

- THE OHIO 4-H INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM -

KEY POINTS IN OUR HISTORY

1949

The 4-H International Exchange Program begins in Ohio, with our participation in the "*International Farm Youth Exchange*" (IFYE) Program. Program name is later changed to "International 4-H Youth Exchange," with over 30 countries participating. Between 1949 and 2008 (when the program was discontinued in Ohio), 860 Ohio families hosted an international IFYE, and 313 Ohioans traveled abroad as an IFYE Representative (6 months – 253 participants) or Ambassador – 1 month (60 participants).

1980

Ohio 4-H expands its international program to include the "*Ohio 4-H/Labo Japanese Month-Long Exchange*." Since then, 3,297 Ohio families have hosted a Labo youth or adult for one month, and 224 Ohio 4-H youth have traveled to Japan for one month. Labo is a Japanese youth development organization focused on cultural and foreign language learning, and its name comes from its original name, "English Language Laboratory."

1986

Ohio 4-H joins the "*Costa Rican Peace Scholarship (CAPS) Program*." Over the next 4 years, Ohio hosts 50 Costa Rican teens, predominantly in Defiance County.

1989

Ohio 4-H builds upon its Labo Japanese international exchange program by participating in a new "*Ohio 4-H/Labo Japanese Year-Long Exchange*." Since then, 194 Ohio families have hosted a Labo youth for one year.

1990

Ohio's first 4-H'er is selected to serve as a "*Labo Intern in Japan*." This program sends Americans aged 18-25 to Japan for one year where they live with host families, travel the country working for Labo and earn a stipend. Since then, seven Ohio 4-H'ers have been chosen for these prestigious positions.

1991

The Ohio 4-H international program begins expanding its volunteer International County Coordinator (ICC) team to assist with program coordination.

1991

Ohio 4-H participates in the first "*4-H/Labo Japanese Adult Exchange*," with 10 Ohio adult volunteers and host parents visiting Japan for 2 weeks, and 4 Japanese adults visiting Ohio. Since then, over 30 Ohio adults have served as exchangees to Japan.

1993

Ohio 4-H is the first state in the nation to host "*Japanese Special Needs Exchange*" through the Labo Month-Long program. Since then, Ohio families have hosted over 40 Japanese Special Needs youth for one month, with disabilities ranging from kidney disease to muscular dystrophy.

1994

Ohio 4-H expands its international program by implementing the first outbound "*Ohio 4-H International Youth Study Tour to Europe*," including a homestay for 16 Ohio 4-H'ers in the former East Germany.

1995

The Ohio 4-H International Program welcomes its first inbound "*Study Tour Group to Ohio*," with visitors from the former East Germany being hosted by 25 families around the state.

1995

Ohio 4-H sends its first outbound "*International Youth Study Tour to Australia*," with 22 Ohio 4-H'ers traveling abroad for 2 weeks.

1996

Ohio 4-H sends its first outbound "*International Youth Study Tour to Costa Rica*." 18 individuals participate, and a second group of 14 travels to Costa Rica in 1998.

1996 - 1997

4-H and the Japanese Labo Foundation celebrate 25 years of successful international exchange at academic *"Forums"* in Williamsburg, VA and Tokyo, Japan. The Ohio 4-H State Leader, staff and volunteers travel to both sites.

1997

The Ohio 4-H International Program welcomes its first inbound *"Study Tour Group from Costa Rica."* 27 Ohio families participate, and a subsequent program in 1999 includes 21 families.

1999

Ohio 4-H establishes the first-ever *"Japanese Year-Long Special Needs Exchange"* through the Labo program. Since then, Ohio has hosted 5 Special Needs Year-Long youth with a variety of disabilities.

2000

Ohio 4-H sends its first outbound *"International Youth Study Tour to Scandinavia and Estonia,"* representing our state's first opportunity for 15 youth to visit the former USSR.

2001

The Ohio 4-H International Program welcomes its first inbound *"Study Tour Group from Estonia,"* representing the state's first opportunity to host 15 teen visitors from the former USSR.

2002

Ohio 4-H sends its second outbound *"Study Tour Group to Europe,"* with the homestay for 16 youth taking place this time in Denmark.

2003

The Ohio 4-H International Program welcomes its first inbound *"Study Tour Group from Denmark,"* hosting 12 youth.

2004

The IFYE Outbound Program discontinued so that limited resources can be directed solely to 4-H age participants.

2006

New 1-month outbound “*Overseas Homestay Programs to Australia, Costa Rica, Finland and Norway*” are established for 4-H age youth. Since then, 8 Ohio youth have traveled to all 4 countries and 8 youth from those countries have been hosted in Ohio.

2008

The IFYE Inbound Program discontinued, so that limited resources can be directed solely to 4-H age participants.

2009

The Ohio 4-H International Program wins the following awards at a national conference of state 4-H international programs:

- 1st Place in the Nation for Year-Long Hosting (1989 – 2009)
- 1st Place in the Nation for Month-Long Hosting (1990 – 2009)
- 2nd Place in the Nation for Outbound Delegate Participation (1994 – 2009)
- 20 Consecutive Years of 100% Placement for Month-Long and Year-Long Programs
- Sustained Program Excellence

2010

Ohio 4-H hosts its largest Japanese Labo Month-Long Group ever, and the largest group ever hosted by any state (131 inbound participants).

2011

Ohio’s outstanding ICC middle-management team includes 30 seasoned, knowledgeable volunteers, with a core group of 10 individuals devoting up to 20 hours per week to the program. These volunteers are the essential back-bone of the program.