



# FFA's



February 2024

# New Era

Vol. 90 • No. 2



STIEFVATER

## FFA Members Earn Distinction at the National FFA Convention

FFA members flooded Indianapolis, IN with an attendance of 72,956 for the National FFA Convention November 1-4 as they attended workshops, competed in different events, and heard messages from keynote speakers. SD FFA members and agricultural educators represented our state with class, integrity, and passion for agriculture, and were recognized for months preparing. The major highlights include:

**National Finalist: FFA Star in Agriscience** - Hadley Stiefvater, McCook Central FFA

**Honorary American Degree Recipients** - Dr. Mike & Carrie Stiefvater

**3 Star National Chapter Award (highest awarded)** - Bridgewater-Emery

**4th - Agriscience Fair Power, Structural and Technical Systems Division 4** - Abbie Chase and Ava Sieverding, McCook Central FFA

**5th - Agriscience Fair Social Systems Division** - Madison Lauck, McCook Central FFA

**5th - Agriscience Fair Animal Systems Division 3** - Atlee Olson, Belle Fourche FFA

**6th - Livestock Evaluation Team** - Raesa Zelinsky (3rd individual in Sheep/Goat division & 8th individual in oral reasons) - Cassie Fenske, Kennedy Nemitx, and Josie Nold (1st individual in Swine Division); Brookings FFA

**8th - Food Science and Technology Individual** - Mason Pulse, McCook Central FFA

**9th - Agricultural Communications Individual** - Lexi Nichols, West Central FFA

**10th - Agricultural Technical & Mechanical Systems Team** - Owen Murphy (10th place individual), Kendrick Droppers, Erika Starr, and Spencer Enstad; Harrisburg FFA



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## FFA Saddled Up for Rodeo Rapid City

South Dakota FFA remains an exciting, educational part of Rodeo Rapid City, through the support of the SD FFA Foundation and our sponsor South Dakota Farmers Union.

On January 27- February 4, SD FFA illustrated the diversity of South Dakota agriculture at the Ag Adventure Zone. This is the Ag Adventure Zone's fourth year showcasing the diversity of South Dakota agriculture at Rodeo Rapid City, situated in the Ice Arena at The Monument in Rapid City. Interactive and educational exhibits on beef, swine, grain, and more, from production to processing, were featured. The mission of the Ag Adventure Zone is to highlight modern agricultural practices, convey a commitment to natural resources, and demonstrate wholesome, safe food production for all ages. Industry volunteers, State FFA officers, and District 5 and 8 FFA members hosted activities and engaged with BHSS attendees.

In addition to the Ag Adventure Zone, SD FFA held "FFA Day" on Monday, January 29th, as part of Rodeo Rapid City. High school FFA members from South Dakota, Nebraska, and Wyoming participated in interactive presentations, learning from industry leaders in four agriculture pathways: animal systems, plant systems, power/structural systems, and advocacy/communications. Presenters included SD Pork Producers, SD Beef Industry Council/Wall Meats, SD Sheep Growers Association, Tyson Foods, SD Soil Health Coalition, SD Florists Association, RDO Equipment, Agtegra Innovation Center, and NewsCenter1/Homegrown. FFA members gained insight into current agricultural practices and innovations, asked experts questions, and had the opportunity to attend seminars, livestock judging schools, contests, cattle shows and sales, and visit vendors.



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## District Officers On The Road To Success

The 2023-2024 district officer teams participated in a training and met with the state officers in Fort Pierre on January 17th-18th. Their training revolved around the theme "Road to...", which allowed the teams to think about what they would like their end destination, or final goal as a district officer team, to be at the end of their year. The five leadership sessions, led by the state officer team, encompassed characteristics valuable throughout their year. Recognizing their own limitations, realizing what they can and cannot control, and looking for the extraordinary in ordinary places, will assist them in establishing the correct outlook for them to have in situations they encounter. The 56 district officers also met with SD FFA Foundation Executive Director, Gerri Eide, to learn about the foundation's role in local member success and provide examples of what programs make an impact for chapters. Training also included practice handling difficult conversations, and properly engaging in conversation and successfully communicating the value of SD FFA.

