

Carolyn Rudy is the recipient of the 2020 Important Volunteer of the Year (IVY) award. The 4-H Foundation would like to take this opportunity to recognize her for her volunteer work with 4-H and other organizations.

- Carolyn retired from teaching 20 years ago and had promised herself that she would remain involved with volunteering and community service. She spent 3 years with the Colorado Red Cross as a Client Caseworker and was very busy during the summers with the fires, assisting families who had just lost everything. While it was rewarding work for her, it was also emotionally draining so she retired from that position. Soon after, because she missed working with youth, she turned her basement into a classroom/craft room and has been working with students aged 5-18 for the past 20 years after school and during the summers teaching sewing skills, tutoring math, working on reading.
- Carolyn started her 4-H club from the ground up after one of her sewing students expressed interest and Cove Circle Creations was born. The members love to come to her basement and be creative. She likes to say that they give as much to her as she gives to them. It has been a wonderful relationship. She also quips that having young students helps keep her computer skills up to date! She is an extremely talented seamstress in addition to her many other creative talents. Her club has grown to as many as 15 members. Throughout the past 7 years, the members of Cove Circle Creations have reached the pinnacles of 4-H including National 4-H Congress, Citizenship Washington Focus as well as being very active in the local and state level of 4-H. Her passion for youth have been an inspiration to those around her.
- Carolyn is also very passionate about community service and giving. Over the years, her 4-H club has participated in numerous volunteer activities, often inspired by her suggestions, that are inherently creative and use skills learned in the sewing 4-H projects:
 - Heart shaped pillow cushions for breast cancer survivors to use when traveling in a car.
 - Large zipper toiletry bags filled with items requested by a local women's shelter. In addition, the club made teddy bears for each of the women and stuffed them with lavender scent so that they would have something more refreshing to smell at night than the heavy sanitized scent that is predominate in the center.
 - Baby bibs, burp pads and receiving blankets for the Denver Health New Mother's program.
 - Rag toys for the Max Fund.
- Carolyn sets the bar very high for her club members and they appreciate that standard. Under her tutelage and guidance, several members have blossomed from being incredibly shy and unable to speak at all or speak above a whisper to having major achievements that have carried over into their school life and friendships. They are more outgoing, organized and ready to accept leadership roles outside of 4-H. Several past 4-H members have since graduated from 4-H and have gone on to pursue careers in the creative arts. They often return to visit when they are back from college to chit-chat and talk about sewing, life, college and other hot topics.
- Carolyn loves to spend time with her dog, Rudy and her close friends and is an avid reader. When asked about her success as a 4-H leader, in her typical fashion, she credits others: "My members and parents have made me successful but I could not have done it without the help of the parents, especially Jennifer Stuck, Fanny Garber and Cindy Camp."

Congratulations Carolyn!