

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer Achievement in Continuing Education (ACE) Program Overview and Details



The North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer Achievement in Continuing Education (ACE) program is designed to assist volunteers in the development of specialized skills as 4-H volunteers by participating in quality training experiences, processing learning experiences, conducting service activities/projects, and developing a Master Volunteer ACE portfolio.

Program objectives include:

- 1) Improve volunteer feelings of self confidence and influence in the organization;
- 2) Increase the quality of program delivery for 4-H members in North Carolina;
- 3) Build a base of committed volunteers to increase program capacity; and
- 4) Develop an infrastructure to expand exponentially the reach of 4-H youth development in North Carolina.

The North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE program follows these general guidelines:

- Candidates must have at least one year of 4-H volunteer experience as of December 1 of the current year and must be at least 21 years of age.
- Recognition for achievement will be presented at the annual 4-H Volunteer Leaders' Conference in February.
- Workshops/service activities included in portfolio must have been completed within two calendar years of the date submitted.
- Each component of the portfolio must be completed and submitted as one document by the December 1 due date. The portfolio will be re-submitted as each level is added to the original. It will be returned at the volunteer leader conference in February.
- Only one level of achievement may be attained in a given year.
- Participation in state level master volunteer training weekends is not required but may be helpful in getting established with the program.
- Those attending state master volunteer training conference will receive a large, three-ring binder for their materials. Those not attending that training meeting will be responsible for providing their own binder for their portfolios.
- Printed materials will be available on-line or may be obtained from a local Extension office or the State 4-H Office upon request.

Developing A North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE Portfolio Overview

Each year the portfolio should be submitted in a binder, one-inch or less, with six dividers, one for each section of the portfolio. A label including name, county and level requested should be attached to the cover.

Section 1 Personal Data

A standardized form to be completed and inserted in this section will include general information about the individual completing the process and a photo of the individual. Following the personal data form should be the transmittal forms that include the dates for completion of all components. If submitting for the silver level or higher, all previous transmittal forms should be included in this section.

Section 2 Statement of Philosophy of Youth Development

Guidelines are provided to assist the volunteer in developing a statement of not more than 250 words (about one page of typed text) outlining the individual's personal philosophy on youth development. This philosophy may be the same used from one year to the next, but it should be reviewed for personal updates each year. It should be included every year in the portfolio.

Section 3 Core Components (for the current level only)

This section will include the reflection work sheets (one per workshop) and other evidence of participation in training sessions, seminars, workshops, and other educational opportunities addressing the core requirements for each level of achievement. Please be specific and complete the forms fully to give evaluators a strong sense of your learning experience through your reflection information.

Section 4 Elective Credits (for the current level only)

This section will include the reflection work sheets and other evidence of participation in training sessions, seminars, workshops, and other educational opportunities addressing the required elective credit hours for each level of achievement. You do not need to include all of the handouts from the sessions, only those items considered pertinent. Please be specific and complete the forms fully to give evaluators a strong sense of your learning experience through your reflection information.

Section 5 Service Activities (for the current level only)

This section will include service report forms to document service to 4-H at each level of achievement. Please be specific and complete the forms fully to give evaluators a strong sense of your service through your reflection information.

Section 6 Self Expression (for the current level only)

This section will provide an opportunity for the volunteer to present additional information utilizing creative media. This might include: scrapbook type entries with photos and captions, artwork or creative writing. This section would be an opportunity for those who are more creative to present their information more personally. Guidelines are provided detailing limits on numbers of pages, etc.

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE Philosophy Statement

Writing a personal philosophy statement is basically articulating your beliefs or finding a way to express your beliefs to others. This process can be helpful in providing clarity and direction as you continue to develop as a 4-H youth development volunteer. Traditionally, philosophies explore the meaning of truth and knowledge. Your statement, to be meaningful, should be relatively free of “jargon,” while utilizing appropriate or accepted vocabulary and concepts. Philosophy statements are generally written in an active voice and use clear and logical ideas to support the statements.

One way to begin to write your personal philosophy statement is to complete a series of sentences, then to further develop the thought by adding the “why” for each statement. This will provide a basis for the narrative statement that will be built from your personal beliefs and values.

