

**Collegiate 4-H Taskforce
Listening Sessions**

SESSION 1

Date: October 22, 2005

Group: Western Regional Conference Call

Taskforce Member: Cindy Sperry (cnsperry@ucdavis.edu)

Approximate Number of Members in Session: 8 + 1 advisor

Schools Participating:

Colorado State University (4 + advisor)

UC Davis (2)

University of Nevada-Reno (1)

University of Wyoming (1)

Report provided by CSU, thus its contents will be marked as CSU

SESSION 2

Date: December 7, 2005

Group: UC Davis (*UCD*)

Location: Club Meeting

Taskforce Members: Cindy Sperry (cnsperry@ucdavis.edu)

Approximate Number of Members in Session: 6

Schools Participating: UC Davis

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE

Name: Jess Falkenthal

Affiliation: UC Davis

NOTES

- Since the discussions were led in varying ways...
 - Ideas arising from Session 1 will be preceded with “**CSU**”
 - Ideas arising from Session 2 will be preceded with “**UCD**”
 - The Individual Response will be preceded with “**Jess**”
- No organized voting took place to prioritize these concerns; rather, they tended to arise from consensus and should be treated as such.
- While the numbers participating in these sessions are small, it should be noted that these are the members who have historically been both active and involved in the National and Regional opportunities available to their clubs. In the case of the UC Davis club, those members participating in Session 2 were those with a voiced interest in National and Regional activities.

Issue 1—Collegiate 4-H Image

CSU

- **What is Collegiate 4-H?**
 - A community service organization designed to work in conjunction with the 4-H organization in order to:
 - Provide leadership and guidance to new and existing 4-Hers.
 - Act as a resource on 4-H opportunities and advancement
 - Act as a liaison between extension agents and 4-Hers
 - Provide an opportunity for those who have not participated in the 4-H organization to become more knowledgeable and enable them to participate in the leadership opportunities it provides.
 - Collegiate 4-H is a bridging organization. It aids members in crossing the ravine between memberships in the 4-H program, and assuming a volunteer roll in the program.
- **What does Collegiate 4-H do? It...**
 - Provides leadership training and opportunities to community youth.
 - Acts as a resource for 4-H youth and their leadership.
 - Serves as an authority figure during 4-H events, aiding leaders and extension agents to maintain the safety of the youth in attendance.
 - Acts as a communicator between 4-H leaders and extension agents to 4-H youth.
 - It is an organization that provides its members with a sense of identity on campus, enriches their lives through group projects and recreation, and develops confidence and leadership skills. Collegiate 4-H is open to all college students who wish to support youth and the 4-H program. It is not necessary to have prior 4-H experience, only to have an interest in the 4-H ideals and in serving the public and the community. “Quoted from the collegiate 4-H hand book published by the national 4-H foundation”
- **Why did you join Collegiate 4-H? To...**
 - Acquire new leadership and communication skills
 - Give back to the 4-H community that has given so much to them
 - Act as a resource for current and future 4-Hers
 - Continue a 4-H career and act as a transition from general 4-H toward becoming a 4-H leader or extension agent.
- **Why is Collegiate 4-H important to you? It...**
 - Acts as a way to connect people with similar interests and goals, allowing them to work together toward accomplishing goals.
 - Provides leadership and communication skills as well as allowing on to become a more rounded individual.
- **Does the current mission statement describe Collegiate 4-H well?**
 - The mission statement is accurate in keeping with the goals of Collegiate 4-H on a local level and should be translated to the goals of Collegiate 4-H on a regional and national level.

UCD

- Give back to 4-H

- Needs a generalized definition
- Serves as a next step after 19
- Professional Image
 - Increase visibility and awareness of Collegiate 4-H

Jess

- **What is Collegiate 4-H?**
 - facilitate the closing of the generation gap between youth and 4-H adults . We're in the unique position to be "adults" who *really see* the youth perspective since we were youth rather recently.
 - network of young 4-H alumni and their peers working together to accomplish ... all things said in the Western discussion...
- **Why did I join Collegiate 4-H ?**
 - because I believe in the ideals of 4-H and believe that those should be present in this organization as well.
 - It was also a natural stepping stone
- **Why is Collegiate 4-H important to me?**
 - because it allows me to be a part of the 4-H organization which I love and give back.

