

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION Beyond Ready

Ride the Wave of Leadership at the 2026

VOLUNTEER AND TEEN FORUM

Grow. Lead. Inspire. Maryland 4-H

Join us for the 2026 Maryland 4-H Volunteer and Teen Forum in Ocean City, MD! This event is open to all 4-H volunteers, parents, teens and educators, and provides time to meet others from around the state and learn more about all the wonders of the 4-H program. This is an excellent opportunity for teen and adult volunteers to learn the knowledge and skills necessary to be leaders in their local 4-H programs. This event can also be used as a family "get-away" due to the location and opportunities provided for youth to learn and have fun simultaneously, while their parents are attending workshops.

The Forum provides professional development workshop sessions and hands-on, educational evening activities on Saturday and connection opportunities for youth and adult leaders on Sunday. This year's workshop topics include a focus on Thriving, Connections, STEM and Service. Sessions are designed for teens (actual age 13-18) and adult volunteers and 4-H professionals. The youth classes will also be offered on Saturday during the workshop sessions (for parents attending the Forum) and are guaranteed to engage and educate youth Clovers (4-H age 5-7), Juniors (4-H age 8-10,) and Intermediates (4-H age 11-13).

But wait! That's not all! To add to the fun, there will be engaging activities on Friday and Saturday nights, opportunities to connect, and energizers at all large group gatherings. We will round out the weekend with a youth and adult presentation on Sunday followed by a workshop on evaluation.

Come join us for the perfect mix of fun, connections and learning.

The **Holiday Inn on 6600 Coastal Hwy**, Ocean City is our destination for the weekend, which is truly a home away from home. Basic accommodations feature a fully-equipped kitchenette and plush furnishings for the ultimate comfort in Ocean City. Each accommodation also offers a full array of modern amenities, including complimentary Wi-Fi, HDTV with cable, and convenient pull out sofa beds for additional guests.

What better way to spend a weekend than relaxing with friends on the ocean front.

* Registration fees must be paid in full by credit or debit card linked to your 4-H Online event registration. If your local 4-H program agrees to pay part or all of your registration, you will need to make arrangements for reimbursement.

Only complete registrations will be approved and only approved participants will be able to attend.

You will receive an email from 4-H Online confirming your approved registration. **Thank you and we hope to see you at the Volunteer and Teen Forum.**

University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this event or activity, please contact your local University of Maryland Extension Office at least two weeks prior to the event.

This year's program includes:

Friday, November 13, 2026

6:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Activities and Social

Saturday, November 14, 2026

8:00 am – 10:00 am	Check-in
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Breakfast
9:30 am – 10:00 am	Welcome and Getting Started Dr. Jinhee Kim • Silent Auctions
10:15 am – 12:30 pm	Youth Classes ♦ Clovers ♦ Juniors ♦ Intermediates
10:15 am – 11:15 pm	Teen and adult workshop session 1
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Teen and adult workshop session 2
12:30 pm – 1:45 pm	Lunch and Networking
2:00 pm – 4:15 pm	Youth Classes ♦ Clovers ♦ Juniors ♦ Intermediates
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Teen and adult workshop session 3
3:15 pm – 4:15 pm	Teen and adult workshop session 4
4:15 pm – 6:30 pm	Dinner (on your own) Explore Ocean City
6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Evening Activity • Share Fair • Activities
8:00 pm – 9:30/10:00 pm	Evening Activity • Let's Sew Together • Share Fair





Sunday, November 15, 2026

8:30 am – 9:45 am	Breakfast
9:45 am – 10:45 am	Sunday Morning Activity Session
10:45 am	• Amanda Wahle, Maryland 4-H Environmental State Specialist • Evaluation Workshop • Maryland 4-H State Council Meeting • Closing

1st Session 10:15-11:15

Harrison North

Curiosity in the Wild: Building Resilience Through Nature Connection*

By Amanda Wahle & Maryland 4-H Camp Action Team

In a world where stress, anxiety, and disconnection are increasingly common, curiosity offers a powerful pathway back to well-being. This interactive workshop explores how nature and curiosity work together to support mental health, resilience, attention, and emotional regulation in both teens and adults. Participants will experience practical, hands-on activities that can be immediately implemented in camps, schools, outdoor programs, and community settings. Through guided reflection, nature-based exploration, and curiosity centered practices, attendees will discover simple ways to help individuals slow down, notice more deeply, and build meaningful connections with themselves, others, and the natural world. Participants will leave with ready-to-use activities, facilitation strategies, and a deeper understanding of how wonder can become a powerful tool for wellness.

