

EXTENSION SNAPSHOT

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Fulton County 4-H teen attends national 4-H summit

Maddy Lettow, a seasoned eight-year member of the Fulton County Logan Leaders 4-H Club, was selected to attend the [Ignite by 4-H Summit](#) in Washington, D.C.

The summit brought together 1,300 young minds from across the nation, including 18 Illinois 4-H teens, for an action-packed four days in March. This incredible conference ignited a passion for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) through exploration, connection, and discovery.

Maddy wasn't just along for the ride – she was eager to dive in. With her sights set on becoming a pilot, Maddy was particularly excited to learn from STEM keynote speaker [Emily Calandrelli](#). A [NASA](#) aerospace whiz, Calandrelli is a champion for science literacy, space exploration, and empowering women in STEM careers.

When asked about her experience, Maddy's enthusiasm was contagious. "I'm interested in how STEM will impact agriculture and sustainability," she shared. "Learning to fly airplanes directly relates to science and adventure, and meeting 4-H members from across the country was incredible."

Maddy wasn't just inspired, she was empowered! "One of the workshops I attended focused on 'Sneaky STEM,'" explained Maddy. "It was all about embedding STEM projects into everyday activities. We even did an art project that bridged the gap between art and STEM. Think about music, theater, or even cooking—they all involve scientific and mathematical concepts. Relating STEM to everyday activities helps to encourage everyone to give STEM a try."

So, what advice does this future pilot have for other 4-H members out there harboring dreams of a STEM career but feeling unsure of the first step? "4-H has been instrumental in providing me leadership opportunities. Serving as an officer in my club and 4-H Federation honed skills that I later utilized in Student Council and FFA. The key takeaway is to simply pick a project, embrace the learning-by-doing approach, and get involved! 4-H offers something for everyone. Being involved on the state and national level has been an incredible experience, and I highly encourage everyone to give it a try!"

In addition to seeing the White House, other sites toured during the summit included the National Mall, Museum of National History, a night tour of the monuments, and witnessing the early peak of the fragrant cherry blossoms.

To learn more about 4-H in Fulton County, visit our webpage, extension.illinois.edu/fmpt/4-h-fulton-county.



Photo by Mark Becker | Illinois 4-H

Maddy Lettow (pictured second row, center) of the Logan Leaders 4-H Club was selected to be an Illinois 4-H delegate for Ignite by 4-H Summit in Washington, D.C. The conference brought together 1,300 youth across the nation to ignite a passion for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

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