The 4-H model, based on University research, utilizes methods that sustain long-term learning and behavior change in young people. Using that as its foundation, 4-H helps youth develop key skills they will need to succeed in college, their careers, and communities, such as communications, problem-solving, decision-making and coping. Ongoing research shows the 4-H model is proving quite effective.

According to a national longitudinal study by Tufts University, youth who participate in 4-H have better grades, are more emotionally engaged with school, are more likely to see themselves going to college, and are more than twice as likely to be civically active and make contributions to their communities.

Eich, who first became involved in 4-H as a shy fifth-grader in Anoka County, credits the Extension youth development program for much of the improvement in her interpersonal communications skills. Through 4-H, she made new friends and learned about her favorite subject, horses.
Community service, volunteerism and service-learning are at the core of 4-H programs. At this year’s statewide 4-H youth-leadership conference, some 400 youth in grades 6 through 12 spent a day participating in onsite service-learning projects throughout the Twin Cities.

Youth from all over Minnesota gave of their time at city parks and nonprofit organizations, combining learning experiences with the chance to serve community partners and explore civic responsibility. They made fleece blankets for Women’s Advocates, a shelter for women and children. They planted trees and native plants for Como Woodland Classroom, a 17.5-acre outdoor classroom in St. Paul’s Como Regional Park. They also spent time weeding and watering fruits and vegetables at JD Rivers’ Children’s Garden, a community garden in Minneapolis’ Theodore Wirth Park.

“We teach young people skills that will help strengthen communities throughout Minnesota,” says Dorothy McCargo Freeman, State 4-H program leader. “Through 4-H, kids come together from across the state and learn how to identify needs in their counties. They gain real-life experience by planning service projects and then executing those ideas.”

To learn more about Minnesota 4-H, visit www.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-H

---

Joseph Toninanto will tell you that 4-H changed his life. Six years ago, his friends talked about how great 4-H was, but he was nervous to join. After taking time to muster up the courage, he attended a youth-leadership conference. He’s gone every year since.

“I learned self-confidence and how to talk to people,” Toninanto, now 18, says of his experiences in 4-H. He said that 4-H gave him an outlet to practice his public-speaking skills and eventually led to him serving on student council in high school.

4-H’s focus on giving back to community also resonated with Toninanto. Today, he mentors and teaches younger kids taekwondo. He earned a black belt in the Korean martial art when he was 15 years old, the youngest person to achieve that level in northern Minnesota.

Now a freshman pre-med student at the University of Minnesota Duluth, majoring in mathematics and biology, Toninanto teaches taekwondo to youth in the Duluth area.

“4-H brought me out of my shell and gave me the tools I needed to achieve my goals in life,” says Toninanto.

To learn more about becoming a Minnesota 4-H member, visit www.extension.umn.edu/go/1073

---

“It takes a lot of confidence to leap successfully through the teen years, confidence that taekwondo black belt Joseph Toninanto credits to his participation in 4-H.

---

It takes a lot of confidence to leap successfully through the teen years, confidence that taekwondo black belt Joseph Toninanto credits to his participation in 4-H.

To learn more about becoming a Minnesota 4-H member, visit www.extension.umn.edu/go/1073

---

Joseph Toninanto will tell you that 4-H changed his life. Six years ago, his friends talked about how great 4-H was, but he was nervous to join. After taking time to muster up the courage, he attended a youth-leadership conference. He’s gone every year since.

“I learned self-confidence and how to talk to people,” Toninanto, now 18, says of his experiences in 4-H. He said that 4-H gave him an outlet to practice his public-speaking skills and eventually led to him serving on student council in high school.

4-H’s focus on giving back to community also resonated with Toninanto. Today, he mentors and teaches younger kids taekwondo. He earned a black belt in the Korean martial art when he was 15 years old, the youngest person to achieve that level in northern Minnesota.

Now a freshman pre-med student at the University of Minnesota Duluth, majoring in mathematics and biology, Toninanto teaches taekwondo to youth in the Duluth area.

“4-H brought me out of my shell and gave me the tools I needed to achieve my goals in life,” says Toninanto.

To learn more about becoming a Minnesota 4-H member, visit www.extension.umn.edu/go/1073

---

“It takes a lot of confidence to leap successfully through the teen years, confidence that taekwondo black belt Joseph Toninanto credits to his participation in 4-H.

To learn more about becoming a Minnesota 4-H member, visit www.extension.umn.edu/go/1073

---

Making fleece tie blankets for a shelter for women and children was one of several ways 4-H youth served others during a youth-leadership conference.

Community service, YOUTH STYLE

Community service, volunteerism and service-learning are at the core of 4-H programs. At this year’s statewide 4-H youth-leadership conference, some 400 youth in grades 6 through 12 spent a day participating in onsite service-learning projects throughout the Twin Cities.

Youth from all over Minnesota gave of their time at city parks and nonprofit organizations, combining learning experiences with the chance to serve community partners and explore civic responsibility. They made fleece blankets for Women’s Advocates, a shelter for women and children. They planted trees and native plants for Como Woodland Classroom, a 17.5-acre outdoor classroom in St. Paul’s Como Regional Park. They also spent time weeding and watering fruits and vegetables at JD Rivers’ Children’s Garden, a community garden in Minneapolis’ Theodore Wirth Park.

“We teach young people skills that will help strengthen communities throughout Minnesota,” says Dorothy McCargo Freeman, State 4-H program leader. “Through 4-H, kids come together from across the state and learn how to identify needs in their counties. They gain real-life experience by planning service projects and then executing those ideas.”

To learn more about service learning and Minnesota 4-H, visit www.extension.umn.edu/go/1071

---

It takes a lot of confidence to leap successfully through the teen years, confidence that taekwondo black belt Joseph Toninanto credits to his participation in 4-H.

To learn more about becoming a Minnesota 4-H member, visit www.extension.umn.edu/go/1073

---

Making fleece tie blankets for a shelter for women and children was one of several ways 4-H youth served others during a youth-leadership conference.

Community service, YOUTH STYLE

Community service, volunteerism and service-learning are at the core of 4-H programs. At this year’s statewide 4-H youth-leadership conference, some 400 youth in grades 6 through 12 spent a day participating in onsite service-learning projects throughout the Twin Cities.

Youth from all over Minnesota gave of their time at city parks and nonprofit organizations, combining learning experiences with the chance to serve community partners and explore civic responsibility. They made fleece blankets for Women’s Advocates, a shelter for women and children. They planted trees and native plants for Como Woodland Classroom, a 17.5-acre outdoor classroom in St. Paul’s Como Regional Park. They also spent time weeding and watering fruits and vegetables at JD Rivers’ Children’s Garden, a community garden in Minneapolis’ Theodore Wirth Park.

“We teach young people skills that will help strengthen communities throughout Minnesota,” says Dorothy McCargo Freeman, State 4-H program leader. “Through 4-H, kids come together from across the state and learn how to identify needs in their counties. They gain real-life experience by planning service projects and then executing those ideas.”

To learn more about service learning and Minnesota 4-H, visit www.extension.umn.edu/go/1071

---

It takes a lot of confidence to leap successfully through the teen years, confidence that taekwondo black belt Joseph Toninanto credits to his participation in 4-H.