



FFA's

New Era



February 2021

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Gordons and Eide Bring Home the Gold

BY JACKSON MCFADEN

During the first-ever online National FFA Convention, teams and members from across the country came together to compete and showcase their hard work. SD members that would typically flood the city of Indianapolis still made their mark on the national level as they competed for awards and represented South Dakota from home in virtual workshops,

the Ag industry “Blue Room”, the national chorus and livestream sessions. Even in the current pandemic members from South Dakota were shining in the spotlight. A shout out to these talented individuals who ranked at the very top of their respective categories:



National Winner - Danika and Matea Gordon, Sturgis- Agriscience Fair - Social Systems Division 6



National Winner - Hunter Eide, Agriscience Research- Animal Systems Proficiency



Runner-up American Star in Agriculture Placement - Cole Schock, McCook Central



3rd Place - Vivian Koepsell and Grace Stoffel, McCook Central, Agriscience Fair - Food Products and Processing Systems, Division 2



3rd Place - Kayle Lauck, McCook Central, Agriscience Fair - Food Products and Processing Systems, Division 5



National Convention Chorus - Kayle Lauck, McCook Central, Paige Peterson, McCook Central



Honorary American Degree recipients - Dawn and Travis Schock, Salem, SD



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Convention: Our Way, Your Legacy

BY ELIZABETH DEBOER

Get ready, the SD FFA Convention is coming ... and we are planning an in-person event! This year's convention will be April 11-13th, in Rapid City at the Central States Fairgrounds and Western Dakota Technical College, with a modified schedule, a limited number of participants, and other COVID safety measures. Details are still being worked out, but the event will showcase how FFA members become today's leaders while using information from the past to better our future in agriculture. Through hard work and dedication members use our way to create their own legacies.

Whether participating in a career or leadership development event, conducting community service projects, or advocating for agriculture, members across South Dakota have been working hard to better themselves and the world around them. At the 93rd South Dakota FFA Convention we will celebrate their hard work and success.

Members get ready as we:

- Participate in fifteen Career Development Events with the hopes of becoming this year's state champions, advancing to the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis in October.
- Receive the State FFA Degree, the highest degree a state association can bestow
- Interview and announce Star Farmer, Star in Placement, Star in AgriBusiness, and Star in AgriScience winners for outstanding Supervised Agricultural Experience projects

- Congratulate last year's American Degree recipients

- Award scholarships to graduating seniors and college students seeking an agricultural degree

- Commend Agriscience Fair winners for their projects and research

- Announce proficiency awards for members with top notch Supervised Agricultural Experiences

- Induct supporters as Honorary State FFA Degree and Distinguished Service Award recipients

- Salute top chapters for local activities with the National Chapter Award - in Building Leadership, Growing Communities, and Strengthening Agriculture divisions.

- Participate in leadership workshops and the Career Carnival hosted by ag industry leaders

- Be inspired by State FFA Officers retiring addresses

- Pass the gavel to the 2021-2022 State Officer Team



Legislative Alert!

As part of National FFA Week, on February 23, 2021, the South Dakota FFA State Officers will be at the Capitol in Pierre, celebrating SD FFA. They will hand out snacks, interact with leaders, and visit throughout the day with South Dakota Legislators, cabinet members and lobbyists. This event will allow the state officers to advocate for agriculture education and promote the FFA's mission of premier leadership, personal growth and career success by interacting with South Dakota's governmental leaders.

Members Watch National Convention

BY JACKSON MCFADEN

The National FFA Convention last October was virtual, eliminating the typical face to face networking. However the State Officers got creative, making the best of the situation, and developed a "Watch Party" for FFA chapters to connect with the state officers and other chapters across SD online - and watch the convention sessions together. The first seven chapters that signed up received a "Watch Party Box" with hot chocolate,

popcorn, and other goodies to help chapters enjoy the unique national convention together. Each night's watch party had different themes, where members and State Officers dressed up, such as Halloween night and pajama night. During the live streams, state officers also led FFA trivia for chapters, quizzing them on past and present FFA knowledge. After a week of answering trivia and participating in convention scavenger hunts,

several lucky chapters won FFA apparel and items including a blanket, mug, water bottles, and more. Even though this year's National FFA Convention was very different, the rest of the officer team and I were glad to interact with FFA members in this way and would like to thank the chapters, members, and sponsors that made it fun and unforgettable.