In the morning, district officers implemented their new knowledge, during breakfast with South Dakota Legislators. They spent the morning conversing with Legislators and Legislative staff, sharing personal stories and experiences, as well as discussing Legislative bills surrounding agriculture. The district officers also ventured to the Capitol, attending committee meetings and meeting with additional Legislators and Lobbyists.

The district 2 officer team exclaimed how grateful they were for the experience, "officers were able to become better informed about past and upcoming bills and decisions within South Dakota as well as develop communication and conversational skills in a professional setting. Sitting in on the Ag Senate committee was also intriguing as officers experienced first hand the process and discussion for agricultural related bills." The morning of fellowship and experiences was a vital part in their district officer training and will better prepare them for their road to success.

District Officer Training and Legislative Breakfast are made possible by our sponsors, through the South Dakota FFA Foundation: Citi, South Dakota Association of Cooperatives, South Dakota Bankers Association, South Dakota Farmers Union, South Dakota Association of Agricultural Educators, South Dakota Crop Improvement Association, and South Dakota Wheat Commission, and our SD FFA Star Partners: Twin Cities Region Northland Ford Dealers, Farm Credit Services of America, Bayer, CHS Foundation, South Dakota Corn Utilization Council, Agtegra Cooperative, Farmers Mutual of Nebraska, Macksteel, BankWest, Butler Machinery Company, Corteva Agriscience/Pioneer, The First National Bank of Sioux Falls, Dacotah Bank, First Dakota Bank, RDO Equipment, C&B Equipment, Prairie Grain Partners LLC, Army ROTC, East River Electric, Hanson & Associates, LLC, Midwest Veterinary Service, BASF, Croplan by Winfield United, Riverview, LLP, Titan Machinery, Dakota Grain Connection, Christensen Farms, LG Seeds, Olsen Custom Farms, Leisinger Farms, and Wilbur-Ellis.



**DISTRICT OFFICERS MET WITH FFA ALUMNI THAT WORK IN THE STATE CAPITOL AND TOOK A PHOTO ON THE ROTUNDA STEPS.**





## Roads Lead to 83 Chapters

Learning, creativity, inspiration, and many good conversations took place in all sorts of different gyms, libraries, shops, classrooms, the outdoors, a living room, and a porch. Members had the opportunity to learn a variety of different skills including how to self-actualize, determine and apply their own strengths, be proactive, understand that progress is unique, and find their own passions from our State FFA officers as they traveled the

state for chapter visits. During the visits, the state officers, in teams of two, had the time of their lives and heard some positive feedback from advisors and students.

Andrew Boersma, Wolsey-Wessington advisor, stated, "Our afternoon with the state officers was a great opportunity for our freshmen to learn more about FFA and what it offers. They also completed a team building activity that revealed a lot about their leadership styles and allowed them to work through challenges. Our FFA officer team met with the state officers and were able to brainstorm ideas for chapter growth. Thanks again for a wonderful time!" Belle Fourche FFA member, Bailey Moke, stated, "The chapter visit brought a meaningful impact, not just on the officer team but the students at Belle Fourche High School as well. The officer team is stronger and more outgoing, the chapter participation and enthusiasm has increased, allowing us to achieve success." Overall, every chapter taught the state officer team something as well, from being brave to how meaningful connections are with advisors in their chapters.

Chapter visits were made possible with the support of the following South Dakota FFA Foundation Star Partners: Twin City Region Northland Ford Dealers (Distinguished Star Partner), SD Corn Utilization Council (4 Star Partner), CHS Foundation (4 Star Partner), Agtegra (3 Star Partner), Farmers Mutual of Nebraska (3 Star Partner), Farm Credit Services of America (3 Star Partner) and Summit Carbon Solutions (3 Star Partner).