Starters for the sentences might be:

I believe that working with young people is important because ...
The roles of volunteers in community organizations like 4-H should be ...
My role as a 4-H volunteer should be ...
I value the role young people play in ...
I believe that young people learn best when ...

These are just general ideas to help you get started. You might also think about the following questions in beginning to write your philosophy statement.

In the grand scheme of things, what difference does it make whether volunteers work with youth?
What is the significance of creating an environment for positive youth development?
What would the impact be of not having 4-H opportunities in my community?
Does it matter if an ethic of community service is instilled in young people?
Does participating in non-formal learning really impact youth as they grow into adulthood?

Instructions: In 250 words or less (one typed page maximum), discuss your personal philosophy statement of positive youth development. You may stop short of that limit, but please do not exceed the one-page limit. The information provided here is intended to help you get started as you reflect on your statement. Your final statement may or may not include these specific questions or sentence beginnings. Make it your statement to reflect your personality and belief system.

NOTE: Philosophy statements must be legibly written in ink or typed in standard 12-point type.

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE Core Components

In the NC 4-H Master Volunteer ACE program, the following workshops/seminars are required for successful completion of the identified level. Note that the core workshops may be offered as sessions at the Volunteer Leaders Conference in February, as workshops/seminars at district or county leader association meetings, as sessions at statewide Master Volunteer ACE training events, or by scheduling them in your county or district through Extension staff and/or volunteers knowledgeable in the subject. While length of instruction may vary for each topic, it is understood that none of the topics may be properly introduced in less than one hour, and that various presenters may spend considerably more time to insure that the materials are covered appropriately. A list of the items that must be covered as a minimum is available for presenters.

Upon completion of the workshop/seminar, a reflection work sheet should be prepared for inclusion in the portfolio submission materials. This section may also include a copy of the program from the session, a training agenda for the sessions attended, or a page or two of the session handouts used in the training, but these items are optional.

Bronze

- Fundamentals of 4-H
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Etiquette for Today's 4-H Volunteer
- Understanding Ages and Stages of Youth Development

Silver

- Public Speaking
- The Experiential Learning Model
- The Life Skills Model

Gold

- Effective Teaching and Learning
- Leadership Basics
- Youth/Adult Partnerships

Emerald

- Advanced Leadership Studies
- Marketing 4-H
- Diversity & Inclusion

NC 4-H Master Volunteer ACE
Core Components Training Contents

In order to request credit for participation in Core Training Seminars or Workshops, the following standards have been identified for course content. If the training covers these identified areas of instruction, the workshop or seminar may be counted as a core component. Workshops may be taught by experienced volunteers and/or Extension professionals. Credit should not be requested for training participation by the class instructor. For example, if Mrs. Ima Volunteer needs credit for Fundamentals of 4-H, she must sit for someone else to teach the class, even if she has taught other volunteers this training topic previously. Then, for any other time that Mrs. Volunteer teaches the topic, she may claim service activity credit for teaching.

Bronze

Fundamentals of 4-H

- Connecting 4-H to Cooperative Extension
- Land Grant University
- Brief History of 4-H
- 4-H Basics (colors, pledge, motto)
- Organizational Structure (volunteers, county staff, district/state staff, etc.)

Parliamentary Procedure

- Order of business for meetings
- Calling meetings to order and adjournment
- Accepting committee reports
- Taking action on committee recommendations
- Making/seconding motions
- Amending motions (basic, single amendment)
- Electing officers
- Creating Agendas for Meetings

Understanding Ages and Stages of Youth Development

- Characteristics of children at various ages
- Planning age appropriate activities
- Age-appropriate ways of including youth in planning

Etiquette for Today's 4-H Volunteer

- Correctly choosing attire for the occasion
- Nametag placement
- Code of Ethics for volunteers
- Social Etiquette concepts
- Basic correspondence skills

Silver

Public Speaking

- Preparation for presentation
- Quality of Voice (tone, volume, inflection, etc.)
- Dressing for the Occasion
- Using Visual Aids (posters, Powerpoint, overheads, etc.)
- Knowing the audience

The Experiential Learning Model

- Understanding the experiential learning process
- Conducting learner centered training
- Can recognize the experiential learning process being utilized
- Understanding facilitation (“letting learning happen”)
- How to ask appropriate questions to facilitate the process

