

Jaryn Bruce
Curry County
Senior

My 4-H Story by Jaryn Bruce

Some would say that my roots go deep, but I would say that they are 4 generations deep in Curry County on both sides of my family. My name is Jaryn Bruce and I am from Melrose, NM. My family has been in Curry County for a very long time, my Great-Grandfather Bruce was born in a half dug out on the family homestead south of Melrose and the family has been here ever since. My Great-Grandmother on my mom's side homesteaded near St. Vrain, NM, which is only 7 miles from Melrose. I am proud to be from Melrose and part of its history. Above all though, I am proud to be a member of the Melrose 4-H Club and have been since I joined 4-H as a 3rd grader. I am a third-generation member of the Melrose 4-H Club and joined 4-H because of my mom's encouragement. The 4-H program was important to her and when I became old enough to join 4-H, I joined the program so that I could learn new skills.

This was my ninth year as a 4-H member, and I have grown throughout my entire 4-H career. This year I served as President of both my local 4-H club as well as the Curry County 4-H Council. Welding is one of the main projects that I focused on this year in 4-H. I was also enrolled in Baking and Quilting this year.

Throughout my 4-H career, I have learned many life skills and have had the ability to improve upon these skills through the different 4-H events and projects that I have completed. The life skills that I have learned include those such as welding, sewing, baking, food preservation and animal husbandry. The skills that I have obtained through these projects will help me throughout my life to be self-sufficient and capable of caring for others and myself. One of the major learning experiences from my 4-H welding project was going from the basics

of learning the parts of the torch and welder to being able to complete a project all by myself. This was just the second year that I was involved in the 4-H welding project and it has become my favorite 4-H project of all time.

During my 4-H career, I have learned many skills from working with other youth. I have learned communication skills, leadership skills, and working with other youth who may have a different background than mine. The four main skills that I would like to highlight from my 4-H career are Giving, Thinking, Being and Caring. Each of these skills is very important to me. The skill of Giving has allowed me the opportunity to use my Hands to larger service. I have been provided opportunities to obtain and improve my leadership skills through participation in 4-H. My leadership skills have been honed by the many offices I have held including president of my local club and county council. By being actively involved in community and county wide service projects, I have been able to develop citizenship skills. The skill of Thinking has allowed me the opportunity to use my Head to clearer thinking. Critical Thinking is a skill I have gained through the many projects I have been involved through 4-H. Some of the projects that I have been involved in that require critical thinking include baking, clothing, and welding. These projects require independent thought and planning for completion. The skill of Being has allowed me to use my Health for better living. Participating in 4-H has allowed me to develop the skill of self-discipline. Competing for the indoor 4-H Project Sweepstakes at my local county fair required the skill of self-discipline to accomplish this goal. The skill of Caring has allowed me to utilize my Heart to greater loyalty. Animal care is a skill that is very important to me because I enjoy animals and taking care of them. This skill is something I have learned from raising chickens and beef.

Leadership has been one of the most important life skills that I have obtained from my 4-H career. I have been able to improve my leadership skills by starting out as a recreation leader in my local 4-H club and progressing to President of the Curry County 4-H Council. Throughout the years, I have held many different leadership roles in both my local 4-H club as well as within the county council. I have held the position of Recreation Leader, Parliamentarian, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President and President. Each of these positions allowed me to see the different roles of each position within a club and council meeting. These positions have also allowed me to develop and utilize parliamentary procedure skills to effectively and efficiently run a meeting according to Roberts Rule of Order.

Through 4-H I have improved upon my communication skills. I have had the opportunity to speak to multiple groups within my community. As a member of the Curry County 4-H Parliamentary Procedure team, we were able to demonstrate our skills at a home extension club within the county. We also competed at the state level during Senior Leadership Retreat. Another opportunity that I was given to improve upon my communication skills was addressing the Curry County Commissioners during a commission meeting. At this meeting I was able to identify some of the skills that I have developed while being involved in 4-H and informed the commissioners about the importance of the 4-H program in our county. This past year as a member of the Curry County Council, I provided a short video on my welding project. This was called "Project Minute" and they were posted on the 4-H Facebook page to demonstrate what the project is and encourage kids to sign up for the project. This video helped further develop my communication skills by allowing me to demonstrate what I have learned through my

project and show it to others. I had to communicate clearly and concisely to ensure that the audience had a thorough understanding of what the project entailed.

Throughout my 4-H career, community service has been very important to me. I have worked on community services projects with my local 4-H club, the county council as well as my local church. One of the community service projects that the Melrose 4-H club held was a trash pickup day at the Melrose cemetery. The Melrose 4-H club has cleaned up trash from around the Melrose Cemetery each May so that the cemetery looks nice for Memorial Day. I have been able to participate in this community service project for many years. Another project that I was involved with through the Melrose 4-H Club was Fire Department Care Packages for Kids. Through this project, I helped gather items for care packages for kids that the fire department could give out when at an accident involving a child. The care packages included items such as a teddy bear to provide comfort as well as other small toys. As a 4-H member, I have been provided with many opportunities to grow as a leader and be involved in my community. I am very involved in my local church. I help out with the AWANA's program on Wednesday nights. This allows me to work with the elementary age children of the community and help them learn Bible verses. It is very important to me to help the younger generation learn the value of God's word. I participated in AWANA's in elementary and it has helped me to see the importance of helping the younger generation and being a positive role model. I also help with Vacation Bible School by serving as the music leader. I like to be involved in outreach and my church involvement has provided me with several opportunities. Samaritans Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes is a project that I have done with my church youth group. We fill and pack shoeboxes for children with toys, games, hygiene items and school

supplies. These boxes are taken to countries where the Gospel is spread to many kids. I have also helped with Military Boxes/Care Packages, this is a project that I have done with both the Curry County 4-H Council as well as my church. With the project, I have provided items for our military service members such as games, reading material, goodies such as candy and crackers, chap stick and other items that they might not have available where they are stationed. I have also written letters of encouragement to include in the boxes.

The highlight of my 4-H career was being able to participate and win the Curry County Fair 4-H Sweepstakes for indoor exhibits in 2021. I learned many skills while completing the various projects that I entered. This year I focused on three projects that I feel have been important to me throughout my 4-H career, welding, baking, and quilting. My grandmother assisted me with the many 4-H projects throughout my 4-H career and this year I decided to make her a special project as a surprise for all of her support throughout the years. Spending time with my grandmother was important to me and working on projects with her allowed me to have a great time with her and spend many hours sewing. The skill of sewing will be very useful in life. Many people today do not know how to sew; even simple projects and I think having the ability to use a sewing machine correctly will serve me for years. The next major project area that I completed projects in was baking. I spent many hours with my mom and grandmother learning how to properly work with a variety of ingredients to create delicious baked goods. Being able to cook for myself will serve me well as I move out and attend college. I worked with my dad to safely learn how to cut and weld my self-determined project, a plant stand for my mom. I have learned how to use an arc welder as well as an oxy acetylene torch while finishing my projects. This skill will definitely serve me well as I pursue my career field as

a heavy equipment mechanic. After high school, my goal is to attend the John Deere Ag Tech program so that I can become a John Deere Service Technician. Learning how to weld and properly use an oxy acetylene torch will benefit me throughout my life. This is a skill that I will use continuously especially when I come back to work on my family's farm.

Working on 4-H projects throughout my 4-H career has taught me valuable life skills. 4-H is a program that has helped me to do things that I wouldn't normally do. It has taught me many valuable lessons and I hope to further my skills that I learned, to help complete future projects either through 4-H or just on my own.