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## Chapter Chatter

**McCook Central:** put on a teddy bear toss on January 12th at the MCM Boys Basketball game. All those participating in the toss will receive a \$5 dollar voucher to use at the concession stand. All teddy bears will go to Sanford Children's Hospital and Children Abuse Center.

**Beresford:** had great success with fruit sales, raising over \$22,400. While busy working on proficiency applications, officers are also preparing to host a fun lock-in for chapter members. Events will include swing dance lessons, tee-shirt making, community service projects, and enjoying food together.

**Brookings:** had a record breaking year in fruit sales, raising over \$73,500. We put on animal stress relief days during semester testing which allowed BHS students to take a break between tests, and their chapter made tie blankets for the women's abuse shelter!

**Webster:** The new ag shop is scheduled to be completed by April 1st. We currently use the welding shop and wood shop, which was just finished in December. We held the 1st annual FFA Dance in December in the shop. The past few weeks students have been busy helping Mr. Zenk move in welding equipment and tables, and hanging plaques in the new classroom.

**Gregory County:** In December the officer team helped serve the local hospital gala while networking with community members. The community enjoyed seeing the officers in official dress as part of the experience.

**Lemmon:** has been building metal picnic tables for the City of Lemmon. They are also getting ready to host a livestock judging school for their students.

**Belle Fourche:** is pleased to announce that we have been awarded the Local Engagement Stewardship award through the Ram trucks FFA chapter Financial Assistance Program. We will use the thousand dollar scholarship to help members grow as leaders by allocating the money towards our FFA leadership day where we put on several sessions to help members grow in teamwork and leadership.






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# State Leadership Champions Crowned

On December 3-4, 2023, nearly 600 FFA members from across South Dakota met in Rapid City for the State FFA Leadership Development Events (LDEs). Members qualified through district competitions, advancing the top two teams and top three individuals from each of the eight FFA districts. While waiting for competitive events, students interacted with SD FFA Star Partners, at the Career Carnival, allowing them to gain knowledge about various areas of agriculture. Additionally, Montana state officers presented workshops on leadership development and identifying leadership qualities for the members to participate in. FFA members and chapters were recognized for their success in 11 leadership areas. The first place winners below will compete at National Convention next October.

*Sponsors for the event and Sunday evening meal were Beck's Hybrids, Black Hills Energy, Lynn, Jackson, Shultz, Lebrun, P.C. Attorneys at Law, Rock Tuff, SD Midwest Dairy Assn., Visit Rapid City, and SD FFA Star Partners: CHS Foundation, Agtegra, BankWest, Butler Machinery Company, Corteva/Pioneer, The First National Bank of Sioux Falls, Farmers Mutual of Nebraska, Farm Credit Services of America, Twin Cities Region Northland Ford Dealers, SD Corn Utilization Council, Dacotah Bank, ADM Grain of Harrold, Miller & Tulare, C & B Equipment, First Dakota National Bank, Macksteel, RDO Equipment Co, and Summit Carbon Solutions. State-winning teams and individuals highlighted below, now advance to the National FFA Leadership Development Events in Indianapolis next fall.*



**Parliamentary Procedure** - six member teams, demonstrate a business meeting. The sponsor is South Dakota Farmers Union. The travel scholarship is sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union, Monte and Ruth Mason, Brett and Tracy Kaltvedt, Jordan and Ashley Wiesen and the Dan and Nicole Tonak family.


