

Carleton P. Dorsey



Carleton P. Dorsey provided inspiring positive leadership to West Virginia boys and girls, their parents, and leaders for more than 38 years in developing a strong 4-H program based on fourfold development. A graduate of the West Virginia University College of Agriculture and Forestry, he began his career with the West Virginia University Cooperative Extension Service in June 1927, as Assistant County Agricultural Agent in Greenbrier County.

For 24 years, Mr. Dorsey served in an administrative role with the 4-H program, first as Assistant State 4-H Club Leader and from 1951 until his retirement in 1966 as State 4-H Club Leader. It was during this period that great progress was made in various aspects of the 4-H program. For instance, the 4-H camping program in West Virginia developed from the scattered camp sites used for one or two weeks each year to present 36 permanent county camps and one state camp, used from two to 12 months each year. Camp facilities are also used by other youth, church, and educational groups. The traditional 4-H camping program has expanded to include county science camps, music camps, older youth discussion group camps, career camps, recreation leadership camps, conservation camp, and several state 4-H camps.

Mr. Dorsey promoted the establishment of county and state 4-H foundations to finance 4-H scholarships for members and leaders to attend camps, conferences, and other 4-H educational programs. He helped organize the West Virginia 4-H Club Foundation in 1945 and served as Secretary-Treasurer from 1952 until 1966.

Because of his keen insight into the area of fourfold development, Mr. Dorsey enlarged upon and promoted the concept of 4-H charting—a personal evaluation device. He also spearheaded the adjustment in 4-H projects to meet current needs and interests. The 4-H project in West Virginia has taken its place among other educational programs, including health, safety, conservation, and service to communities. As a result, West Virginia club member made excellent contributions in both fourfold development and project areas during a period when the state population was declining, but 4-H enrollment increased 20 percent.

Early in Mr. Dorsey's career, he realized that the development of local leaders would greatly increase the efforts of professional workers, more families could be reached, and more boys and girls could benefit from 4-H. Through his leadership, the use of volunteer leaders in 4-H expanded by more than 100 percent.

Mr. Dorsey initiated and provided leadership in developing the financing of West Virginia participation in the International Farm Youth Exchange by the "dime from every club member for IFYE" project. West Virginia has sent and hosted IFYE's every year since the program began. Through Mr. Dorsey's efforts, a group of foreign students from Greece visited Jackson's Mill, the State 4-H Camp, in the early 1950's and were so impressed with the caliber of the 4-H program that they went home determined to establish a similar institution. Their goal was reached and there is now a youth training camp in Greece.

Mr. Dorsey's leadership has been recognized by his appointment to numerous state and national committees, including serving as member and chairman of the prestigious 4-H Subcommittee of the National Extension Committee on Organization and Policy. He received an Honorary State Farmer Degree from the West Virginia Association of Future Farmers of America, and the C.P. Dorsey Resource Center at Jackson's Mill was dedicated in his honor in the fall of 1977.

He served as President of several Extension organizations and was active in Kiwanis, the Salvation Army, and the Presbyterian Church.