



Assistant Director, 4-H Youth Development

Position Description



In close partnership with Auburn University's academic leadership and local, regional, and national 4-H organizations, the Assistant Director will develop initiatives that integrate research-based solutions into practical applications for youth. The goal is to equip young people with the life skills, knowledge, and leadership capabilities they need to succeed in an increasingly complex world.

At the heart of ACES is the belief that education has the power to change lives. The 4-H Youth Development program inspires young people to reach their full potential through a wide range of hands-on, inclusive learning opportunities. Whether cultivating leadership skills, fostering a passion for science and technology, or encouraging healthy living, ACES and Alabama 4-H are dedicated to building the next generation of informed and engaged citizens.





Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership & Vision: Lead the Alabama 4-H Program, ensuring alignment with and contribution to Auburn University's strategic plan and ACES' mission to enhance youth development through science-based education. Provide strategic leadership for statewide 4-H programs, fostering a culture of inclusivity and engagement.

Program Development: Oversee the development, implementation, and evaluation of innovative 4-H programs, with a focus on expanding outreach to all youth throughout Alabama. Demonstrate a strong commitment to broaden access and ensure that programs are research-driven and deliver measurable impacts.

Collaboration & Partnership: Build and sustain strong partnerships with community leaders, stakeholders, volunteers, and Extension faculty. Engage with regional and national 4-H leadership to represent Alabama and ACES on broader youth development initiatives.

Staff & Fiscal Management: Provide leadership and mentorship to 4-H professionals, staff, and volunteers. Oversee budget management and secure external funding through grants and partnerships to support and grow Alabama's 4-H programs.

Content Creation & Communication: Develop clear and accessible content such as factsheets, peer-reviewed journal articles, and impact statements. Ensure effective messaging that communicates the value and outcomes of 4-H programs to internal and external audiences.

Training & Workshops: Support the recruitment and retention of engaged educators. Conduct training sessions and stakeholder workshops to ensure staff and volunteers are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver high-quality 4-H programs.

Advocacy & Engagement: Advocate for the importance of positive youth development and serve as a key spokesperson for 4-H programs across the state. Develop and deliver impactful messaging and reports that communicate the value and outcomes of 4-H programs to internal and external audiences.

Land-Grant Mission Contribution: Contribute to Auburn University's multi-functional land-grant mission by engaging with community stakeholders and ensuring that 4-H programs align with broader educational and outreach goals.



Qualifications

- A PhD from an accredited institution in a field relevant to ACES programs (e.g., agriculture, human sciences, education, natural resources, STEM, and related fields), and must have achieved the academic and professional qualifications to be considered at the level of Associate Professor.
- A minimum of five years of leadership experience in Extension or a similar organization, with a proven track record of successful program management and staff supervision.
- Proven experience in securing and managing external funding, including grants.
- Deep knowledge of 4-H youth development programming and the Cooperative Extension system.
- Success in developing and maintaining effective partnerships and working relationships with internal/external stakeholders and broad audiences.
- Outstanding communication, organizational, and leadership skills.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Senior-level Extension experience, with a focus on land-grant systems and collaborative, multidisciplinary research.
- Knowledge of Alabama's rural, urban, and suburban communities and experience in developing and evaluating impactful programming that addresses local needs.

Desired Qualities and Experiences

The Assistant Director of 4-H Youth Development should be a visionary and experienced leader with a deep commitment to youth development. This role requires a blend of personal qualities, leadership skills, and professional experience that align with Alabama 4-H's mission and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) values. Key attributes include:

- **Strong Communication and People Skills:** Proven ability to engage and communicate effectively with diverse audiences, including youth, staff, stakeholders, and community partners. Transparency, accountability, and consistent messaging are essential.
- **Proven Leadership and Visionary Thinking:** The Assistant Director should be a strategic thinker capable of aligning Alabama 4-H with Auburn University's mission. They should

be able to envision and implement innovative programs that meet the evolving needs of Alabama's youth, while also balancing traditional values with modern approaches.

- **Collaboration and Team-Building:** A natural team-builder who fosters a cohesive, inclusive, and supportive work culture across Alabama's 67 counties. This includes addressing segmented programs and building camaraderie among the state 4-H team and county staff.
- **Advocacy and Partnership Development:** Experience building partnerships with traditional (agricultural) and non-traditional (STEM, community organizations) partners, as well as fostering positive relationships with educational institutions and local communities.
- **Experienced at Creating a Sense of Belonging:** Demonstrated dedication to creating programs that engage youth and adult volunteers, fostering and creating a sense of belonging. This includes ensuring that staff, volunteers, and program participants feel valued and supported, and that programs are accessible to all youth.
- **Experienced Mentor and Supporter of Professional Development:** Skilled in mentoring staff, promoting professional development, and implementing structured training programs to enhance agent performance and retention. They should be proactive in helping staff achieve their professional growth goals.
- **Adaptability and Innovation:** Able to adapt to changing needs within the program and develop creative solutions for challenges, such as staffing shortages and high turnover. The ideal candidate should bring fresh ideas for curriculum updates, especially in emerging areas like STEM, while honoring the core values of 4-H.
- **Experience with Fiscal Management and Funding:** Proficiency in budget management, securing external funding, and managing grants. They should understand the importance of sustainable funding models and be willing to pursue new funding opportunities in alignment with Auburn University's land-grant mission.
- **Respected within the Field of Youth Development:** Ideally, the candidate should have senior-level Extension experience and be respected within the broader field of youth development, bringing credibility to Alabama 4-H on a national level.

These qualities and experiences will enable the Assistant Director to foster a dynamic, supportive, and inclusive environment, positioning Alabama 4-H as a leader in youth development across the state and nationally.