Members "Find the Mystery Within" at a Unique Training

BY SAMANTHA OLSON

This year the FFA State Officers traveled to three different locations to conduct the 2021 District Officer Training event in smaller groups of 2-3 districts, allowing more time to get to know each other better. The FFA State Officer team built around a Scooby Doo theme, facilitated leadership training workshops for the 49 district officers on leadership, etiquette, agriculture advocacy, and professionalism. Members got the opportunity to interact with their district, set goals for their year and learn valuable leadership skills. In a year where face to face interaction is limited, this training was more important than ever. William Kuhl, Hot Springs FFA member and District 5 officer says, "I most appreciated the training for advocacy of FFA and agriculture. I am excited to put the knowledge to work at the Black Hills stock show and state fair." The South Dakota FFA District Officer Training is sponsored by SD Association of Cooperatives; SD Bankers Association; SD Farmers Union; SDAAE; SD Crop Improvement Association, Seed Certification Division; SD Soybean Processors, LLC; and SD FFA Star Partners: Agtegra; Twin Cities Region Northland Ford Dealers; Bayer; CHS Foundation; BankWest; Butler Machinery Company; ADM Grain Tulare; BASF; C&B Operations; Citi; Croplan by Winfield United; Dacotah Bank; Pioneer/Corteva; East River Electric Cooperative; Farm Credit Services of America; Farmers Mutual of Nebraska; GrainBridge; Hanson & Associates, LLC; Midwest Ag Supply & Veterinary Service; RDO Equipment Co.; Riverview, LLP; The First National Bank in Sioux Falls; and Titan Machine.



District 5 & 6 officers participating January 21st in DOT training in Pierre.

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The South Dakota FFA is dedicated to empowering students and giving them a chance at a brighter future.

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At Citi, we commend the South Dakota FFA on their efforts and are pleased to support their invaluable work.



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SD FFA Debuts Ag Adventure Zone at 2021 Black Hills Stock Show

BY MATEA GORDON, DISTRICT 5 FFA PRESIDENT



SD FFA had the opportunity to spotlight agriculture during the Black Hills Stock Show and Rodeo in Rapid City, SD, Jan. 29-Feb. 6, 2021, with the launch of the Ag Adventure Zone.

The Ag Adventure Zone was patterned after the popular Ag Adventure Center coordinated by SD FFA annually at the South Dakota State Fair. The two activities share the same motto: 'To showcase modern agricultural practices, communication commitment to natural resources and demonstrate wholesome, safe food production.'

Industry volunteers, State FFA officers and FFA members from District 5 chapters volunteered at the Ag Adventure Zone throughout BHSS to hold activities, interact with attendees, and make presentations from the stage.



The FFA Ag Adventure Zone was sponsored by South Dakota Farm Bureau as a special project of the SD FFA Foundation. Dani Herring, SD FFA Executive Secretary says, "FFA is excited to grow our advocacy efforts and we appreciate South Dakota Farm Bureau helping us achieve that goal. We are hoping it will become a permanent part of Rodeo Rapid City, providing agriculture education for attendees."



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Give FFA Day - Thursday, Feb. 25th

National FFA Week is Feb. 20-27. For one day during National FFA Week we will again celebrate the spirit of giving in FFA with #GiveFFADay. All donations received during these 24 hours will help grow future leaders through the South Dakota FFA. Give at: <http://sdffaoundation.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/SouthDakotaFFAFoundation>



FFA's Mission in Action



The **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.

This month we feature a current leader who exemplifies premier leadership.

