

4-H Achievement Portfolios

Overview, Criteria, and Definitions

Achievement Night Overview:

Achievement night is a chance for our Ontario County 4-H families to gather and celebrate all that we have accomplished this year. However, we rely on youth and parents to submit project records and nominate deserving youth so that we can make sure that everyone who deserves it gets rewarded. There are two main sections of achievement night paperwork: 1) Achievement Awards and 2) Essential Element Awards.

Achievement Awards: To earn these awards, youth fill out portfolios chronicling what they have accomplished that year in 4-H. Where some counties award for specific achievements, Ontario County awards based on a more holistic model. Please see below sections to learn more about available achievement awards.

Essential Element Awards: These awards reward growth in character and are awarded based on nominations from adults, volunteers, and peers. Youth can be awarded for areas of growth in: belonging, independence, mastery, and generosity. Please see the nomination form for descriptions of these growth areas. There is no limit to how many youth you can nominate for an essential element award. You should write 2-4 paragraphs of why you think that the youth is deserving of consideration for the award.

Achievement Awards Criteria

This section walks you through the available achievement awards and requirements for each.

Achievement Certificates:

Cloverbuds (ages 5-7)

- Submit a portfolio
- Participate in one 4-H event

Juniors (ages 8-13)

*A project area is defined A unit of work, which is the basis of "learn by doing". Each project consists of a series of learning experiences to help shape the character of 4-H youth and teach lifelong skills. To be considered a project it must be a long-term learning experience (approximately 6 hours in length or longer).

- **Bronze**
 - Submit portfolio
 - Participate in at least 1 project area
 - 5 hours of community service/4-H promotion
 - Attend two 4-H events

- **Silver**
 - Submit portfolio
 - Participate in at least 2 project areas
 - 10 hours of community service/4-H promotion
 - Complete a public presentation
 - Attend three 4-H events
- **Gold**
 - Submit portfolio
 - Participate in at least 3 project areas
 - 15 hours of community service/4-H promotion
 - Complete a public presentation
 - Attend four 4-H events
 - Participate in at least one 4-H promotional event

Senior (ages 14-19)

*A project area is defined A unit of work, which is the basis of "learn by doing". Each project consists of a series of learning experiences to help shape the character of 4-H youth and teach lifelong skills. To be considered a project it must be a long-term learning experience (approximately 6 hours in length or longer).

- **Bronze**
 - Submit portfolio
 - Participate in at least 1 project area
 - 5 hours of community service/4-H promotion
 - Attend two 4-H events
- **Silver**
 - Submit portfolio
 - Participate in at least 2 project areas
 - 15 hours of community service/4-H promotion
 - Complete a public presentation
 - Attend three 4-H events
- **Gold**
 - Submit portfolio
 - Participate in at least 3 project areas
 - 20 hours of community service/4-H promotion
 - Complete a public presentation
 - Attend four 4-H events
 - Participate in at least two 4-H promotional events

4-H Project Mastery Award

The purpose of a Project Pin is to recognize outstanding work in a specific project area. Members age 8-19 can apply for these awards.

Criteria:

- Member must specify on their portfolio if they want to be considered for this award
- Member must have participate in the subject area for a minimum of two consecutive years (must submit portfolio binder including both years). *(For 2023 ONLY – youth do not have to submit paperwork from the past year. However, they do have to have received an achievement night award in 2022 and have participated in that project area in 2022 and 2023.)*
- Must have completed a public presentation about something in that project area within the last year (example: Breeds of dairy cattle for the dairy project area).
- Must have completed a **primary leadership** in the subject area you are applying for.
- Exhibited projects in the subject area at county fair
- Participated in programs to increase proficiency or knowledge in the project area (ie. clinics, workshops, etc.)
- Complete 20 hours of community service/4-H promotion
- Participate in at least one promotional event

4-H County Service Award

This award is for senior 4-H'ers only (age 14-19 as of January 1st of project year). It is to award youth who coordinated an advanced community service project during the 4-H year. This can be awarded to an individual or to a group of two youth.

Criteria:

- Complete a portfolio
- Complete a 4-H public presentation or interview
- Attend at least four 4-H events
- Complete 25 hours of community service/4-H promotion
- Participate in three 4-H promotional events
- Conduct major community service project in past 4-H year
 - Submit project proposal to educators for approval and keep educators informed of project progress throughout the year
 - Work with at least one outside organization
 - Create promotional materials for project
 - Have at least 5 other 4-H'ers participate in the project
 - Evaluate project success
 - Submit final project report to educators
 - Submit a press release for educators to send to local media outlets

4-H County Leadership Award

This award is for senior 4-H'ers only (age 14-19 as of January 1st of project year). It is to award youth who complete an advanced leadership project during the 4-H year. This project has to be a series of programs and/or lay the foundation for a program that will continue on in the future. This can be awarded to an individual or to a group of two youth.

