

Amber Underwood Memorial 4-H News competition

4-H Ontario announces 2009 Amber Underwood Memorial 4-H News Competition Winners, Nicole Shelley of Hanover and Christina Straathof of Westmeath

(Guelph, ON – Dec. 2009) The Amber Underwood Memorial 4-H News Competition had an astounding 24 junior entries and 5 senior entries in 2009. These 29 entries showcased the writing talents of 4-H members from across the province with Christina Straathof and Nicole Shelley coming out on top.

Shelley, the junior division winner from Hanover, wrote about courage and helpfulness in her entry entitled “The Tornado That Brought My Community Together”. Straathof, the senior division winner and resident of Westmeath, shared her experience as team member of the 4-H Ontario Agribition judging team through her entry entitled “Look to the West for Opportunity.”

“4-H Ontario programs aim to build confidence through its motto of ‘Learn to do by Doing’ experiences; and the Amber Underwood Memorial 4-H News Competition does just that by allowing youth to develop their talents in writing and journalism,” says 4-H Ontario Executive Director Lyndon Stewart. “This is a great accomplishment for both Christina and Nicole, and their results exhibit well one of our core goals—developing communication skills in youth.”

4-H members are encouraged to submit a 500 word entry on one of the following: a report on a 4-H program, event or 4-H success story; a review of a current agricultural or rural community concern; or an interview with a community leader.

The Amber Underwood Memorial News Competition is an annual competition in memory of Mrs. Amber Underwood who passed away in 1989. Amber grew up on a farm in Norfolk County, was a graduate of the University of Guelph with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and an OMAFRA Assistant Ag Rep in Kent County. Writing was Amber’s first love and this annual competition was established to encourage 4-H youth in their writing and journalism efforts. This award is made possible through the Amber Underwood Endowment Fund created in Amber’s honour to remember her strong commitment to 4-H and her love of writing.

4-H is an organization of leaders building leaders. Over 6000 youth 10-21 years of age, and a grass roots network of 1600 trained, screened volunteers pledge their Head, Heart, Hands and Health as members of community based clubs. With projects encompassing agriculture, food, health and the environment, 4-H Ontario’s “Learn To Do By Doing” clubs, camps and conferences have a successful 94 year history in developing competence, confidence, connection, character and caring within rural and urban youth.”

- 30 -

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