The Life Skills Model

- (Based on Pat Hendrick’s “Targeting Life Skills Model”)
- Defining the concept of life skills
- Understanding the domains of the life skill wheel
- Using the Targeting Life Skills materials to look up definitions
- Designing learning experiences targeting specific life skills through 4-H
- Understanding the connection from various activities to life skill development

Gold

Effective Teaching and Learning

- Appreciation for a variety of learning styles
- Impact of personal learning style on teaching style
- Strategies for facilitating/teaching with respect to varied learning styles

Leadership Basics

- Defining Leadership
- Understanding personal leadership challenges
- Assessing characteristics of “good” leaders
- Communication and teambuilding in leadership roles

Youth/Adult Partnerships

- Characteristics of Adults and Characteristics of Teens
- Barriers to creating equality in youth/adult partnerships
- Strategies for involving youth as partners in 4-H

Emerald

Advanced Leadership Studies

- Wise use of power in leadership situations
- Leadership in change situations
- Ethics and principles of leaders
- Communicating and leading with vision
- Thinking big and taking risks as a leader

Marketing 4-H

- Thinking about public relations
- Creating a message for others
- Approaching the media (print and visual)
- Updates in 4-H programs and how to market them

Diversity and Inclusion

- Valuing unique contributions of individuals
- Recognizing similarities among individuals
- Identifying strategies to help others develop tolerance and understanding
 - Resources to help with accommodation and engagement

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE Elective Credits

In the North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE program, elective credits may be earned for any workshops and/or seminars related, either directly or indirectly, to youth development, volunteerism, leadership or 4-H. In an effort to assist those who might be planning training meetings, some elective ideas are provided for the various levels of achievement. In order to successfully achieve each level, a minimum of 10 contact hours of training must be completed. These workshops may be offered as sessions at the Volunteer Leaders Conference in February, as workshops/seminars at district or county leader association meetings, as sessions at statewide Master Volunteer ACE training events, or by scheduling them in your county or district through Extension staff and/or volunteers knowledgeable in the subject.

Upon completion of the workshop/seminar, a reflection work sheet should be prepared for inclusion in the portfolio submission materials. This section may also include a copy of the agenda from the training session, a training agenda for the sessions attended, or a page or two of the session handouts used in the training, but these items are optional. Placing these items in your portfolio may be a good process for relocating these resources in the future.

Note that these are just ideas and they are not reflective of the wide array of topics that may be offered in a variety of settings to meet the required 10 hours of elective training.

Bronze (10 contact hours of training)

- Flag Etiquette
- Recruiting club members
- 4-H Presentations

Silver (10 contact hours of training)

- Working with committees
- Officer roles and responsibilities
- Project Books/Cumulative Records
- Judging in 4-H
- Understanding the NC 4-H Volunteer Leader Association and its History

Gold (12 contact hours of training)

- Planning educational programs
- 4-H ARI program
- Project Specific Curriculum training
- Teambuilding

Emerald (12 contact hours of training)

- Fundraising Fundamentals
- Project Specific Curriculum training
- LABO/International Exchange programs

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE

Service Activities

In the North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE program, service activities must be completed to achieve recognition at each level. The program is designed to encourage participation in training activities that lead to involvement at every level of 4-H. Increasing from club and county to district, state, regional, national and even international levels is possible for any adult volunteer through 4-H! In order to successfully achieve each level, a minimum of 4 service activities must be completed. A service report form should be completed for each activity and included in the portfolio.

Note that these are just ideas and they are not reflective of the wide array of service activities that may be undertaken in a variety of settings to meet the program requirements.

Bronze (*Total of 3 service activities at the Club, Community, or County Focus, though higher levels of service are acceptable*)

- Serve as a club leader
- Serve as a county committee member
- Serve as an officer in county volunteer association
- Help plan county 4-H event
- Serve as a coach for an ambassador
- Serve as a coach for a 4-H presentations participant
- Plan a club field trip and follow it through

Silver (*Total of 4 service activities, with at least 2 from the County or District Focus, though higher levels of service are acceptable*)

- Chair a county 4-H planning or event committee
- Chaperon county 4-H delegation to an event
- Serve as an officer in county or district volunteer associations
- Serve as a judge or evaluator for county presentations
- Help plan a district event
- Attend and participate in district leader association meetings
- Take a delegation on an exchange trip
- Teach a summer programming workshop for the county
- Serve as a 4-H advisory board member locally

