

4-H Congress

Hawaii State Delegation

2016

Atlanta, GA

November 25-28



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS



08 ACTIVITIES



06 EVENTS



04 SPEAKERS



10 WORKSHOPS



12 SITES

WELCOME TO ATLANTA

On Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 2016, six 4-H youth delegates and their chaperone from the state of Hawaii met in Kona to travel to National 4-H Congress in Atlanta. While it was a long trip, it was an exciting one and the experience was a truly memorable one.

Reflections on the trip demonstrate a unique learning experience that will be remembered for years to come.

Reflections

After having about a week to completely digest everything that happened at Congress, I can wholeheartedly say that it is in my top five best and most life-changing experiences. Yes, the activities were so unique, new, and educational but nothing beats the people I got the chance to meet. Each and every person was a sweetheart that viewed Hawaii as the paradise that everyone thinks of it as. They idolized us and it was ironic because I idolized everyone else from the mainland with some having snow and others having endless herds of cows. It was all just so new and fascinating and I would've never been able to meet so many people at any other service/leadership-based event. I had the opportunity to meet about 900 people--each and every one having great hearts and caring personalities. - Zo'i Nakamura

A few things I enjoyed most about National 4-H Congress was the organization. I loved that each event had a purpose and that the transition from workshop to workshop was easy. I also really enjoyed the breakfast and how easy it was to get along with the other delegates. I really enjoyed all the speakers that attended as well. I felt that they made a big impact on my 4-H Congress experience and in my life. - Emily Mitra

The past five days have been one of the best experiences of my life! Getting to meet all these people from all across the country really opened my eyes. I learned so many things about 4-H and I can't wait to share it with my club and community. - Tori Oshiro

My five days at Congress will stay with me always- because of the learning, because of the friends, and because of the subjective experience. I can't adequately capture what the Congress means with words; it's just something you need to try for yourself! - Rebekah Rapoza



It was an amazing experience to attend the 2016 National 4-H Congress. Through the community service project, tour, workshops, and assemblies, I learned so much and had lots of fun. I also made connections and friendships with great 4-Hers from across the nation. I will take back everything I've learned and apply it to my life and the lives of others around me. It truly was a once in a lifetime opportunity and I feel very blessed to have been able to attend. - Cassidy Matsuda

We learned to step out of our comfort zone, introduce ourselves to others, and have a deeper respect for those who come from different places. We bettered our communication skills, and all the while enjoyed the experience and meeting new people. - Wailana Medeiros

Overall the trip was a life-changing event that inspired the participants to contribute and lead in their communities.

For the rest of the newsletter, each of the delegates wrote about every event (with the exception of workshops, which were specific to individuals). The articles are a combination of their writings and reflections.

View more photos and video from National 4-H Congress on Facebook



INSPIRING SPEAKERS

- Kevin Wanzer - One Laugh at a Time
- Barbara Chamberlain - The Most Powerful Words
- Dr. Eugen Schoenfeld - The Fallacy of Tolerance
- Savvy Shields - 2017 Miss America
- Dan Clark - The Art of Significance



Chicken Soup for the Soul contributor **Dan Clark** gave the closing Congress speech.

He urged each delegate to become the best not by comparing oneself to others, but instead by always competing against oneself.

The moral of the story was to keep a positive mind and have hope. He inspired all of us to learn to love ourselves, express everything that we are, and make the most of our differences.

Speaker **Kevin Wanzer** inspired all of us with his rousing and uproariously funny introductory speech. His witticisms and hilarious escapades truly reinforced his message (find the fun!) and his cheerful attitude and warm aloha welcomed us all to the start of Congress. His stories told about opening up to others and filling your life with positivity by “choosing to laugh”. Mr. Wanzer shared with us stories and advice on making a difference in someone else’s life, looking at the positive side of every situation, and finding what you love and embracing it. Who would’ve thought I would fly 12 hours from Hawaii to have this hilarious yet well-spoken stranger give me a speech on what aloha and ohana mean? Tonight’s session was very uplifting.

In her speech on the most powerful words in the world, **Barbara Chamberlin** revealed the importance that tiny words wield. The words included “I don’t know”, “Let’s find out”, and “How can I help?”. Another phrase that she emphasized was “I’m the one thing I can control”. I took this to heart for when I have to work through others’

similarities and differences to achieve a goal in the future. I cannot shake how passionate and entertaining her whole spiel was; from faking a British accent to referencing pop culture, she had the most pizzazz of any other speaker that I have heard. She taught us to broaden our horizons, to learn through experience, and the importance of connecting with others on a deeper level.

