



# Making a Difference

2016 – 2017

## Youth Development Program Focus Team

### College and Career Readiness: A Day at College

#### Grand Challenges

K-State Research and Extension: providing education you can trust to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future.

Ruddy Yanez Benavides  
New Youth & Adult  
Audiences Program  
Manager  
785-532-5800  
ruddy7e@ksu.edu



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Kansas State University  
Agricultural Experiment  
Station and Cooperative  
Extension Service  
*K-State Research and Extension  
is an equal opportunity  
provider and employer.*

#### Situation

The purpose of this education program was to promote college access for first-generation youth from underrepresented populations. The activities in this two-day residential event were designed to expose participants to careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and education and help them navigate the process of applying to and attending post-secondary education institutions. There was a need to provide college and career readiness resources to youth, to expose them to all types of careers and college opportunities. This included helping youth make connections with community organizations as well as university faculty and staff. Five undergraduate Kansas State University students served as team leaders and role models for the participants, four of which were first-generation college students themselves.

#### What We Did

4-H Youth Development partnered on this project with the College of Education's Center for Student & Professional Services and Diversity for Community Committee, the Center for Engagement and Community Development Grant, 4-H Youth Futures: College within Reach Grant, and the Kansas 4-H Foundation. Nearly 40 middle school students from Seward County, the Riley County 4-H Verde Clovers Club, the Kansas Kickapoo Tribe, and the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation participated a two-day residential camp that allowed youth to engage in STEM activities and college preparation workshops. This event was provided at no cost for the youth.

#### Outcomes

Youth were exposed to a variety of campus resources, academic programs, and career paths, and as a result, began to think more seriously about attending a post-secondary institution. By giving youth the opportunity to experience K-State on campus as potential students, the possibility of attending college was much more realistic. The youth that participated in this event experienced a diverse university environment where they interacted with college students who come from many different backgrounds. Not only did they develop meaningful relationships with caring university faculty and staff, but they also met other youth their age and realized they are not alone. The camp helped facilitate conversations about college and career readiness and helped prepare youth for the decisions they will make in the coming years.

#### Success Story

Youth had the opportunity to engage in activities focused on college access and career exploration; for many, this was their first positive interaction with the concept of attending college. Youth made connections with university resources, faculty, and staff, and learned about financial options that will help them make attending college a reality. The youth that participated in this event report they are now working intentionally toward their own college and career goals.

"It was a really good experience because it gives you new opportunities to meet people and they teach you a lot about college. I learned a lot more than I expected." – Geraldine Rodriguez, 14, youth participant.