

Wanted: 4-H Science Ambassadors

By Kathleen Jablonski, 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator

Do you like science? Are you between the ages of 10 and 18? Do you have 2 or 3 friends that like science? Can you find an adult who would like to work with you to become a 4-H Science Ambassador? Grafton County UNH Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development is looking for teams of youth and adults to be 4-H Science Ambassadors for the 4-H Science Everywhere program. The program is designed to inspire youth and adults working in partnership to experience, through inquiry, the science in their 4-H projects.

Science weaves through everything in our lives and we want to develop teams to help youth in Grafton County be 4-H SET for life. (That is ready to use science, engineering and technology learned with the life skills taught in the 4-H program to improve their lives. National 4-H Council has a goal for 2012: One Million New Scientists. We are confident the 4-H Science Ambassador program will help meet that national goal.

The 4-H Science Everywhere Discovery Institute is a new daylong event held at UNH on Saturday, February 12, 2011. At the Institute, youth and adult partners will explore activities and curriculum in one of four science strands: plant and animal science; food and health; engineering and physical science; environmental science and natural resources. Teams will receive training in teaching and sharing. After returning to their county, teams will serve as ambassadors to bring the fun of science back to share with their clubs, Afterschool programs and other community groups. While at the Institute participants will meet faculty and graduate students working in scientific research, do engaging inquiry-based curriculum and tour UNH research facilities.

Inquiry Science or Inquiry-based Learning is a form of the Experiential Learning Model in which the activity is set up for the learner to engage in open ended, learner centered hands on activities. It is the freedom of exploration within the content area that allows for inquiry. There are three basic types of inquiry learning: *structured inquiry*, where a set problem, procedure & material are presented without knowledge of expected outcomes; *guided inquiry*, where a problem and material are provided to investigate; *open inquiry*, where learners are presented with materials and can formulate their own problems to investigate.

We are looking for teams of 2 youth (age 10 – 18) and one adult to explore each of the four science strands. If an interested youth is not already involved with 4-H, the youth can complete a simple enrollment form prior to registering for the event. Adult partners would need to complete the 4-H Leader Screening process. Participants will be responsible for their own transportation to and from the University. A minimal registration fee will be charged to cover cost of materials for the day. Teams will be expected to volunteer time after the institute to work with at least one six hour inquiry science program with a youth based group in Grafton County.

At the Institute, training will include teaching participants to work as youth/adult partners and teaching them how to be Ambassadors, as well as introducing them to faculty and graduate student mentors. Participants will also be taught specific curriculum to teach to community groups upon their return home. Training will be provided in a web based 4-H Science Everywhere Blog. 4-H Educators in charge of the institute are Rick Alleva, Claes Thelmark, Julia Steed-Mawson and Mike Kioski. All were trained at the National 4-H SET Leadership Institute sponsored by the National 4-H Council.

Registration information will be posted on the 4-H website shortly. If you are interested in being on a team to represent Grafton County please contact Kathy Jablonski at 787-6944, Kathleen.Jablonski@unh.edu or write to her at: 3855 Dartmouth College Highway, Box 5, North Haverhill, NH 03774.

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