Issue 2—Communication

CSU

- **How do we reach you?**
 - Email
 - Phone contacts
 - Websites
- The organization on a national level should consider a more efficient format.
CONSIDER:
 - Is there a way of keeping up with local level clubs in order to make communication with all members easier?
 - Providing contact information for all national officers and regional officers.
- **How does your club communicate?**
 - Email
 - Website
 - Phone contacts
- **How does your club get regional and national information?**
 - Other members of the club or word of mouth
 - NAB website
 - Communication at the national level could be great improved by:
 - Having club officers informed of events at regional and national levels
 - Have general information posted on website so that it can be included in agendas for the local clubs.
 - Provide information with enough notice makes receiving a response in a timely manner more realistic
- **What would be the easiest way to contact you?**
 - Phone contacts

- Email
- A national newsletter sent to the entire Collegiate 4-H body through email would provide a simple alternative to relying entirely on 4-H members to provide information to their club.
- **What form of media do you read?**
 - Internet
 - Newspapers
 - Television news broadcasts.
- **What is the best way of conveying information to you?**
 - Through local clubs and websites.
- **How could response time be improved with leadership and members?**
 - Providing enough notice to those you wish to respond.
- **How could timely responses be encouraged at all levels?**
 - Providing information in a timely manner to the general membership without relying on last minute deadlines to govern NAB's activities.
- **What content/information would you like to access at collegiate4h.org?**
 - A continental map of the United States allowing access to the websites of each state.
 - Lesson plans and instructions for use at Collegiate 4-H events as a reference for local clubs to use when planning their own events. This will in turn enable clubs to communicate more easily with each other as well as make it easier for the entire organization to present information that is similar across the country. This will enable the organization to become more unified in their way of teaching as well as the content they are exploring.
 - Minutes and agendas from the last NAB meeting
 - A master calendar displaying up coming events and deadlines for NAB as well as the regions.
 - An active telephone number and email address for all members of NAB
 - The next meeting's call in number and the date.
- **What resources should the new National Advocacy Team work on creating for clubs?**
 - The advocacy team should work to provide information on fundraising, community service on the campus level as well as within the community, as well as lesson plans and provide a way for local clubs to express their ideas about these items to the national organization.
 - The advocacy team should act as a way of unifying local clubs together by providing information about recreational activities and happenings around the country as well as promoting involvement on the national level by presenting a club of the month or giving some kind of recognition to the local organizations that are working to better 4-H as a whole.
 - The main focus of the advocacy team should be to present ideas about gaining club membership by building and sustaining existing clubs and providing information for new club formation.
 - Because of the differences between 4-H in the different states, the Advocacy team should work on promoting collegiate 4-H at national regular 4-H events.

- The advocacy team should also work on promoting the national Service project, and provide a bi monthly newsletter on the goings on with NAB.

UCD

- Need a single website
 - NAB needs to be directly involved
 - Message boards, blog, USDA, 4-HUSA
 - Unify existing websites
 - Don't pawn it off on web team
- List Serves
 - Form a national listserv with addresses from existing regional listserv
 - Send NAB minutes out through listserv
 - Need an Announcements listserv
- Web team
 - Too bureaucratic – it seems to focus too much on its political position
 - No structure – there is no action plan available for it
- Communication needs to be proactive

Jess

- **How does your club get regional and national information?**
 - I would like to see a central location to receive information, so we wouldn't have to worry about information getting skewed down the line of communication. Perhaps via the website as everyone can access that.
- **What would be the easiest way to contact you?**
 - e-mail
- **What form of media do you read?**
 - websites, then newspapers & newsletters
- **What is the best way of conveying information to you?**
 - website
- **How could response time be improved with leadership and members?**
How could timely responses be encouraged at all levels?
 - well publicized meeting dates and deadlines that are established early on (at least 2-4 months in advance).
- **What content/information would you like to access at collegiate4h.org?**
 - I sent a document to NAB earlier in 2005 about this. Please relay that to the 2006 Web Team for ideas.
- **Web Team and Advocacy team**
 - The teams should establish a year plan early on as to what they want to accomplish. As long as they're chosen because they're qualified, they will know what they should be doing in their position.
 - NAB should let the groups have much freedom and try not to govern their every effort or provide them with an external leader.
 - Advocacy team should also consider creating resources to be distributed at state levels (conferences, fairs, scholarship programs, etc) explaining what Collegiate 4-H is and how to start one at their school. Perhaps they need to establish a liason with each state office to do so.