Harrison South

Teamwork in Action: Simple Activities, Stronger Clubs!

By Michelle Harman

Looking for fun, engaging ways to build teamwork and strengthen connections within your 4-H club? Join us for an interactive, hands-on workshop featuring creative team-building activities that youth and volunteers can easily bring back to their clubs! Discover activities that encourage communication, cooperation, leadership, problem-solving, and trust—all while having fun! Best of all, these activities require little to no equipment or use inexpensive, readily available materials. Participants will leave with a collection of practical, ready-to-use ideas that can be adapted for different ages, group sizes, and club settings. Come ready to participate, connect, and take home new ways to make your club meetings more engaging and meaningful!



Marlin

Level Up! Climbing the Ladder to True Youth-Adult Teamwork*

By Joseph Cho, Abby Worth, & Erin Kline

Ready to build the ultimate leadership dream team? It's time to move past just counting heads and start making heads turn! Join us for a fun, high-energy workshop where we ditch the old "adults-run-everything" routine and unlock the power of true teamwork. Whether you're a program coordinator, an adult volunteer, or a teen leader aged 13 to 18, this session will show you that real engagement isn't just about showing up to meeting, it's about giving everyone an equal voice and real decision-making power. Together, we'll use a simple Leadership Ladder to map out how your group actually works, checking if youth are just there "for show," if adults are making all the final calls, or if you are ready for the top step where teens and adults share the steering wheel as equal partners. We'll explore how this equal partnership supercharges teen confidence, gives adults fresh energy, and keeps everyone excited to return, plus you'll get an inside look at how our State Council uses this exact style to drive massive real-world success. Don't sit on the sidelines; come grab the tools to build a program where every single voice matters and let's climb together!

Sand Castle

Ace the Interview: Building Confidence and Communication Skills*

By Barb Barga & Marylisa Schaedel

This Teen Interview Skills Plan is designed to help youth in grades 8-12 develop the confidence and communication skills needed to successfully navigate job, scholarship, and program interviews. Through interactive, hands-on activities, participants learn how to prepare for interviews, present themselves professionally, and respond effectively to common and challenging questions. Teens will engage in mock interview practice with guided feedback to strengthen self-awareness and improve performance in real-world settings. By the end of the program, participants will be better prepared to demonstrate professionalism, communicate their strengths and approach future interview opportunities with confidence.

Sessions provide Camp Training Hour

- Youth Specific
- Adult Specific
- Youth and Adults

2nd Session 11:30-12:30

Harrison North

Character in Action: Camp Activities That Build More Than Skills*
By Amanda Wahle, Hayden Wahle, & Dickybright

Camping programs naturally create opportunities to teach responsibility, respect, kindness, teamwork, and leadership. In this interactive workshop, youth and adult presenters will share hands-on activities that intentionally connect camp experiences to character development. Participants will engage in experiential learning activities, discuss reflection techniques, and leave with ready-to-use ideas for incorporating character education into camp programs and other 4-H settings.



Harrison South

Grab and Go STEM Lessons
By Marylisa Schaedel

4-H is built on belonging, but too often, youth who learn differently are asked to adapt to the program instead of the program adapting to them. In this hands-on workshop, participants will explore how Universal Design for Learning (UDL) helps leaders plan inclusive experiences from the start without lowering expectations or singling anyone out. Through quick simulations, real 4â€‘H scenarios, and a UDL makeover activity, attendees will learn how to turn common pain points (long directions, noisy spaces, rigid participation rules, and single-format presentations) into multiple pathways to success. You'll leave with practical tools you can use immediately: a simple meeting template, visual supports, choice boards, flexible demonstration options, and language that communicates the message every young person needs to hear your identity belongs here.

