

2008  
**4-H CONGRESSIONAL**  
***RECORD***  
**SPECIAL TENNESSEE EDITION**



**TENNESSEE 4-H'ERS EXPERIENCE ATLANTA**

Tennessee 4-H'ers sampled a taste of the Old South during the 2008 National 4-H Congress in Atlanta. The City of Atlanta and the Atlanta Hyatt Regency rolled out the red carpet to make their stay an exceptional one. The delegates enjoyed traditional Southern hospitality in a world class international city with a culturally diverse history.

The 87th National 4-H Congress was an event that recognized our nation's brightest and best young people. The Tennessee delegation was certainly no exception! They gained knowledge and skills during their Atlanta experience that will empower them to return to their communities and continue to "Make the Best Better." It provided a springboard for their development as the leaders of the future.

## TENNESSEE DELEGATION

The Tennessee delegation to National 4-H Congress included 33 4-H members. This was the one of the larger delegations in attendance at Congress. Delegates included:

<b>Sarah Allen</b>	Anderson County	<b>Rachel Lee</b>	Rutherford County
<b>Ashley Amirkhanian</b>	Putnam County	<b>Alyssa Maloney</b>	Hancock County
<b>Asa Black</b>	Hardeman County	<b>Elizabeth Marvin</b>	Madison County
<b>Joycelyn Broadus</b>	Madison County	<b>Jonathan Mills</b>	Coffee County
<b>Andy Brown</b>	Coffee County	<b>Joshua Moore</b>	Warren County
<b>Abby Bryant</b>	Blount County	<b>Madeline Munn</b>	Coffee County
<b>Jessica Cobb</b>	Robertson County	<b>John Schultz</b>	Dyer County
<b>Sarah Edwards</b>	Campbell County	<b>Samantha Southard</b>	Warren County
<b>Justin Flatt</b>	Putnam County	<b>Blythe Steelman</b>	Lawrence County
<b>Sara Gray</b>	Pickett County	<b>Andrew Thauer</b>	Madison County
<b>Brittany Harris</b>	Washington County	<b>Brianna Tidwell</b>	Dickson County
<b>Kevin Hensley</b>	Loudon County	<b>Emily Upchurch</b>	Cumberland County
<b>Brooklyn Henson</b>	Shelby County	<b>Rachel van der Merwe</b>	Knox County
<b>Hannah Hopkins</b>	Knox County	<b>Lilia Weber</b>	Knox County
<b>Erica Jenkins</b>	Loudon County	<b>Marci Weber</b>	Knox County
<b>Kimberly King</b>	Loudon County	<b>Ambur Wray</b>	Madison County
<b>Thea Lawson</b>	White County		

For more on the Tennessee delegates to the 2008 National 4-H Congress, check out the Web site at <http://4h.tennessee.edu/natcong/>.

## ADULTS

Tennessee's delegation was assisted by a group of Extension personnel and a volunteer leader. These adults provided leadership for the 2008 National 4-H Congress program activities as well as serving as official chaperones for the group. Adults and their roles at Congress included:

**Steve Sutton**, Interim Director (4-H Youth Development) - State Coordinator  
**Renee Badon**, Extension Agent (Dickson County) - Facilities Committee  
**Michael Barry**, Extension Agent (Warren County) - Facilities Committee  
**Lori Belew**, Extension Assistant (4-H Youth Development) - Headquarters Committee  
**Justin Crowe**, Extension Specialist (4-H Youth Development) - Program Committee  
**Martha Keel**, Professor (Family and Consumer Sciences) - Program Committee  
**Debbie Hensley**, Volunteer (Loudon County) - Facilities Committee  
**Greg Hensley**, Volunteer (Loudon County) - Operations Committee  
**Lynn Brookins**, Extension Program Leader (Western Region) - Facilities Committee

The Tennessee 4-H'ers were also happy to welcome Dr. Tim Cross to National 4-H Congress. Dean Cross attended representing the University of Tennessee Extension administration.

