

Tennessee 4-H: A Roadmap to Success

American author, Earl Nightingale once said, “All you need is the plan, the roadmap, and the courage to press on to your destination.” If in fact Nightingale is to be believed, then 4-H’ers should have a bounty of resources and guidance at their fingertips to ensure lifelong success. 4-H offers tools or “roadmaps” which allow participants to grow, flourish, and succeed during and throughout their careers as 4-H members. Tennessee 4-H provides a roadmap to success by building character, providing direction, strengthening life skills, and growing leaders.

4-H programs offer opportunities just like the attractions one may find on their roadmap to success. These opportunities can be found in the form of new and inviting programs and offer direction and encourage development of character and self. Each “attraction” that an individual may encounter along their way, propels them onward and supports positive change and transformation.

With 4-H, an individual’s future success has no limit and no end. If 4-H programs create a roadmap to success, then 4-H Agents act as the compass; working to keep everyone on the right path. By following the roadmap to success, each and every member can learn to soar, reach new heights, and challenge themselves in order to realize a future full of endless possibility and potential.

From the 4-H perspective, the roadmap to success guides participants through many challenging and unexpected road blocks. The life skills gained from navigating road blocks are key to reaching the destination of success. Life skills teach 4-H’ers about problem solving, setting goals, and working well with others. As they get older, they also find themselves honing the skills they acquired during those early formative 4-H years. For me, I know being a 4-H’er has given me the edge over my peers.

4-H is the place where no one takes a road trip alone. 4-H is the vehicle to providing leaders with the opportunity to aid others with their roadmap to success. In my experience, 4-H has taught and given me the courage to be a leader of my peers, my community, and my world. Tennessee 4-H has guided, prepared, and empowered me to lead in ways I never would have imagined. By being a leader, always choosing to do what is right, and caring for others I can affect positive change in those around me, promote and foster diversity and inclusion, and nurture and encourage community involvement and social development.

Embarking on any journey is scary but when you have a plan, a roadmap, and courage, anything is possible. As I continue my career with Tennessee 4-H and follow the roadmap to success I know that each step will lead me closer to the ultimate destination; a life that allows me to give my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service, my head to clearer thinking, and my health to better living for my club, my community, my country, and my world.