

July 16, 2019

4-H Community:

As many of you are aware Lynn Schmit-McQuitty, the Tri County Youth Development Advisor, presented on April 10th, 2019 regarding changes to the UCANR's (University of California Agricultural and Natural Resources) funding for the 4-H program. The purpose of her presentation was how funding to the 4-H program (and all UC programs) has remained flat and as a result there would budget cuts and changes coming in the next few years as they deal with raises and increases to overhead costs (insurance, pensions, etc). She offered a powerpoint with background information and the possible reductions that could happen. Since that presentation the funding position of Monterey County 4-H has been modified numerous times and currently Monterey County is facing staff budgeting shortfalls that need to be addressed.

A group of concerned 4-H volunteers, alumni, community members, a council officer, and stakeholders organized a meeting with Lynn on June 26th. Through this informal discussion, we received an overview of the UCANR program, the past budget spending, the current issues and the projected impacts for the 4-H program. Here is an overview of issues affecting our local program:

- Tri County Youth Development Advisor Lynn Schmitt-McQuitty (Lorin's supervisor) was promoted to be Statewide Director of 4-H and is moving to Davis on July 22nd. There is currently no plan in place to replace her and it's possible her position could remain vacant for the foreseeable future due to frozen budget spending.
- UCANR is in a position vacancy freeze (no more hiring) for academic positions such as Lynn's. However, Program Representatives staff positions are not in a freeze.
- Our Diversity Representative of Monterey County through a grant funded position is ending at the end of September. No statewide or local funding was secured to maintain this position.
 - All of the after school 4-H programs and SPIN clubs that Darlene has initiated will be ending.
 - The 2 grants (The Youth Participation Research and College & Career Funding) that we heard could fund her in a different role are gone and not coming to Monterey County.
- San Benito County 4-H has different funding mechanisms than Monterey does. However, they did increase their County Participation fees this next year to offset the staff budget. They have a tiered approach, enrollment fees are \$70 per 4-Her if paid by August first, \$80 if paid by September 1st, and \$90 if paid by November 1st.
- The Santa Cruz County 4-H program is potentially more negatively impacted by these changes than its County neighbors. It is expected their enrollment could potentially drop from 130 to 100 members. They have yet to develop ways to fund up to \$12,000 to pay for staff funding increases this next year. There is concern their financial shortfalls could place increased pressure on clubs at their borders.
- Current UC Funding for the Program Representative position in Monterey County could run out sometime in March or April of 2020 which will result in that position being furloughed until July 1st. That position could then come back after July 1st, 2020 at 85% reduced hours.
- At both meetings, Lynn has stated these budgeting numbers may change as other funding is sought or found. There is a great deal of uncertainty and we should be proactive in finding and setting aside funds.

What does this mean for Monterey County 4-H? If the funding runs out in March or April of 2020 we will be without a Program Representative. Some of the impacts of not having a full time Program Representative include:

- Community Leaders will be directly responsible for club reporting to the state offices. Little or no support would be provided.
- No support, selection process or training would be available for new community leaders stepping in to take on roles in clubs.
- No support for conflict mediation in clubs.
- Enrollment support will be minimal for members and adults.
- Increased pressure on volunteer county council executive officers to complete tasks currently completed or assisted by a Program Representative.
- Impact to local fairs could include:
 - Inability to verify Member & Leaders
 - Inability to complete APR verification for eligibility purposes
 - No mediation to help with issues with exhibitors and/or volunteers
 - Difficulties enforcing club livestock rules or 4-H code of conduct
 - Decrease in fundraising opportunities or collaborations for the 4-H program
 - Communication void and an inability to email fair correspondence to all members in the 4-H program

Through our conversations, we are proposing the following solution to this first year staff budget cut and ask for the 4-H community to support a one time program fee increase.

- We are proposing a \$12 increase to enrollment of all youth and adult members. With enrollment fees for 2019-2020 being \$79 per youth and \$40 for adults.
- These additional funds would be placed in a separate budget line item to be used to fund the County 4-H Representative position shortfall for the 2019-2020 year.

Doing this will allow volunteers time to find ways to address the UCANR budget cuts. Ideas for doing this include:

- Participating in lobbying efforts of state senators and legislators to find the money to fund 4-H in all of California.
- Help us spread awareness of the changes UCANR is proposing to 4-H throughout the state.

As long time supporters of 4-H, we realize that increasing enrollment fees for this year could place financial hardship on families. This is not proposed as a long term solution and we are looking for ways to secure other funding to set aside for future budget cuts. The 4-H Program in comparison to other youth organizations is inexpensive and we do not want to change that, but we recognize having our Program Representative furloughed for possibly months would do more harm to our youth than a one time fee increase.

This information was shared with the Program Representative and the existing Council officers. A request from our community committee to increase the fees for the 2019-2020 was accepted by the council officers and this will be a matter before the July 23rd Leaders Council meeting with an informative meeting to be held at 6 pm prior to the Leaders Council meeting.

As a committee we strongly believe UCANR has other budgeting options and the 4-H program should NOT suffer due to past, unrelated poor spending choices. We hope every club sends a voting representative(s) to help us secure the future of our 4-H program. In the meantime, this committee is currently looking at avenues to reach county and state elected officials who have

collaborations or authority to direct UCANR in preventing future budget cuts over the next 3 years. Please contact Dirk Giannini (831-809-7105) or Angie Horwath (831-262-0224) if you have ideas or contacts to help us find a way to keep 4-H alive in Monterey County and the State of California.

Thank you,

Dirk Giannini & Angie Horwath