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NEW SCIENCE-RELATED 4-H PROJECTS ENGAGE YOUTH

By Brooke Matthew, CSU 4-H Extension Agent, Otero & Crowley Counties

Southeast Area—Two new science-related 4-H projects have been introduced recently –robotics and geospatial technology programs with GPS/GIS. These projects fulfill the commitment Colorado 4-H made to engage one million youth in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by 2013.

4-H members learn about what a robot is, how to build one and program the robot to use sensors to interact with its environment. Working collaboratively, 4-H team members make decisions and organize information the activities. Robotics is an ideal way to introduce STEM while teaching life skills to youth ages eight through 18.

Robotics teaches 4-Hers programming concepts using the ROBOLAB language. Robotics also teaches more advanced topics in both programming and mechanics. Youth advance their programming techniques, use subroutines and variables to achieve more precise movements of their robots and build their own custom functions while they practice and develop creative thinking, decision making and leadership skills.

A partnership with ESRI, the premier geographic information systems (GIS) software supplier, has allowed 4-H to utilize geographic positioning



**Southeast Area
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**County Extension
Offices**

Baca County
772 Colorado St.
Springfield, CO 81073
719-523-6971

Bent County
1499 Amb. Thompson Blvd.
Las Animas, CO 81054
719-456-0764

Cheyenne County
425 S. 7th W.
P. O. Box 395
Cheyenne Wells, CO 80810
719-767-5716

Crowley County
603 North Main St.
Courthouse Annex
Ordway, CO 81063
719-267-5243

Kiowa County
1305 Goff
P. O. Box 97
Eads, CO 81036
719-438-5321

Otero County
411 N. 10th
P. O. Box 190
Rocky Ford, CO 81067
7190-254-7608

Prowers County
1001 S. Main
Lamar, CO 81052
719-336-7734

systems (GPS) and GIS to implement community service projects.

Nine Colorado 4-H programs received software grants, site licenses and training from ESRI – valued at up to \$35,000 each – to conduct geospatial community service projects. The goal is to gather community-based data that will better inform decision makers about new and emerging community issues and areas for improvement.

Projects have included developing a new community park; identifying potential mosquito breeding sites to mitigate the spread of West Nile Virus; mapping the spread of invasive species; developing a community tree inventory; marking buffer zones around raptor nesting sites; and identifying litter patterns at a youth conference center.

If your child is interested in joining 4-H or you would like further information on the 4-H program, please contact your local CSU Extension Office; Baca County 719-523-6971, Bent County 719-456-0764, Cheyenne County 719-767-5716, Crowley County 719-267-5243, Kiowa County 719-438-5321, Otero County 719-254-7608, Prowers County 719-336-7734. 4-H is a cooperative effort between CSU Extension and the County.

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