## **ASHLEE DUNCAN RETURNS TO CONGRESS AS YOUTH DESIGN TEAM MEMBER**

**Ashlee Duncan** of Coffee County returned to Atlanta as a youth member of the National 4-H Congress design team. Ashlee was selected by the 2007 Tennessee delegation as one of our state nominees. After submitting her resume and audition tape to the national selection committee, she was one of seven chosen from across the nation. As a member of this elite group, Ashlee helped plan the 2008 Congress and attended the event in a leadership role. The Tennessee delegation was very proud of Ashlee and the way in which she represented Tennessee. Ashlee is a freshman at Northern Virginia Community College and attended the 2007 National 4-H Congress as Tennessee's photography winner.

## **NATIONAL 4-H CONGRESS YOUTH LEADERSHIP TEAM**

All Tennesseans were honored as **Rachel van der Merwe** from Knox County and **Jonathan Mills** from Coffee County presided over Congress sessions as two of 13 National 4-H Congress leadership team members. Rachel gave the welcome at the international dinner and dance. Jonathan introduced the Joe Gransden Quartet at the Congress Gala and served as the emcee at the closing assembly on Tuesday morning.

Rachel, a freshman at Biola University in California, attended National 4-H Congress as the state winner in the leadership project. Jonathan, a homeschooled senior, is a past State 4-H Council member and a former Tennessee 4-H Congress officer. He attended National 4-H Congress as a state winner in the forestry, wildlife and fisheries project.

## **JOSHUA MOORE CARRIES TENNESSEE FLAG**

**Joshua Moore**, state 4-H dairy winner from Warren County served as our state flag bearer at the Saturday morning opening assembly. Joshua proudly carried the Tennessee flag across the stage as the Tennessee delegation showed their respect by standing quietly in their Tennessee 4-H sweaters.

## **KEVIN HENSLEY IS STATE YOUTH DELEGATE ADVISOR**

**Kevin Hensley** of Loudon County served as Tennessee's state youth delegate advisor. Kevin presided over the state meetings each night and served as the liaison for our state delegates to headquarters and the design team. Kevin, a freshman at University of Tennessee, Knoxville, attended National 4-H Congress as Tennessee's state winner in the swine project. The entire Tennessee delegation wishes to thank Kevin for helping them to make the most of their Congress experience.

## **HISTORY OF NATIONAL 4-H CONGRESS**

An educational tour to Chicago was the forerunner to what would eventually become known as National 4-H Congress. This annual tour was held in the Union Stock Yards during the International Livestock Exposition. There, over 100 young men and women met to exchange ideas and receive recognition for individual accomplishments and community service.

The number of participants steadily grew, and by 1922 this annual event was designated the National Boys and Girls Club Exposition. This meeting is officially considered the first National 4-H Youth Congress.

Exhibits, demonstrations and a popular parade became the annual program for 4-H during the International Livestock Exposition. For 73 years, National 4-H Congress gave over 100,000 delegates, Extension staff, volunteers, partner representatives, exhibitors and other friends of 4-H the opportunity to participate in a special event. There was no National 4-H Congress in 1995, but two invitational events were hosted by the Southern Region and Western Region states. 1996 saw the rebirth of National 4-H Congress in Memphis under the leadership of the Extension Service - USDA. Memphis was the home of National 4-H Congress until the event moved to Atlanta in 1998.

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

Enthusiastic 4-H'ers from across the United States invaded the Hyatt Regency in Atlanta, Georgia, November 28-December 2, for the 2008 National 4-H Congress. The program featured educational, cultural and motivational experiences centered around issues of concern to youth.

Delegates were inspired by speakers Dan Thurmon, Barbara Chamberlin, Amy Oates Ranel and Kirsten Haglund during the Congress event. Mr. Thurmon is a motivational speaker who uses his juggling talent to inspire others; Dr. Chamberlin is an Extension instructional design and educational media specialist at the New Mexico State University; Ms. Ranel, a 4-H West Virginia 4-H alumnus is the executive producer of the Fox 5 Morning News and Good Day Atlanta; and Miss Haglund is the reigning Miss America. Dan Clark, an internationally recognized speaker, songwriter/recording artist and New York Times best selling author, captured the delegates' attention with his capstone address. These individuals inspired the Congress delegates with their stories of personal accomplishments and positive views of life.

Delegates enjoyed a pin exchange on Friday night; the posting of state flags and Challenge for Change on Saturday morning; an international dinner in a world village on Saturday; an evening of culture at the Atlanta History Museum on Sunday; and a final banquet and gala at the Georgia Aquarium on Monday evening.

