

#### **4-H Youth Development Area Advisor Solano and Yolo Counties, focus in Community Development**

**Position:** The 4-H Youth Development Advisor will develop and conduct a research and extension program focused on community development for youth in Solano and Yolo counties. We seek individuals with experience conducting Expanded Learning Programs (a.k.a. afterschool/out-of-school), especially those serving lower income and ethnically diverse communities. A minimum of a master's degree in child, community or human development, community services, recreation, education or a related degree is required with relevant experience in youth development and experiential learning.

**Justification:** Expanded Learning Programs (ELPs), represent a large opportunity for 4-H to reach new and diverse audiences in a manner that is difficult for structured 4-H clubs to fill. Funded primarily through the CA Department of Education (CDE), ELPs primarily serve Title I schools ( $\geq 50\%$  of students receive free or reduced fee school lunches) and seek to augment student learning through engaging educational experiences—a perfect match for our 4-H mission. Top issues this position will address:

- *Youth science literacy in agriculture, nutrition and natural resources:* Science literacy in the US lags behind other developed countries. As of 2015, only 38% of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in the US scored above average or proficient in science (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2015). In California, only 55% of 5<sup>th</sup> graders scored proficient in science in 2015 (CDE, 2015).
- *High-quality learning opportunities for black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) youth:* This gap in scientific literacy is especially prominent for youth of color (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2018).
- *Increased competence and confidence of afterschool staff:* Instructors in afterschool programs are not typically credentialed teachers (Chi et al., 2008), and staff often have little background in subject expertise or training as teachers, especially in science pedagogy such as inquiry-based exploration (Freeman et al., 2009).

A strong partnership between UCCE and ELPs would improve college and career readiness and increase science literacy, healthy lifestyles and civic engagement for youth. Internally, it will grow the number and diversity of youth we serve in 4-H and position UCCE as a leader in non-formal educational programming with the CDE.

Locally, the YD Advisor will develop community connections and resources in Solano and Yolo counties to expand 4-H programming in new venues. Recent experiences with 4-H afterschool programming in both counties identified many untapped opportunities. ELPs have sought 4-H engagement, but our capacity limits our ability to respond. For example, in November 2021 Esparto Unified School District, a low-income district in Yolo County, with 81% minority enrollment (majority Hispanic) reached out to UCCE to provide summer programming, but lack of resources, expertise and staff time will limit our participation. This position helps fill gaps in services and expertise, both locally and statewide, as the YD Advisor will share their expertise with 4-H staff across California.

**Extension:** The YD Advisor will develop a well-rounded extension program locally, working with government, schools, community agencies, volunteers and businesses to extend UCCE resources and programming that support youth science literacy, healthy living, and citizenship in ELP settings. They

will expand 4-H program's reach into under-served, lower-income and minority communities; educate administrative and frontline ELP staff in curriculum and best practices; and foster networking and collaboration between organizations to accomplish shared goals. They may modify or write curriculum for ELP audiences. The Advisor is expected to share their expertise with UCCE staff to increase their capacity to understand and access ELPs, furthering 4-H program growth and ANR's mission statewide.

**Research:** Out-of-school time represents a developing field of literature to promote professionalism and scholarship in afterschool education. Research topics may include teaching/learning pedagogy, funding models, staff development, DEI, and program impact on youth and communities. Potential research partners include CDE and local County Office of Education (who have interest in program evaluation). Publication outlets serving both scholars and practitioners include *Afterschool Matters Journal*, Afterschool Alliance Publications and Research, *Journal of Education and Practice*, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *Journal of Youth Development*, and ANR 8000 series, reports, and manuals.

**ANR Network:** ANR does not have an identified academic working on ELP, and this inhibits our ability to serve this clientele. Although YD Advisors may be serving youth through afterschool programs, a concerted effort to maximize our reach and document our impact in this increasingly important realm is lacking. A YD Advisor with expertise in ELP is a forward-looking opportunity to enhance and amplify our impact. In alignment with the CA 4-H Staffing Plan, they will share their expertise statewide, educating and advising UCCE county-based staff in their efforts to establish and evaluate ELP programming.

**Network External to ANR:** The YD Advisor will work locally with school districts, afterschool programs, county offices of education, UCD and CSUS schools of education, community organizations (e.g. Boys & Girls Clubs), and volunteers. Partnerships with the local military base in Fairfield provides links to national opportunities. Both counties have partners ready to collaborate which helps ensure a path to success for the new Advisor. They will also interface with CDE on a statewide level.

**Support:** Pooled county resources will provide an office, a vehicle, personal mileage reimbursement, internet access, telephone, printing, clerical support, a meeting room and supplies.

**Other Support:** ELP programs can, and do, provide funding for 4-H programming and training in the schools and communities we serve (Sacramento and San Bernardino/Riverside are examples). ELPs welcome the research and evaluation component UCCE academics provide. The YD Advisor will be expected to seek funding from local school districts, offices of education, ELP providers and grants.

**Headquarters and Coverage Area:** UCCE Solano has space and resources to support this position. The advisor will provide a crucial presence in Solano County, which has been without any academic positions since 2014, and without a YD Advisor since 2011. Coverage will extend to Yolo County.

**Developed and proposed by:** The UCCE Capitol Corridor 4-H team of Advisors, CES staff and the Director, with input from the unit's Advisory Committee. The 4-H Director is aware and supportive of the position focus. Calls with Program Team Members indicate support as well.