1. Willow Lake (pictured left to right): Andy Peterson, Shay Michalski, Sami Brenden, Emma Peterson, Ginny Warkenthien, Kaylyn Hofer, & Nora Terhark.
2. Belle Fourche
3. McCook Central
4. Lennox-Sundstrom
5. Harrisburg



**All-State Parliamentary Procedure Team** - comprised of the top individual officer from each position in the Parliamentary Procedure CDE. Awards are sponsored by Skinner Financial Services. Those selected (pictured left to right):

Chair: Kathryn Loewe, Lennox-Sundstrom  
 Members At-Large:  
 Wyatt Lesmeister, Belle Fourche  
 Emma Peterson, Willow Lake  
 Raif Parmeter, Belle Fourche  
 Tyler Strasser, Lennox-Sundstrom  
 Jazlyn Olson, Belle Fourche





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Prairie Grain Partners, LLC is a 50/50 partnership between ADM Benson-Quinn and Tri-Line Farmers Cooperative that was formed in 1997. PGP has Agronomy facilities in Clarkfield and Dovray MN, and Grain Facilities in Clarkfield and Boyd, MN and recently acquired the facilities in Hitchcock/Tulare, Harrold and Miller, SD.

**Hitchcock/Tulare Office: (605) 266-2530**  
**Miller Office: (605) 853-9200**  
**Harrold Office: (605) 875-3278**

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### Prepared Public Speaking

-contestants present a 6–8-minute agriculture-oriented speech and answers five minutes of related questions. Sponsored by Hefty Seed Company/Ag PhD with the travel scholarship is sponsored by Hefty Seed Company/Ag PhD and the Central States Fair Foundation.

1. Laney Andrews, Beresford
2. Vivian Johnson, Madison Central
3. Lexi Nichols, West Central
4. Madelyn Caulfield, Florence
5. Josie Nold, Brookings
6. Julia Tinker, Brandon Valley
7. Remington Jacobson, Tea Area
8. Laramie Nutter, Wall



### Extemporaneous Public Speaking

– a 4–6-minute unrehearsed speech, written and presented onsite. Contestant are allowed 30 minutes to prepare. Sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union, with the travel scholarship sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union and Crazy Lady Consulting.

1. Laine Forst, Mitchell
2. Briella Wettlaufer, Howard
3. Emily Knodel, Freeman
4. Cheznie Anderson, Watertown Area
5. Gage Anderson, Lemmon
6. Ashlyn Roudabush, Mitchell
7. Olivia Witing, Watertown Area
8. Carter Ross, Parker



**Employment Interview Skills** - challenges members to complete a job application, write a letter of application and resume, participate in an interview and compose a follow-up letter. Sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, with the travel scholarship sponsored by Kindra Gordon, Sadie Frey (pictured) and the Lance & Shirley Howe Family.

1. Grace Lindeman, Parkston
2. Tanner Eide, Gettysburg
3. Elliot Hendrix, Rapid City
4. Hope Baysinger, Mitchell
5. Lacie Weber, Oldham-Ramona-Rutland
6. Megan Wiese, Milbank
7. Sydney Lockhart, Hot Springs
8. Tristen Petrik, Platte-Geddes



**Ag Sales** - team members develop a strategy for selling pre-determined products in specific customer scenarios. Participants also utilize individual sales skills, selling an agricultural product to a customer. Sponsored by Wilbur Ellis, with the champion team travel scholarship sponsored by Wilbur Ellis, Hoegemeyer Hybrids, YieldPro Ag, Bobbie Jo Donovan, and Kevin and Amber Blagg.

1. Tri-Valley (pictured left to right): Colby Carruthers, Corie Wicks, Ryken Hieronimus, Tyler Groenewold, and Espn Althoff
2. Tea Area
3. McCook Central
4. Lyman
5. Sioux Falls CTE Academy

**Ag Sales** top individual sellers were also selected from each presentation room and is sponsored by Sorum Farms of Canton and Larson Farms of Hartford.

- Room 1: Owen Alley, McCook Central  
Room 2: Colby Harrell, Miller  
Room 3: Jack Daggett, Tea Area  
Room 4: Aiden Gruppe, Watertown

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# State Leadership Champions - continued

## Conduct of Chapter Meetings

- designed for freshmen to present a mock FFA meeting. Sponsored by Gary Bachman,

with the state travel scholarship sponsored by Gary Bachman, YieldPro Ag, and the Dan & Nicole Tonak family.

