

WINTER 2024

# THE VOICE

Association Newsletter



## “Why I Joined IEPYE”

When given the prompt “Why I joined IEPYE”, a few members have shared their insights and hope you too find value in being a part of the organization.

*As youth development professionals, we focus on providing our 4-H members with a place to belong and feel welcome – but we sometimes don't realize that we crave that too. IEPYE is the place where I feel like I belong. By joining the association, I have been able to meet other colleagues that share my interests, support my goals, and help me celebrate successes. IEPYE has helped me become a better youth development and extension professional by giving me a safe space to grow and learn, both personally and professionally.*

**SARA  
MARTEN**

*I joined IEPYE for the chance to grow! I've grown my connections to other Illinois and national 4-H pros, I've grown in my work recognition through the multi-level awards program, and I've grown as a presenter with the opportunity for virtual and in-person national presentations that the association offers.*

**CARISSA  
NELSON**

*I joined IEPYE because I wanted to get to know my fellow colleagues a little better. It's a great way to brainstorm ideas and partner on programming. I also enjoy the regional fall and spring get togethers that happen as it's fun but also a learning experience. Some of the best ways to bond with your colleagues. I also appreciate being able to apply for awards.*

**KELLY  
LAFFERTY**

*I joined IEPYE to connect with other 4-H Educators. We have a unique job and the support I've received from other members is invaluable! When you're looking for a resource, in need of a suggestion or solution, or just a few words of encouragement, an IEPYE member is seldom far away!*

**MARTHA  
EBBESMEYER**

SEND NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS TO  
DANIELLE GAPINSKI AT DES85@ILLINOIS.EDU

## 2024-2025 Board Members

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Katie Duitsman, Vice President

Kasey Kemme, Secretary

Jennifer Peterson, Treasurer

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Professional Development

Andrea Farrier  
Member Recognition

Katie Duitsman  
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Danielle Gapinski  
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Sara Marten  
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## Winter Break Recharge: Inspiration and Renewal for Youth Development Professionals

It has been a busy year of conferences, planning, programming, and meetings. As we prepare for a fresh, new year, here are some ways to recharge over your winter break and set yourself up for a rejuvenated 2025.

### Personal Renewal

1. Reflect on Successes: Journal or create a gratitude list of achievements from the year.
2. Engage in Self-Care: Prioritize rest, mindfulness, or enjoyable hobbies that rejuvenate your energy.
3. Learn Something New: Explore books, webinars, or creative activities to inspire new ideas.

### Professional Growth

1. Plan Ahead: Set goals or brainstorm fresh programming ideas for the upcoming year.
2. Organize Resources: Refresh your materials, lesson plans, or workspace to reduce stress in the new year.

### Creative Exploration

1. Try DIY Projects: Experiment with art, crafts, or STEM projects that can later be shared with youth.
2. Explore Local Events: Attend community events for inspiration and connection with local culture.

### Recharge Through Service

1. Volunteer: Engage in service projects to stay inspired.

### Reconnect with Nature

1. Spend Time Outdoors: Enjoy winter activities like hiking, snowshoeing, or visiting a local park to refresh your mind and body.

### Celebrate Your Achievements

1. Host a Celebration: Celebrate milestones with family, friends, or colleagues to end the year on a positive note.

## Professional Development Opportunities

### Essential Skills: Managing Time to Achieve Goals

Length 1 hour (recorded webinar)  
*Learn key time management strategies to boost productivity, set achievable goals, avoid procrastination, and create a balanced routine for success in both work and personal life.*

### **Leader in You series by Suzanna Windon, Ph.D., Mariah Stollar**

#### Leader in You Part 1 - Preparing to Engage in Leader Development

#### Leader in You Part 2 - Understanding Your Self

#### Leader in You Part 3: Get Motivated

#### Leader in You Part 4: Self-Mastery - How to Thrive and not Just Survive

### **Articles:**

#### Pathways to Supporting Youth Leaders in the Community

By Tanja Hernandez, Suzanna Windon, Ph.D.

#### Dealing with Conflict

By Linda Falcone, Neal Fogle, Dana Ollendyke



## NAE4-HYDP Conference

**Date:** October 28-30, 2025

**Location:** Atlanta, GA

[IEPYE WEBSITE](#) | [JOIN THE IEPYE FACEBOOK GROUP](#)





## IEPYE member set to present as part of 2025 virtual webinar series

Carissa Nelson, Media Communication Manager, will be among the presenters in NAE4-HYDP's Virtual Professional Working Group webinar series, Empowering 4-H Pros with AI: Top 10 Tools to Elevate 4-H Program Impact.

Discover the top 10 innovative ways AI can enhance 4-H program design and delivery by improving workflows, strengthening youth engagement, and boosting program efficiency. Learn how to harness AI tools to streamline processes, enhance knowledge sharing, and create impactful youth development experiences, all while maintaining the essential role of human expertise. Through interactive exercises and real-world case studies, this session will empower 4-H professionals with actionable strategies to adapt and integrate AI solutions that meet the unique needs of youth and adult audiences. Embrace the future of 4-H programming with tools that support positive development outcomes, making each program more adaptable, scalable, and effective.

[Register here](#)

A graphic for the 2025 Webinar Series. It features a purple banner at the top with the text "Virtual Professional Development Working Group" and "2025 Webinar Series". Below the banner, on a pink background, is the title "Empowering 4-H Pros with AI: Top 10 Tools to Elevate 4-H Program Impact" in bold black text. To the right of the title is a photo of people working at a table with laptops. At the bottom, on a yellow background, is the date and time: "Wednesday, January 15, 2025 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST".

Virtual Professional Development Working Group  
**2025 Webinar Series**

**Empowering 4-H Pros with AI:  
Top 10 Tools  
to Elevate  
4-H Program  
Impact**

**Wednesday, January 15, 2025  
2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST**

## NAE4-HYDP has a working group for that

Are you looking to become more connected and involved on a national level? You may wish to hone in on one of your passion areas and collaborate with colleagues with similar interests and backgrounds. NAE4-HYDP offers a variety of working groups to help you connect in special program areas. Sign on to your profile and join a working group or visit [www.nae4hydp.org/page/ProgramsTeam](http://www.nae4hydp.org/page/ProgramsTeam)