Speaker **Eugene Schoenfeld**, who was a survivor of the Holocaust, inspired me to never give up no matter how many challenges I face and to follow my hopes and dreams and do everything I can to make them possible. His drive and determination are things that some can only dream of having. He inspired the audience to never give up, to not tolerate what isn’t right, to find justice, and most importantly, to always have hope. While Dr. Schoenfeld’s childhood may have been traumatizing, he was able to turn that negative part of his life into a positively moving speech for young adults.

With the utmost class, poise, and heartfelt sincerity, Miss America 2017, **Savvy Shields**, addressed the importance of always loving and respecting yourself. She also spoke to us about 4-H and the difference we were making to positively impact our communities, country and world. She was educated, driven, talented, and just plain lovely. She truly left the audience speechless as she advocated for being yourself, loving who you are, and striving to achieve everything you want to be.

Walking into that ballroom at the Opening Assembly is an experience that I will never forget.



CONGRESS EVENTS

Walking into that ballroom at the **Opening Assembly** is an experience that I will never forget. The lights, people, music, and equipment were unlike anything that I had ever seen before. I liked this as an opening assembly because it gave me a new perspective about how to open up to others and that being unique is different and more enjoyable. Attending this assembly allowed me to be more comfortable being myself around people I don't know or haven't met yet. Even though we were all pretty tired from the night before, the room was bursting with 4-H spirit.

Lights! Camera! Action!! The six Hawaii delegates performed a short (but super sweet) hula at the **International Dinner**. We were asked to perform a hula to share our culture with the other delegates. Puerto Rico also honored their heritage with a lively

dance, flaming colors, and an in-house magic show. We stepped out of our comfort zones to perform in front of a crowd of around 900. It was nerve-wracking and fun all at the same time. Everyone loved it so much that many asked us to take pictures with them to show their friends back home their new Hawaii friends. One thing that I will always remember was eating different cultural foods, experiencing different dancing styles, and learning about others' cultural differences. It was quite a breathtaking experience.

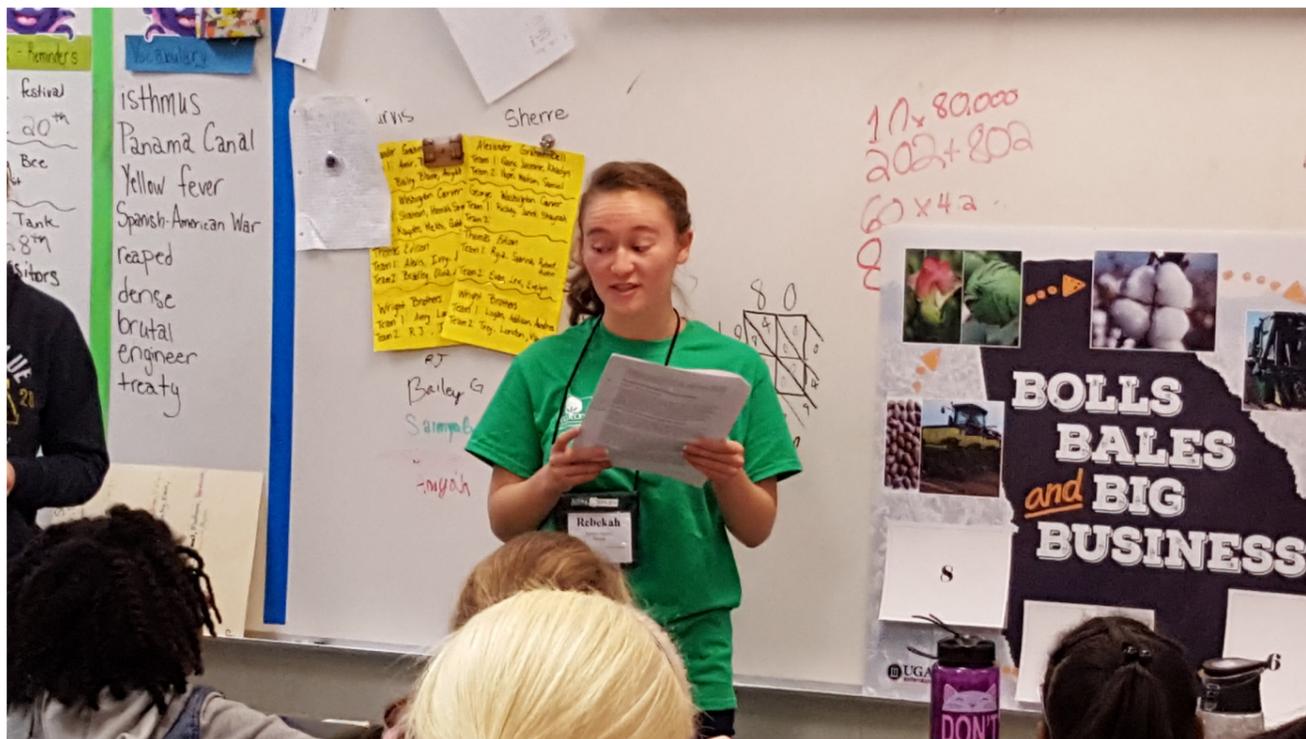
In the **Flag Ceremony** Hawaii delegates Zo'i and Rebekah proudly represented their breezy, tropical paradise in this patriotic and deeply inspirational ceremony. Even though they had to switch roles at the last minute (laryngitis) it was fun to be a part of. All 39 states and Puerto Rico

