Keynote Speakers

Justin Uchimura

According to Dan Thurman, a juggler and an entertainer, the secret of juggling is to ‘always look up and never look down.’ This secret applies to our perspective in life because a person should always be aware of the future and how to grasp and reach their goals. Looking down prevents a person from seeing everything around them.

Our closing speaker, Dan Clark, a contributing author of the Chicken Soup books, spoke about gratitude, consideration, and kindness. He told a story about himself; he gave up his first-class plane seat to a soldier, which started a ‘chain reaction’ of others giving up their seat for other soldiers on the flight. He also described how he felt – miserable, after he took his new seat between two chubby men. He then thought of the ‘hell’ that the soldiers experienced and he suddenly felt better about his situation. He gave us real-world examples of how small acts of kindness can spread like wildfire and how powerful an effect it may have on others.

‘Seize the Day’

Jennifer Taniguchi

As we entered the ballroom on the first day of the 4-H National Congress, I became aware of diversity, we were surrounded by people from across the country. I noticed the different physical features, accents, and culture - we are different, yet we came together in many ways.

Congress was both a learning and social event where I made many friends and was motivated to talk to over 800 student delegates. We were assigned to attend different workshops, and were able to get to know each other during the ‘Speed Meeting’ and ‘Dancing with the Stars’ workshops.

‘Seize the moment,’ is what I learned from the key note speaker during the closing ceremony; Aunty Linda’s advice to us was ‘Carpe Diem,’ ‘seize the day.’ Since congress was only about 5 days, everyone had to learn to take advantage of all of the opportunities.

The key note speaker also told us that ‘you were never this old before, but you will never be that age again.’ This means that if one is passionate about something, they should not delay their actions. I will apply this advice to my everyday life, by trying to achieve all of my goals/dreams. I will serve as a role model for others as they aspire to attain their dreams.

No ‘I’ in Team

Nai’a Willard

National 4-H Congress has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I learned about working as a team, that there is no ‘I’ in team and when one member struggles, we all struggle. Therefore, we need to help each other out.

This experience inspired me to really push myself during my last year of high school. I will take these new skills; share and apply them. National 4-H Congress has taught me how to be a better person, a better leader and a ‘Catalyst of Change,’ not only for myself, but for my club, my community and world.
The Amazing 4-H Organization
Nicole Davis

4-H across the nation is actually a large and diverse organization. The 4-H members I met are quite different from us living in Hawaii; with different cultural backgrounds, even though we all live in the same country. This fact developed a global awareness for me.

I learned leadership skills and cooperation which enhanced all of what I learned within my 4-H club. The enormity of 4-H across the nation was amazing. I will share my experiences with my club members and encourage them to participate in Congress next year!

Important Lessons Learned
Kyana-lei Yamada

Throughout my entire 4-H Congress experience, I was able to learn many things, but the three most important ones were:

1. It is very important to get as much sleep as you can, as the days are really long, and I sometimes found myself dozing off or closing my eyes. Breakfast became the most tiring part of the day because we were all half asleep.

2. No matter how tough the work is, it is important to try and make it into a fun experience. When things are fun, it makes it a lot easier. For example, while we were at the Salvation Army center, I made it fun by talking to my partner about funny topics and socializing with the other members at the site. This made my community service day enjoyable.

3. Everyone is different and that is a fact that we have to accept. Learning this fact, I have become a more social and mature person.

I really hope that more 4-Hers will try to make it to Congress because even though it is a lot of hard work, it is a really fun and life-changing experience.

Time Flies
Kalena Potter

I learned that you should cherish your time; time flies quickly when you are having a good time. When you are meeting new people, attending workshops and participating in a service learning project, one simply loses track of time! I was getting really involved in our project and was really disappointed when it was announced that we had only an hour left. I had a good time while giving back to those in need, no matter how small you give back, people will always appreciate it, you will make a huge impact on others. So every passing moment is something worth cherishing. Especially at an event like this.

‘Learn by Doing’

Late!!
Genna Galindo

I believe that the National 4-H Congress gave me a glimpse of the future because I was treated as an adult. I was responsible for myself and my actions. When I woke up late for a meeting, I had to rush to get ready, skip breakfast, and shamefully walk into the meeting late.

