

National 4-H Council 2004



Hometown: St. Joseph, MO
Nominated by: National 4-H
Council
Year Inducted: 2004

Blaine Yarrington

Former Chairman, National 4-H Service Committee

4-H Statistics: Former President of the American Oil Company and former Chairman of the National 4-H Service Committee. Initiated discussions with Dean McNeal, Executive Vice President, Pillsbury Corporation and then chairman of the National 4-H Foundation, which resulted in merger of National 4-H Service Committee and National 4-H Foundation into National 4-H Council in 1976. He “engaged in a good deal of shuttle diplomacy during the merger negotiations” and spent a lot of time with business leaders and Extension Leaders addressing their concerns and questions about the merger. Led the Resource Development Committee to consolidate fundraising efforts of the two organizations.

Yarrington, former President, American Oil Company and former Chairman, National 4-H Service Committee, saw the urgency in the late 1960’s for one private national 4-H organization. Competition for corporate funds between the National 4-H Service Committee and the National 4-H Foundation created confusion in the private sector. He initiated discussions with the Foundation which created a joint merger committee appointed by both organizations. This created National 4-H Council in 1976. Yarrington spent a lot of time with business and Extension Leaders addressing concerns and questions about the merger. A joint Resource Development Committee led by Yarrington consolidated fundraising efforts. By 1981, Yarrington considered 4-H as the best example of partnership between the government and private enterprise that he knew.

Yarrington began in 1937 as a truck driver. He later took a job as a mail boy to gain experience in administrative and clerical work. In the early 1960’s, Yarrington joined the American Oil Company, which became Amoco Oil Company. He worked his way through the ranks to company President in the early 1970’s. In the mid 1970’s, Yarrington became Executive Vice President of Standard Oil Company (Indiana) until retiring in 1983. Yarrington’s leadership skills and his “ability to listen understand, and get to the critical point” were instrumental in the creation of National 4-H Council. Yarrington also served as President of the Board of Trustees for the Field Museum of Natural History, member of board for Community Fund of Chicago and United Way of Metropolitan Chicago.