

The Power of Youth

Each year, Klickitat PUD sponsors a 4-H Power of Youth Award. It recognizes an individual for outstanding efforts exemplifying youth and adult partnerships, and encouraging young people in decisions that affect them and their world.

Contenders are interviewed, then the 4-H committee determines the recipient.

Klickitat PUD is proud to announce Nicolena Thiemann as the 2022 Power of Youth Award winner.

A resident of Dallesport, Nicolena is a member of Central Klickitat 4-H Club and has shown goats for seven years. This year, she won the Klickitat County Fair Judges Choice award in recognition of an educational poster that covered a project detailing brucellosis.

Brucellosis is an infection spread from animals to people, mostly through unpasteurized dairy products but also through contact with infected animals. Goats, sheep, cattle, pigs and dogs are commonly infected.

Nicolena has attended school in Klickitat her entire life.

She has one brother, who she mentors in goat showmanship. They train and exercise their goats together.

She also volunteers at the Home At Last Humane Society in The Dalles.

Nicolena's interest in animals began at a young age when she attended a camp at the Home At Last shelter. There, she learned of the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership of Washington Annual Leadership International Gold Award.

After attending a conference, she focused her volunteer efforts on earning the International Gold Award, which requires 250 hours of community service.

For 4-H, Nicolena rears and trains goats. Her family has two mama goats and hopes to breed them this year. Showmanship goats typically are bought from a local breeder.

Goats aren't Nicolena's sole animal



focus. She also has two female turtles, Tony and Mac.

Her other hobbies include sketching and painting, particularly galactic scenery.

She wants to travel abroad, specifically to the Amazon.

Nicolena hopes to enroll in Running Start through Clark College in Vancouver, graduate from high school with her two-year associate degree in biology and science, then attend New York University or Columbia University.

Her goal is to become a veterinarian, with a focus on zoology. She would love to

participate in a sanctuary research program.

Nicolena's passion for biology came from her middle school biology teacher, who brought out her appetite for exploration.

Asked about her ultimate life goal, she says she would like to learn the scientific name of every marine animal.

Thank you, Nicolena, for inspiring others and having aspirational life goals. It is our pleasure to have you as our Power of Youth Award recipient. ■