

Honolulu → Atlanta

What is the National 4H Congress?

National 4-H Congress is a five-day event that engages high school aged 4-H members in leadership, citizenship, global awareness, and inclusion. Participants not only have the opportunity to participate in state-of-the-art educational workshops and hear from world-renowned speakers, they also have the opportunity to network with other 4-H members from across the United States.

For more than 99 years, National 4-H Congress has been a premiere nation-wide opportunity for 4-H members across America. Originally held in Chicago, the event is now held in the "Capitol of the South," Atlanta, Georgia during the Thanksgiving break.

Hawaii delegates to National 4-H Congress are selected through an application process. Contact your local 4H agent for more information.

Our 4H Congress journey started with the long travel day from our home islands to Atlanta, Georgia. Me and my fellow Hawai'i Island delegates met at the airport at about 1:00pm on Thanksgiving day. This was the first time we would all be in the same place and get to meet each other. After saying goodbye to our parents we were on our way. Maya, Nahe, Megan, Kiryn, and I were all super excited as none of us had been to Atlanta before. Our first short flight took us to Oahu where we met up with the Kona and Maui delegates and Auntie Jen, which meant the whole Hawai'i delegation (of 8 4hers and 2 chaperones) was complete!

From Honolulu to Atlanta is about an 8 hour flight. We all knew sleeping would be the smartest thing because we had a full day of getting settled, registration, and getting acquainted activities planned once we landed. We tried our best, but the excitement in addition to the slightly uncomfortable plane seats prevented a full night of rest. To pass the time I loaded up on downloaded Netflix, Christmas music, and some sporadic naps. I would definitely recommend bringing comfy attire, sanitizing wipes, and snacks if airplane food isn't your thing (although it wasn't half bad). We landed in Atlanta before the sunrise, got our luggage, and made our way to the MARTA and the start of our National 4H Congress Journey!

~ Cassidy Denault

2019 4H Congress Hawaii Delegates:
Front: Deena Kiyabu (Maui), Jordan Bear (Kona), Maya Atwal (Hilo), Kiryn Komata (Hilo), Megan Nakamoto (Hilo)
Back: Manami Alspach (Kona), Cassidy Denault (Hilo), Nahenahe Rosario (Hilo)



Atlanta, Georgia
November 29 - December 3, 2019





Fall colors can be seen all over the city

Arrival at our hotel



State Photo

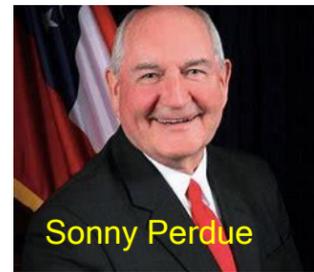


Welcoming Assembly

John Beede was one of the first guest speakers that we met and listened to at 4-H Congress. We were welcomed by him and his great stories of climbing Mount Everest, and many other mountains. He talked about his struggles of climbing and how tough the journey was. However, through it all came many valuable life lessons of goal setting, perseverance, determination, and leadership. While climbing, Beede opened his eyes to all of these life lessons and shared his great experience with us. He told us about the journey up Mount Everest and the people he met. During his presentation, Beede also shared an important lesson that we should all remember with a little activity he wanted us to do. He asked everyone to line up their hands next to their wrists to see which hand was bigger. Then, he told us to believe that our other hand can grow to be taller. We then lined up our hands again and we all saw that our other hand “grew”. He closed the activity with the simple saying that if we tell ourselves we are going to do something, we set a goal, and we truly believe in this goal, then we can achieve anything. John Beede’s message was truly inspiring.



