

Youth Development in AgriLife Task Force

Options Report

The task force has developed the *Options Report regarding the future organization and administration of youth development academic and extension programs in AgriLife. These options were voted on by the task force before submission. The final vote, from the ten-member task force, for moving this forward to Dr. Stover was 8 yes and 1 abstain. As Dean Fellow for this team, I recused myself from the vote.

Option 1:

Create and Implement a “Renowned Visiting Scholars in Youth Development” Program

The Renowned Visiting Scholars in Youth Development program would attract world-leaders in youth development research and extension to our campus. Scholars would be in-residence at Texas A&M for one year. During that time, the Scholars would mentor and collaborate with existing faculty, extension professionals, post-doctoral trainees, and top graduate students. Two Renowned Visiting Scholars in Youth Development, one focused on research and one focused on extension, would be in-residence concurrently.

Option 2:

Create a Coordinator of Youth Development position in the office of the Vice Chancellor

The Coordinator of Youth Development would be charged with creating synergies and enhancing communication among faculty, specialists, and advanced graduate students conducting research and outreach in youth development. The Coordinator would lead AgriLife in identifying renowned scholars, actively seek funding opportunities for conducting youth development research and outreach and establish and use networks and inventories of AgriLife faculty and specialists to assemble teams to conceptualize projects and strategically pursue external funding. The coordinator would also organize a Youth Development Council comprised of representative personnel from within AgriLife agencies and COALS. The Council would meet quarterly to review and discuss youth development programs and research, thereby facilitating increased communication and coordination among colleagues.

Option 3:

Create an AgriLife Institute for Youth Development

The AgriLife Institute for Youth Development would be a community of scholars, practitioners, and students engaged in youth development research, education, and service activities who all have a desire to advance the field of youth development. The institute would be representative of all AgriLife entities including the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M Forest Service, and the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory. Main areas of focus within the Institute would need to be identified such that existing resources and networks are leveraged to foster innovative, cutting-edge solutions to youth development issues. A rich array of programming (e.g., conferences, lecture series, symposia, summits) would be included in the Institute to create a space for inquiry and dialogue among individuals working in youth development across AgriLife. A Director in the Institute would manage processes within the Institute, but not direct the work of individuals and/or teams.

Option 4:

Do Nothing – Leave Youth Development as it is

Youth Development efforts across AgriLife are exemplary as they are.

*Note. These number aligned with the respective options are not indicative of a priority or ranking order.

Also, not mentioned in this list of Options are a shared belief that future AgriLife youth development efforts develop synergy for potential collaborations with Thomas Ranch administrators or coordinators for youth development impact opportunities.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Strong". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R".

Robert Strong