

**James 'Jim' Barthel**

**4-H Youth Development Educator**



Home: Oshkosh, WI  
Nominated by: Wisconsin 4-H  
Internet: [jcrbarthel@att.net](mailto:jcrbarthel@att.net)  
Year Inducted: 2012

**4-H Activities:** 10 year 4-H member, 3 year Peace Corps, El Salvador. 29 year WI 4-H Youth Development Educator; 26 year 4-H volunteer. Image of the 4-H Professional NAE4-HA Team; National 4-H Strategic Directions Team; National 4-H Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship Program Team, Co-Chair; National 4-H Program Outcomes Committee.

**Honors:** Wisconsin 4-H Key Award; Citizenship Short Course; National 4-H Dairy Conference; Co-coach 1st place National Dairy Judging Team. WAE4-HYDP, NAE4-HA and Epsilon Sigma Phi Distinguished Service Awards; WAE4-HYDP and NAE4-HA Air Force Recruiting Salute Awards. Faculty Study Awards: Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica.

Jim began 4-H as a 5 year old tag-a-long in Salem Pioneers 4-H club/Kenosha Co. when his older brother joined and his parents became 4-H leaders. He began 10 years of membership at age 9 and took dairy, woodworking, gardening and youth leadership projects. His leaders and peers challenged him to try new things like speech, drama, demonstration events and share his skills. State 4-H Chorus, State Congress, State Judging Contests and National 4-H Dairy Conference provided lifelong friends. In college he joined UW-Madison collegiate 4-H and Alpha Gamma

Rho fraternity. He then spent three years as a Peace Corps volunteer in El Salvador doing 4-C Club and community development.

Jim's 29 year career as a UW-Extension 4-H Youth Educator included Green and Winnebago Counties. His programs always included strong youth/adult leadership development and infusion of life skills. Outreach to underserved audiences, conducting and applying research, mentoring college students and co-workers and being a resource reflect the cornerstones of his career. Jim's wife Carolyn, son Kevin, and daughters Sarah and Emily are 4-H graduates. In retirement he continues to mentor 4-H staff and serves on the UWEX Centennial History Committee. He works part-time for the UW-Oshkosh Career Development Center and is active in various community programs.

**Quote:** I can't think of any other career or experience that would have been as personally fulfilling and also allowed contributing to others. You learn and teach while doing 4-H. Thank you to all the youth and adults who shared a bit of their life journeys.

Thinking about tomorrow's possibilities delights me and generates the energy needed to complete today's tasks.

One bit of advice I've always given to new colleagues is to identify what you really enjoy and find a way to include that personal joy into your programming and work.



Jim recruited four new 4-Hers, a new leader and a future 4-H staff member at this promotional display in 1985.



Jim in 1959 with offspring from Anita Mary Ellen Ideal, his first dairy project animal.



GREAT KIDS participants visit with Jim at the County Fair in 1999 [The Country Today photo by Judy Brown]