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## Congressional Award Arkansas Kick-Off Held in Little Rock

**Washington, DC (April 27, 2018)** — In cooperation with Arkansas 4-H and state and local partners, The Congressional Award Foundation held a program launch event in Little Rock last weekend.



The *Arkansas Service Day and Reception*, held on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, was a strategic effort to showcase the Foundation's partnership with 4-H and to introduce Congress' award for youth to young people in the Natural State.

Coinciding with **Global Youth Service Day**, the largest service event in the world, the kick-off began with a celebration of service at the Arkansas 4-H Center. Youth participants assembled hundreds of hygiene kits for deployed military service members.

That evening, **Governor Asa Hutchinson** welcomed youth participants, family members, and supporters to the Arkansas Governor's Mansion for a reception. Honorary guests and speakers included **U.S. Senator John Boozman**, former Secretary of Transportation and Congressional Award Vice-Chairman **Rodney Slater**, and Associate Director of 4-H Youth Development **Dr. Martha Ray Sartor**.

"The young people who gathered at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion reminded me that the upcoming generation promises great things for Arkansas," Governor Asa Hutchinson said. "I appreciate The Congressional Award program for the opportunities it offers our youth to undertake good work for their communities. It was an honor to greet the men and women of our future."

**Erica Heyse**, Congressional Award National Director, identified Arkansas as a primary target for outreach and development in the coming year, with a goal of enrolling youth from across the state.

Following the event, Senator Boozman issued the following statement, "The Congressional Award program is a worthwhile experience that is incredibly fulfilling for our youth and the organizations where they dedicate their service. Partnering with 4-H will open more doors to youth interested in improving themselves and their community. I am proud to support this opportunity to challenge young Arkansans to develop valuable skills that will help shape their future."

**About The Congressional Award**

The Congressional Award is the United States Congress' only charity and the highest honor bestowed upon a youth civilian through the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Established by Congress as a public-private partnership in 1979 under Public Law 96-114, the program recognizes initiative, service, and achievement in youth ages 13 ½ - 23. Learn more at [www.congressionalaward.org](http://www.congressionalaward.org).

**About 4-H**

4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization, empowering nearly six million young people across the U.S. through experiences that develop critical life skills. 4-H is the youth development program of our nation's Cooperative Extension System and USDA, and serves every county and parish in the U.S. through a network of 110 public universities and more than 3,000 local Extension offices.

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