4-H leader to receive national volunteer award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 14, 2012
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Fairbanks, Alaska— During May, Becky Osimowicz will organize her 4-H club’s Relay for Life team, an upcoming 4-H horse clinic and show and a series of summer play days for community horse riders. And that’s just one month.

In recognition of her volunteerism, the Fairbanks leader has been named the 4-H Salute to Excellence Volunteer of the Year — one of two national awards given to 4-H leaders.

Osimowicz was chosen from four regional winners for the award, which 4-H presents to one volunteer with less than 10 years of service. Osimowicz is co-leader of the Amour de Cheval 4-H Club, whose members raise and show horses.

Marla Lowder, the Tanana District 4-H agent, nominated Osimowicz and two other 4-H leaders who have received the national award in the past four years, Priscilla Rice and Nancy Graff. “Hey, I have amazing leaders,” she said.

Lowder says Osimowicz has a thriving club, and she volunteers at the district and state levels. She credits the leader for broadening the district horse program for youth who want to improve their skills but do not want to show their horses. Osimowicz organized a community play day, which turned into a weekly community gymkhana/summer skills event that raises enough money to rent an arena for practice.

Osimowicz serves on the district 4-H and leaders councils and on the Tanana Valley State Fair Board. She also coached two teams for the State Horse Contest.

She got involved with 4-H nine years ago, she said, for her family, which includes Emma, 15, and Cora, 13. She has stayed involved because she believes 4-H provides great activities for kids and she’s having fun volunteering. “I just enjoy doing it,” she said.

Osimowicz will receive the award in Orlando, Fla., this October.

- 30 -

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