1. McCook Central (pictured left to right): Front Row: Ella Deknikker, Brooke Heumiller, Taylor Thrift, and Julianne Grady. Back Row: Gavin Kipp, Parker Randall, William Dyen, Tucker Peterson, and Luke Horstman
2. Harrisburg
3. Sioux Valley
4. Hot Springs
5. Belle Fourche



## Creed Speaking

- participants recite the FFA Creed and answer questions. This event and travel scholarship is sponsored by YieldPro Ag and Craig and Bonnie Dybedahl.

1. Noah McGee, Freeman
2. Emma Caulfield, Florence
3. Coltyn Raymond, Ethan
4. Natalie Yates, Newell
5. Karley Luke, Marion
6. Alexis Roesler, Wessington Springs
7. Allie Hoekeman, Northwestern Area
8. Sienna Leheska, Kimball



## Marketing Plan

-teams determine a local community need and create a strategy for marketing a new agricultural product or company to fill that need. Sponsored by Legend Seeds, Inc., with the state winning team travel scholarship sponsored by Hurley and Associates and YieldPro Ag.

1. McCook Central (pictured left to right): Lauren Roling, Joe Grady and Maddy Lauck
2. Hot Springs
3. Doland
4. West Central
5. Howard



**Ag Issues** - teams discuss the pros and cons of a major agricultural issue facing their area. Sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union, with the state winning team travel scholarship sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union and the Central States Fair Foundation.

1. Beresford (pictured left to right): Ethan Hauch, Joseph Anderson, Robert Watkins, Halle Livingston, Kayla Jen-see, Kylie Mockler, and Carley Crist
2. Parker
3. Bridgewater-Emery
4. West Central
5. Sturgis



**Ag Broadcasting/Journalism** - in 30 minutes members prepare a five-minute agricultural radio newscast and then "air" it. Sponsored by Prairie Winds Humbolt LLC.

1. Alexandria Madsen, Kadoka
2. Gavin Mattson, Deuel
3. Elle Goehring, Parkston
4. Cash Voegelé, Parker
5. Josie Nold, Brookings
6. James Bame, Madison Central
7. Caroline Witte, Wessington Springs
8. Jordan VanDeStroet, Canton



**Ag Communications** - teams play the role of communications consultants and develop a media plan for an assigned scenario, with an identified client, communications need and budget. Sponsored by the SD Broadcasters Association with the travel scholarship sponsored by Farm Progress/Dakota Farmer and Dakota Farm Talk.

1. Gregory County (pictured left to right): Ava Kerner, Ella Sperl, Aubree Miller and Avery Zeisler
2. McCook Central
3. West Central
4. Belle Fourche
5. Parker



## Convention Approaches Quickly – April 18 to 20th

Before you know it, State FFA Convention will be here – and FFA members will **“BREAK THROUGH”** as student leaders ready to change the world and set a high standard of excellence. With SDSU Frost Arena renovations underway, convention **“BROKE THROUGH”** the challenges and is moving to **April 18-20th, (Thursday - Saturday)**, with many events and activities at the Brookings Dacotah Bank Center, as well as on the SDSU Campus.

**Join us as we “BREAK THROUGH” tradition, to grow student impact:**

- **Thursday** will include Career Development Events, a Day of Service – packaging 50,000 meals for Feeding SD, workshops and the opening session, which will welcome new chapters, highlight agriscience fair finalists, thank the SD FFA Family of the Year and a kick off with a keynote.
- **Friday** will hold more Career Development Events, the Career Carnival, workshops, and an afternoon session – recognizing our scholarship and State FFA Degree recipients and hearing our national officer keynote.
- **Friday evening** a VIP banquet will connect Star Partners, Stars Pageant and proficiency sponsors with member finalists. There will also be a Past State Officer gathering. The evening session will include Star Partner recognition, highlight proficiency finalists, have our Stars Pageant, and honor our Honorary Degree and Distinguished Service Award recipients.
- **Saturday morning** will wrap up with Session 4, where Golden Owl Award advisors will be recognized and outstanding members will be **“BREAKING THROUGH”** in Career Development Events, National Chapter Awards, and the election of the 2024-25 state officers.

