

# National 4-H Hall of Fame 2013

## NIFA



### Virginia Gobeli

National 4-H Program Leader, 4-H Youth Development

Home: Harmony, RI Nominated by: NIFA, USDA Internet:vgobeli@yahoo.com

#### Major 4-H Accomplishments:

Over 60 years in 4-H as a member, volunteer and staff member. Held state 4-H and home economics positions in RI, MA, NV and NE, and a National 4-H Program Leader at USDA. At USDA, managed National 4-H Conference, served on various interagency committees on youth development activities and conferences and very involved in international programs.

**Honors:** RI State winner Home Economics and Dress Revue, 4-H Key award, All-Star, Outstanding Volunteer; recognition for Home Economics, RI General Assembly. USDA agency award for 4-H Centennial; Secretary's Award and Agency Certificate for Plan of Work Team; USDA Leadership Award, 25 Years of Service and Distinguished Service.

#### Biography:

Dr. Virginia Gobeli has been involved in 4-H for over 60 years as a member, volunteer and a staff member. Starting as a RI Extension Home Economist, she later served as State Home Economics 4-H Specialist in MA, 4-H Specialist in NV and NE. In Nevada she started the State 4-H Camp, developed curriculum and managed the State Fair 4-H section. In Nebraska, she worked with teams developing 4-H projects, managed the State Fair 4-H exhibits, was responsible International Exchanges and managed the Volunteers for the Future grant. At USDA, Virginia managed National 4-H Conference and served on or coordinated projects including USDA Team Nutrition, National Recognition Model Team and IFYE and Japanese exchange committees.

Virginia was active planning and conducting various interagency conferences on youth development. At National 4-H Conference she introduced Real Colors and Character Counts! to the 4-H system. Her work to bring technology into 4-H led to National 4-H Headquarters web site, National 4-H Technology Team and Conference, and Teens Teach Technology with Medicare. Her 4-H International responsibilities included the IFYE World and 50th Anniversary Conference, various conferences and meetings abroad and recruiting assistance to 4-H and youth development programs in Estonia, Latvia, Tonga and Uzbekistan. Virginia remains an active 4-H volunteer assisting at 4-H events and activities and the 4-H Alumni working group.

#### Quote:

I think that 4-H helps all to understand "Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass... It is about learning to dance in the rain" - Author Unknown. I firmly believe that because of 4-H and its influence on my life I was able to do all that I have, learning to dance in the rain. I also believe that through my experiences in 4-H I developed the life skills that helped me become a better person, wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend as well as employee. The 4-H Pledge says it all Head, Heart, Hands and Health for a better family, community, country and world.



Virginia serving as RI National 4-H Conference delegation chaperone.



Virginia conducts a youth development training in Tokyo.

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### Sharon K. B. "Sherri" Wright

National Program Leader, 4-H National Headquarters, USDA

Home: Rehoboth Beach, DE

Nominated by: NIFA, USDA

#### Major 4-H Accomplishments:

4-H member in Wadena Co., MN; Junior Princess, 4-H Dress Review, 1953. At Univ. of MN, obtained grants for integrating at-risk youth into 4-H. National Program Leader 4-H National Headquarters, directed Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR) and 4-H Military Partnerships.

**Honors:** Army White Plume Award - highest medal for achievement in support of Army MWR, 2008; Dept. of the Air Force Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award, 2008; Air Force District of Washington Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Award, 2007; USDA Secretary's Honor Awards for 4-H Army Youth Development Project, 2006, and for CYFERnet Team, 2003.

#### Biography:

Sherri Wright worked in 4-H for 29 years as a professor at the Univ. of Minnesota and as a 4-H National Program Leader at USDA. At USDA Wright directed the Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR) program, managing an average of \$7 million annually. CYFAR grants to land grant universities for community programs reached 27,000 at-risk, low income youth and families and engaged over 10,000 CYFAR youth in 4-H clubs. Sherri established a CYFAR program support network to grantees through university faculty liaisons; an annual CYFAR professional development conference for 900; and CYFERnet, one of the first internet-based, peer reviewed, information networks for youth and family programs.

Wright directed 4-H Military Partnerships, administering USDA agreements with Army, Air Force, and Navy, and managing a total of \$108 million in military funding. The project assigned 4-H youth development professionals to military offices and recruited 50 State 4-H Military Liaisons to link 4-H staff with military installations. Worldwide over 20,000 U.S. military youth enrolled in 4-H. Sherri worked with Army to design and implement Operation: Military Kids for 30,000 children of deployed National Guard and Reserve soldiers. In a career committed to youth in high-risk environments, Wright's most significant professional achievement was bringing 4-H to thousands of youth across the U.S. who had not previously been reached.

#### Quote:

The success of 4-H lies in the fact that kids enjoy learning when they are actively engaged. Kids want choices. They thrive on responsibility. They work hard to achieve goals they have set. They crave respect from caring competent adults. They want to contribute, in their clubs and their communities. Most of all they want to be with their friends and have fun. When this happens kids love 4-H. As 4-H expands to rural, urban, and suburban communities across the country and overseas with 4-H Military Partnerships young people everywhere will have the chance to learn and have fun with friends in 4-H.



Sherri and 4-H and Army representatives receive the USDA Secretary's Honor Award from Secretary Mike Johanns, 2006.