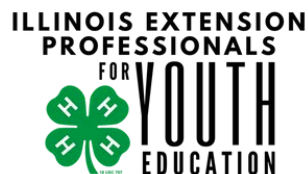


JUNE 2025

THE VOICE

Association Newsletter



State Award Winners announced

Each year NAE4-HYDP members have the opportunity to showcase their work through submission of Member Recognition Awards covering areas of Communication and Speciality. State selections will advance to the regional round for judging. This year's state recipients are as follows:

SPECIALITY AWARDS

EXCELLENCE IN PEER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD AMY HENSCHEN

This award recognizes NAE4-HYDP members for significant accomplishments in peer-to-peer teaching in 4-H, youth development or other professional development topics related to the youth development professional. Delivery of professional development must be by other Extension professionals to their peers. Individuals or teams may apply. Interdisciplinary teams are encouraged as well as interdisciplinary content where subject-matter content is merged with positive youth development principles. Delivery of professional development may be through face-to-face training, distance education (webinar(s), interactive online courses or other effective delivery methods. Professional development efforts may be a single training or a series of sessions.

GREG YOST MEMORIAL YOUTH IN LEADERSHIP AWARD KATIE DUITSMAN

This award recognizes the outstanding efforts of members that exemplify youth-adult partnerships which support young people in programs that affect them and their world.
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2024-2025 Board Members

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Martha Ebbesmeyer, *President*
Katie Duitsman, *Vice President*
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Kelly Lafferty & Latosha Reggans, *Northern*
Carissa Nelson, *East Central*
Jessica Jaffry, *West Central*
Kristi Stout, *Southern*



State Award Winners announced (continued)

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AWARD

DANIELLE GAPINSKI

This award recognizes the use of technology in delivering or managing educational programs. Programming might include technology such as computers, video, satellite, web pages, etc. Applicants should seek to showcase how technology has expanded the educational delivery of 4-H and promote logical problem-solving techniques using educational technology(ies).

EXCELLENCE IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING AWARD

SHELBY CARLSON

This award recognizes outstanding efforts by members in workforce development and career exploration programming and to strengthen the commitment to workforce development programming curriculum. The program should be part of the ongoing 4-H program in the geographical area the nominee serves (county, district, region or state).

EXCELLENCE IN TEAMWORK AWARD

SHELBY CARLSON

This award encourages and recognizes outstanding Extension programs or projects conducted by a team that demonstrate effective performance and significant results (impact) at community, area, state, or multi-state levels.

EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATION AND EXPRESSIVE ARTS AWARD

DANIELLE GAPINSKI

This award goal is to create 4-H Communication & Expressive Arts (CEA) opportunities for youth, volunteers, and extension professionals incorporating CEA into one or more of the National 4-H Mission Mandates: Science, Healthy Living, Civic Engagement and show the impact of a Communication & Expressive Arts program through formal or informal evaluation and/or published article/story/media coverage.

EXCELLENCE IN AG LITERACY PROGRAMMING AWARD

ALCHA CORBAN

This award recognizes outstanding 4-H programming efforts by members in the area of agricultural literacy whether in a rural, suburban or urban setting.

EXCELLENCE IN HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAMMING AWARD

HENRY CRAFT

This award recognizes outstanding efforts and impacts of NAE4-HYDP members in Healthy Living programming, evaluation and/or research projects.

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State Award Winners announced (continuned)

SEARCH FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEEN PROGRAMMING AWARD

KRISTI STOUT

This award provides recognition for outstanding programs conducted for and with teen audiences. Programs should strive to gain national recognition for program accomplishments relative to scholarly and creative activities, teaching and/or research effectiveness, to show evidence or collaboration with others who help meet community teens' needs, and to strengthen the commitment to programs with teen audiences.

FIRST TIME ATTENDEE

ABIGAIL NELSON

SECOND TIME ATTENDEE

BRITTNEY MUSCHETTO

COMMUNICATOR AWARDS

To recognize NAE4-HYDP members for significant accomplishments in presenting 4-H to the general public, civic groups, 4-H groups, or individuals through public information methods.

RADIO/AUDIO PROGRAM

AMY HENSCHEN

To provide educational or promotional information that is accurate, concise and makes the listener respond in a positive manner or to attract the listener's attention, hold attention and make the listener respond in a positive way.

VIDEO PROGRAM

SHELBY CARLSON

To provide educational or promotional information that is accurate, concise, and makes the listener respond in a positive manner or to attract the listener's attention, hold attention and make the listener respond in a positive way.

EDUCATIONAL PIECE - INDIVIDUAL

DANIELLE GAPINSKI

To educate through accurate, concise information (research based as applies) on one subject. It is not a promotional piece.

EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE - INDIVIDUAL

DANIELLE GAPINSKI

To educate through accurate, concise information (research based as applies) on one subject. It is not a promotional package.