## Live to Serve as a State Officer or Ambassador

The state officer team invites you to apply for a 2024-25 South Dakota FFA State Officer or State Ambassador position. If you are currently a high school senior or college freshman who has a passion for FFA and Agriculture, wants to help members breakthrough, and has a desire to grow as a leader, this is just the position for you. Through the interview process you will experience self reflection and grow as an individual. While the nominating committee puts together the most effective team, you will make connections and meet new friends from across the state. If elected, you will have the opportunity to serve the South Dakota FFA Association. You will network with industry professionals, facilitate workshops, travel the state and nation, and learn about diversity in the agriculture industry. As a state officer or ambassador, you have the privilege to help members develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. To learn more about these positions, contact the State FFA Office at (605) 688-4380.

## SD FFA Reaches New Heights

South Dakota FFA has officially broken a state-wide membership total of over 6100 members, spread throughout 110 chapters across the state. All of these chapters proudly engage in equipping students with the necessary skills to achieve Premier Leadership, Personal Growth, and Career Success.

Chapter	Membership	Chapter	Membership
Aberdeen Central	14	Kadoka	39
Alcester-Hudson	29	Kimball	84
Andes Central	17	Lake Preston	36
Arlington	32	Langford	56
Baltic	25	Lead-Deadwood	16
Belle Fourche	93	Lemmon	80
Bennett County	26	Lennox Sundstrom	254
Beresford	51	Leola	18
Bison	28	Lyman	37
Bon Homme	44	Madison Central	155
Bowdle	22	Marion	17
Brandon Valley	29	McCook Central	152
Bridgewater-Emery	77	McIntosh	17
Brookings	96	Menno	24
Buffalo Christian	12	Milbank	181
Canton	168	Miller	82
Centerville	33	Mitchell	50
Chamberlain	56	Montrose	68
Chester	69	Newell	44
Cheyenne Eagle Butte	101	Northwestern Area	68
Clark	80	ORR	40
Colman-Egan	22	Parker	91
Colome	16	Parkston	43
Custer	14	Philip	57
De Smet	49	Pierre	23
Dells	33	Platte-Geddes	56
Deubrook	37	Rapid City Central	111
Deuel	50	Rapid City Stevens	37
Doland	42	Redfield	146
Dupree	23	Sanborn Central/Woonsocket	108
Edgemont	18	Scotland	35
Edmunds Central	21	Selby Area	46
Elkton	50	Sioux Falls CTE Academy	8
Estelline	20	Sioux Valley	47
Ethan	39	Sisseton	30
Faith	28	Stanley County	15
Faulkton	48	Sturgis	132
Flandreau	104	Sully Buttes	56
Florence	39	Sunshine Bible Academy	40
Freeman	32	Tea Area	208
Garretson	52	Timber Lake	43
Gettysburg	59	Tri-Valley	149
Gregory County	43	Viborg-Hurley	53
Groton	47	Wagner	27
Harding County	26	Wall	63
Harrisburg	227	Watertown Area	18
Henry	23	Webster	69
Hereid	11	Wessington Springs	57
Highmore	35	West Central	100
Hitchcock Tulare	36	Willow Lake	42
Hot Springs	49	Wilmot	51
Hoven	16	Winner	49
Howard	66	Wolsey-Wessington	41
Huron	37	Yankton	12
Iroquois	31	<b>SD FFA</b>	<b>6142</b>
Jones County	16		

# It starts with you ... Empower the Next Generation

Growing leadership in agriculture requires a substantial investment—one we believe is vital and one you can make. The SD FFA is the largest it's ever been, with 111 chapters. That's exciting, and exactly why we need your help. **You can ensure FFA members are genuinely challenged and prepared to be successful in agriculture.**

6,000+ SD FFA members need blue jackets, leadership development events, exposure to agricultural careers, real-life experiences practicing skills, networking opportunities with like-minded members and agricultural industry leaders, dynamic teachers, scholarships, recognition for hard work, encouragement to be servant leaders, and a safe place to grow.