This experience taught me that when I am on my own I must force myself to wake up and not rely on anyone else, as future consequences may result in a job loss. Thankfully I learned from this mistake while still in high school and not in college.
**A Grand Opportunity**  
Shanae Baraoidan

It is a grand opportunity to go to National 4-H Congress. Completing your portfolio takes a long time, but it is worth it. You should put all of your efforts in it, as Congress is one of those experiences of a lifetime. You will create memories, make tons of new friends, and become a family with your delegation; this is an experience you will never forget. Attendance at Congress will prove to yourself that you can ‘make the best better.’ Through this experience, I have become a “catalyst of change.”

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**Organic Food**  
Kiana Tom

The Healthy Gourmet class taught me the difference between organic and non-organic foods. This class has affected my personal life, because now I look at the number of calories of the menu item and try to eat organic fruits and vegetables. Organic foods do not have pesticides on them, I will now inform my family members so we could begin to buy more organic foods.

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**Expanding Horizons**  
Miki Matsuoka

During the Expanding Horizons workshop, we were assigned scenarios to discuss, such as ‘how to show respect,’ ‘how to show disrespect,’ etc. These topics led to discussions about diversity and how everyone may have different opinions and ideas about the same topic! We also learned how to work together and compromise as a diverse team.

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**Operation Christmas Child**  
Josh Dawrs, Kiana Tom, Justin Uchimura

Little things can make a big difference. ‘Operation Christmas Child’ is an organization where we helped to organize donated shoe boxes to ship to children in need all over the world. It was like a mass-production assembly-line factory that pumps out millions of boxed presents every year, which allows children to experience Christmas and the feeling that someone cares for them. It made me feel great as a volunteer to know that I was helping to make someone else feel great. We did not pack too many boxes, but the ones we did, we know made an impact on many children.

These shoe boxes were placed into large boxes, which we labeled and place on rollers. Now I am thankful for the simple things such as having a toothbrush, toothpaste, clothes, underwear, slippers, etc. I will tell my brother about ‘Operation Christmas Child’ because he can be a ‘brat’ sometimes when he doesn’t get what he wants. I will tell him about the millions of children around this world who are not as fortunate as we are.

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**The Connotation of ‘Community Service’**  
Matt Kawamura

Some of us may have a negative connotation of “Community Service,” such as when teens get into trouble they may be required to complete X number of community service hours. So we should begin to say ‘Volunteer Work’ instead.

Volunteer Work should be conducted for a longer period of time so that everyone concerned will experience a stronger effect, and volunteers will be able to observe the progress and growth. A personal bond may be expected to develop.
Snapshots.....

Nai’a Willard: Dan Thurman said that we need to take successful risks, “to lean forward in life but don’t look down.”

Shanae Baraoidan: In baking, if you are allergic to some ingredients, you may use something else.

Matt Kawamura: Getting lost helped me realize that it is okay to make mistakes as long as you get back on track and learn and progress from the mistakes made.

Miki Matsuoka: We developed a working knowledge of teamwork and inclusion, how to work together and compromise.

Erica Wells: Each day is precious, I needed to just ‘go for it’ and not hold back; I did and had fun!

Josh Dawrs: I learned that many other 4-H members do livestock for their project, while we do community service.

Boyd Elementary School
Shanae Baraoidan, Genna Galindo, Miki Matsuoka

‘Be a Catalyst for Change,’ our theme for the National 4-H Congress, gave me the perception that making a change meant doing something large such as donating thousands of dollars to a worthy cause, however, I have learned that making a difference can be done by volunteering a couple of hours of one’s time to the community.

We assisted teachers at Boyd Elementary School, reading to the children, discussing the story with them and tutoring them. I felt that the discipline and teaching methods were a bit different from what I experienced in Hawaii.

We received a generous amount of appreciation from the teachers, staff and even the students! We realized that making a difference can be simply done by completing a small service project.