Workshops helped delegates to learn and gain skills related to healthy lifestyle choices. They focused on areas such as eating healthy, exercise, personal safety and positive self-image. Additionally, delegates became aware their leadership strengths and weaknesses through team building exercises and learned about the roles of leaders when working with groups. "Speed meetings" allowed everyone to meet and make friends from across the country.

Delegates made a difference while in Atlanta by participating in a variety of service learning projects. Many Atlanta community agencies provided the delegates with the opportunity to give back to the local community in a day of helping others.

### **4-H CLOVER HOUSE**

***"Accept the Challenge: Bring the Change!"***

The 2008 National 4-H Congress design team challenged all youth and adult delegates to "Accept the Challenge" and help bring positive change to others by continuing fund raising efforts to build a second Clover House in the Atlanta area.

The first Habitat for Humanity House built by National 4-H Congress delegates was completed and dedicated in 2006. However, this new drive started in 2007 will be different from the previous one. The goal is to build it faster! Each youth and adult at the 2008 National 4-H Congress event was asked to donate \$20.00. The goal is to raise approximately \$60,000 each year so that the second Clover House can be dedicated in three years time. The Tennessee delegation contributed more than \$600 toward this effort.

## **TENNESSEE BRUNCH**

The “Congress experience” for the Tennessee delegates was enhanced with an elegant Tennessee brunch on Sunday at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. This very special event was given by past Congress delegates who “returned to Congress” by helping to sponsor the event. Joshua Moore, a National Congress delegate and State 4-H Council president presided over the event.

The highlight of the event was an introduction session with delegates sharing the names of people who had helped them “get to Congress.” The group was also honored to have two former Tennessee 4-H Congress governors in attendance. Don Bowman (1949) and Sam Hale (1955) told of their 4-H experiences and what they mean to them today. Martha Jo Tolley, former Tennessee state 4-H leader, was also at the event and shared some of the Tennessee history and traditions of National 4-H Congress. Steve Sutton, Interim Director, 4-H Youth Development, closed the event by issuing a challenge to all the delegates.

Former delegates and chaperons who contributed to the sponsorship of the Tennessee brunch included:

**1949**

Don Bowman

**1965**

Roy Upton

**1969**

Steve Sutton

**1980**

Donna Foster Abernathy

**1981**

Kathy Walsh

**1982**

Glen and Tisa Liford

**1984**

Jeanie Sorrells Garrell

**1988**

Etta Mae Westbrook

**1989**

Jesse Francis and Larry Skinner

**1990**

Bo Shadden

**1991**

Jennifer Hartsell Stockdale

**1992**

Gordon Pafford and Gary Stockdale

**1993**

Matt Fennel

**1994**

Phillip Chambers, Melissa Henry and Sally Smith

**1996**

Melanie Henry

**1997**

Stephanie McKeehan

**1998**

Holly Hardin, Cori Gould Jasso, Doyle Meadows and D.J. Wiseman

**1999**

Amanda Gray and Carrie Harris

**2001**

Lara Savage

**2002**

Warren Gill and Mary Mantooth

**2003**

Michael Claridy, Adam Hensley and Dena Wise

**2004**

Steven Gray

**2005**

Linda Bower, Ryan Hensley, Preston Morris, Amanda Presley, Lindsey Smith and Marianna Wooden

**2006**

Evan Bartley, Jenny Davis, Joseph Greene, Jamie Harris, Linda Harris and Mary Beth Lee

**2007**

Beth Lee, Brittany Marsh, Marjorie Pess, Amy Powell Williams and Bethany Wolters

**Others**

Sam Hale, Ben Powell, Martha Jo Tolley and Alice Ann Moore

**DELEGATES SELECT DESIGN TEAM NOMINEES**

The Tennessee delegation had the opportunity to nominate three of its members to apply for the 2008 National 4-H Congress design team. The delegates kept a close eye on one another and on Sunday night voted for three of

their number whom they felt had exhibited leadership skills to bring to this national planning group. Three finalists were announced at the Monday night state meeting at the conclusion of Congress. Rachel Lee (Rutherford County), Joshua Moore (Warren County) and Brianna Tidwell (Dickson County) will be putting together their resumes and video tapes for the national selection committee. We are proud of them and wish them the best in their bid to be a part of the planning team for next year's Congress.