Gold (*Total of 4 service activities, with at least 2 from the District or State Focus, though higher levels of service are acceptable*)

- Serve as an officer in the district volunteer association
- Serve as a judge for project book or cumulative record evaluation
- Serve on a district committee
- Attend and participate in Volunteer Leader Conference
- Teach a workshop at district leader association event
- Attend 4-H Congress as a chaperon
- Coach a TRY team

Emerald (*Total of 5 service activities, with at least 1 from State, Regional, National or International Focus, at least 1 from district level, and any combination of levels for the remaining 3*)

- Serve as a Board member or officer in the state leader association
- Run for a district or state office in the district or state leader association
- Attend Southern Region Leader Forum
- Teach a workshop at the Volunteer Leader Conference
- Teach a workshop at the Master Volunteer ACE training event
- Teach a workshop at the Southern Region Leader Forum
- Serve as a judge for Application/Resume/Interview evaluation (ARI)
- Serve as a chaperon to National Congress or National Conference
- Serve on a state committee (examples include curriculum, awards, etc.)
- Serve on a 4-H task force

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE Self Expression

In the North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE portfolio, this section provides an opportunity for candidates to share the story of their 4-H involvement creatively. Candidates may choose to write an essay or story, share creative endeavors (poetry, artwork, etc.) or create a scrapbook utilizing photos and captions. Each entry should include some background on why that particular project or approach was added to the portfolio.

This section should be no more than 10 pages total. Candidates may display work on one side only or on front and back of pages (front side equals one page, back side equals one page). Candidates may utilize whatever creative options they have available for the completion of this section, but the materials must fit into the portfolio.

This would be an appropriate place to share an agenda from a meeting or event that the candidate was instrumental in planning or presenting, a handout from a training session that the candidate presented or a photo of the candidate preparing for or participating in service or training activities. Other ideas for this section include newspaper articles written by the candidate or about the candidate, materials created to recruit new 4-H members or volunteers, or a piece of artwork that is in some way related to youth development or 4-H.

It is important for this section to be about the candidate and his or her work, not focusing on his or her club members, but rather on the 4-H volunteer and his/her work. This is a time to share personal accomplishments and ideas about what makes volunteering with 4-H and young people important to this individual.

No recorded media (audio tapes, video tapes, etc.) should be submitted.

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE Emerald Maintenance and Specialization Information

Emerald Maintenance

For renewal following the Emerald level, individuals must submit a portfolio at least every two years for continued recognition as an Emerald ACE Master Volunteer. The reflection sheets for training, service and teaching activities may be kept over the two-year time span for inclusion in the portfolio for review. Individuals should reflect a variety of training areas for well-rounded experiences in learning relevant to youth development and North Carolina 4-H.

Emerald Specialization

For those interested in pursuing specialization(s) as an Emerald ACE Master Volunteer, there should be a consultation with county 4-H staff members to identify an appropriate focus or specialization area. The training sessions, then, should be reflective of a focused concentration to attain skills and knowledge to successfully work with programs in the area of specialization. The Specialty Proposal Worksheet, completed in cooperation with 4-H staff members, should be included for review and feedback with the Emerald level ACE Portfolio. Ideas for specialization might include Healthy Lifestyles programming, Record Keeping (focused upon 4-H project and/or cumulative records), Presentations and Public Speaking, Citizenship and Leadership, etc. These are only ideas – the options are endless!

Elective Credits

(12 contact hours of training, minimum)

Elective credits may be earned for any relevant seminar or workshop offered through 4-H or Extension, or may be obtained from outside sources. Sessions may be related, directly or indirectly, to youth development, volunteerism, leadership, or the area of specialization for those choosing to focus.

Service Credits

(Total of 8 service activities, at least one from state, regional, national or international level; at least one from the district level; and any combination of levels for the remaining credits)

Three service activities should be service to others; three service activities should be teaching; Others may be any combination of service activities.

