

Task 1: Agency Selection

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4-H is the largest youth developmental organization in the United States. This agency provides a wide array of programs for children, volunteer opportunities for adults, and jobs for professional adults. Its focus is on empowering and influencing young people everywhere to change the world by providing them with the tools to do so. The tools and knowledge provided are given in through a number of different programs throughout the organization.

### **Agency**

4-H is a nation-wide, youth development organization that provides children with experiences both educational and life skill oriented through hands on learning. “This agency provides programs such as after-school programs, school clubs, community clubs, and 4-H camp. Programs cover information, experiences, and activities in areas like health, science, agriculture, and citizenship” (4-H [About 4-H], 2017, para 1). The Chesapeake 4-H Extension Agent, Jocelyn Dailey, was kind enough to grant permission to use the agency for the duration of the semester for this course. One aspect of Mrs. Dailey’s job is the 4-H Junior Summer Camp. This camp takes part during one week of the summer, four nights/five days. The summer camp focuses on leadership and life skills being taught in a hand on, fun way during the course of the week of camp through classes and other camp-wide activities.

### **Mission and Purpose**

“The purpose of 4-H is to provide learning experiences and opportunities for youth which will help them grow and develop to their fullest potential. The 4-H youth development program encourages individuals to reach their potential” (J. Dailey, personal communication, 23 January 2017). “The mission of 4-H is to assist youth, and adults working with those youth, to gain additional knowledge, life skills, and attitudes that will further their development as self-directing, contributing, and productive members of society” (Virginia Cooperative Extension [4-

H/Youth], 2017, para 2). The 4-H club pledge reads as follows (also includes hand motions): "I pledge My Head to clearer thinking, My Heart to greater loyalty, My Hands to larger service and My Health to better living for my club, my community, my country, and my world" (Virginia Cooperative Extension [4-H/Youth], 2017, para 4).

### **Population**

4-H is delivered nation-wide through Cooperative Extension, which includes a community of more than 100 universities. 4-H reaches a nation-wide population of roughly 6 million people. "The 6 million 4-H's include an urban population of 1.8 million people, a suburban population of 1.6 million people, and a rural population 2.6 million people" (4-H [About 4-H], 2017, para 3). The broad span of 4-H programs are delivered to both children, as the recipients of the agencies abundant resources and programs, but also adults that are used as mentors to help guide the children through their perspective 4-H program. "4-H has 3,500 adult professionals as well as 562,000 adult volunteers throughout the agency nation-wide and 25 million alumni all over the world" (4-H [Annual Report], 2017, para 1). With 6 million current 4-H's in the United States makes 4-H the largest youth development organization.

### **Location**

4-H is a nation-wide youth development organization. Its reach covers every corner and crevice in the United States with locations in all 50 states, all counties, and cities. Which makes the service delivery quite vast. "In the state of Virginia there are seven centers that are the program's hub within the state; Airfield, Holiday Lake, Jamestown, Northern Virginia, Southwest Virginia, and Skelton Educational Centers" (Virginia Cooperative Extension [4-H Camping/Facilities], 2017, para 2). For the purposes of this class, and the coursework, the City of Chesapeake Jr. Summer Camp runs out of the Airfield 4-H Educational Center in Wakefield,

Virginia. Wakefield Educational Center's physical address is 15189 Airfield Road Wakefield, Virginia 23888. The camp gets their participants, both child campers and adult volunteers/professional staff, mostly from the city of Chesapeake, Virginia. Children and adults interested in attending Chesapeake's week of camp don't have to come from the city of Chesapeake though; they could come from any city or any state as long as they filled out the application to go to Chesapeake's week of summer camp.

### **Reasoning**

4-H has been apart of my life for almost ten years now. I attended camp as a camper and worked my way through the ranks as a counselor in training, then a camp counselor, and then finally to an adult volunteer. The work this organization puts into only a week of camp made a life-long mark on my life. They teach life skills and leaderships skills but in fun, innovative ways that make it not seem boring. The years of camp and trainings are a part of why I chose the educational/professional path I am on. While camp taught me many life skills, it also was an outlet for the home-life issues I had going on throughout the years. A combination of my home-life and the 4-H program made me want to work with kids. Hence lies my rationale for choosing this agency for this course. This agency works with kids as young as 3 through 18, if not older. During that time frame of childhood and adolescence is a time in life where they need the most education and guidance in multiple aspects in their lives. The 4-H program does that in more than one way with their vast array of programs. Their motto is, "making the best better", and that is precisely what they do (Virginia Cooperative Extension [4-H/Youth], 2017, para 3).

## References

4-H. (2017). *About 4-H*. Retrieved January 24, 2016, from <http://4-h.org/about/what-is-4-h/>

4-H. (2015). *2015 Youth Impact Report*. Retrieved from

<http://3t61of1t6u3x3af7ir2y91ib.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wpcontent/uploads/2016/03/4H-annual-report-2015.pdf>

Virginia Cooperative Extension. (2017). *4-H/Youth*. Retrieved January 24, 2016, from <http://ext.vt.edu/4h-youth.html>