

Experience the world through 4-H



4-H members have endless opportunities as they grow up in the 4-H program.

For those members who dream of traveling to foreign destinations, or simply experiencing different cultures, 4-H offers numerous international exchange programs.

Perhaps one of the most common programs to Colorado 4-H is the Japanese Summer Exchange. Each year, Colorado 4-H families are asked if they would like to host a Japanese teen.

This year, there will be approximately 65 Japanese youth arriving in Colorado on July 21 and departing for Japan on Aug. 19. 4-H teens from hosting families in Colorado are subsequently eligible to participate in an exchange program to Japan during any of the following summers until he or she is 21 years old.

However, 4-H teens do not have to participate as a host family first before heading to Japan. Any 4-Her, ages 12-19, may apply to be part of the outbound exchange with Japan.

There are numerous other opportunities to host inbound exchange youth through 4-H. Youth come to the United States from Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Australia, Asia and Africa. These exchange participants are excited to share information about their country and culture with their host families and the communities they stay in. This is a great way for anyone to experience a different culture without ever leaving their own home!

For 4-H members who want a longer, more in-depth experience with traveling abroad, the International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) program may be the way to go. IFYE representatives are required to be older than the regular 4-H age. They need to be between 19-30 years of age

Extension Corner

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and have a 4-H background.

These individuals will live in another country for six months. They will live and work with several host families for 3-6 weeks at a time. While with host families, IFYE representatives are asked to participate in day to day family life and may have the opportunity to interact with other host organizations.

Once the IFYE representatives return to Colorado, they travel throughout the state, giving presentations and sharing their experiences. Colorado provides two full scholarships annually, excluding personal spending money, to participate in the IFYE program.

An IFYE representative who traveled to the Philippines sums up the experience this way, "Travelers see mountains, museums and human masses and mimic a country's culture. IFYEs pass through the front doors of homes to live as brothers and sisters. Thus the culture engulfs them."

If you or a 4-H member in your home is interested in any of 4-H's exchange programs, please contact the Phillips County Extension Office at 854-3616 or by e-mail at kindra.plumb@colostate.edu.

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