John Beede



Sonny Perdue

In the early morning, the members of 4-H Congress met the Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue. He gave a speech about the upcoming technology in agriculture, and his own personal stories of growing up on a small farm. By telling these stories, he shared with us his love of agriculture and his belief in the importance of expanding agriculture. Perdue talked about using new technology to more effectively harvest crops and raise animals. When talking about this, he encouraged all of us to develop new techniques and use critical thinking to solve world problems and apply them to agriculture. He explained to us that we are the future of America. After Sonny Perdue gave his speech, another speaker, Mason McClintock gave an inspirational and heartwarming story about how 4-H has changed his life and allowed him to truly thrive. He shared his personal story about being gay and how he never really fit in with anyone else until he joined a local 4-H club. From then on, he grew as a person and learned to express himself through different arts. McClintock shared with us his love and gratefulness for 4-H and encouraged us to take pride in what we do, in and out of 4-H.

~Maya Atwal

MEGA WORKSHOPS

Be the Change - Nahe Rosario

In Be the Change we had an amazing speaker, Justin Crowe. He taught us the importance in community service and how important it is that we all volunteer. We learned the important steps there are to be a change in the community. We learned about a lot of different service opportunities we can do that are around our community or even around our world. We learned about his organization, in which he gets shoes for kids in third world countries and makes sure they have a pair of shoes on their feet.



How to Become Highly Charismatic - Deena Kiyabu

How to Become Highly Charismatic was one of the many interesting workshops that I attended. In that workshop, we had a very entertaining speaker named John Beede. He gave us ten helpful steps to get people to like and remember you better. Being in that workshop made me realize that there are some habits that I have that I should fix to become a more likable person. In this workshop, he also gave us tips on how to remember names better which I will definitely use in the future. Going to this event has changed my view of how I think of workshops. I was able to learn a lot while still being able to laugh and enjoy my time. All in all, this workshop on how to become highly charismatic has made a huge impact on my life and I will use all of the things that I learned and apply it to my daily life.

MEGA WORKSHOPS

Speed Meeting - Jordan Bear

The speed meeting was a really fun. What happened was there were rows of tables and there were two chairs on each side. One side would move while the other stayed. You would be moving down in pairs. It was really cool meeting all the different delegates and finding out what they do in 4H. For most of the people I met, they do agriculture and work with animals. It was interesting learning about 4H across the U.S. because I knew it would be different compared to what we do in Hawaii. I remember getting asked a lot of questions when I told the delegates I was from Hawaii. Most of them were what I do back home for fun. I also got some interesting questions like if we have ants or if we have water in Hawaii. It was very interesting to say the least.



MEGA WORKSHOPS

Expanding Horizons through Group Involvement - Kiryn Komata

At National 4-H Congress, one of the Mega Workshops we participated in was a group development activity that focused on building respect, communication, and decision-making skills. Georgia College's Department of Outdoor Education was brought in to facilitate the various groups and activities. Due to being split up into different groups, Hawaii participated in different types of activities. I was a part of a group made up of people from Montana, Louisiana, Oregon, and various other states. We focused on communication and teamwork, first by designing a road trip that had to include a stop that each person wanted to visit, and then partaking in a tennis ball relay race. Our small group was then broken down into even smaller groups: about four groups of three. We were tasked with moving seven tennis balls from one side of the marked area to the other, but we could not use any part of our body below our elbows. While I wished we had more time to get to know one another, my group and I learned a lot of the different aspects of being a team.



Breakfast sponsored by



WORKSHOPS

Coolness of Science

One of the workshops I went to was the Coolness of Science. This workshop was really fun and involved teamwork, critical thinking, and science! The first thing we did was a small thinking game where we had to figure out how to put 4 gallons of water in a bucket using a 3 gallon bucket and a five gallon bucket. After that, we had to build something using spaghetti noodles and marshmallows, and other candy. This was really fun because we were split up by tables and I met many new people during this activity. We all worked together to build a boat with santa and fish everywhere. Finally, the last thing we did was make slime with glue, water, and another special ingredient. This was really fun because we got all sticky but the best part of the workshop was the new friends I made. This workshop was one of my favorites because it included science and new friends!

~ Maya Atwal



National 4H Congress was an amazing eventful experience, not just the wonderful speakers but the workshops were exciting as well. One of the workshops I participated in was yoga. I was not overjoyed at first but the workshop turned out to be just what I needed. National 4H Congress, as fun and memorable it was, was a very tiring and eventful week with not much sleep. The yoga workshop really helped relax my mind and body and I felt very refreshed and ready to take on the rest of the week.