Suggestions for service activities may include any from the previous listed activities or may include any of myriad other opportunities, like:

- Serve as a judge for project records (county, district, state)
- Serve as a chaperon for exchange programs (county, state, national, international)
- Work with another charitable organization to involve youth in their projects
- Teach at a summer camp in your county -- or help coordinate one!
- Teach a workshop at a District event for other adults

ACE Marketing Service Credits

(Total of 3 marketing activities in addition to service credits)

Marketing activities are those events and/or activities that promote 4-H to targeted audiences. These activities may be at the county, district, state, regional, national or international levels. Complete a service reflection worksheet for each of the Marketing credits and include these forms in the Service section of your portfolio for review. Ideas include, though these activities are not limited to:

- Newspaper articles
- Report to Commissioners
- Recruit adult volunteers for 4-H
- Assist in district and/or state events (i.e. 4-H Gala, Leaders' Conference, etc.)
- United Way (or other funding agency) funding request
- Display about Association or 4-H at external event
- Fair Booths
- Fundraising and/or making presentations about 4-H

**NC 4-H Master Volunteer
ACE Portfolio Feedback**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Application Level: _____ Bronze _____ Silver _____ Gold _____ Emerald

_____ Approved for Award _____ Re-submit

Component Description	Complete	Incomplete
Personal Data Forms complete for current submission	_____	_____
Photo included on Cover Sheet (required as of Dec. 1, 2008)	_____	_____
Transmittal Forms from current and previous levels	_____	_____
Philosophy Statement	_____	_____
Core Component Reflection Pages	_____	_____
Elective Component Reflection Pages	_____	_____
Service Activity Reflection Pages	_____	_____
Self Expression Section	_____	_____
Agent/Mentor Signature	_____	_____
Organization of materials (binder, dividers, etc.)	_____	_____

Reviewer Comments:

North Carolina 4-H Master Volunteer ACE Frequently Asked Questions

- Q: Do Master Volunteers from the “old” system have to start over from the beginning?
A: Yes. Everyone starts at the same place with this process.
- Q: Can we count service from previous years?
A: Service and/or training may be counted from the two years prior to the submission date. For example, for portfolios being submitted on December 1, 2004, credit may be received for service completed or training participation from December 1, 2002 up to the submission date. For each level, this holds true so that only accomplishments within two years are included in a given level of achievement.
- Q: Do I have to attend a state master volunteer conference to be a 4-H Master Volunteer ACE?
A: No. Information concerning the content for the core components will be developed for agents, volunteers and specialists who might conduct those training sessions. Training credits may be received for workshops at district leader fall or spring meetings, officer seminars, volunteer leader conference, master volunteer conferences, southern region leader forum, county training meetings, and any other location where instruction is included for adult 4-H volunteers.
- Q: Do I have to complete the elective workshops and service activities that are listed in the program overview materials?
A: No. These lists are included to provide ideas of the kinds of service and workshops that might be routinely available for North Carolina 4-H volunteers.
- Q: What happens if I don't have 10 pages of self-expression material in my portfolio?
A: The portfolios are evaluated as a whole. You do not have to meet the maximum number of pages for the self-expression or philosophy sections, but there should be evidence of effort to complete these sections.
- Q: Who will evaluate the portfolios?
A: In the initial three years, state and county staff members will form teams to evaluate the portfolios utilizing a standardized rubric for objective evaluation. Feedback will be given to those submitting to assist in the development of the materials for the next level of achievement. As the program matures and individuals achieve at the Gold and Emerald levels, it is anticipated that volunteers who have successfully completed these levels will begin to assist in the evaluation of the portfolios submitted for the lower levels.
- Q: Do I have to re-write my philosophy statement for each level of achievement?
A: While your philosophy may not change from one year to the next, it will be important to review and edit or adjust the statement to reflect new learning and experience. You may find that the training and activities reinforce your personal philosophy, so just adding a statement to indicate this renewed commitment to your statement is sufficient.
- Q: Can I get credit for the same service activity in multiple years?
A: Yes. If you're a club leader, please proudly claim that service each year! The important thing will be to be sure that you increase the scope of at least one of your service activities at each level. For example, you might be a club leader working on the silver achievement so you may claim club leader as one service activity, but you'll need to be sure that at least one of your other service components is at the county level to show outreach beyond the club. For gold achievement, at least one activity must be at the district level while for the emerald level at least one activity must be at the state, regional or national level.