**You can do something about it. Make a gift today of time, talent or treasure,** and help FFA members become leaders in agriculture.

1. **Connect** with the South Dakota FFA Foundation on **Facebook**
2. **Create a birthday, work or friend challenge** to match your donation to us during **National FFA Week**
3. **Utilize** company **Matching Gift** programs
4. Use **Thrivent Choice** to benefit the SD FFA Foundation



5. **Donate** – cash, check, online at: [sdffaoundation.org](https://sdffaoundation.org) (scan the QR code for link), or you can give from your assets – grain, land, stocks, gifts from your IRA, cryptocurrency, and grants from your Donor-Advised Funds to see larger tax savings!
6. **Volunteer to help judge state agriscience or proficiencies - sign up here.**
7. **Leave a legacy** – Your gift in a will or estate plan will make an impact on future members, just like the impact on you, your spouse or children



**What's the future worth and will you invest?**  
**Contact [gerri@sdffaoundation.org](mailto:gerri@sdffaoundation.org)**

## Ensure Your Plans for the Future

Make sure the positive impact you want to make at FFA, are keeping up with your life. Below, find simple tips to make sure you are headed the right direction.

### FUND YOUR DONATION WITH:

- Appreciated Securities
- Real Estate
- Tangible Personal Property
- Closely Held Stock
- IRAs – distributions or fund a charitable gift annuity
- Cash

### GIFTS THAT COST YOU NOTHING TODAY

Did you know you can make a significant gift to the South Dakota FFA Foundation without touching your savings!

#### OPTION 1: RETIREMENT PLAN ASSETS

When you name us as the beneficiary of all or part of your retirement plan assets, you don't part with a single penny today. You also protect your estate from taxes down the road. When a nonprofit like ours receives your retirement funds, we pay no income tax. If you leave these hard-earned funds to your loved ones, federal income taxes may erode up to 37% of the assets—significantly reducing the amount of your hard-earned dollars they will actually receive.

#### OPTION 2: A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

A gift in your will or living trust allows you to feel good about your contribution now and part with your assets later. **Helpful hint:** You can name the South Dakota FFA Foundation as a beneficiary of a percentage of your retirement plan, life insurance policy or will. That way, your gift will remain proportionate to the size of your estate.

#### OPTION 3: LIFE INSURANCE POLICY

A popular option is to name the South Dakota FFA Foundation as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy (alternatively, you can sign ownership of your policy over to us today). You'll receive an income tax deduction equal to the policy's fair market value or the total premium paid—whichever is lower—at the time you make the gift.

Information herein was accurate at the time of writing, but is not intended as legal or tax advice.

**We express our sincere gratitude to donors who have already provided for the future of FFA through a bequest in your will, trust, or by designating FFA as a beneficiary of your financial account. Thank you.**



## A Mission that Matters!

In FFA, **every member is on a journey that will define their lives.** Each of their experiences looks a little different. **Meet Taya Kristine**, a Junior in the Belle Fourche FFA. Our mission matters in Taya's journey:

Taya's shares how her advisor, Mr. Bishop, pushes her to do new, outside the box things, "Even though bad at doing them, I grow. I am more outgoing, willing to try new things, better at public speaking, believe in myself, and am a better leader. Her poultry SAE started with six chickens and an eagerness to learn. Gaining skills in budgeting, customer service, problem-solving, general management, and chicken health practices and techniques, she enjoys growing her business. "I want to be an agriculture teacher and share my passion for agriculture. Many have listened to my long list of reasons why they should join FFA; I go into depth about opportunities found in FFA: competitions, friends, student leadership, networking, and more. In the

end, they love it." She credits FFA Leadership Retreat, for connecting her with friends and teaching every day skills like working with different types of people, networking, and openly sharing her love for agriculture. "Believing in others helps them to begin to believe in themselves."