~ Manami Alspach

WORKSHOPS

Dancing with the Stars



One of the days of National 4-H Congress was dedicated to the attendance of a variety of workshops ranging from more educational-based activities to ones that were more hands-on. Out of the two workshops I was able to participate in, the Dancing with the Stars one was more hands-on. We were placed in a section of the ballroom and learned many partner dance steps that steadily increased in difficulty. Through this activity, I was definitely forced to get out of my comfort zone. In the room, there were more guys than girls, which meant that the girls had to go up to the guy they wanted to dance with. I am a very reserved and shy person so it was difficult for me to take that initial step into physically walking up to the guy. Despite being very intimidated, I was able to do it a couple of times and actually had a lot of fun. I not only learned some dance steps but also some communication skills and was also able to make a few friends with some other shy people in that room. It was an experience I will never forget as it forced me to branch out and be more social which is something I have struggled with for a long time.

~ Megan Nakamoto

WORKSHOPS



Let me tell you, I was not prepared to do pilates. I was not aware of the fact that we had to pack athletic wear. This meant that I did pilates in jeans and a t-shirt. I was not too excited about that. It was a fun class because everyone in the class was very vocal about their struggles. I was laughing for most of the class. A lot of this workshop we focused on our abdominal muscles and some of our back muscles. I learned some exercises that I will use in the future to stay in shape.

~ Jordan Bear

Digital Footprints and Social Media

The second workshop I had the opportunity to attend was the Digital Footprints and Social Media workshop which was more educational-based. At the beginning of the workshop, we were told to post a picture on Instagram so I posted a cute picture of myself and Cassidy - one of the other Hawai'i delegates - playing with the beautifully colored leaves of fall. After this, we were told to put our phones away and listened to a presentation about the effective uses of social media and when it can be harmful versus helpful. They also emphasized the fact that once you post something, it stays out there forever in some way, shape, or form. Then they proceeded to answer any questions we had about social media and our own personal digital footprints and it was interesting to see what the other people in the room inquired about. Towards the end, they told us to take our phones back out and asked how many likes we got. I was one of a few people who had over 100 likes within that period. They explained that the reason for this was to show us how fast a post can travel and how many people we actually reach. I thought it was a very unique and fascinating way to portray this message. Overall, I really did learn a lot from this workshop and am glad I was able to experience it.

~ Megan Nakamoto

WORKSHOPS

Be Extraordinary in a Field of Ordinary

Be Extraordinary in a Field of Ordinary was another workshop that I attended at the National 4-H Congress. In this workshop, I learned a lot about how to boost my resume to make it stand out from the other ones. I also learned about how to act during an interview for a job and how to properly greet yourself in a professional way. This was one of the workshops that got broken down into smaller groups so there wasn't anyone from Hawaii, but this was a great way for me to open up and meet new people from other states. Through this workshop, I learned how to stand out and be extraordinary rather than ordinary.

~ Deena Kiyabu



Zumba

One part of the National 4-H Congress I especially liked was the different "mini" workshops each delegate got to participate in. I got to go to Zumba, and it was not one of the workshops many people fought over because it seems intimidating and silly to dance and workout in front of a ton of strangers. I traded for my yoga workshop pass to be able to attend Zumba and I think I made a wise choice. I love to dance, and I got to do a lot of it then, and the delegates from the other states helped make the most of the time with the instructor. Compared to the other workshops, we got a lot more laughs, smiles, and blood pumping. Yes, it was intimidating to walk into a room where I knew no one, but I turned to the mindset of "I probably won't see these people again so I shouldn't worry about them judging me". It's a lot of fun, especially since you get to laugh at yourself, and no matter what workshop you get to go to, make the most out of every second. I danced my heart out and smiled even when I didn't know what I was doing because Congress flew by.

