

Scholarship Descriptions

Memorial Scholarships

- **James O'Neill Memorial Scholarship (new)**

Jim O'Neill began his 4H involvement when his daughter became a 4-H member in 1991 and quickly became involved in the club, later becoming the North Napa club leader. He supported the 4-H Camp program and enjoyed his years at Las Posadas as a Camp Counselor; he was Camp Dad in 1997.

In 2000, Jim accepted the position of Napa County 4-H Program Coordinator. Jim was very dedicated to the youth and adult volunteers and knew many of them by name, what club they belonged to and was a great resource and advocate for the adult volunteers. He served in this capacity for two decades.

In 2025, after Jim's untimely death, his family established the Jim O'Neill Memorial Scholarship. This memorial scholarship in his honor recognizes his long devotion to the Napa County 4-H program and to continue to share his enduring belief and dedication of supporting the local 4-H youth members with a scholarship to help them as they continue on to their next level of continuing education. Jim was a member of the Napa County 4-H Scholarship Committee for many, many years and it was one of his greatest joys to watch our 4-H youth members receive a 4-H Scholarship.

- **Paulette Cormack**

Paulette Cormack was born and raised in rural Iowa and joined 4-H at an early age. As an active club member in the 1950's-60's she participated in many leadership programs. She even met her future husband at 4-H summer camp! Paulette pursued a career in teaching to fulfill her enjoyment of childhood development and education – always promoting 4-H as a strong youth program of basic skills and leadership. Paulette and her family were active in the Napa County 4-H program where she was a leader in the Mt. George and Wine Valley 4-H clubs and the annual 4-H summer camp. After her untimely death from cancer in 2009, Paulette's family established this memorial scholarship in her honor – recognizing her life-long devotion to the 4-H program and to continue to share her love of helping others.

- **Peter Gerlach**

Peter Gerlach was in 4-H for 9 years. His last year was in 2000, the year he graduated from Napa High. Peter completed many 4-H projects and he had a BIG, thick record book to prove it. Some of Peter's most enjoyable projects were woodworking, welding, his 30 acre hay project (he loved to drive the tractor!), and breeding and raising 4-H market lambs. Peter and his brother Joe always brought their own lambs that were born and raised on their family's property. Peter was always proud that he brought something to the fair that he helped birth and raise. Peter was in the champion drive almost every year with one of his lambs! He also won champion Suffolk several years and won sheep showmanship his senior year.

After Peter's death in 2012 a scholarship fund was started to help other 4-H kids who wanted to go to college. The Bingham family raised a lamb that was auctioned off and brought in \$20,000 to start this scholarship.

- **Grace Methven**

Grace Methven served as a 4-H adult volunteer leader for 65 years. She was also a youth member, joining 4-H at age 10. She was a 4-H All Star in 1944. She was a teacher at Shearer Elementary School and after retirement volunteered as their librarian. She was very involved in the 4-H Camp program, having attended Las Posadas 4-H Camp as a 4-H youth and was the camp registrar as an adult for years and years. She also was involved in the Napa Town and Country Fair managing the 4-H exhibits building.

- **John Wagenknecht**

John Wagenknecht served as a 4-H Youth Development Advisor. He worked for the UC for 38 years. He was known as Sir John at 4-H Camp and developed parent and child programs like kite day, quail raising, and tree growing as family projects for 4-H. He was very active in the community serving 10 years on the NVUSD school board and was involved in many other community organizations.

- **Polly Wagenknecht**

Polly Wagenknecht served as the Napa County 4-H Program Coordinator. She set a positive example for our 4-H youth with her commitment to fostering strong families in 4-H and guiding our 4-H youth. She always gave credit to others before herself. Her Friday night campfire speech at 4-H camp closing ceremonies was legendary.

- **Ed Weber**

Ed Weber was a viticulturist and joined the UC in 1988 as the viticulture farm advisor, and then later became county director in 2001. He was a wonderful educator and problem solver.

Other Scholarships

- **4-H Courageous Heart Scholarship**

This scholarship category is for graduating seniors living within Napa County currently enrolled in the Napa County 4-H Youth Development Program as an “active” member that have overcome extreme obstacles related to medical, family, and/or education. While these obstacles may have prevented them from completing the “minimum of four (4) years in a 4-H Club within Napa County including all (4) years of high school” requirement, applicants should be able to demonstrate a high level of 4-H involvement – both in their club and at county, regional, and/or state level events – during the time they have been enrolled in the 4-H program. • At least one (1) of the required three (3) letters of recommendation should outline in detail the obstacle and how the applicant has overcome the situation. • One (1) additional essay narrative explaining their circumstances will be required by the applicant. • Applicants may be asked to provide additional documentation of obstacles related to health, education, and/or family situation where applicable.

- **Napa County 4-H Leadership Team**

The Napa county 4-H Leadership Team is organized for the purpose of cooperating with the University of California Cooperative Extension in organizing, promoting and carrying out 4-H youth development work in Napa County