

Marin County 4-H: Equity in Youth Development

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Introduction

With diversity increasing in Marin County, it is imperative to ensure access and equity to youth development programs. Nearly 28% of K-12 students identify as Latino and there is a need to offer high quality afterschool experiences. Population studies forecast a 56% increase in the next four decades, creating an even greater need for 4-H programs that are culturally responsive and tailored to the needs and experiences of Latino Youth.

Background

- From 2013 to 2017, UCCE Marin 4-H expanded program delivery to be more accessible and culturally relevant.
- Partnerships with youth-serving organizations (Bay Area Community Resources Learning Enrichment and Afterschool Program and Boys & Girls Clubs) were the key to bringing experiential, research-based curriculum to a larger audience.
- Partially funded by the County of Marin, programs engaged approximately 1,100 youth ages 5 to 13 in high quality STEM, health, and civic learning experiences.
- Programs served one middle school and four elementary schools in San Rafael and one Boys & Girls Club.

Programs

Programs supported through four components:

- **Personalized curriculum:** Provided research-based curricular resources adapted for cultural relevancy.
- **Professional development for afterschool staff:** Provided a four-session series adaptation of *Tools of the Trade II* to develop staff competency in teaching methods, experiential learning, and content delivery.
- **On-site coaching for afterschool staff:** Offered weekly drop in coaching visits to provide immediate feedback on curriculum delivery, experiential learning, and pedagogical practices.
- **4-H Afterschool Club, San Pedro 4-H:** In weekly meetings facilitated jointly by afterschool staff and 4-H staff, youth experienced the new curriculum—*Thriving Youth, Flourishing Communities*—targeting concepts in healthy habits, STEM, and civic engagement.

Results

Post program surveys illustrated the following:

- Positive attitudes toward science and collaboration:
 - 100% of students agreed that “I like science.”
 - 100% of students agreed that “I like to work with others to solve problems.”
- 4-H Afterschool Club: Growth in competency-oriented reflective statements; from the beginning of the year, 4-H made youth feel “good” and “happy,” to the year end, 4-H made them feel “great,” “proud,” and “excited”.
- Summer Enrichment: Positive shift in growth mindset for scientific ability (+10%) and a 12% increase in the views of science regarding girls’ ability and aptitude.
- **71% of the total 4-H enrollment for Marin County serves the Latino community.**