

North Carolina – 2009



Hometown: Cary, NC
Nominated by: North Carolina 4-H
Year Inducted: 2009

Chester D. Black **State 4-H Leader, Director of Extension**

4-H Efforts: Black and his wife were Missouri 4-H'ers; his major project was sheep. Both began careers as MO Extension agents. N.C. State 4-H Leader 1970-1975, Director of County Operations 1976-1981, Director of Extension 1981-1988.

Honors: National leadership positions on Extension Committee on Policy (ECOP). Led national study on issues programming that included strengthening 4-H youth at risk work. Received Epsilon Sigma Phi Ruby Award in 1989. Chester D. Black Scholarship established to recognize members of N.C. Association of Extension 4-H Agents and provide professional development resources. Established endowment supporting professional development for 4-H program assistants, associates, agents and specialists.

Chester Black was the third North Carolina state 4-H Leader from 1970-1975. When he arrived, a new volunteer-led community club program was under way with a \$1 million campaign by the N.C. 4-H Development Fund. Black introduced special interest programming, as he realized the value of involving youth and volunteers in short-term, high-impact specialized educational programs. He sought to expand 4-H's influence in cities, towns and rural areas. To accommodate this expansion, the 4-H program assistant position was introduced. Black later served as Director of County Operations from 1976-1981 and Director of Extension from 1981 until retirement in 1988.

North Carolina 4-H agents were either assistant agricultural or assistant home economics agents. Black cooperated with a small group of 4-H agents to convince the Extension Director to professionalize the 4-H agent position. The N.C. Association of Extension 4-H Agents was founded in 1972 as a result. Agents became responsible for training the volunteers needed to implement the new 4-H community club model. Black was also committed to the merging the National 4-H Foundation, on whose board he served, and the 4-H Service Committee. Currently Black is providing leadership to a state campaign committee seeking funds for the N.C. 4-H Museum and History Center and is also a member of the 2009 North Carolina 4-H Centennial team.

Quote: It has been my privilege to work closely with 4-H for many years of my life. There is a magic about 4-H that makes it the world's most popular and successful youth development program. The magic is not in the green clover emblem, the excellent educational materials or even the rewards programs. It is in the personal interaction between inquisitive, energetic youngsters and the thousands of caring 4-H leaders and Extension agents that builds good citizens, caring families and successful careers that serve our communities and nation. I salute these unsung leaders for their achievements.



Chester Black crowns NC 4-H Health King & Queen.