

## **Steppingstone LLC – PR & Design**

### **Case Study: A National Service Learning Curriculum for Teens** *Hands-on Materials Empower Youth to Improve Communities*

**Situation:** In early 2005, the 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System was facing a crisis. A design team had fallen more than a year behind schedule, and they now needed to produce a new service learning curriculum for teens in only five months. Orders were already in-hand from all over the country, and there were no other curricula available at a national level designed specifically for 4-H experiential learning.

**Solution:** They hired Steppingstone LLC to manage the project, write materials, and design the printed curriculum and a website. Steppingstone LLC's staff edited and dramatically expanded the drafts created by the original design team, wrote a new helper's guide for teachers and adult volunteers, correlated the curriculum with national learning standards, pilot-tested the activities at locations around the United States, shepherded the product through a national certification process, created engaging photographs, and graphically designed three printed books, a CD, and a website.

Materials were designed to be adaptable for individual and group use at the local level, with a focus on experiential "hands-on" activities. To complement the materials, Steppingstone LLC created media outreach materials that could be adapted and used locally. Steppingstone LLC also promoted sales of the curriculum to service learning practitioners, extension educators working with 6.5 million 4-H members, and the homeschool community.

**Results:** The curriculum was certified for national distribution and the project was completed on time. Thanks to this curriculum, thousands of teens ages 13-18 are conducting their own service projects and realizing the impact they can have on the world and its future. The materials have been featured in a national educational magazine and profiled in newsletters read by the service learning community. Approximately 309,736 youth engaged in service projects through 4-H in 2005, a more than 20% increase over the number (255,442) involved in 2003. Prior to this curriculum's publication in 2005, there was no national curriculum specifically to support 4-H service learning projects. This curriculum was also nominated for Product of the Year in 2006 for the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce's Small Business Awards.

**Visit the Project Website:** <http://www.n4hccs.org/servicelearning>

