

National 4-H Hall of Fame 2011

New Jersey



David C. Wood
County 4-H Agent

Hometown: Mays Landing, New Jersey

Nominated by: New Jersey 4-H

Major 4-H Accomplishments:

Graduated Rutgers Univ. College of Agriculture, 1944. County 4-H Agent, Atlantic Co., 1948. Rutgers tenured Asst. Professor, 1951; promoted to Assoc. Professor; appointed to full Professor, 1968. Developed and sustained one of the most successful programs in New Jersey 4-H history. NAE4-HA Conference host state coordinator, 1971. Retired in 1978 with 30 years of service.

Honors: NAE4-HA Distinguished Service Award, 1963. Outstanding Contribution to Agriculture, Atlantic Co. Board of Agriculture, 1963. Man of the Year, Mays Landing Chamber of Commerce, 1971. Citizen of the Year, Atlantic Co. Chamber of Commerce, 1973. County 4-H center named the David C. Wood 4-H Center.

Biography:

Dave Wood conducted one of the most successful programs in New Jersey 4-H history. He established a high standard of excellence and motivated 4-H faculty and staff to strive to meet new benchmarks in club structure, programming, school programs and marketing. Many of his innovative methods and techniques were adopted by 4-H programs in New Jersey and throughout the country. During his tenure, Atlantic Co. boasted one of the largest 4-H enrollments in the state. He established innovative marketing and promotional efforts that expanded the county 4-H program from 200 to over 3,500 4-H members when he retired. His leadership was instrumental in establishing a 4-H fairgrounds and the state's first privately funded county 4-H Center.

Dave established organizational and volunteer management strategies that built strong team spirit and high morale among volunteers. His attention to teen programming engaged hundreds of teens in significant leadership and program planning roles. Dave's accomplishments in volunteer management and leadership development were an example for other youth development professionals. For 30 years he created innovative programs to attract, involve and educate diverse youth audiences, such as growing red oak seedlings, a school science series and the county camping program. Such efforts resulted in a huge growth in membership and lasting impacts on youth and families.

Quote:

For me, the 4-H Program was a mission of love. My most important job as County 4-H Agent was to maintain contact with the volunteer 4-H leaders, to motivate and support them, and keep up their morale. This job must be done morning, noon and night, by phone, by letter, and when you see them on the street. I also advocated open communication at all levels of 4-H, so the boys and girls in the program would be motivated and grow.



Dave Wood (right) presenting awards to 4-H members.



Dave Wood freeing quail raised from eggs in 1958.



Dave Wood at the county 4-H Center that he helped to establish and now bears his name.