Issue 3—Governance (NAB)

CSU

- **What should the duties of the elected leadership (local, regional, and national) be?**
 - The majority of governing power should remain at the discretion of the local clubs while relying on their respective regions to relay information between clubs. The National organization should act as an umbrella to allow communication between regions; however, they should not be relied on as a moderating system to make decisions for regions without first allowing a vote to go out to the general membership first. The national organization should, in fact, be accessible to all levels of the organization and should allow every member of the organization to express their opinions during meetings, or at the very least, present their opinions to the organization before meetings take place. These opinions should in no way be scoffed or ridiculed and should be taken seriously by all members of the NAB board.
 - On the local level, leadership should strive to build club membership and encourage active participation in local 4-H programs as well as encourage members to participate and become more involved at the regional and national levels.
 - The question of local and regional leadership is not a national matter. Those should be decided at the discretion of the local clubs and members of the regions in question. NAB at current is ineffective and crippled by power hungry individuals who place the worth of their voice and views above the values of 4-H as a whole. Because of this, and because it has been an on going problem NAB should have no power. It should serve rather to help share ideas and distribute information. Decision making power should be left with the national body as a whole.
 - Note these are the values that NAB has move away from, during its petty quest for power.
- **.Why a National Collegiate 4-H Organization?**
 - The strength of the National Collegiate 4-H organization lies in the local clubs. The future of the organization is entirely in the hands of students who determine on each campus which resources to utilize in their service work.
 - Why, then a national organization? If what is important happens in the local club, then why the need for a central office, an intern serving as director, and a National Action Board? Why not just a very loose federation of independent local groups rather than all the paraphernalia of national organization?
 - The most obvious reason is to help keep our vision, values, and goals before us. We are a service-oriented, educational organization promoting well-rounded people. Without constant reminders, teaching, help and advice, even the best of us lose sight of our larger goals.
 - But the best reason for a national organization is the networking of various Collegiate 4-H Clubs to share ideas and resources. This can help make the local clubs even stronger as we strive to reach our common goals.
 - Each of us needs to feel pride in the things we are associated with. We are proud of the record of collegiate 4-H and the kind of individuals with who we

have been associated with. But we also recognize that collegiate 4-H has not yet even approached its potential, and that there are many more individuals whom the program has yet to touch. It is these things in mind that the National Collegiate 4-H Organization was formed, and that we reaffirm ourselves to the purposes of the organization and to the principles of the 4-H program.

- The purpose of NAB is for the betterment of 4-H as a whole not for the advancement of personal agendas.
- **What should be the make-up and design of regional and national leadership teams?**
 - Again the make up of the regional leadership team is not a quest for the national body as a whole. It should be left up to the states that make up the region to decide. NAB should be made up of equal members from each region. The current process of taking regional presidents as the NAB representatives seems to work. The Chair of NAB, The Secretary, and Business manager should be chosen by a popular vote of the national body as a whole after reviewing applications from all interested parties.
- **There are Advocacy and Web Teams for Collegiate 4-H at the national level, should there be others and what should they be?**
 - Again it is not a question for the national body to decide what is needed to best meet the needs of the regional bodies and local bodies. These questions should be left up to the individual states and regions.

UCD

- Meetings must be public, no private sessions
- Publish by-laws and minutes of NAB operations over the past two years
- before 2006
- Financial report at all meetings
- NAB Meetings need to start immediately after being elected
- Not necessary, they don't do anything
- We need monthly updates of minutes and what's been accomplished
- Positions should be voted on at national business meeting rather than selected by NAB
- No action seen from NAB
- Items are pawned off onto others, and failure is blamed on committee
- Minutes should be available electronically within one week
- More involvement and support from national headquarters
- Focus on grassroots structure of collegiate 4-h
- Constitution
 - Advisor article in the constitution?