~ Kiryn Komata



WORKSHOPS

Healthy Gourmet

Day 3 of National 4H Congress consisted of randomly assigned workshops. My first one was "Healthy Gourmet" with the head chef of a Hyatt Regency kitchen. These individual workshops meant we weren't with anyone from our state. While a little scary, it did push me to talk to other 4Hers from a variety of states. With about 30 of us in the workshop, we watched as the head chef did healthy cooking demos in the front of the room. He demonstrated making healthy fruit smoothies and tofu stir fry. Almost no one in the room had ever eaten tofu so they all got to try it, and it was so funny to see their reactions. We also toured the industrial kitchen and he answered any job questions we had about his job or experiences. I really liked this because you don't often get to have honest conversations with professionals and I got to try some really good food!

~ Cassidy Denault

UAS - R U READY

In UAS R U Ready, we learned how to fly and operate drones in a safe manner. We watched a presentation on how to be safe and follow the rules about flying drones, we flew drones in a simulation, and we flew racing drones to practice the feeling. In each segment we had a goal to get out of our learning and then we would compete to reach that goal. We had to work together in groups to learn about the way's drones operate and how to be safe with them.

~ Nahe Rosario



Atlanta History Center



FLAG CEREMONY



Maya as the Flag Bearer and Kiryn as the Youth Delegate shared a Hawaii fun fact

Morning of Service

Scott Elementary:

Going to Scott Elementary was such an amazing experience. When we got to the school, we split into different groups. So some people went to the other classrooms and helped the teachers, while some organized the library, others helped the robotics team. Another group of kids taught a few classes of fifth graders about poultry. Cassidy and I did some laundry from the lost & found and organized a closet of clothes for the students. It was great to hear from the assistant principal that the students were looking forward to having us at their school. Overall, I am really happy that I had the opportunity to go to Scott Elementary.

~ Jordan Bear



A museum dedicated to a soda brand may seem boring and a waste of time because you could be doing something that is more fun while you're in Atlanta, but you'd be surprised by how wrong that mindset is. Walking through a museum that shows a history you never thought you would know about or would even exist is breathtaking. I remember going through the museum and hearing Aunty Becky (a dedicated Pepsi fan) say that it was really cool. You get to learn about the advancements Coca-Cola made in the world of advertising, how the brand has touched so many lives, and the innovations that you wouldn't think to credit Coca-Cola for. My favorite part was walking through the vault, looking for Coca-Cola's secret ingredient. Correction, my favorite part was having fun with my newly made friends from my state. We were having a blast opening drawers, pulling levers, and looking through holes in the wall. The World of Coca-Cola was much cooler than I thought. One bonus is being able to try the different flavors from around the world.

~ Kiryn Komata

Bethlehem Elementary:

I went to Bethlehem elementary school where I went into the second-grade class and I hung out with them in the makers space and got to know their stories and hear about the things they like. In the makers space we also got to build fun things and just have fun with the students. From the makers space we went to their reading class where I read a book to the entire class, then we got split up in to groups and we read books within our small groups and talked about what the students learned from the reading. The children at Bethlehem were the most amazing group of kids I could ever have asked to be around!

~ Nahe Rosario



Congress Gala



GEORGIA AQUARIUM

The last night of 4H Congress was Gala night! We dressed in our most formal attire of the conference and walked into the filled banquet hall. We were served a three course meal and were entertained by talented 4Hers. One of the performers was a 4Her who played the flute. After we enjoyed our delicious meals and entertainment, we had the opportunity to listen to 3 incredible speakers. One of them was Kelly Leoffler, a successful business woman, who was raised on a farm and credits much of her success to 4H's values. It was super inspirational- like all of the speakers at the National Congress. Leoffler exemplifies how the values of 4H can translate to our professional goals and set us up for success. After the speakers, we all changed into comfier clothes so we could dance the last night of congress away. One cool thing all of the Hawai'i delegates experienced was the endless amount of square and line dances the other 4Hers knew. Gala night is so special- it was so cool to experience a very formal dinner, excellent guest speakers, and a super fun night of dancing with all of the delegates for the last time. It perfectly culminated my experience.

