2015 4-H Legacy Awards Honors Nosa Akol with Youth In Action Award

On Thursday, April 23, 2015, National 4-H Council hosted the 6th Annual 4-H Legacy Awards. It was an incredible evening that saw supporters of 4-H join together to celebrate the life-changing experiences 4-H brings. At no time was this more apparent than during the award presentation to the 2015 Youth In Action honoree, Nosa Akol.

Nosa, a 17 year old senior at Binghamton High School in New York, began her 4-H experience when she joined CITIZEN U 4-H, a Cornell Cooperative Extension Program, her freshman year of high school.

In middle school, Nosa endured harsh, racially-motivated bullying due to her dark skin tone. The bullying was so bad at times she would make up reasons to miss school. CITIZEN U 4-H helped her overcome this bullying, develop self-confidence and build leadership and public speaking skills.

Nosa’s service to her community has included involvement in a nutrition-education program called “Taste the Rainbow” and the Great Pothole Solution Project to help map the location of potholes throughout the city of Binghamton. This spring, Nosa will partner with fellow New York 4-H alumnus and current National 4-H Council Trustee, Lazarus Lynch, to lead a Hunger Banquet and Poverty Simulation to educate her community about childhood hunger and how they can become “hunger champions” in the fight to end world hunger.

Nosa is also making great strides in the field of agriculture, specifically in her native country, Sudan. Nosa was a delegate at the World Food Prize Global Youth Institute and was a panelist at the Norman Borlaug Symposium where she had the opportunity to speak with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack about how micro-farming could help women and girls in South Sudan.

As part of the award, Nosa will receive a $10,000 scholarship to use at a college of her choice. Congratulations to Nosa on her award and her commitment to bettering her community, her country and her world!
On April 15, National 4-H Council held its second annual 4-H Congressional Breakfast on Capitol Hill. The event provided an opportunity for 4-H to share stories of 4-H youth impact with members of Congress and to thank them for their continued support of 4-H programming and learning.

Emceed by Dr. Gordon Gee, president of West Virginia State University, 4-H hosted nearly 255 attendees, including 19 Senators and Representatives, Cooperative Extension leaders, USDA representatives and 80 4-H youth.

Here is what some participants said at the event:
“Stop calling us ‘at-risk.’ Call us ‘at-hope.’ Language makes a difference. Words make a difference.”
– Karol Mason, Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, on the importance of supporting and uplifting 4-H National Mentoring Program youth

“The impact that 4-H has lasts a lifetime.” – Senator Chris Coons, Delaware

“I think that for every generation’s new challenges, I hope that you 4-H’ers will stand up and be leaders in your community on the problems that matter most and affect your lives.”
– Congresswoman Terri Sewell, Alabama

On April 13, President Obama met with eight 4-H’ers in a special ceremony in the Oval Office. These 4-H’ers represented all parts of the country and each brought their inspiring stories to share with the President. They included Kashawn Burke (16) of Georgia; Jacob Jensen (17) of Utah; Kimberly Lopez (15) of Idaho; Spencer Orr (17) of Iowa; Gabrielle Parker (17) of Maryland; Andres Parra (20) of Arizona; Lorena Rivera (15) of Idaho; and Geneva Wright (18) of Alaska.

All of these incredible youth are leaders in their communities, working on bettering the lives of youth and adults alike and striving to make a difference every day. Associates at National 4-H Council were truly excited to help prepare the youth for their visit, including donations for a shopping trip before the meeting to ensure all the 4-H’ers were dressed for success!