Jess

- **Why a National Collegiate 4-H Organization?**
 - to bring clubs together and share ideas. NOT to control the local levels.

Issue 4—Relationships

CSU

- **Should Collegiate 4-H clubs be chartered on the county or state level?**
 - Collegiate clubs should continue to be chartered at the state level. This allows for changes in the way the USDA runs their entities, and does not require Collegiate 4-H to have a national body to function. The NAB board is not required in order for Collegiate 4-H to continue and thus cannot consider itself to govern Collegiate 4-H as a whole.
 - Keeping Collegiate 4-H chartered in the states also allows for a more accurate count of active clubs in the region.
 - Again this is not a question for this body to decide. The USDA empowers each state's cooperative extension program the power of authority to create clubs and distribute the use of the 4-H emblem as it see fit so long as it is appropriate under law. The national body does not have the right to decide how each state handles this process.
- **Should Collegiate 4-H be a database of young 4-H volunteers?**
 - Because of the different feelings we all have on privacy and because of the different local and federal laws pertain to the demission of personal information I feel that this is a bad idea.
- **How should regions interact with other regions? ***
 - Again this is a question for each individual region it so not the place of the national body to inform the regions how they are to relate with one another. Perhaps if newsletters are being produced the regions could share newsletters so other regions know what is happening across the country
- **How should clubs interact with other clubs? ***
 - Club interaction is a wonderful idea, however, it can prove to be challenging on many levels. CSU and Wyoming have tried to do joint activities but have never been successful due to varying schedules and time constraints.
 - Again this is a question for each individual club it is not the place of the national body to inform the clubs how they are to relate with one another. .
 - ** Where do the gaps in communication truly lie? It seems to be harder to gain communication between states on a national level rather than a regional or local level.
- **How could we better communicate with other 4-H/USDA entities?**
 - By having members of the national body act as liaisons between collegiate 4-H and these entities, these liaisons would attend meetings of the afore mentioned organizations and report back to NAB which would then distribute the info to the regions passing information down the line.

UCD

- Policy covering Collegiate 4-H
- Step child to 4-H
- Get into contact with big shots and delegates

Jess

- **Should Collegiate 4-H clubs be chartered on the county or state level?**

- state level with *recommended guidelines* from national to assist states. (alot of state offices are unsure what to do about Collegiate 4-H clubs as there are so few in each individual state. Therefore there really aren't any policies anywhere about membership)
- **Should Collegiate 4-H be a database of young 4-H volunteers?**
 - for 4-H staff purposes yes. And it could be collected digitally with waivers saying that contact information would only be provided to 4-H staff. Statistical information could be made public... And the public could see that ex. there is a collegiate 4-Her in southern California who specializes in rabbits, but have to contact a 4-H staff member to establish contact with the individual.
- **How should clubs interact with other clubs?**
 - to share ideas.
 - at conferences.
 - online
- **How could we better communicate with other 4-H/USDA entities?**
 - I'm not certain if there should be a member of Collegiate 4-H on the Trust, as we are a very small # of individuals compared proportionately to the other stakeholders on the Trust. However, it might deserve some consideration!
 - Policies covering Collegiate 4-H need to be established somewhere and the state levels don't really know what to do about it.

Issue 5—Opportunities

CSU

- **What 4-H events do Collegiate 4-Hers participate in at the county, state, and national level?**
 - In Colorado our club aids the state office in putting on all the 4-H camps that take place in Colorado. Members of our club have also traveled to other states to assist with their camps. On the National level we help with Western Round Up. I know there are opportunities to participate with Washington focus, Congress, Conference, IFFY and other events at the national convention center
 - The Wyoming club is giving a workshop at the state leader's conference and we help out locally with the 4-H Carnival.
- **Do Collegiate 4-Hers represent 4-H or Collegiate 4-H at these events?**
 - This, of course, depends on the kind of event. If Collegiate 4-H were to attend a national FFA convention or some college sponsored event, they would be representing both Collegiate 4-H as well as the 4-H program as a whole. It is unfair to generalize the practices of one part of an organization as representing only that portion of the program. No matter what event they participate in, they speak for both organizations as they were once 4-Hers themselves. Their actions now reflect the kind of leadership they were exposed to during the 4-H career.
 - We represent Collegiate 4-H working as volunteer event staff.
- **What role do Collegiate 4-Hers play in these events?**

