

4-H Youth Development Program

Preparing Youth for a World of Science



Youth Wetlands Education Program

Since its inception in 2007, the YW program has reached over 100,000 students and 2000 educators across Louisiana. The YW program is founded on the principles of experience-based learning, community service, and leadership development. The existence of this program provides the students of Louisiana with unprecedented resources on wetland conservation, as well as creates a platform of service that can be monitored as the students move from elementary to high school to college. The program curriculum is endorsed by the Louisiana Science Teachers Association and lessons are designed to follow Louisiana's Grade Level Expectations (GLE's). Scores from pre and post tests completed by participating students showed an increase on average of 28% across grades 4-12 ($p < 0.001$). Because the lessons are associated with Louisiana GLE's, it is thought that these scores reflect an increased knowledge of main science concepts.

Louisiana Outdoor Science and Technology Camp

The Louisiana Outdoor Science and Technology (LOST) Camp seeks to improve science literacy in Louisiana's youth through hands-on learning experiences. The program's long-term goal is to increase the number of students pursuing undergraduate degrees in science, engineering, and technology areas; thus increasing the number of young adults pursuing careers in these fields. LOST Camp is intended to promote the awareness of these career choice opportunities through hands-on scientific learning and discovery. Youth credited LOST Camp with introducing them to many new concepts that they had *never learned before*:

- 79% learned about Programming and Logic Sequences in the Robotics track;
- 78% of youth learned about Polarity and 75% learned about Polymers in the Kitchen Chemistry track; and
- 78% learned the Basics of Editing Video in the Videography track.

School Gardening

4-H Agents across the state are supporting the development of School Gardens as an outdoor classroom. In the Louisiana 4-H Seeds of Service project, students scored in the range of 79 to 100 on 37 science GLEs. As a result of the garden, faculty shared the following comments: "It has changed the overall attitude of the students." "It's the hands-on aspect and them seeing a product come out of it. They have a sense of accomplishment and pride."

Clover College

Each year, approximately 300 youth from across the state participate in Clover College which features a wide range of topics. In an evaluation, 86% of the participants understood the relationship between computers and robotics.

- 96% of the participants increased their knowledge of forensic procedures.
- 69% of the participants increased their problem solving skills.
- 90% of the participants understood the importance of wetlands and causes of coastal erosion.
- 60% of the youth gained knowledge of videography.

Youth participating in school gardens reported an increased sense of civic engagement. Youth increased agreement with the statement "I do things to make the community a better place." At pretest, 88% of youth agreed or strongly agreed compared to 92.7% at posttest.



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Louisiana 4-H is an educational program of the LSU AgCenter