

My 4-H Story
by
Logan Gray
Lincoln County
Novice

Hi! My name is Logan Gray. This is my third year in 4-H and I was ten years old as of January 2019. Because I love to learn about new things, I joined 4-H in April 2017. I was excited that 4-H isn't just for kids with livestock. The project lists include some of my favorite interests: dogs, electronics, shooting sports, and public speaking. I do also love horses and like learning more about them for the Horse Bowl competitions. While I can't have livestock at our house, fortunately, I can learn more about animals by doing Livestock Judging, and it's awesome!

I also get to work with animals through the Dog Project. Even though I did not have a dog at the beginning of the 4-H year, I still worked on the Dog Project, learning the characteristics of different breeds. I used that knowledge to help my family choose our pet and continue to use what I learn in 4-H to benefit my pooch, Lexi.

Competing in Consumer Decision Making has helped me make better decisions when shopping. I now look for the best prices and best quality. Sometimes, when shopping with my parents, I am allowed to choose the best options for our family's needs. This past year, I was able to incorporate CDM skills as we purchased my shooting sports equipment.

For the past two years, I have attended TeenPact as part of the Citizenship Project. I wrote and presented a bill supporting cursive handwriting education in 2018, and another in 2019 that would establish a longer learning period for driving. While at TeenPact, I also voted on proposed legislation and learned about the three branches of New Mexico's government. I have used the parliamentary procedures I learned at TeenPact during other meetings, such as club and County Council meetings.

Serving as a voting member of Lincoln County 4-H Council for the past two years has also affected my everyday life by allowing me to know about and learn what is happening in our county. It also gives me practice in resolving conflict, as we all are free to agree or disagree and

still be able to cast our votes. From being the Secretary for Winner's Circle 4-H Club this year, I have gained stronger writing skills, including improved note-taking that has helped me with my homeschooling.

As a member of 4-H, I get to spend time with kids within our state, county and my local club. 4-H gives me social skills, promotes sharing and teamwork building, and lets me contribute to group efforts. I keep records in order to communicate between the County Council and my club, I am responsible for attending meetings, I have to work well as part of a team, and I have learned how to better contribute to group efforts. While participating in shooting sports, I learned about personal safety and communication. There is so much to learn with lots of opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving especially during practices with my fellow 4-H members.

I served as my club Secretary and Dance Committee Chairman. As Secretary, I kept track of attendance and meeting minutes, wrote correspondence, and gave reports on previous proceedings. I really enjoyed serving as my club's Dance Committee Chairman because it was fun to lead web calls with my committee members. On those calls we got to work as a team to set goals, make decisions, divide duties, and plan an exciting event. As a leader, I prefer to make decisions quickly, but I also want to take time to hear all of the options and other people's opinions. I am friendly and kind to others, and I like to cooperate with others to get things done.

My involvement in community service projects this year included trash pick up at the Lincoln County Cowboy Symposium, assembling food kits for Feed My Starving Children, helping set up and tear down at County 4-H events and a local homeschooling convention, and participating in the statewide service project at Youth Get Away (YGA). To prepare for the Youth Get Away service project, I bought toothpaste, toothbrushes, and combs with my mom's help. At YGA, I put stuff into bags for the homeless. Every Christmas since I can remember, I have helped

with Operation Christmas Child too. I chose items for our family to purchase and donate. Then, I participated in filling boxes with donated items for kids in need around the world. Helping the kids each year feels good inside because you know that they'll be getting something.

In November, I placed flags at Ft Stanton Cemetery to honor the veterans buried there, and this summer I held the US flag at the Ruidoso Downs Racetrack during their Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day flag ceremonies. Also, I had a special opportunity in February, to page for the New Mexico House of Representatives' Minority Whip, Rob Montoya. It was an exciting day, and I got to be on the House floor while they were in session. As a page, I transported items and got coffee for the various Representatives. I hope to page again next year.

4-H gives me knowledge about lots of things, which is very exciting because I get tons of learning opportunities in 4-H. Every time I learn something new it affects who I am. It makes me think about what is true. It helps me understand more of the world around me.

Participating in 4-H has given me marketable skills, taught me to be a more responsible citizen, and helped me accept differences in order to resolve conflict. From club, county, and state activities, I have gained friendships, self-discipline, and self-responsibility. I have also learned teamwork, social skills, communication, and cooperation as I contributed to group efforts. I want to learn as much as I can so that I can be more prosperous in the future. My career goals include military service, business ownership, and to participate in politics. I want to own dogs and continue to do shooting sports. As an adult, I want to be a volunteer leader in 4-H to help youth become better.