- Event staff ranging from workshop presenters, to office workers, to crowd control, to coiffures, to bouncers at the dances.
- **What other events should we become involved with?**
 - Commitment to events should be left open to individual clubs' discretion. If the national body would like to advertise the service opportunity that's fine but it not the national bodies purpose to give a guarantee of manpower at any event. Individual clubs can only be as active as the local membership desires to be.
- **How can the National Service Project be improved?**
 - The national service project should not be an annual event, rather one that is accomplished over several years of on going service. The training time involved with these projects needs to be extended and offered at all levels of the organization, not only at the national conference.
 - This project should try to align itself with the rest of the 4-H community as a whole, focusing on a project that has been undertaken by the 4-H leadership of the nation, rather than creating their own unique project. An example of this would be to work toward helping leadership in implementing the Youth at all Partnerships program nationally or perhaps focusing on youth obesity.
 - It would become more beneficial if the national body could decide to partner with a service project for a period of 4 or five years rather than having a different one-day project at each national convention. The Service Project should be something that individual clubs can contribute to individually and through out the year. And example of this is if we did a 4 year partnership with MADD, or DARE. This would allow the clubs to network with local branches of the partnered national organization increasing the impact 4-H has with the service project and make the project more tangible on a local level.

UCD

- Get Collegiate 4-H involved at national events
- Lead workshops at events
- Develop workshops for regional presidents to present in their home areas
- Create resources for anyone to present Collegiate 4-H workshops

Jess

- **How could we better communicate with other 4-H/USDA entities?**
 - I'm not certain if there should be a member of Collegiate 4-H on the Trust, as we are a very small # of individuals compared proportionately to the other stakeholders on the Trust. However, it might deserve some consideration!
 - Policies covering Collegiate 4-H need to be established somewhere and the state levels don't really know what to do about it.
- **Do Collegiate 4-Hers represent 4-H or Collegiate 4-H at these events?**
 - both. We're obviously successful alumni AND a member of Collegiate 4-H. but when representing either, it should be as an adult rather than a youth role. Meaning following the state's adult 4-H policies.

- **How can the National Service Project be improved?**
 - more publicity of it
 - an incentive for the sponsor club?
 - brainstorming on national message boards
 - having more than one club sponsor the project
 - having it give back to the 4-H program rather than external.
 - I don't remember mention of it at the past 2 National Conferences? so I don't even know what the past one was (weird since each club is supposed to be trying to have one project a year to support this!)
 - inform us of all the past projects to help us gain ideas!

Issue 6—Other Concerns and Ideas

CSU

- **NAB**
 - Individuals involved with NAB need to realize that they are elected as a representative of the people. It is not their place to try and filter or screen information for the people. Nor is it NAB's right to try and gather and sustain its own power furthering the views of the individuals of the board rather than the constituency which they are suppose to represent. Collegiate 4-H should embrace the ideas of democracy and transparency of government and should embrace the concept of a free market place of ideas.
 - NAB needs to realize that it is broken and needs to change.
 - Individuals who are trying to control NAB and desire individual power need to realize that they are working against the ideals of 4-H. Realizing this they either need to change there resolve for power, or leave 4-H as an organization for though their tyrannical efforts the good will and purpose of the organization are being undermined.

UCD

- National Conference
 - Make report available online
- Taskforce
 - Purpose?
 - People appointed themselves

Jess

- **General**
 - I think it should be a concern as to why we're not "bridging" more 4-H members into new collegiate clubs. Perhaps we need greater publicity to states about what C4-H is.
 - why are there not more types of Collegiate 4-H than just member clubs? we need to make being an at-large-member more possible! Look at all the different ways that 4-H is run! Afterschool programs, club programs, individuals, online groups, etc...
 - slow to change

