

impact

of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences



Economic Development and Quality of Life for People and Communities JOLT: Journey of Opportunities for Leaders of Tomorrow

Issue

Modern society is filled with negative attitudes and problem-causing teenagers. Programs like JOLT turn teens into positive role models and future community leaders.

What has been done?

JOLT (Journey of Opportunities for Leaders of Tomorrow) is an Arizona Teen Leadership camp held annually in Heber, Arizona in June. Activities promote trust-building, leadership, and communication skills. Arizona Cooperative Extension sponsors the camp which has been held for 14 years. Teenagers aged 14-18, of various backgrounds, gather from across Arizona to develop open-minded and positive attitudes, develop a strong sense of teamwork, and learn to reject selfish actions that only benefit individuals. Conflict resolution skills

and relationship building skills help create the "JOLT team," promoting life-long friendships that are uncommon in other camps.

Impact

More than 1,100 teens have attended JOLT over the past 15 years. Teens who were youth staff members have gone on to serve as state 4-H Ambassadors and state 4-H Teen Council officers and representatives, and about 25 percent report they have participated in school government opportunities. Two youth staff for the 2001 conference tried out for plays and sports leadership roles after JOLT. Participants at "2001: A JOLT Odyssey" reported increasing their leadership skills and abilities by 23 percent; ability to make new friends by 19 percent, ability to trust others by

26 percent, ability to logically solve problems in a group by 20 percent, and to participate in new activities and challenges by 26 percent. Many participants return more than once.

"JOLT has taught me so many things. I have made the friends of a lifetime and have learned so many skills in becoming a great leader. I use these skills every day of my life away from JOLT and it just means so much to me. I will definitely be back next year."

—JOLT participant

"JOLT means believing in yourself, making new friends, and becoming a leader. I think that it gives the kids another chance who have messed up in the past."

—JOLT participant

Funding

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