Criteria:

- Complete a portfolio
- Complete a 4-H public presentation or interview
- Attend at least four 4-H events
- Complete 25 hours of community service/4-H promotion
- Participate in three 4-H promotional events
- Conduct a major 4-H program or create a resource (ideas: a workshop series or a “how to survive county fair” pamphlet)
 - Submit project proposal to educators for approval and keep educators informed of project progress throughout the year
 - Create promotional materials for project
 - Have at least 5 other 4-H'ers participate in the program
 - Evaluate project success
 - Submit final project report to educators
 - Submit a press release for educators to send to local media outlets

4-H Definitions

This document is to help you determine what would qualify under each section of your portfolio. We tried to be as detailed as possible, but you are involved in an event and are not sure where you should put it on your portfolio, please reach out to your educator.

4-H Age: 4-H age is the member's age on January 1 of the Project Year (e.g. January 1, 2010 for the 2009-2010 4-H Club Year).

4-H Project: A unit of work, which is the basis of "learn by doing". Each project consists of a series of learning experiences to help shape the character of 4-H youth and teach life long skills. To be considered a project it must be a long-term learning experience (approximately 6 hours in length or longer).

EXAMPLE: Susie is involved in the 4-H Sewing Program. She has spent 2 hours knitting a scarf, 1 hour sewing a fleece pillow, and 3 hours sewing a teddy bear. Susie should list that she has completed one 4-H Sewing Project.

Showing up to the Holiday Special and creating a 20 minutes ornament craft one time does not mean that you completed a 4-H craft project. However, if you created several small crafts and practiced your techniques that added up to six hours, you would have completed an arts and craft project.

4-H Cloverbud Project: Similar to a 4-H Project except for being a shorter-term experience that emphasizes socialization and interaction which is developmentally appropriate. A Cloverbud Project is usually 30-45 minutes in length.

4-H Event: We list popular county, district, and state events on the form to help jog your memory as to what you might have been involved in throughout the year. However, there might have been other workshops, contests, clinics, etc. that are not listed. You can list these under the “Other” category of each respective events section. Examples of what you might need to manually include are:

- One-time county-wide workshops such as cake decorating, showmanship, etc.
- District or state one-time events such as the Outdoor Adventure Weekend at Camp Bristol Hills that is sometimes held in the fall or the NYS 4-H Forestry weekend.
- State Fair contests or invitationals that are not listed on the form such as the Produced in NY contest, state public presentations invitational, etc.

4-H Community Service versus 4-H Promotion Events

This is a section that often gets confused and can sometimes be a gray area. Basically, a promotion would be anything where you are actively raising awareness about 4-H, whereas community service is when you are actively helping someone or some organization in the community. Sometimes an activity can fall under both promotion and community service. We have listed below some events that would be considered community service and some that would be promotional events. If you have questions about whether something counts as promotion or community service or both, please reach out to your educator.

One additional note about community service... It needs to be done as a 4-H club/member. You cannot “double dip”. If you are doing community service for school or with another group, that would not count in your 4-H community service section. However, we have another section on the portfolio for non-4-H community service.

Community Service

- Canned food drive for local food bank
- Making cards for nursing home
- Caring for flower bed at local park
- Volunteering at humane society
- Cleaning up a cemetery
- Nursing home visits

Promotional Activities

- 4-H Open House
- Display at Tractor Supply for Paper Clover Campaign
- Window decorating
- Parades
- Petting zoos at local events

*Fair cleanup night does NOT count for community service as that is a requirement for all 4-H'ers, but helping at the fairgrounds weekends/evenings leading up to fair besides the 4-H cleanup night DOES count for community service.

4-H Leadership: Leadership can take many forms, so please talk with your educator if you have questions about what counts as leadership. Below are some examples:

Lead a workshop

Assist with a workshop

Camp Bristol Hills Counselor

Club Officer

Junior superintendent at fair

Teen evaluator at 4-H event

Teen Leader at 4-H event

Serving on a state or district teen leadership group (example, capital days committee, STARR planning committee, etc.)

Mentoring another 4-H'er

Non-4-H Participation

This section gives you a place to document other things you have done during the year. It will be helpful to you (or your educators if they are writing you letter of recommendation!) when you are looking back for the purpose of scholarship, college, or job applications.

REMEMBER....

The 4-H staff will work with members, parents, and leaders to individualize requirements to take into consideration a member's financial, physical, geographic and intellectual limitations; religious beliefs; the time requirement associated with certain projects, etc. A member, or when appropriate their parent or leader, must explain why they wish to vary any Achievement Award requirement and receive approval from an Extension Educator before hand.