presented their flags and announced one fact about their home. It was interesting to hear the state facts and how many delegates each state brought. Did you know that the ratio of people to chickens in Delaware is 1 to 250? THAT'S A LOT OF CHICKENS. And I thought Kaua'i had it rough!

This was the third time I had ever attended a gala and it was the best. I learned a little more about proper etiquette at the **National 4-H Congress Gala**. The overall feel was classy with a hint of surprise. We had a delicious 3-course meal, watched amazing teen entertainers, and listened to great speakers. The food was mouth-watering, the service was crisp yet elegant, the dessert presentation from Santa was a breath of fresh air, and everyone was dressed so beautifully.

As a homeschooler, I thoroughly enjoyed my one (and probably only) dance opportunity while in high school. I learned the Chicken Dance, the Macarena, and an array of line dances! One of the things I enjoyed about the **Club Congress Dances** was having strangers become friends by teaching me how to line dance. I also really enjoyed that they played a variety of music that incorporated all styles. As young people say nowadays, the dance was LIT! By the final dance, everyone had gotten to bond a little better and therefore felt more comfortable dancing among one another. It was so much fun to laugh and dance with friends from other states. It made me realize that although we come from various places throughout our country, we aren't that different.

ACTIVITIES



“Even though they probably won’t remember me 10 years from now, I will always remember them.”



Each delegate had a different experience for **Community Service**. Rebekah presented a 45-minute lesson on the cotton industry in Georgia along with other state delegates. “I absolutely LOVED this experience and plan to adapt some of the strategies we learned during the workshop for opportunities in my community.”

Two other delegates also provided community service at the elementary school. Emily enjoyed working with children and being a role model. “This event has not only showed me how important it is to instill good skills in children but also how to be kind to others no matter who they are or what they look like, because everybody is going through something.”

Zo’i worked in first grade classrooms and got pretty attached to the kids. “I got to help them with their spelling, work on the computer, and I even attempted to help them with their history project. I was kind of shocked to see the kinds of advanced material that kids are learning at such young ages. The kids were just so sweet and curious about pretty much everything that it was impossible to not fall in love with them. Even though they probably won’t remember me 10 years from now, I will always remember them.”

Community service was at the food bank for Tori where she “learned so much about how hard it is to provide food for yourself when money is tight. The activity we did really opened my eyes and now I can spread awareness about the hunger problem in my community.”

The remaining two delegates helped at *Books for Africa*, which is an organization that collects old books from the people of Georgia and sends them to Africa so their people have an opportunity for education and learning. Cassidy sorted books by age level and genre while others packaged them in boxes to be shipped. She said “it was a great experience to help an organization that is making a difference in other countries.”

Wailana learned that “raising awareness is so important when it comes to these kinds of things. I felt like I was a part of something bigger, even though it was a sort of indirect service, I knew I would be able to impact the life of someone



who is less fortunate than I am. For that, I feel special.”

Conga lines and rock-paper-scissor rivalries were the order of the day at the **Get Acquainted** event as over 900 delegates representing thirty-nine states and the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico eagerly swapped pins, stories, and contact information during this ice breaker marathon. I liked that I was able to meet people from other states and exchange pins with them. Learning about their state and about their interests really allowed me to become more confident in talking to others. This was the first time meeting everyone and honestly it was a bit scary at first. It was a great way to break the ice and talk with other state delegates.