Name: Dana J. Dykhouse

Home FFA Chapter: Central Lyon High School FFA

Year Graduated High School: 1975

College: B.S. Ag Economics, South Dakota State University, 1979

Current Positions: CEO, First PREMIER Bank, and Chairman South Dakota Board Technical Education; Board Member Sanford Underground Lab - Lead, SD; Board Member Northwestern Energy Corporation; Board Member South Dakota Junior Achievement; Chairman South Dakota Chamber of Commerce.

What did you enjoy most about FFA?

I became involved in FFA speech contests at the urging of my FFA Teacher/Advisor as a freshman Creed speaker. I enjoyed the competitions throughout high school. It taught me how to organize my thoughts and share my thoughts, plans, and opinions with coworkers and the public.

How did your FFA experience contribute to your leadership development?

I had the opportunity to serve as an Iowa State FFA Officer my senior year of high school. It was a life changing experience being able to interact with great leaders within FFA and the business community.

What advice would you give FFA members today?

Get involved! Participate in the many opportunities that your local chapter and state organizations offer. You'll gain life changing experiences!

ADM operates one of the world's largest networks of grain elevators connecting harvest to the home. At ADM we believe that sometimes, it's the little things that matter, we understand farming is more than a business, but a way of life. We understand the service & commitment we offer can truly improve your business and way of life. And to us that's what really matters. Experience a new level of service at our Shuttle Terminal locations at Hitchcock-Tulare 605.266.2530, Miller 605.853.9200, and Harrold 605.875.3278

State FFA Champions Named in Leadership Development Events

South Dakota FFA's annual State Leadership Development Events continued this year in a new format, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. FFA members from across the state traded an in-person State Leadership Development Event, in Pierre, for virtual events throughout December and January. Members qualified through district competitions, advancing the top two teams and top three individuals from each of the seven FFA districts in South Dakota. Despite the changes, students still had the opportunity to interact with agriculture industry leaders, through our SD FFA Star Partners, with a "Career Carnival in a Box". Twenty-five chapters received a box filled with "ag swag" and educational materials from our Star Partners. Each state-qualifying participant also received a portable charger sponsored by SD Midwest Dairy Association and SD FFA Star Partners: CHS Foundation, Agtegra, Bayer, Butler Machinery Company, BankWest, and Twin Cities Region Northland Ford Dealers. State-winning teams and individuals will now advance to the National FFA Leadership Development Events in Indianapolis next fall. Results from the event are as follows:



The **Conduct of Chapter Meetings** event is designed for high school freshmen to present a mock FFA meeting. This event and travel scholarship are sponsored by Gary Bachman. The team results were (*winning team pictured*):

1. Highmore (*Back row l to r. Eleanor Evjen, Kendall Cermak, Reghan Westcott, Kenidey Effling. Front row l to r. Carson Stephenson, Trake Cowan, Riley Werdel*)
2. McCook Central
3. Lennox-Sundstrom
4. Howard
5. Montrose



Parliamentary Procedure teams, consisting of six members per team, demonstrate an FFA business meeting. Our state sponsor is South Dakota Farmers Union. The state-level team travel scholarship is sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union, Monte and Ruth Mason, and Brett and Tracy Kaltvedt. The team's results are as follows (*winning team pictured*):

1. Highmore (*Front row left to right: Hunter Brueggeman, Haley Husted, Trenton Ramsey. Back row Left to Right: Mark Hague, Carter LaMont, Peyton McDonnell*)
2. McCook Central
3. Lennox-Sundstrom
4. Belle Fourche
5. Parkston



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 positions. These awards are sponsored by Skinner Financial Services. Those selected are (*individually pictured*):

- Chair - Haley Husted, Highmore
- Member at Large: Hunter Brueggeman, Highmore
- Member at Large: Tayah McGregor, McCook Central
- Member at Large: Peyton McDonnell, Highmore
- Member At Large: Mason Pulse, McCook Central
- Member at Large: Jacob Wagner, McCook Central



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. The results are (*winning team pictured*):