‘4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, Citizenship and life skills.’
A Large Organization  
Erica Wells

I did not realize that 4-H was such a large organization and that so many people share the same values as me. It is comforting knowing that there are so many others across the country giving back to their communities. I will share with the younger 4-Hers how much this organization affects others and that the entire country supports what we do.

Healthy Gourmet  
Justin Uchimura

The Healthy Gourmet workshop was interesting, since I too am a healthy epicurean. The chef introduced us to organic ingredients emphasizing the fact that flavor and nutrients are enhanced when using organic food items. The Hilton Hotel corporation uses an all-organic menu. The chef talked about supporting the humane-meat producers and to try to eat foods that were made admirably.

Communication Modes  
Josh Dawrs

Communication is essential and there are many different mode of communicating with each other. Our team had to get each team member across the room using the squares on the floor. The problem was that we did not know which squares were ‘ok’ and which were ‘bugged.’ We used different types of communication – we pointed, used our fingers, used hand gestures, body language and even motioned with our heads! Communication must be clear!

Memories!!

Nai’a Willard: National 4-H Congress has broadened my view on life, it’s taught me about leadership, working together and taking risks.

Erica Wells: How the little things we do everyday in our own state affect the entire country because everyone is contributing.

Matt Kawamura: Keep things organized, this will help you complete your record books.

Josh Dawrs: Hyatt uses all natural organic foods, they feel that it taste better and will develop healthy eating habits.

Justin Uchimura: Congress has ultimately made me more aware of how to become a better person regarding mentality, consideration, effort, and well-being.

I learned...........

Genna Galindo: There are many different fields of interest in 4H - such as engineering, etymology, etc.

Jennifer Taniguchi: How to lead/facilitate people of all origins.

Justin Uchimura: Other 4-H members were able to make huge differences in their communities and now I have a better idea of how to become the “catalyst of change” that will improve my community.

Congress for Everyone  
Genna Galindo

I will encourage my sister’s club members to keep participating in their club’s activities so that they will be able to attend congress and have a memorable experience. I want to encourage and help everyone in 4-H get to National 4-H Congress, because it was fun and it provided me with an opportunity I won’t be able to receive anywhere else.
Pilates/Zumba

Shanae Baraoidan: I learned the right way to work your lower stomach muscles. If you don’t do the moves correctly you may work the wrong parts of your body.

Miki Matsuoka: I learned how to get a good workout at home, we did abs workouts to help focus on our core.

Kyana-lei Yamada: Physical fitness does not just come from cardio, it also consists of stretching and resistance training. My body hurt the next day, but I felt good about myself, I discovered a new way to stay healthy and active.

Josh Dawrs: You can have fun while getting a workout out – exercise can be fun!

Kiana Tom: I learned new ways to stay fit and healthy, now I know how to stretch and exercise without running, this will help us to be one happy healthy family!

Recipe for Slime

Matt Kawamura

Making ‘slime’ engages the young children to learn more about science.

Mix 1 T Borax and 1 c water

Mix ½ c water with 4 oz Elmer’s glue

Mix both mixtures together, add food coloring

A Fun Workshop

Justin Uchimura

The group involvement workshop was fun. My group had to stand on a relatively small tarp and work together to fold the tarp in half and flip it while all of us were standing on it the entire time. It taught us the importance of communicating effectively and setting aside our awkwardness to get the job done.

‘Go for It!’

Erica Wells

How many times I decided not to do something because I was embarrassed or scared! Congress has given me confidence; throughout the week, I told myself ‘to just go for it,’ so introduce myself and participate in all of the events. I will live each day to the fullest, I don’t want to regret not doing something because of a ‘lame reason.’ I learned that I am truly in control of my own life, and I will determine where life takes me.

Congress

Genna Galindo, Justin Uchimura

Congress allowed us to meet people who exposed us to different cultures which will prepare us for the ‘real world.’ Congress also provided many opportunities for us to develop life skills which will help shape our character and continue to help us throughout our lives.

We learned about responsibility since we had to do everything ourselves, such as: wake up, be on time, attend workshops, and behave maturely.

We learned to act respectfully, considerately, compassionately, and positively. Doing so will hopefully make others do the same and start a chain of kindness as Dan Clark.

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