



# FFA's New Era



February 2023

Vol. 89 • No. 2

## South Dakota FFA members leaving their mark on Indy

Students flooded the city of Indianapolis with a record attendance of 68,900 at National FFA Convention as they attended workshops, competed in different events, and heard inspiring 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 of hard work and preparation as the convention proceedings finished up in Indianapolis. These students and their projects were recognized on stage:



**DIGIOVANNI**  
- MCCOOK CENTRAL



**WEBER**  
- BRIDGEWATER-EMERY

### National Winner in Service

Learning Proficiency - Grace DiGiovanni, McCook Central

### Runner-up Diversified Crop Production Proficiency

Carson Weber, Bridgewater-Emery

### Runner-up Grain Production Proficiency

Landon Roling, McCook Central

### 2nd - Agriscience Fair Animal Systems Division 3

Colton Stiefvater, McCook Central

### 2nd - Milk Quality Written Exam

Vivian Koepsell, McCook Central

### 3rd - Agricultural Communications Team

McCook Central: Grace DiGiovanni (2nd individually), Tayah McGregor and Abby Wagner; Paul Kaffar

### 3rd - Compact Equipment area, Agricultural Technical & Mechanical Systems - Miller:

Briggs Runge, Jaden Anderberg (2nd individually), Dylan Hass, Trevor Werdel

### 3rd - Agriscience Fair Environmental Services/Natural Resources Systems Division 2

Ty Oyen and Gage Egger, Tri-Valley

### 3rd - Sheep/Goat Division, Livestock Evaluation

Quinton Berg, Bridgewater-Emery

### 4th - Agriscience Fair Plant Systems Division 5

Grace DiGiovanni, McCook Central

### 4th - Agriscience Fair Power, Structural and Technical Systems Division 2

Tucker Peterson and Gavin Kipp, McCook Central

### 4th - Agriscience Fair Power, Structural and Technical Systems Division 4

Brody Ahlquist and Hunter Foster, Tri-Valley

### 5th - Agriscience Fair Environmental Services/Natural Resources Systems Division 1

Noah Felderman, Doland

### 5th - Agriscience Fair Plant Systems Division 3

Tanner Eide, Gettysburg



**ROLING**  
- MCCOOK CENTRAL



**STIEFVATER**  
- MCCOOK CENTRAL



**DIGIOVANNI, MCGREGOR,  
& WAGNER**  
- MCCOOK CENTRAL



**RUNGE, ANDERBERG,  
HASS, & WERDEL**  
- MILLER



**OYEN & EGGER**  
- TRI-VALLEY



**BERG**  
- BRIDGEWATER-EMERY



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**2022-2023 STATE OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT**

Ella Stiefvater  
ella.stiefvater@jacks.sdstate.edu

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Megan Sanders  
megan.sanders@jacks.sdstate.edu

**SECRETARY**

Kathryn Rausch  
kathryn.rausch@jacks.sdstate.edu

**TREASURER**

Jacob Olson  
jacob.jolson@jacks.sdstate.edu

**REPORTER**

Sidney Petersen  
sidney.peterson@jacks.sdstate.edu

**SENTINEL**

Caleb McGregor  
caleb.mcgregor@jacks.sdstate.edu

.....

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Wyatt DeJong  
Cell: 605-842-5683  
wyatt.dejong@sdated.org

**LEADERSHIP &  
PROGRAM MANAGER**

April Hamilton  
april.hamilton@sdstate.edu  
Cell: 605-237-7526

.....

**SD FFA FOUNDATION**

39393 133rd St  
Bath, SD 57427  
Office: 605-688-4380

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Gerri Eide  
(605) 765-4865  
gerri@sdfoundation.org

**EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

Gretchen Sharp  
gretchen@sdfoundation.org

.....