1. Sturgis
2. Parker
3. Howard
4. Wolsey-Wessington
5. Garretson



In **Extemporaneous Public Speaking**, an unrehearsed 4-6 minute speech is written and presented onsite. Each contestant is allowed only 30 minutes to prepare. Our state-level and travel scholarship sponsor is South Dakota Farmers Union. Results were as follows (*pictured individually are 1st, 2nd & 3rd*):

1. Megan Nash, Northwestern
2. Samantha Pappas, Groton
3. Mitchell VanderWal, Northwestern
4. Grace Starr, Harrisburg
5. Grace DiGiovanni, McCook Central
6. Natalie Haase, Parker
7. Kordel Kohnen, Hitchcock-Tulare
8. Rachel Rickenbach, Hot Springs
9. John Piroutek, Philip
10. Collin White, Brookings

Employment 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. The travel scholarships are sponsored by Kindra Gordon and Lance, Shirley, Jordanne, and Dalton Howe. The results were (*pictured individually are 1st, 2nd& 3rd*):

1. Matea Gordon, Sturgis
2. Mitchell Vander Wal, Northwestern
3. Kayle Lauck, McCook Central
4. Ella Stiefvater, McCook Central
5. Tessa Erdmann, Groton
6. Kacy Goehring, Parkston
7. Gabi Siefkes, Aberdeen Central
8. Laney Mackaben, Belle Fourche
9. Jami Bergeson, West Central
10. Gracie Fitzgerald, Philip



In **Ag Communications**, teams of students play the role of communications consultants to develop and present a media plan for an assigned scenario. Members also complete Editing and Communications tests. This event is sponsored by the South Dakota Broadcasters Association. The winning travel scholarship is sponsored by Dakota Farm Talk. Results were:

1. West Central (*pictured left to right Maddie Leasure, Ali Zacharias, Faith Hallem, Elli Otheim*)
2. Harrisburg
3. Lennox-Sundstrom
4. McCook Central
5. 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 and travel scholarship are sponsored by Ag PhD. The results were (*pictured individually are 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners*):

1. Morgan Mackaben, Belle Fourche
2. Matea Gordon, Sturgis
3. Kathryn Rausch, Hoven
4. Nate Collette, Lennox-Sundstrom
5. Alyssa Dix, Lemmon
6. Megan Nash, Northwestern
7. Drew Pederson, Garretson
8. Abby Blagg, McCook Central
9. Kaylee Morehead, Iroquois
10. Emma Jackson, Tri-Valley

Creed Speaking participants recite the FFA Creed and answer questions posed by the judges. This event and travel scholarship is sponsored by Craig and Bonnie Dybedahl and Jeremy and Laura Nettifee. The results were (*pictured individually are 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners*):

1. Brendan Nowell, Hitchcock/Tulare
2. Ethan Hendrix, Rapid City
3. Faith Genzlinger, Howard
4. Kathryn Loewe, Lennox-Sundstrom
5. Audrey Cox, Dell Rapids
6. Rebecca Feldhaus, Howard
7. Lexi Nichols, West Central
8. Kate Hamilton, Wolsey-Wessington
9. Raylee Fagerhaug, Wessington Springs
10. Kaecie Zacher, Aberdeen Central





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 Ludens Inc. Results were (pictured individually are 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners):

1. Blake Volmer, Winner
2. Jesse Cech, Lennox-Sundstrom
3. Lydia Hill, Sully Buttes
4. Avery Miles, Doland
5. Ashton Olivier, Chester
6. Elijah Pomerence, Belle Fourche
7. Madison Hofer, Freeman
8. Serena Davis, Belle Fourche
9. Tanner Calmus, Howard
10. Michael Larson, Sioux Valley



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 state travel scholarships are sponsored by Wilbur Ellis, Anipro Xtraformance Feed, Dacotah Diamond Auction and Kevin and Amber Blagg. The results were:

1. McCook Central (pictured with alternates: Ryan Blagg, Colton Stiefvater, Kayle Lauck, Maddy Lauck, Lauren Roling and Joe Grady)
2. Wolsey-Wessington
3. Beresford
4. Hot Springs
5. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket



In **Ag Issues**, a team of 3-7 students discuss the pros and cons of a major agricultural issue facing their area. The sponsor is South Dakota Farmers Union and the state winning team travel scholarship is sponsored by South Dakota Farmers Union, Farm Forum, and Dakota Risk Management. The results were:

1. Iroquois (Back Row - left to right): Logan Pekron, Harley Nelson, Katie Dubro and Sierra Kogel
Front Row (left to right): Kaylee Morehead, Lily Blue, and Lexi Burma
2. Lennox-Sundstrom
3. West Central
4. Miller
5. Howard



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New FFA Student Board of Directors Hold Inaugural Meeting

BY RYDER MORTENSON

On Tuesday, January 19th, 2021 the newly formed South Dakota FFA Student Board of Directors met for the first time since its inception. The Student Board was created to increase student input regarding association business as well as recommend changes and additions to State FFA events and programming. The student board consists of 14 student representatives, two per FFA district, and the six state officers, with State President Samantha Olson, serving as the chair. In the new format, SD FFA Association business is first seen by the Student Board before moving to the Adult Board for final approval. In January's meeting, members discussed and voted on adopting six policy additions to the Student and Adult Board of Directors. These

policies included a Deadlines Policy, Financial Policy, SD Conflict of Interest Policy, SD Document of Retention/Destruction Policy, SD Whistleblower Policy, and Volunteer Policy. In addition, they addressed New Business including State FFA Degree Review and Approval, Distance Education (Dual-credit FFA Membership), and a Constitution update project highlighted by a possible Constitution Committee. The SD FFA Adult Board of Directors met January 22, 2021, to act on business passed by the Student Board of Directors. Board minutes and adopted policies can be found on www.sdaged.org. The Student Board of Directors will meet again in the Fall.

Chapter Chatter

Arlington FFA is hosting an Ag Olympics, a teacher appreciation breakfast, a coloring contest, interacting with the elementary classrooms to teach them about ag facts and play games, and gearing up for spring CDE's.

Bon Homme FFA built a Ferris wheel for their local community park and pond area and is busy preparing for spring CDE's.

Flandreau FFA has a new fundraiser, selling fresh strawberries, since their regular winter fruit sales are successful.

Gettysburg FFA conducted an Adopt-A-Highway to clean up their community. They are also going to elementary classrooms during FFA week to educate their youth about the agricultural industry and inspire them to one day be an FFA member.

Howard FFA will be going to each elementary classroom and teaching about the agricultural industry and have fun dress-up days to promote FFA week.

Kadoka FFA finished a service project, funded in part by a TransCanada grant, as a special project of the SD FFA Foundation. Their senior class led design and construction while underclassmen helped construct three picnic tables for an outdoor high school lunch area, allowing for social distance. Their baseball complex will also utilize them. They used a homemade steel tubing bender and MIG welders to assemble the steel legs.

McCook Central FFA is excited to announce the first animals have been placed in the newly constructed hoop barn where students will gain hands-on experience with livestock! Members also competed at the State FFA Convention in AgriScience fair, proficiencies, STAR awards, and CDE's.

Scotland FFA had a busy semester hosting a barn dance, petting zoo, and will be hosting a lock-in to get new members excited about FFA and as a chapter recruiting for younger students.

Sturgis FFA is providing high school staff breakfast to go boxes throughout FFA week, to give back to those who helped them throughout the year and show appreciation for them.

Philip FFA built a hands on milk cow and beef cow exhibit to educate youth at the SD FFA Ag Adventure Zone.

Webster/Waubay FFA hosted the state degree meeting and with surrounding FFA Advisors, helped Mr. Adam Franken, Groton advisor, celebrate his birthday with pizza and refreshments.

