

From the 4-H Youth Development Advisor, Steven Worker

4-H Grows Here

In my first few months as the new 4-H Youth Development Advisor, I have seen tremendous efforts and contributions from hundreds of youth, parents, and adult volunteer leaders. I was impressed with the vibrancy at 4-H summer camps. I was delighted to see 4-H at the Marin, Sonoma-Marín, Sonoma, Healdsburg, Napa Town & Country, and West Marin Fairs. I have felt welcomed to the greater North Bay 4-H community and am excited to helping grow the 4-H program.



What is the job of a 4-H Advisor?

In my conversations with 4-H leaders, I have been getting the question: “What is your job?” According to the University of California, the role of a Cooperative Extension Advisor is to “make available to the public the latest in knowledge and practices” respective to the specific Advisor, like Viticulture Advisors, Weed Science Advisors, Environmental Horticulture Advisors, and Youth Development Advisors. Advisors are evaluated on research efforts, building programs, professional competence, University and public service, and affirmative action efforts.

But what does this mean? Here are a few things I will be doing.

- 1) **Leadership:** Providing leadership and oversight to 4-H Clubs, programs, and camps, in partnership with the 4-H Program Representative/Manager. This includes providing educational resources, providing training, supporting evaluation, and ensuring 4-H policies are followed.
- 2) **New Programs:** Growing new 4-H programs and developing curriculum. I plan to bring my expertise to bear in positive youth development, teen leadership, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Additionally, I have a specific charge from the University to reach Latino communities.
- 3) **Research:** Conducting applied research. My background is in out-of-school time educational research (social sciences) and my interest areas include broadening how we define learning (beyond knowledge and skill to include attitudes, dispositions, and identity) and assess learning (moving beyond surveys to include the things youth make in their projects as an authentic form of assessment).
- 4) **Face of 4-H:** Acting as a 4-H liaison to the National and State 4-H Offices, as well as local government agencies, youth organizations, and the community at-large.

Do you have other questions or ideas for new programs? Send me an email at smworker@ucanr.edu.