**District Advisors**

District 1: Sara Colombe  
District 2: Dave VanderWal  
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## Achieving Top Gun

On January 11th and 12th, South Dakota's 49 district FFA officers attended a District Officer "Top Gun Training Academy" in Pierre, led by the state officers. The district officers learned the differences of guest vs. host mentality and that, as leaders, we are called upon to be the initiator. Session 2 dove into leading for others and identifying individuals they will be serving as well as finding power in their weaknesses, embracing periods of growth, and facing hard tasks. In the fourth session, district officers practiced communicating effectively by finding purpose and shaping their message. Upon learning about the ripple effect, they were invited to cast their stone into the "FFA Pond" and affect those around them with positive interactions. They wrapped up by building a plan for the future, graduating and achieving Top Gun!

The training included an educational visit to the state capitol building and evening reflection in the capitol rotunda, looking up at the paintings of the four pillars of South Dakota: livestock, industry and mining, agriculture, and family.

While in Pierre, the state and district FFA officers also hosted a Legislative Breakfast, sharing the importance of agriculture education and FFA with our state leaders and learning about current issues facing this legislative session.



## Chapter Chatter

**Gregory County FFA** - teamed up with the Mid Missouri River Prescribed Burn Association to help encourage attendance at their annual meeting. They invited students and chapters to listen to Dr. Twidwell speak about woody plant encroachment on January 15th. After his presentation, they helped serve supper and encouraged FFA members to stay for a fun night of games, dancing, and socializing.

**McCook Central FFA** - provided Thanksgiving dinners to two families, had an annual FFA Sharing Tree, delivered homemade goodies to community businesses, gave reindeer jars of puppy chow for staff appreciation and finished with a soup supper for all supporters and businesses to say thank you.

**Scotland FFA** - is excited to start the semester with an FFA member lock-in and community Mini CDE event.

**Webster/Waubay FFA** - prepared, served and delivered food to fishermen at a fishing tournament.

**Wilmot FFA** - is excited to host their first CDE this spring and is eagerly planning the event and gaining community connections to assist in hosting.

# District Officers Capitalize on Legislative Breakfast

On January 12th, the South Dakota FFA was honored to host nearly 40 state legislators and numerous sponsors at a Legislative Breakfast in Pierre. The district and state officers personally shared their experiences with legislators and discussed pressing agriculture topics, the impact of FFA, and the importance of all parts of the Agriculture Education program: classroom instruction, supervised agriculture experience (SAE), and FFA. Officers also shared that SD FFA is growing, with 109 chapters and nearly 5,500 members! Legislators expressed their passion for agriculture and interest in FFA and explained how the legislative process operates.

The FFA Legislative Breakfast was made possible by our sponsors, as a special project of the South Dakota FFA Foundation: Citi Bank, South Dakota Association of Cooperatives, South Dakota Bankers Association, South Dakota Farmers Union, South Dakota Association of Agricultural Educators, South Dakota Crop Improvement Association, South Dakota Soybean Processors, and South Dakota Wheat Commission, and our SD FFAStar 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, BankWest, Butler Machinery Company, Corteva Agriscience/Pioneer, The First National Bank of Sioux Falls, Dacotah Bank, ADM of Harrold, Miller, and Tulare, Titan/GoodYear Tires, First Dakota Bank, RDO Equipment, C&B Equipment, Army ROTC, East River Electric, Hanson & Associates, LLC, Midwest Veterinary Service, BASF, Croplan by Winfield United, Riverview, LLP, Titan Machinery, Citi, Green Thumb Commodities, Christensen Farms, LG Seeds, Olsen Custom Farms, and Leisinger Farms.



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# On The Road Again!

Over two thousand miles, a thousand students, ninety-four chapters, and six state FFA officers. These statistics can mean only one thing...FFA chapter visits are in full swing across South Dakota. From Mrs. Wammen's room in Buffalo to Mrs. White's shop in Hot Springs to Mrs. Maier's library in Hoven, the state officers facilitated a variety of workshops where students learned about the three circle model, how to develop their own mission statement, or what each officer position meant. Games like FFA Jeopardy, 'Become the Expert', and 'Emblem Scramble' gave students a chance to find out for themselves FFA's history, purpose, and how they see themselves in FFA's future.

