

For Immediate Release

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**\*All photos are available as JPG files at:**

[**https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dyetx\_Zjy77FKGV74Pj6T-B4pwUNrE6y?usp=sharing**](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dyetx_Zjy77FKGV74Pj6T-B4pwUNrE6y?usp=sharing)

**State FFA Champions Named in Leadership Development Events**

BROOKINGS, S.D. --- On December 4, 2023, nearly 600 FFA members from across South Dakota met in Rapid City for the State FFA Leadership Development Events (LDEs). Students qualified through district competitions, advancing the top two teams and top three individuals from each of the eight FFA districts in South Dakota. While waiting for competitive events, students had the opportunity to interact with agriculture industry leaders, who are SD FFA Star Partners, at the Career Carnival. Additionally, state officers from the Montana FFA Association 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 at the awards presentation. The event and Sunday evening meal was sponsored by Beck’s Hybrids, Black Hills Energy, Lynn, Jackson, Shultz, Lebrun, P.C. Attorney’s 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** teams, consisting of six members per team, demonstrate an FFA 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. The team results are as follows:

1. Willow Lake (*pictured left to right*): Shay Michalski, Samantha Brenden, Emma Peterson, Ginny Warkethien, Nora Terhark, Andrew Peterson, and Advisor Dan Tonak.
2. Belle Fourche
3. McCook Central
4. Lennox-Sundstrom
5. Harrisburg

The **All-State Parliamentary Procedure Team** is comprised of the top individual officer from each position in the Parliamentary Procedure CDE. These competitors are the best-of-the-best in their respective position. These awards are sponsored by Skinner Financial Services. Those selected are (*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

In **Prepared Public Speaking**, each contestant presents a 6–8-minute agriculture-oriented speech and answers five minutes of related questions. The event is sponsored by Hefty Seed Company/Ag PhD. The travel scholarship is sponsored by Hefty Seed Company/Ag PhD and the Central States Fair Foundation. The results were:

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

In **Extemporaneous Public Speaking**, an unrehearsed 4–6-minute speech is written and presented onsite. Each contestant is allowed only 30 minutes to prepare. The event is sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union. The travel scholarship is sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union and Crazy Lady Consulting. Results were as follows:

1. Lainee 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 FFA members to complete a job application, write a letter of application and resume, participate in an actual interview and compose a follow-up letter. Our sponsor is the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The travel scholarship is sponsored by Kindra Gordon, Sadie Frey and the Lance & Shirley Howe Family. The results were:

1. Grace Lindeman, Parkston *(pictured with Sponsor Sadie Frey)*
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 work together to develop a strategy for selling pre-determined products to specific customer scenarios. Participants also practice their individual sales skills by selling an agricultural product to a customer. This event is sponsored by Wilbur Ellis. The champion team travel scholarship is sponsored by Wilbur Ellis, Hoegemeyer Hybrids, YieldPro Ag, Bobbie Jo Donovan, and Kevin and Amber Blagg. The team results were:

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. The top individual sellers were:

Room 1: Owen Alley, McCook Central

Room 2: Colby Harrell, Miller

Room 3: Jack Daggett, Tea Area

Room 4: Aiden Gruppe, Watertown

The **Conduct of Chapter Meetings** event is designed for high school freshmen to present a mock FFA meeting. This event is sponsored by Gary Bachman. The state travel scholarship is sponsored by Gary Bachman, YieldPro Ag, and the Dan & Nicole Tonak family. The team results are as follows:

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 posed by the judges. This event and travel scholarship is sponsored by YieldPro Ag and Craig and Bonnie Dybedahl. The results were:

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

In **Marketing Plan**,teams of students determine a local community need and create a complete strategy for marketing a new agricultural product or company to fill that need. The sponsor is Legend Seeds, Inc., and the state winning team travel scholarship is sponsored by Hurley and Associates and YieldPro Ag. The team results are as follows:

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

In **Ag Issues**, a team of 3-7 students discuss the pros and cons of a major agricultural issue facing their area. This event is sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union. The state winning team travel scholarship is sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union and the Central States Fair Foundation. The team results are as follows:

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

In **Ag Broadcasting/Journalism**, students have 30 minutes to prepare a five-minute agricultural radio newscast and then "air" it. This event is sponsored by Prairie Winds Humbolt LLC. Results were:

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

In **Ag Communications**, teams will play the role of communications consultants and will develop a media plan for an assigned scenario. The scenario will identify a client with communications need and a budget. This event is sponsored by the SD Broadcasters Association. The travel scholarship is sponsored by Farm Progress/Dakota Farmer and Dakota Farm Talk. The team results are as follows:

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

The South Dakota FFA consists of 111 FFA chapters with over 6,000 FFA members. The SD FFA Leadership Development Events are a special project of the SD FFA Foundation. FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. Visit http://www.sdffafoundation.org/ for more information, and/or follow us on Facebook (South Dakota FFA Foundation and South Dakota FFA Association).

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