Members by Chapter

BY ELIZABETH DEBOER

South Dakota FFA continues to grow - with 95 chapters and 4,589 members. Our 2020-21 impact:

Aberdeen Central - 16
Alcester-Hudson - 57
Andes Central - 7
Arlington - 25
Baltic - 12
Belle Fourche - 54
Beresford - 71
Bison - 19
Bon Homme - 33
Bowdle - 30
Brandon Valley - 16
Bridgewater-Emery - 51
Brookings - 54
Canton - 171
Centerville - 43
Chamberlain - 62
Chester - 52
Clark - 44
Colman-Egan - 26
Colome - 22
De Smet - 37
Dells - 43
Deubrook - 51
Deuel - 25
Doland - 41
Dupree - 35
Edmunds Central - 8
Elkton - 45
Estelline - 17
Ethan - 22
Faith - 21
Faulkton - 54
Flandreau - 10
Florence - 71
Freeman - 36
Garretson - 53
Gettysburg - 39
Groton - 27
Harding County - 31
Harrisburg - 167
Highmore - 53
Hitchcock Tulare - 32
Hot Springs - 31
Hoven - 42
Howard - 61

Huron - 32
Iroquois - 39
Jones County - 11
Kadoka - 32
Kimball - 56
Lake Preston - 43
Lemmon - 49
Lennox Sundstrom - 104
Lyman - 40
Madison Central - 137
McCook Central - 162
McIntosh - 14
Menno - 46
Milbank - 137
Miller - 57
Montrose - 45
Newell - 70
Northwestern Area - 57
Parker - 98
Parkston - 41
Philip - 65
Pierre - 11
Platte-Geddes - 66
Rapid City - 66
Redfield - 91
Rutland - 43
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket - 32
Scotland - 40
Selby Area - 31
Sioux Valley - 43
Sisseton - 22
Stanley County - 13
Sturgis - 81
Sully Buttes - 38
Sunshine Bible Academy - 19
Timber Lake - 17
Tri-Valley - 90
Viborg-Hurley - 63
Wagner - 31
Wall - 52
Watertown Area - 7
Webster - 30
Wessington Springs - 52
West Central - 72
Willow Lake - 43
Wilmot - 30
Winner - 21
Wolsey-Wessington - 73

On the Road Again...

BY: SAMANTHA OLSON

Chapter visits? Yes, they happened! The state officers traveled across the state both virtually and in person to 41 chapters this past fall getting to know what was happening at the local chapters. FFA members participated in workshops, which helped them advance their skills in speaking and leadership. Workshops focused on: FFA Opportunities, Value Identification, Time Management and Taking Initiative to Create a Plan, Effective forms of Communication, and the The Importance of Effective Communication. The topic most picked by advisors for their visit was "Time Management and Taking Initiative to Create a Plan." Students identified the value of time and how to create a plan before their FFA

career and time in high school ends. Madaline Watzel from the Winner FFA chapter said, " My favorite part of chapter visits was getting to see the different state officers and learn about new opportunities in FFA". Virtually or in person, state officers were able to create a connection with students across the state. Virtually or in person, state officers were able to create a connection with students across the state. Chapter visits wrapped up at the end of November, but the memories and lessons last throughout members' FFA careers. Twin City Northland Ford Dealers, Bayer, CHS Foundation and Agtegra sponsored the officer travels for chapter visits.



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Growing Leaders. Building Communities. Strengthening Agriculture.

This past year everything looks different. Just because HOW we do things has changed, does not mean WHY we do things has. FFA is still preparing youth to be tomorrow's employees in the science, business, technology and production of our food, and equipping them to advocate for agriculture and how we raise our food. **Join the SD FFA Foundation** as we celebrate successes and charter new opportunities for FFA members. You can **invest in agricultural education and the nearly 5000 South Dakota FFA members** and their advisors through the South Dakota FFA Foundation.

Be the difference!

1. **Use your voice** - record a <1-minute video advocating for FFA, for us to use on social media
2. **Connect** with the South Dakota FFA Foundation on **Facebook**
3. **Create a work or friend challenge** to match your donation to us during **National FFA Week, February 20-27**
4. **Donate** - any amount can support the general fund; \$80 Blue Jacket; \$150 leadership retreat scholarship; \$200 team travel scholarship; \$1000 Agriscience Fair; or \$2750 Star Partner
5. **Go to www.smile.amazon.com**, select the South Dakota FFA Foundation as your charity, and 0.05% of eligible purchases will go directly to us!