### **QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM TENNESSEE DELEGATES**

As the 2008 National 4-H Congress drew to a close, each Tennessee delegate was asked to write a statement about the highlights of their week. Listed below are their responses. Read and enjoy!

“I enjoyed the African dancing and comedy show (at the Atlanta History Museum) as well as the World of Coca-Cola Museum. It was also great getting to spend time with members of our delegation.”

***Erica Jenkins***  
Loudon County

“I was proud to be associated with such fine young people of good character and a joy of life.”

***Martha Keel***  
Professor  
Family and Consumer Science

“National Congress was the most amazing experience of my 4-H career. The international dinner and the Congress gala were nothing short of truly wonderful.”

***Justin Flatt***  
Putnam County

“A highlight to me was getting to work with a great bunch of young adults and watching them act responsibility with very little guidance.”

***Greg Hensley***  
Volunteer  
Loudon County

“Enjoying a truly spectacular trip full of fabulous activities and speakers that allowed me to get to know other 4-H'ers from across Tennessee and the nation. I was able to form life-long friendships.”

***Kimberly King***  
Loudon County

“I enjoyed meeting new people from around the United States, but the best part was getting to know new people in my state. I’ve enjoyed every moment of National Congress! If you can, go!”

***Madeline Munn***  
Coffee County

“My most memorable experience of this trip has to have been all the times we spent together as a state. The times we spent bonding, having fun and getting to know each other are the moments I’ll never forget.”

***Hannah Hopkins***  
Knox County

“My most memorable experience from the 2008 National 4-H Congress was watching the Tennessee delegation represent our state 4-H organization with pride and class! It was a pleasure to be with you all this past week. Best wishes to you all!

***Lori Belew***  
Extension Assistant  
4-H Youth Development

“I enjoyed making new friends from across the nation and serving on the National 4-H Congress leadership team. All of the trip was truly amazing.”

***Jonathan Mills***  
Coffee County

“My most memorable experience this week was making a really great friend.”

***Elizabeth Marvin***  
Madison County

“My most memorable experience is really hard to choose. I loved it all! I would have to say that my morning of service learning was the most touching though. I also enjoyed getting closer to all the delegates on the trip. It really felt like we were one big family by the second day! I love you guys and thanks for the trip of a lifetime!”

***Blythe Steelman***  
Lawrence County

“My most memorable event was going to the nursing home and bringing smiles to unfamiliar faces.”

***Ambur Wray***  
Madison County

“I liked getting to meet new people and becoming closer with the Tennessee delegates.”

**Sara Gray**  
Pickett County

“The best part for me was meeting so many new people and at the same time being closer to the people from your own state!”

**Sarah Edwards**  
Campbell County

“My best experience at National 4-H Congress was getting “4-H” shaved into the back of my head by a delegate from Puerto Rico while listening to Spanish music. He couldn’t speak English, and we had to use a translator.”

**Asa Black**  
Hardeman County

“I enjoyed getting to know all types of people from around the country and their stories, interests, etc. It was also nice to grow closer to the Tennessee delegates.”

**John Schultz**  
Dyer County

“I would have to say that eating at the Ritz-Carlton is something I will never forget. This was an experience that I cannot compare to in my life.”

**Kevin Hensley**  
Loudon County

“The state brunch at the Ritz-Carlton was a very good experience because the food was excellent and the speeches by Don Bowman and Sam Hale were very interesting.”

**Andy Brown**  
Coffee County

“The most memorable experience was the brunch at the Ritz-Carlton. I’ve never eaten somewhere like that, and it was so amazing!!! Thank ya’ll SO much!!!”

**Sarah Allen**  
Anderson County

“My most memorable moment was making friends and meeting new people from across the country.”

**Emily Upchurch**  
Cumberland County

“National 4-H Congress was so incredible that I can hardly select a favorite ‘part.’ There was no one part. It was the entire experience with some of the most outstanding individuals I know as well as my best friends. I will always remember my time in Atlanta and will forever be thankful for the awesome lessons, laughs and friends.”

**Rachel Lee**  
Rutherford County

“I enjoyed meeting so many different people in so short a time. The speed meeting was awesome!”

**Jessica Cobb**  
Robertson County

“My most memorable experience at National 4-H Congress was being able to come so much closer to my friends that I already knew and getting to know the people from Tennessee that I didn’t really know.”