Marlin

Mission Washington D.C.: The Insider's Guide to National 4-H Conference
By Joseph Cho & Rylan Hamburg

Ready to take your 4-H journey to the heart of the nation? The National 4-H Conference is far more than just a trip to Washington, D.C.; it is your chance to step into the spotlight and speak directly to the federal agencies that shape our country's future. In this high-energy workshop, we are pulling back the curtain on this premier event to show you exactly how you can have a seat at the table with federal agencies. We will dive deep into the application process and the unique "briefing" experience where you turn your biggest ideas into professional proposals that demand attention. You won't just hear about the conference you will live it through a hands-on "Flash Briefing" challenge that gives you a taste of what it's like to present your solutions to the professionals in real-time. Whether you want to sharpen your public speaking, build a world-class resume, or find out how your voice can spark national change, this session is your official roadmap to the National 4-H Conference. Discover the lasting impact of becoming a state and national representative and learn how to return home as a true changemaker ready to lead. Your mission to make a difference starts right here!

Sand Castle

Revamping Your Club Through Technology
By Karli Parks

Your club may already be doing incredible work, but does your community know about it? In today's digital world, technology can help clubs increase visibility, engage members, streamline operations, and tell their story more effectively. This interactive session will introduce participants to practical tools such as Canva, CapCut, Excel, and artificial intelligence platforms that can help clubs work smarter, not harder. Through real-world examples, demonstrations, and group discussion, participants will learn how to create eye-catching promotional materials, develop engaging social media content, organize club data, track participation, and simplify routine tasks. Whether you are a teen leader looking to grow your club's presence or an adult volunteer seeking ways to save time and improve efficiency, this session will provide strategies that can be implemented immediately. Participants will leave with new ideas, resources, and confidence to use technology to strengthen their club, reach a broader audience, and showcase the impact of 4-H in their communities.

Sessions provide Camp Training Hour

Youth Specific
Adult Specific
Youth and Adults

3rd Session 2:00-3:00

Harrison North

Driving the Thriving: Demystifying Transcendent Awareness in 4-H*

By Kimber Sarver

Transcendent awareness (TA) is often experienced in 4-H through moments of connection, wonder, purpose, service, and belonging, yet many volunteers and youth leaders may already foster these experiences without having language for them. The "Driving the Thriving: Demystifying Transcendent Awareness in 4-H" interactive workshop will introduce youth and adult participants to transcendent awareness and explore its connection to the 4-H Thrive Model, sparks, belonging, and contribution. Through movement-based activities, reflective storytelling, small-group discussion, and practical application exercises, participants will examine how meaningful experiences may help youth connect their interests and passions to personal growth and community contribution. Attendees will engage in hands-on strategies that can be incorporated into club meetings, service-learning, camping, outdoor education, and project work to encourage reflection, connection, and purpose among youth. This session matters because today's youth benefit from opportunities that build lasting life skills, as well as those that foster meaning, belonging, and thriving within their communities and beyond.

Harrison South

Exploring Pathways to Careers in Animal, Environmental, and Human Health

By Chris Anderson, Tom Hutson, & Sheryl Bennett

Let us help you explore pathways to careers in animal, environmental, and human health! Health is important to everyone, but there are hundreds of careers (not just doctors and veterinarians) that are essential for keeping animals, people, and the environment healthy. Furthermore, a "One Health" approach recognizes that animal health, human health, and environmental health are closely linked and interdependent. In this workshop, you will examine the importance of health-related careers through a One-Health lens. You will engage in activities to explore the working conditions that best suit you as you explore different pathways to consider in pursuit of your interest in health-related careers.



Marlin

Building Wealth, Not Just Earning Money

By Harry Vassiliadis

Financial literacy is about more than budgeting; it is about making informed decisions that create opportunities for long-term success. This interactive workshop will explore the difference between earning income and building wealth through entrepreneurship, investing, and strategic financial decision-making. Participants will engage in a hands-on simulation, working in small groups to navigate realistic financial scenarios, evaluate opportunity costs, and consider the long-term impact of their choices. Through discussion, collaborative problem-solving, and scenario-based learning, attendees will examine common financial misconceptions and discover practical strategies for building financial resilience. Designed for both teens and adults, this session encourages participants to think like owners, not just consumers, and provides tools they can apply in their personal lives, leadership roles, and local 4-H programs. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of how everyday financial decisions can influence future opportunities and financial well-being.