For **Expanding Horizons**, we separated into smaller groups with a specific focus. My group was on recognizing and developing leadership skills. I learned so much about the importance of clear, effective communication and, surprisingly, the power in knowing each individual’s name! This part of the conference was my absolute favorite event. I attended the group activity

-- cooperation and communication. It was my first time ever experiencing something like this and I’ve learned that there are multiple ways to start up a conversation and being different from someone can actually be good. I learned that communication is the key to having a successful outcome when cooperating with others. My group played a game where you have to figure out how to hit each number in chronological order without overlapping. I tried to let everyone come to a compromise and made sure to voice my concerns and takeaways during the reflection period of the workshop.

At the **Speed Meeting** I got to meet so many new people and had various conversations with many people comparing and contrasting our states and learning about each other’s interests. This was probably the only time we got to do activities that crossed leadership with socializing -- and for that I am appreciative. I can honestly say that I have never gotten so many Snapchat and Instagram followers in such a short period of time. Everyone was so nice and pleasant.

WORKSHOPS

I chose **Junk Drawer Robotics** to experience something new. Not only did I learn about programming but I learned how important science is and how often it's used daily .

The **Physical Activity with Mobility Challenges** workshop taught about recovery and has motivated me to exercise more, eat healthier and encourage others to do the same.

At the **Farm to Fork** workshop, I worked with others to solve a real life problem dealing with E. Coli. What I liked most was it taught me something I would never think of learning.

The **Mindshift** workshop was about setting goals. We shared our goals and told others why they should forget what is holding them back. It gave me a more positive mindset.

I loved dancing **Zumba!** Zumba was a fun way to get comfortable around people I didn't know and be able to stay fit!

In the **Attention- Get and Keep** workshop, our instructor told us how to introduce ourselves and keep the conversation interesting.

Six Important Decisions had us ask ourselves and others some pretty personal questions. We pushed the social boundaries and learned about the struggles of others.

As a dancer, I was drawn to the **Yoga** workshop. I learned that sometimes we need to just have some quiet time to ourselves. Things started off easy and got more challenging with balancing poses. It was relaxing and made me want to take yoga in Hawaii.

Even as a dancer, I didn't know much about **Irish Dance**. I found it to be a pretty difficult workshop. Some people gave up, but I stuck it out to the end and made myself proud.

In the **Healthy Gourmet** Workshop I learned about foods from different parts of the United States and that food can be nutritious and delicious at the same time.

In the **Social Media** workshop a social media advisor from CNN taught us the do's and don'ts of posting online. I learned posts leave a fingerprint and we must be responsible.

In **Dancing with the Stars** I definitely stepped out of my comfort zone; I don't usually dance with a partner. This taught me how to dance to certain beats, and how to be respectful, all the while having fun.





SITES IN ATLANTA



Atlanta History Center

History truly came alive! Prior to visiting this museum, I did not know how special the city is. Atlanta has a lot of history that impacted the entire country. I learned about the civil rights movement, religions, music, and even fashion of Atlanta in addition to Atlanta's sports, famous people, important events, and life-changing times.



We got to travel back in time and dance how they did in the past, by doing a dance called the Virginia Reel. The dance lesson was reminiscent of *Gone With the Wind* and *Pride and Prejudice*, the cultural night is a memory I shall treasure!

We also were entertained by a juggler with a message: treat others the way you want to be treated. He showed that everyone makes mistakes but you can choose to laugh and continue on or to dwell about it. He could juggle, rap, and spin plates! If people had as much heart as he did; the world might be a more creative and fulfilling place.

CNN and Bus Tour

While Congress was exhilarating, it didn't leave much time to actually see Atlanta--this tour changed that. Atlanta is so rich with history and I was so glad to be able to see some of it.

We got to see Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s home and memorial, the Olympic Park, and

a giant Ferris Wheel. I learned a little bit more about the great city of Atlanta.

We were also lucky to tour the CNN national headquarters, and be in the presence of some very expensive equipment. Christa Chapell took us on a tour of the headquarters and shared facts about CNN and what they do.



We got to ride the longest free-standing escalator in the world, see how control rooms work, watch researchers in action, and view different showrooms. The technology and high-stakes atmosphere were all so exciting.

It was so fun to go on a field trip but also good to learn about the importance of communication. Not only that, the art infused architecture and gift shops were quite fascinating.

The tour of **Coca-Cola** allowed us to taste different products from around the world and to learn about the history of the company and the drinks.

All in all, it was a great way to see all that Atlanta has to offer and I hope that I can one day go back to actually visit some of the landmarks we just drove by.