About ACES

The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES) is comprised of approximately 700 employees who deliver educational programming in areas of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources (AFNR), Human Sciences (HS), 4-H Youth Development, Community Engagement and Planning, and Urban programs to meet the needs of Alabamians.

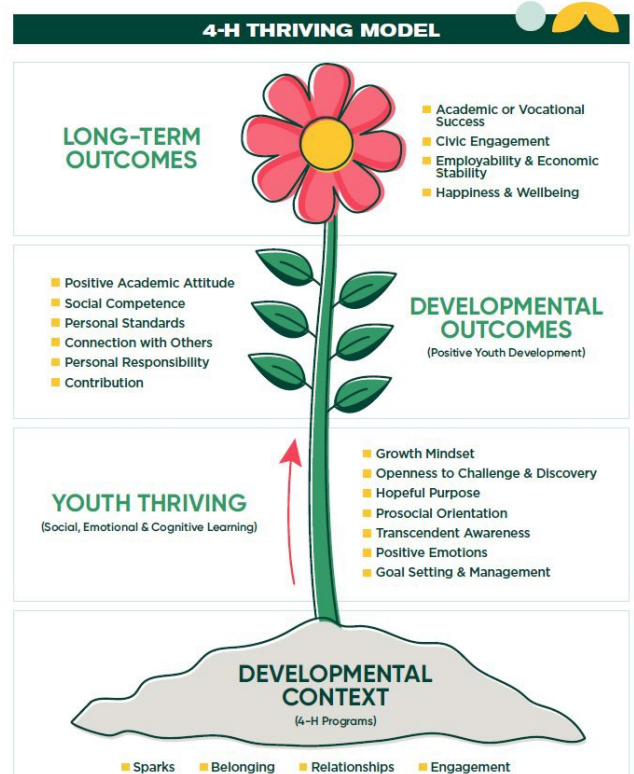
ACES is the outreach arm of Auburn University and Alabama A&M University, dedicated to extending the knowledge and resources of these land-grant institutions to all corners of Alabama. With a mission rooted in improving lives and communities, ACES connects cutting-edge research with practical solutions in agriculture, natural resources, family life, and, notably, youth development. Through its statewide network of experts and educators, ACES empowers Alabama's citizens—both urban and rural—with the knowledge and skills to thrive.



About Alabama 4-H

Alabama 4-H is the state's largest youth development organization, serving over 170,000 young people annually through hands-on learning experiences that inspire leadership, citizenship, and life skills. As part of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Alabama 4-H reaches youth in all 67 counties, providing opportunities that spark curiosity and empower them to explore their interests in science, agriculture, technology, arts, and healthy living.

With a rich tradition of community involvement and a forward-thinking approach to positive youth development, Alabama 4-H creates an environment where young people can thrive. From traditional clubs and camps to innovative, project-based programs, 4-H encourages youth to discover their potential and become tomorrow's leaders. We're committed to inclusion and equity, ensuring that all Alabama youth—regardless of background or location—have access to the transformative experiences 4-H offers.





About Auburn University

Auburn University is one of the nation's premier land-grant institutions. The 2024 edition of the U.S. News & World Report identified Auburn as the top public university in Alabama and ranked it as one of the top 100 universities in the nation. Auburn has 1,443 full-time faculty and enrolls over 33,000 students from all 50 states and nearly 100 countries. Auburn University is understanding of and sensitive to the family needs of faculty, including dual-career couples. <http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/facultyjobs/>.

The university is nationally recognized for its commitment to academic excellence, positive work environment, student engagement, and beautiful campus.



About Auburn, Alabama

Auburn, Alabama is a vibrant and thriving college town conveniently located between Atlanta, GA (90 minutes), beautiful Lake Martin (45 minutes), and the Gulf of Mexico (under four hours) in one of the fastest growing counties in the nation (an MSA with a population of almost 200,000). With a newly constructed Gogue Performing Arts Center and world-class sports facilities, Auburn hosts a variety of cultural and sporting events. It also boasts a low cost of living and high quality of life, was recently recognized by Southern Living as one of the top small towns in the South, and was named the best place to live in Alabama by Money.

Paralleling the exponential growth of Auburn University, the Auburn/Opelika area boasts services and amenities that cater to any interest. We're proud of our top school systems, city services, award-winning restaurants, and the infectious spirit of life in a college town. You can find us nestled halfway between the beach and the mountains in a lower-cost-of-living area, two hours outside of Atlanta or Birmingham. If you're new to Auburn, we'd love to introduce you. If you're already acquainted with Auburn, we'll keep it simple: it's time to come home! Learn more about Auburn's impact, generous employee benefits, and thriving community by visiting aub.ie/working-at-auburn.

3

Nomination and Application Process

How to Apply

Jeremy Duff and Lois Stetson with Greenwood Asher & Associates are assisting Auburn University and The Alabama Cooperative Extension System on this search. Applications and nominations are now being accepted. Application materials should include:

- A letter of interest that clearly states the applicant's qualifications for the position;and
- A current résumé/curriculum vitae

We strongly encourage submitting application materials as separate PDF attachments. The search will be conducted with a commitment of confidentiality for candidates until finalists are selected. Initial Screening of applications will begin immediately and will continue until an appointment is made.

All application materials should be submitted through the Greenwood Asher & Associates e-mail at: AU-4H@greenwoodsearch.com.

Nominations, inquiries, and questions regarding the application process should be directed to:



Scan me!

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LEARN MORE ABOUT Auburn University and ACES

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Auburn University is committed to providing a working and academic environment free from prohibited discrimination and harassment and to fostering a nurturing and vibrant community founded upon the fundamental dignity and worth of all its members. Auburn University prohibits harassment of its students and employees based on protected classes and works to eliminate prohibited behavior from its academics and employment through corrective measures and education.