- Public is unaware of the difference/distinction between 4-H activities and Collegiate 4-H activities
- don't have a defined role in the 4-H system
- Who does C4-H answer to?
- **we need some continuing membership in our governing bodies.**
Perhaps 2 regions have a different fiscal year than the other two so that 2 are swapped out halfway through the year.
- lack of resources being created to aid clubs in their pursuits (4-Hers, volunteers, staff members, etc all have TONS of resources!)
- lack of involvement from 4-H staff at all levels towards providing advisors and support (not in all cases of course, but generally)
- **Collegiate 4-H Constitution**
 - **Article I, Section A**
 - We have the option of membership at large, yet I don't think that this option is used very often. Perhaps as a body, the NAB or a committee created by them, should be creating resources for program ideas for individual members at large. And *giving them a reason* to be a part of our organization besides having a vote at the meeting.
 - **Article II, Section B**
 - Based on Article II, Section B about voting by proxy. I think that a recommended deadline for proposed amendments, resolutions, or topics to be voted on by the general body should be established prior to the publication of the National 4-H newsletter.
 - There should be an attempt to make this issue available online (perhaps as a PDF) for clubs to look at prior to attendance at the conference. This would allow non-attending clubs to establish proxies and have a voice at the meeting with their votes.
 - **Article III, Section E (Duties of NAB)**
 - This article mentions that the NAB is responsible for the administration duties at the National Collegiate 4-H Conference and other administration tasks. It also emphasizes that #1 the body should be serving as a liason between regions and sharing ideas.
 - I don't feel that this is necessarily being done.
 - In 2005, the attempt was made to communicate to the general body via a NAB blog, which was definately a step in the right direction. However, I didn't feel the *idea sharing* part was emphasized enough.
 - **How can NAB work towards providing resources, ideas and support to the club level?**
 - this question should be addressed.
 - 4-H as an organization does not have a *governing* body of youth. It is truly an organization that is best seen at the grassroots level. This should be remembered when trying to make Collegiate 4-H into a hierarchial society.
 - We elected our regional president to serve on the NAB not to *govern* but to represent and help the people (clubs).

- Our leaders are supposed to be servants to the people, not the other way around. So I would like to see the NAB putting more emphasis hereforth on **servicing** their organization.
 - There are also many other duties in this section that I don't feel that NAB is doing since they're attempting to be a ***governing body*** to the organization. This might require more than just meetings, but possible **action** being taken.
 - **Other comments on NAB**
 - There should be no closed meetings of NAB.
 - an advisor should be present at all meetings to ensure that NAB and Collegiate 4-H are staying on track with the ideals of the 4-H program.
 - *NAB should not be responsible for selecting the business manager and secretary candidates. Their qualifications should be published in the national newsletter so that the organization can vote for these positions.*
- **Article VI**
 - **Publications**
 - I didn't see a final report of the previous conference sent on to our member club. In the future, the final report should be published on the web for all to see.
 - **B. Handbook**
 - Where is the National Collegiate 4-H Handbook?
 - Can it be published to the Collegiate 4-H website for others to see.
- **National Conference Workshops**
 - I believe that the outgoing Web Team (considering that the new one might not be selected yet) should be responsible during the conference for collecting all PPT's, handouts, and resource material that was in the workshops at National Collegiate 4-H Conference to be uploaded to the National Collegiate 4-H website to start a resource library. They can pass this material on to the new Web Team members.
- **Communication**
 - I like how Article IX mentions that a Regional Communication Coordinator should be elected by each club.
 - Perhaps if each club did this, a national listserv could be created in which *at least* these members should be subscribed to, to ensure that communication is happening among our entire organization.
- **NAB committees**
 - Information about the 2 NAB committees should be added to the Procedural Notes of the constitution document. *Yet I don't see anywhere in the constitution that gives NAB the power to appoint or govern committees?*
 - the committees should be responsible for choosing their own liason to provide reports at the NAB meetings.
- **Business Meetings**

- some sort of amendment should be made similar to the Western Region's about holding business meetings via electronic communications if necessary. The logistics are possible (such as e-mail votes), but would not need to be furnished in the constitution.
- Voting members should be able to waive the floor to another individual during business meetings
- all things to be voted on at the meeting should be published in the National Collegiate 4-H newsletter in the future.