

Progress Index – Petersburg, VA

. Fifth annual Virginia Youth Voices Red Carpet 4-H Oscar Awards Expo held in Richmond- May 7, 2016



A 4-H team accepts their Oscars during the fifth annual Virginia Youth Voices Red Carpet Event
By Hermon Maclin Posted May 23, 2016 @ 2:01 am

The fifth annual Virginia Youth Voices Red Carpet 4-H Oscar Awards Expo was held at the Science Museum of Virginia a couple of weeks ago and it was a grand affair indeed. Youth from several localities, including Chesterfield, Petersburg, Alexandria, Cumberland, Prince George, Arlington, Fort Lee and others got all dressed up, to not only walk the Red Carpet, but to exhibit their projects and hope to win a 4-H Oscar award.

The contestants have a full year to work on their projects and surprisingly, most of their time isn't spent behind the camera. The real work goes into the creative process where the youth determine exactly what it is they want their media project to say, who they want to say it to and how they are going to say it in a way that people will actually stop, look and listen.

Prince George 4-H'er, Alex Woods, won a 4-H Oscar for Inspirational Video of the Year. She told her amazing story through dance and narration in an effort to help other girls who are going through the same abusive things that she is facing in her life. Chesterfield 4-H won a 4-H Oscar for their video called "Insecurities can make you stronger". Starr Woods of Chesterfield said making the video was an experience that helped them understand each other better and she hopes that their video will help others overcome and deal with their own insecurities.

Sterling Mclymont of Prince George 4-H won a 4-H Oscar for Music Video of the Year. His video called “Breathe Easy”, tells us all just breathe and keep the faith when troubles of life get you down ... and know that it does get better.

TaiZhe’ Parson, Justin Brown, Josh Maclin, Ben McAnelly, Jackson Schrulds, and Lawrence Jefries won Virginia Youth Voices Lifetime Achievement awards. They have all been a major part of building Virginia Youth Voices into the program it is today and continue to do the work that keeps the program going.

The Keystone and Torch 4-H Club of Fort Lee won a 4-H Oscar for PSA of the Year for their project called, “Show Me Who You Really Are”. The judges for the event all agreed that Jordan Wilson, one of the actors in their video, has serious acting possibilities in his future. Arlington 4-H won Promotional Video of the Year with their project called, “Bridges to Independence.” Petersburg 4-H won a 4-H Oscar for their Voices of 4-H History video. It was a wonderful interview done by Chrystal Peerman, featuring Rev. Grady Powell telling us all about his 4-H Victory Garden.

Chesterfield 4-H also won an Oscar for Voices of 4-H History with Sarah Gregory. Sarah told the kids to try all the projects that 4-H has to offer, even if you don’t think you’re interested ... just try it and if you don’t like it, it’s ok, just try another one until you find your passion ... because there are hundreds of 4-H projects to try.

Prince George 4-H won a 4-H Oscar for a music video called “Decisions”. Zoe Draft said she never even imagined being able to do anything like this and can’t wait to do more.

Our 4-H youth digital media program ignites young people's "Creative Confidence". It helps them develop skills to solve problems and equips them with 21st century tools empowering them to find their voice and make it heard. The program also provides youth with the inspiration, training and technology to create original media works on issues they care about. Participants hone skills of self-expression, ideation, collaboration flexibility and persistence; the skills we regard as central to "Creative Confidence".

Virginia Youth Voices (VYV) is the youth digital media program of Virginia 4-H. Josh Maclin is our 4-H Youth Digital Media director working with 4-H’ers all across Virginia. Together we make up the VYV production team that includes Bethany Eigel, 4-H Extension agent in Chesterfield County. VYV helps young people to become “change makers” in their communities and their world.

Our partnership with Adobe Youth Voices gives us access to a network of youth and educators in over 60 countries around the globe. We communicate and share ideas with a common goal of letting the voice of our youth be heard. We want youth to have opportunities to express their positive ideas and offer solutions to problems and issues youth face in today’s world.

• *Hermon Maclin is an Extension agent, specializing in 4-H Youth Development, with Virginia Cooperative Extension Prince George County Office. He can be reached at (804) 733-2686 ext. 102 or hmaclin@vt.edu*