Sand Castle

Game On! Skill-a-thon Strategies for Success

By Navonne Torbert & Karli Parks

Think skillathons are only for animal science? Think again! Skillathons are a versatile, hands-on teaching tool that can be used across a wide variety of 4-H project areas to build knowledge, critical thinking, communication, and decision-making skills. In this interactive, game show-themed workshop, participants will rotate through a series of mini skillathon stations focused on topics such as public speaking, Maryland history and trivia, clothing and textiles, and judging consumer products. Through experiential learning activities, group discussion, and real-world examples, participants will discover how skillathons can be adapted to fit nearly any project area while promoting youth engagement and life skill development. Attendees will explore how judging and reasoning activities strengthen observation, decision-making, and public speaking abilities, while learning practical strategies for creating skillathon stations in their own clubs, camps, and county programs. Participants will leave with ideas, resources, and the confidence to use skillathons as a fun, educational, and effective way to enhance learning and participation in 4-H.

Sessions provide Camp Training Hour

- Youth Specific
- Adult Specific
- Youth and Adults

4th Session 3:15-4:15

Harrison North

Mission: Save Camp Clover*

By Trish Moore & Ian Moore

A 4-H Leadership Escape Challenge. Camp Clover is in crisis. Severe weather is approaching, supplies are missing, schedules are mixed up, and campers arrive in less than an hour! In this fast-paced interactive leadership challenge, teens will work in teams to solve camp-themed missions, crack codes, complete problem-solving activities, and navigate unexpected challenges to "save" camp before time runs out. Through immersive, escape room-style stations, participants will practice communication, teamwork, decision-making, adaptability, and leadership under pressure as they tackle realistic camp scenarios. This high-energy workshop combines competition, collaboration, and creativity to create an engaging experience that builds confidence and leadership skills in a fun and memorable way. Participants should be prepared to move, think critically, and work together as they race against the clock to complete the mission.

2027 Volunteer and Teen Forum Planning Committee Application

Harrison South

Agriculture Mythbusters: Truth or Trash?

By Mackenzie Jones

Do cows sleep standing up? Do farmers mistreat animals? Does chocolate milk come from brown cows? In this fun and interactive youth session, participants will put common agriculture myths to the test and learn what is fact and what is fiction. Through team games, hands-on activities, and group discussion, youth will explore topics related to farming, livestock care, food production, and everyday agriculture. Participants will learn where misinformation comes from, why it spreads so easily, and how to respond with accurate facts in a positive way. This session matters because many young people hear false information about agriculture online and in everyday conversations. By helping youth understand the truth, they can become stronger leaders and better advocates for the industry. Participants will leave with new knowledge, more confidence, and facts they can share with others. Please bring a device such as a phone, tablet, or computer to participate in the interactive game activities.

Marlin

Print the Imagination

By Nidhish Gupta & Saish Gupta

The extended learning outcome of the 3D printing class is that participants will understand that technology, particularly 3D printing, has virtually no limitations in its applications. Learners will recognize that 3D printing can range from simple objects such as key chains and dog tags to more complex and functional designs such as vases, helmets, prosthetics, and even medical models like brain structures and arteries. They will also understand that different types of filaments are used for different purposes, as materials suitable for basic items like key chains may not be appropriate for biomedical or structural applications. Through this session, students will gain insight into how 3D printing integrates with computer science, coding, and engineering to create innovative solutions across multiple fields. By the end of the workshop, participants will leave with the understanding that 3D printing is not limited to small toys or decorative items, but is a powerful and widely used technology that is transforming industries such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, and design.



Sand Castle

Unlocking the Power of Communication and Public Speaking*

By Navonne Torbert

Unlock the Power of Communication & Public Speaking! Ever wondered if communication and public speaking are the same thing? The answer might surprise you, they're not! While both are essential to our daily lives, whether at school, work, in family conversations, or during meetings and events most of us (youth and adults alike) don't always find these skills come naturally. But don't worry, we've got you covered! In this workshop, you'll discover the key differences between communication and public speaking, and why each is so crucial for both you as an individual and for society. Through fun, hands-on activities, you'll gain strategies to build confidence, improve your skills, and learn how to make your voice heard effectively whether you're speaking in front of a crowd, in a meeting, or simply having a conversation. You'll leave equipped to communicate more clearly and powerfully in your everyday life, 4-H activities, and beyond! Participants will be provided take-home materials for easy replication at 4-H club meetings and programs.

Sessions provide Camp Training Hour

- Youth Specific
- Adult Specific
- Youth and Adults