~ Cassidy Denault

The Georgia Aquarium is a place I will never forget. Although the walk there was very cold, it was definitely worth it. As you walk in the front doors into the main area you are greeted with beautiful lights and an array of colors. There were so many areas to explore and a great variety of animals to see. The sea otters, in particular, were my favorite. They would swim around their tank and use their little hands to push off the rocks to move faster and farther. I kid you not, myself, as well as Cassidy, Maya, and Jordan were staring at these cute little creatures for the longest time, encapsulated by their movement. Another one of my favorites were the penguins. They had a tunnel you could crawl through that lead to a place where you could pop your head up and be inside the enclosure which was super cool. There were many other animals such as beluga whales, sharks, and a multitude of fishes. Along with that, there were also crabs, puffins, and shrimps that would eat at the dead cells on your fingers. It was so pretty, and I definitely cannot do it justice with only my words. With three gift shops, you definitely cannot go home empty-handed. I would love to go back one day as it is a place I will remember forever for the cute animals and gorgeous views.

~ Megan Nakamoto



Board Reception



Evening of Culture

The Evening of Culture was such an amazing experience yet somewhat nerve-wracking. The evening of culture was when we had to perform our hula dance in front of all of the other 4-Hers from all of the other states. We welcomed everyone into the room with shell leis in our costumes that we wore for our performance. Right before we had to perform, we were all very nervous because we had to do two dances and we started to mix them up. As we were about to go on stage, we all became very focused and shook all of our nerves out and walked out onto the stage with a nice smile. At the end of our performance, we were all relieved and we ended up doing a great job. For dinner, there were a lot of different types of food that we could eat and by all of the food were huge props that represented the different cultures around the world. After having a delicious dinner, there was a dance. I realized that there's a lot of different line dances that we from Hawaii did not know of, but they were very fun to learn. At the end of the night, we were all very tired, but it was one of the best days on this wonderful trip.

~ Deena Kiyabu

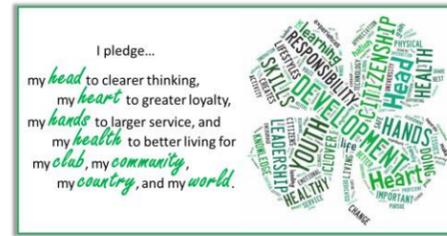


MARTA Adventure



Chaperone's Corner - Jennifer Egami

What an honor it was to serve as a chaperone for the Hawaii 4H delegation to this year's Congress. When this opportunity came along, my main goal was to learn more about the 4H organization and to see what I would need to do to prep the kids in my club for this once in a life time opportunity. I would consider myself a "rookie" as a 4H leader. I started a 4H club on Maui 6 years ago to get my daughter and her friends to be involved in our community and to teach them leadership skills. I "limped" and learned along the way with curriculum and record books. The kids had a lot of fun so that was my motivation as a leader. When we moved to Oahu, I felt that I was back at square one. No one really knew what 4H was but as the kids got involved with projects and participate in county events, I could see their interests and involvement grow. As a parent and leader, I see the benefits of the 4H program for young people, especially when you hear speakers like Kelly Leoffler, an entrepreneur, who credits her 4H experience to her success. At Congress, I was able to witness our Hawaii delegates carry themselves as smart, young adults and be able to participate in a variety of workshops that are relevant to them today. It was nice to see their excitement in riding the MARTA, playing with fall leaves, shine as they shared the hula, meet other kids from different states, learning a new country line dance and interacting with the elementary school kids during their service learning activity. As the world and our society evolves rapidly, I think it is crucial that kids today get involved in programs like 4H to give them an advantage when they go out in the real world that they are equipped with leadership and life skills. Thank you 4H Congress for giving me this once in a lifetime opportunity as well!



State Luncheon - Sweet Georgia Juke Joint

For our state luncheon we tried traditional Southern cuisine. Selections included fried green tomatoes, grits, chicken and waffles and gumbo. It was delish!!



Olympic Centennial Park