(Communicator Awards On page 4)

State Award Winners announced (continued)

PERIODICAL PUBLICATION - INDIVIDUAL AMY HENSCHEN

An information piece designed to inform, update, and make reader respond in a positive way. Examples may include newsletters, State Association publications, magazines, tabloids, etc.

We are incredibly proud of our state-level award recipients and their outstanding achievements. Their dedication, hard work, and excellence set a high standard for all of us. Please join us in congratulating them and celebrating their success. Together, we continue to strive for greatness and support each other in all our endeavors.



ESP National Conference 2026

ESP National Conference will be hosted by the Illinois Association on October 12-15, 2026 in Springfield. ESP, or Epsilon Sigma Phi, works to strengthen the impact of the Extension System's ability to address the needs of individuals and communities through research-based education. It is one of the oldest and is the largest organization of Extension Professionals.

They are seeking help in a variety of areas to make the national conference a success, including Hospitality & Registration, Tours, Entertainment, Life Member, Décor, Auction, and Technology. If you are interested in assisting, please let an IEPYE board Member know.

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

IEPYE happenings

Take a moment to explore the highlights from recent and upcoming professional development events that bring our members together to learn, share, and grow.

National 4-H Beyond Ready Activation Summit



IEPYE members, (pictured left to right) Kevin Carey, Kristi Stout, and Carissa Nelson attended the National 4-H Beyond Ready Activation Summit, April 22-24, in Minneapolis, MN.

This transformative gathering provided teams with the tools, strategies, and connections to align the 4-H Beyond Ready Initiative with local needs and opportunities.

Northern Region outing



The Northern Regional attended the Burpee Museum in Rockford on April 21st. They got a behind the scenes look at the Paleo lab and were even able to make their own fossil before venturing to Prairie Street Brewing Company for lunch and a brief business meeting.

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

Professional Development Opportunities

Mental Wellness Series: Fostering Mental Health in Youth

Length 1 hour

Learn tips on ways to develop positive coping skills for helping youth through difficult times.

Simon Sinek –Unlocking Leadership with Simon Sinek: The Infinite Mindset | Full Conversation



IEPYE Annual Meeting

**Thursday, September 18
Champaign**

More details to come!



Southern Region Professional Development Day

Three members of the Southern Region IEPYE (Illinois Extension Professionals for Youth Education) program experienced significant personal and professional leadership growth after attending the Speaking for Illinois 4-H Legislative Connection event in Springfield, Illinois, on May 6, 2025. This impactful visit gave the educators a unique opportunity to meet with state legislators alongside teen ambassadors, share their personal 4-H experiences, and advocate for continued support of youth development programs. As part of the day's activities, the group observed teens confidently interacting with members of both the Illinois House and Senate, expressing the value and importance of Illinois 4-H in shaping responsible, skilled, and community-minded leaders. Watching youth speak passionately about how 4-H has impacted their lives inspired the IEPYE members to recognize the power of their own voices and the importance of always including our elected officials. By preparing elevator speeches, learning about the legislative process, and engaging in one-on-one conversations with elected officials, the youth honed their public speaking, critical thinking, and civic engagement skills. For many, it was their first time inside the Illinois State Capitol, and the experience of standing in such a historic and influential space helped build confidence and a deeper understanding of how government decisions impact their communities. These interactions reinforced their personal and professional belief that young voices matter and that they can play an active role in shaping the future of their state. The event also inspired the educators to advocate for more state level youth leadership members from within their counties to get involved



and share their knowledge, making the visit not only a memorable day in Springfield but a pivotal step in their journey as youth development professionals. Kristi Stout, Southern Region IEPYE director coordinated the IEPYE professional development day with the Speaking for Illinois 4-H state staff and was happy to have Emily Reese and Kasey Kemme alongside her to watch the day unfold. Stout encourages all IEPYE members to attend state level events to gain appreciation, understanding to be able to adequately advocate for youth to fulfill these roles throughout the state!

NAE4-HYDP Conference - Georgia On My Mind, 4H in My Heart



Date: October 28-30, 2025

Location: Hilton Atlanta | Atlanta, GA

The 2025 NAE4-HYDP Conference: Georgia on My Mind; 4-H in My Heart is focused on 4-H youth development professionals working together to improve their profession and the people with whom they work.

Registration is open!

Member registration: \$500 by July 15;
\$600 after July 15

One Day registration: \$200 by July 15;
\$375 after July 15

Nonmember registration: \$800

During our Spring IEPYE meeting, Illinois members requested a survey to help plan for travel and housing options. If you anticipate that you will be attending, please consider completing the survey regarding your plans at this link which includes space to provide a cellphone number for inclusion in our Illinois group chat:

https://illinois.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3lqpza47U2QJ8Cq.

Will you be presenting a poster or workshop at the conference? Let us know so we can support each other! https://illinois.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_80QPihZ7Owkfg6m