Taya is the first to admit, "I have so much more to learn." **YOU can help** Taya and members like her experience **life changing opportunities and be inspired to pursue excellence in their journey. Thank you!**



## Super Saturday

On February 10th, members across the state came together in Kimball, South Dakota, for the 1st ever FFA "Super Saturday". The day encompassed a variety of activities and training for "super" members to grow even more. Super leadership. Super educational. Super fun.

1. Members ready and interested in taking their next step in leadership participated in a state officer/state ambassador school. They were given a better understanding of the duties required of state officers.
2. Star interviews took place. Members selected as District Stars from their State Degree applications in each of the STAR categories were interviewed about their Supervised Agriculture Experience project. Four finalists in each of the following divisions were selected: Star Farmer, Star in AgriBusiness, Star in Ag Placement, and Star in Agriscience. The sixteen finalists will go through another interview prior to convention to select the four SD FFA Stars that will be announced during the Stars Pageant, Session 3 of State Convention, April 19th.
3. District officers participated in enrichment training. Established to focus on the strengths and individuality of each officer, and how they are going to contribute to their new leadership role in the coming year. They got the chance to listen and ask questions to a panel of some of SD's strongest past leaders.

4. State officers and two students selected by their districts, from each of the 8 FFA districts conducted the student board of directors meeting. This was followed by the adult board of directors meeting to conduct business, update policy and plan for the future.
5. Proficiency award applications were judged and ranked by advisors and industry representatives to be recognized at State Convention.

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# Our Ag Teachers are Outstanding!



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Congratulations to the SD agriculture educators recognized at the NAAE Convention, in December!

**Terry Rieckman, McCook Central, in Salem, won the Outstanding Service Citation.** With 39+ years in the profession, Terry is passionate about supporting those who are teaching others to advocate for agriculture. An active member of the South Dakota Association of Agricultural Educators since the beginning of his career, he has served NAAE as Region III Vice President, President-Elect, and President. Terry has been recognized at the local, state, and national level for his achievements. He is proud to be an NAAE member and feels strongly that every agricultural educator can benefit from membership.



**Alysha Kientopf, Garretson, won the Early Career Teacher Award.** "Every child, every day" are the words that Alysha uses to guide her teaching style and classroom learning environment. Alysha has restructured and reenergized the Garretson agricultural education program, and teaches a variety of courses in a two-year course offering rotation. She works to ensure that her program is inclusive, using a variety of teaching and learning styles to meet students' needs. Alysha holds certifications including ServeSafe, Beef Quality Assurance Certifications, and a South Dakota Private Pesticide Application License.

## Celebrating FFA Week

With FFA week quickly approaching, how will you celebrate? FFA week is recognized across the state and nation with service projects, fun activities, and other outreach events. Whatever your week entails, don't forget to share with the SD FFA Foundation and SD FFA Association on social media! Here are some ideas to help you make the most of your FFA week:

- **Teacher Appreciation:** Host a teacher appreciation breakfast or hand out goodie bags to show your appreciation and support to your teachers.
- **Conduct a Service Project:** Live to serve during FFA by giving back. Hold a food drive and donate collected items to your local food pantry. Make tie-blankets and give them to your school nurse or donate them to a local shelter or hospital.
- **Ag Olympics:** Bring your whole school together with agriculture based competitions. Plan games like a parts scavenger hunt, a stick horse barrel race, or a bale toss.



- **Dress-up Days:** Embrace agriculture with dress up days and involve all grade levels. Popular ideas of days include, ag occupation day, farmer or rancher day, FFA shirt day, or camouflage day.
- **Photo Contest:** Let your school show off their skills by holding an agriculture photo contest. Pictures could include an SAE project, an FFA jacket, or an FFA memory.
- **Chapter fun night:** Celebrate your chapter's hard work with a fun night! Play board games, do trivia, reflect on your favorite FFA memories, or even have a potluck.