

New Jersey – 2007

Rita Natale Saathoff

Former 4-H Department Chair & Regional 4-H Agent, South



Home: Atlantic County, NJ
Nominated by: New Jersey 4-H
Year Inducted: 2007

4-H Efforts: 25 year career with Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Became Atlantic County 4-H Agent in 1980. Served as department chair on three occasions and served as the NJ Southern Regional 4-H Agent. Active in New Jersey and national 4-H professional associations and Epsilon Sigma Phi; leadership included NAE4-HA board as Northeast Director. Held numerous positions on the Rutgers University, Rutgers Cooperative Extension and 4-H department levels through various committees and task forces.

Honors: NAE4-HA Distinguished Service, 1987; NAE4-HA Meritorious Service, 2002; ESP Chapter Distinguished Service, 2004.

Rita discovered Extension and 4-H as an intern in Cape May Co. In 1980, she began her 25 year career as Atlantic Co. 4-H Agent. She gained national recognition for her work with younger 4-H members. As a leader in the Department of 4-H Youth Development, she created mentoring, volunteer and staff development systems and supporting publications. She led the reorganization of the department committee structure to better reflect the current issues and needs of youth development. This included conducting research on professional development needs, developing needs assessment tools, planning in-service training and updating the 4-H professional development model.

Rita's initiative created the excellence of the New Jersey Youth and Adult Partnerships Program. She led the scholarship team that funded, planned, conducted, and evaluated an extensive training, complete with supporting curriculum, for county youth/adult teams. This training was the impetus for numerous county youth/adult partnerships and professional presentations. In support of the 4-H program, Rita served on the Governor's Office on Volunteerism Conference Planning Group, provided educational support to various external agencies and organizations. Rita was an active in the Catholic Charities, volunteered at St. Joseph's Church and for the American Heart Association and other charities.



Ken Pickett, Marilyn Mozenter Spiegel, Rita and B.J. Jesuncosky Webersinn at the 1983 NAE4-HA Conference in Portland.



Rita receives NAE4-HA Meritorious Service Award from Kirk Astroth, NAE4-HA President, in 2002.



Rita is with some of her Atlantic Co. 4-H members at 4-H Expo, a state event held in the 80's.