Visit www.sdffaoundation.org to learn more

SD FFA Members Receive National Grants to Expand Supervised Ag Experiences

Abbie Chase, McCook Central FFA and Rylee Schultz, Bridgewater Emery FFA each received \$1000 grants from the National FFA Organization to help create or expand their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects. Farm Credit and Corteva Agriscience - Pioneer Seeds, respectively, sponsored their grants. Chase and Schultz were selected from 5,968 applications nationwide.

Virtual Event Enables Career Exploration for FFA Members

The nature of work in rural America is changing. Growing industries such as precision agriculture, livestock development, food processing, manufacturing, energy, communications, and more require different skills, as well as an entrepreneurial spirit.

The Region's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives are hosting a Bright Futures event, February 24th, for FFA members and current tech school and university students. The virtual event will help students realize they have a bright future right here at home and discuss what it takes to get a good, high paying job in South Dakota.

The five-hour virtual event will feature key speakers and breakout sessions. Attendees can connect with other students, respond to survey questions, and post their own comments and photos; create and post content/videos throughout the event; participate in a live Q & A with presenters. Check with local ag teachers for more information.

Agriculture Education Classrooms and FFA Chapters in Action

Chamberlain Freshman earn FFA jackets, Bridgewater-Emery students tackle tractor restoration, Hoven 7th graders learn woodworking skills, and Scotland FFA members host a Petting Zoo for community members and supporters.





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Celebrate National FFA Week February 21st-27th

BY: HUNTER EIDE

FFA members and communities from across the nation will celebrate National FFA Week with activities and service projects. We asked SD chapters to share with us their top event ideas whatever you do, help us celebrate all FFA offers.

1. Businessmen's Breakfast - Members fix an early morning buffet-style breakfast to thank the businesses throughout the community and staff at the school - or deliver them a cupcake and a coke at the end of the school day, with a thank you note for everything they do for the FFA.

2. Greenhand Night - 1st year FFA members are invited to a night filled with games, leadership activities, and helpful FFA hints to make the most out of their years ahead in the blue jacket.

3. Pass the Chicken - Fundraise and get your community involved! Take the chicken to different businesses or teachers where they pay to pass it to a different business or pay for "insurance" to not get it back. It is a great way to develop new community connections and thank businesses and staff members.

4. FFA Emblem Scavenger Hunt - What better way to celebrate FFA week, than to get the whole school involved? At the beginning of the week, chapter officers hide FFA emblems around the school. Anyone who finds an emblem can bring it to the ag classroom to win a prize.

5. Speak Loud and Proud - Schedule newspaper, radio, or TV interviews to share FFA's values and mission. Share ag

education facts on social media to spread the word about FFA and ag education to others. Talk about why you joined/stayed in FFA, and opportunities for members.

6. Package it up! - Follow the FFA motto of "Living to Serve" and package meals for those in need in your community, or conduct another service project.

7. Blast from the Past - Ask alumni to take their FFA jackets to work, hang on their chair and start conversations about how FFA impacted their career - and share their story on social media!

8. Kiss an Animal - Set up one set of jars with different animals and another set of jars with different teachers' names on them. Students have a penny war, voting for 1 teacher and 1 animal they want that teacher to kiss. At the end of the week have the winner kiss the winning animal in front of the school.

9. Host an Ag Olympics Challenge - Get the whole school involved with competitions of bale tossing, nail pounding, roping, tractor pull, sawhorse riding, tire relay, FFA trivia, and more.

10. Wear FFA attire - sport FFA t-shirts, whether a chapter shirt, or one from Leadership Retreat, State Fair, District Officer Training, State or National Convention, wear an FFA shirt each day to show pride in the FFA and encourage people to ask questions about FFA.