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SEE ALSO PHOTO FILE ATTACHED

Photo Caption: *Michelle Johnson, Kent County 4-H Member and a Senior at the Lake Forest High School moderates a National Issues Forum recently held at the Lake Forest High School on “Protecting Our Rights – What Goes on the Internet.”*

Kent County 4-H Taking Action to Improve Their Community through Engaging Youth, Serving Community Program

The Kent County 4-H Program has received funding from the University of Delaware to support 4-H Engaging Youth, Serving Community (EYSC) programs in the Lake Forest community. The grant is intended to help strengthen rural communities across America by providing leadership, service and educational opportunities and resources to rural youth, especially those from underserved and diverse populations.

A team of two adults and two teens representing Delaware 4-H recently attended a training at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center, along with teams from 14 other states. They were trained in forum planning, facilitation, action plan development, evaluation and implementation, and have now returned home to Delaware to train additional youth-adult teams. Representing the Kent County 4-H team are youth members Michelle Johnson, Whitney Betts, Brent Ashley, Jeffery Sullivan, Amanda Fabi, Scott Tjaden, Emily Vincent, Joshua Wakeley, Stephen Galloway, and Derrick Kelley and adult members Chris Kenton, Karen Williams, Amy Moore and Carole Fleming. They will work with Kent County 4-H Extension staff members Doug Crouse, Heather Gooden and Rhonda Martell as well as EYSC grant director and training facilitator Karen Johnston.

All team members participated in a training on forum planning and facilitation. They also met and collaborated to identify social, cultural, economic and environmental issues in their community. From these discussions, they recently conducted a National Issues Forum on “Protecting Our Rights – What Goes on the Internet.” Over 150 students and adults from Lake Forest High School participated in this open forum to express opinions related to this topic. The Kent County 4-H team will review the results and information from this forum to conduct an action plan to use the funding provided with the grant.

“4-H is committed to empowering youth to make the decisions that impact their lives as part of our ongoing youth in governance initiative,” said Donald T. Floyd, Jr., President and CEO of National 4-H Council. “These grants will help revitalize the concept of citizenship for youth and help maintain stable, vibrant, and sustainable communities.”

EYSC is funded by the Rural Youth Development Grant awarded to the University of Delaware by National 4-H Council, through support from the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Overall, the program will impact at least 8,000 youth and adults in 80 rural communities nationwide.

4-H is a community of more than 7 million young people across America learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. National 4-H Council is the national, private sector, non-profit partner of the 4-H Youth Development Program and its parent, the Cooperative Extension System of the United States Department of Agriculture.

If you would like to become part of the 4-H program in Kent County as a volunteer leader or member, call the Kent County Extension Office - University of Delaware at 730-4000. The 4-H program is open to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, handicap, age or national origin.