

South Dakota FFA Foundation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SD FFA Star Partners Help Fund New Generation of Student Leadership

The South Dakota FFA actively engages South Dakota's youth in agriculture, and has done so for more than 89 years. The SD FFA Foundation's Star Partner Program joins the efforts of SD businesses and organizations with FFA's mission of developing premier leadership, personal growth and career success for youth involved in agriculture education. The Foundation welcomes a growing list of supporters that value South Dakota FFA and agriculture education at the local and state levels:

Distinguished Star Partners – Twin City Region Northland Ford Dealers

4 Star Partners - Monsanto

3 Star Partners - CHS Foundation and North Central Farmers Elevator

2 Star Partners - ADM Benson Quinn; BankWest; Producers Hybrid and SD Wheat Growers

1 Star Partners –AT&T, BASF, Butler Machinery; Croplan by Winfield United; DuPont Pioneer; East River Electric; Farm Credit Services of Americas; Hanson Associates LLC; Midwest Ag Supply; RDO Equipment (Aberdeen; Webster, Redfield; Sioux Falls; Rapid City); SD Corn Utilization Council; SD Farm Bureau; US Army/ Army ROTC; and C & B Operations, LLC (Gettysburg; Selby; Roscoe; Miller; Freeman; Yankton; Wagner; and Mitchell).



"The need to build partnerships in support of local and state agricultural education programs continues to grow," said Gerri Ann Eide, Executive Director of the South Dakota FFA Foundation. "We understand the ag economy is tight right now and it is inspiring to see companies and individuals stepping up! Our Star Partners are leading by example, committing financially to meet the needs of our students who are our future leaders and employees. These partners help provide quality leadership training for our FFA members, creating a pipeline of

employee development for the production, business, and science sectors of the SD agriculture industry."

Star Partner Program support provides resources for the South Dakota FFA Association, South Dakota FFA Alumni, South Dakota Association of Agricultural Educators, South Dakota FFA Foundation, post secondary agricultural events, and agricultural education at South Dakota State University.

"It's a win-win partnership as all levels of our agriculture education programs receive valuable support to prepare future employees for agricultural careers and develop skills to provide leadership for their local communities, while at the same time businesses and organizations receive year-long recognition for their partnership." says Eide. In 2016, SD FFA Star Partners made the following possible:

- Leadership training, curriculum supplies & breakfast with legislators for fifty district FFA officers
- Agriculture education Winter Professional Development conference for over fifty ag teachers
- New Teacher Academy, mentoring fourteen new teachers and ag ed majors on curriculum, working with stakeholders, and FFA
- One college student experienced international exchange developing a foundational understanding of global agricultural, including a cultural and personal perspective. Experience was shared with community and campus groups.
- Awards for Ideas Unlimited contest, encouraging teachers to share innovative teaching ideas
- Three issues of the SD FFA New Era newsletter
- Two college students attended National Ag Day in Washington, D.C. They learned different ways to advocate for agriculture, and shared personal stories about agriculture with legislators and decision makers.
- SDAAE Conference –outstanding member, program, and new teachers awards; banquet, educational tours
- New teacher workshop for teachers with 1-3 years of experience and student teachers
- In-depth Ag Mechanics workshop, curriculum materials for all SD ag ed programs
- 45 beginning teachers at SDAAE conference received food science instructional resource materials and laboratory supplies.
- FFA Alumni networking gathering at the SD State Fair
- Teach Ag day activities & reception; campus Ag Ed student professional development
- FFA Ag Adventure Center at the SD State Fair was renovated to advocate for modern agriculture and provided hands on learning activities and handouts for individuals attending
- Financial support for the SD FFA Convention, State Leadership Career Development Events, Summer Leadership Retreats, and all activities and events for the SD's 6,000 high school Agriculture Food and Natural Resources students.
- Travel scholarships for state champion teams to compete at National FFA Convention
- 140 FFA members received FFA jackets of their own

- Support for postsecondary student to serve on the National FFA Nominating Committee
- FFA Alumni networking event held at State Leadership Career Development events
- "Be an Ag Teacher" workshops hosted by SDSU AgEd majors for high school students
- Over 500 students connected with industry at the State Leadership Career Carnival

For a complete listing of South Dakota FFA Foundation Star Partners or more information, visit www.sdffaoundation.org.

The South Dakota FFA Foundation partners with individuals and businesses to provide resources that promote and enhance premier leadership, personal growth and career success for South Dakota youth in Agricultural Education. For more information about the South Dakota FFA Foundation, contact executive director Gerri Ann Eide at 605-765-4865 or visit us on the web at www.sdffaoundation.org.

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Photo Caption: SD FFA members attend the SD FFA Convention, sponsored in part by the SD FFA Star Partners.