

## STATE CONGRESS

I easily consider State Congress one of the most memorable events of my 4-H career. It is at State Congress where one earns the prestigious title of Master 4-Her. This title, however, does not come easily. A 4-Her must first dedicate themselves to creating a detailed portfolio, along with an outstanding presentation, and qualify for State Congress by placing first at the district level before advancing to the state level.

The portfolio is a collection of all events related to their specific project area and 4-H events that a 4-H member has participated in during the previous calendar year, complete with pictures for support and a cover letter. The portfolio constitutes half of the 4-Her's overall score. While at State Congress, competitors are required to do an interview with their portfolio judges, which allows the judges to better understand the portfolio and the events listed within it.

Next, an oral presentation is required by most project areas. The oral presentations must be between ten and twelve minutes long and include visual aids, usually posters or a PowerPoint. The presentation must be related to the project area in which the 4-H'er is competing, and makes up the second half of the overall score. The 4-H'er must possess not only good public speaking skills, but a thorough knowledge of the subject they are presenting on.

Since my freshman year, I have competed in the Family Resource Management project area, with a speech on budgeting. This summer, I attended State Congress for the second time, and Mastered, meaning I placed first in my project area. Attending State Congress itself is a notable achievement, and mastering is even more noteworthy. It is extremely rewarding to earn this title after working so hard on both my portfolio and presentation. Achieving a Master status is something that I will always remember and cherish about my 4-H career.

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