**Brooklyn Henson**  
Shelby County

“My most memorable experience from National Congress was the international dinner. I loved the food from the different countries and especially seeing the dances from around the world. Most importantly though, I got to talk with delegates from other states that I will probably stay in touch with for a long time.”

**Lilia Weber**  
Knox County

“National 4-H Congress was amazing! The opportunity to meet people and become closer friends with people from Tennessee and around the United States. It really showed me how united the state of Tennessee is! Thank you to everyone who helped me get to Atlanta!”

**Joycelyn Broadus**  
Madison County

“Being able to meet delegates from many other states and discussing with them their 4-H experiences was really interesting. I also enjoyed the international dinner and the guest speaker on Friday night. The Tennessee delegation was awesome, and I was happy to be able to become closer with everyone. You guys are awesome, and I know we will stay in touch!”

**Brianna Tidwell**  
Dickson County

“I will never forget the friends I have made; I will never forget the kids that were impacted from the service learning; and I will never forget this past week. It was amazingly wonderful. My best memory was the last night in the state suite when we all came together and participated in Tennessee tradition and danced to “The Dance.”

**Andrew Thauer**  
Madison County

“While interacting with the Tennessee delegates throughout the 2008 National 4-H Congress, I realized not only were they the best of the best teen 4-H members that the State of Tennessee has to offer, but they had also developed into outstanding young men and women. The level of class and maturity they exhibited during the Congress caused me to view them no longer as teenagers, but now as young adults. As a 4-H agent, this made me proud to know that young people who are active in the 4-H program do develop positive leadership, citizenship and life skills that help them become responsible citizens and leaders for their communities.”

**Michael Barry**  
Extension Agent  
Warren County

“A lot of amazing things happened this week, and I learned many awesome new things. However, what really made all those experiences so special was the people and getting to spend sweet moments on my last 4-H trip as a 4-H'er with my 4-H friends. One distinct experience I will always treasure is getting to sit with Miss America at the banquet and really get to know her as a person - realizing we're really close in age and it didn't matter that she's a 'celebrity' and I'm not.”

**Rachel van der Merwe**  
Knox County

“The most memorable moment for me was getting the chance to come. This Congress was amazing. It will never be forgotten nor will the friends I came with or made while I was here.”

**Joshua Moore**  
Warren County

“National Congress was nothing short of AMAZING! From Friday night until Monday night, there wasn't a boring or bad moment. My favorite memory is definitely all of the people and new friends.”

**Samantha Shouthard**  
Warren County

“I enjoyed the late night state meetings because the youth shared how much the day's events impacted them. I saw them grow from young people to adults.”

**Renee Badon**  
Extension Agent  
Dickson County

“The most memorable thing would be when I taught a guy from Puerto Rico how to do the Electric Slide.”

***Brittany Harris***  
Washington County

“The most memorable thing was the service learning and making new friends from different states. I also remember the international dinner. It was so beautiful and well organized. I loved trying all the new styles of food.”

***Thea Lawson***  
White County

“I appreciated the opportunity to be able to come to Congress. My boys told me it was a great trip, and I would regret if I didn’t attend. They were right. The thing I enjoyed the most was being able to work with a great group of young people and dedicated leaders.”

***Debbie Hensley***  
Volunteer  
Loudon County

“My best memory is the service learning at John Hope Elementary. I got to help kindergarteners learn their alphabet, reading, etc. I am interested in elementary education so it was very informative to be able to assume the role of a teacher for a few hours. I also had some time during the children’s lunch break to talk with the teacher about a teacher’s scholarship and education program which was very insightful as well.”

***Marci Weber***  
Knox County

“The international dinner was amazing! The interesting culture and awesome food were definitely a highlight for me.”

***Abby Bryant***  
Blount County

“My most memorable experience was when the entire Tennessee delegation stood in reverence as our flag was brought in during the opening assembly. What a classy group of Tennessee 4-H members!”

***Justin Crowe***  
Extension Specialist  
4-H Youth Development

"I enjoyed all of the new and exciting activities I experienced, but the most memorable was the tour of the World of Coca Cola. The museum was a lot of fun. I also enjoyed the brunch at the Ritz-Carlton tremendously. Everyone I met was so sincere, and I loved the activities where I was allowed to meet new people."

*Alyssa Maloney*  
Hancock County

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