together in the next year to continue the work that was started. I would really like to see things like this continue to happen with other topics. Maybe we don’t need to have every staff member from each state attend, but determine common themes and let people attend as their needs dictate. Examples may mirror national objectives—technology, science, healthy lifestyles.
- Great time frame. We fit a lot into 24 hours.
- Great ideas and effective use of time.
- Well done!
- I enjoyed the opportunity to participate.
- Great effort—thanks!
- When do we meet again?
- Worthwhile. I was a little skeptical coming in, but was definitely worthwhile to participate.
- Excellent!

## Appendix 4: Participant Information

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