Emma Peterson, Willow Lake FFA member, said, "In my chapter visit, the first thing we did was learn a few things about the state officers. I didn't know most of them very well, so this activity was really beneficial and helped me understand who they are and what they do! My favorite part was when Sidney and Jacob had us write down our goals and dreams for our futures. We got to talk about them and figure out how we planned on attaining them. I learned a lot and am very grateful that I had the opportunity to meet a couple state officers and grow my leadership skills through my chapter visit!"

Kacy and Elle Goehring, Parkston FFA members, said, "Two state officers made their way to chapter visits. The Parkston FFA chapter was very fortunate to have Ella and Kathryn come and share some skills with us. We played games in the process of gaining different skills throughout

each. My favorite part about the visit was getting assigned a food and having to describe it against another person. The skills gained will help all FFA members with speaking and leadership."

Successful chapter visits include students connecting with the state officers, finding new opportunities in FFA, and sharpening their leadership skills.





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# FFA Returns to Rodeo Rapid City



South Dakota FFA has found its place as part of Rodeo Rapid City. SD FFA showcased agriculture at the Ag Adventure Zone, January 27th-February 4th for the 3rd year, and also brought in hundreds of FFA members from three

states for FFA Day. District V Officers, FFA members, and special guests all appeared in FFA shirts, promoting agriculture and broadening horizons thanks to industry leaders sharing hands-on presentations.

The FFA Ag Adventure Zone, first showcased in 2020, is sponsored by South Dakota Farm Bureau as a special project of the SD FFA Foundation, and has become a popular attraction at Rodeo Rapid City. Patterned after the FFA Ag Adventure Center at the South Dakota State Fair, both activities share the same mission: "To showcase modern agricultural practices, communication, commitment to natural resources and demonstrate wholesome, safe food production."

"We are thrilled to have the South Dakota FFA Ag Adventure Zone back at Rodeo Rapid City! The activities provide a great way for FFA members to expose and educate the public on how agriculture is immersed throughout our everyday lives," says Amy Muller, Rodeo Rapid City production manager.

District V chapter members presented agricultural games and activities for visitors to partake in as well as speaking to guests about South Dakota agriculture. Ethan Hendrix, District 5 FFA Vice President shares, "The ag adventure zone is a great way to educate the public about agriculture, especially those not exposed to it on a daily basis."

In addition, "FFA Days", January 29-31, expanded to two days and was a key part of RRC. Chapter members heard from and interacted with industry leaders in agricultural educational pathways including animal systems, plant systems, power/structural systems and advocacy/communications. Presenters included: Tyson Foods, SD Beef Industry Council/Wall Meats, SD Pork Producers Council, SD Soil Health Coalition, Bayer, Brinks Constructors, Dakota Mill & Grain, Butler Machinery, SD Farm Bureau, Agtegra Cooperative Innovation Center, NewsCenter1/Homegrown, SD Stockgrowers, and the SD Sheep Growers Association. FFA members asked questions, mimicked different jobs, and gained insight on current agricultural practices. FFA members also had the opportunity to attend livestock shows, a livestock judging school, cattle and horse sales, and visit with different vendors and cheer on their classmates at the 20X High School Rodeo Showcase. Mercedes Jones, Wessington Springs freshman shared, "I really enjoyed FFA Days. The South Dakota Beef Board and Wall Meats taught how meat gets cut to our preferred form. I enjoyed the financial planning, learning the 4 pillars of successful farming, and learning about the pork industry from the Pork Council. I think every FFA member deserves to get this incredible opportunity."



# FFA Members Strive for SAE Excellence

**Joseph Grady, McCook Central; Lauren Roling, McCook Central; Benjamin Vandembark, Colome; and Lacie Weber, Rutland** each received \$1000 grants from the National FFA Organization to help create or expand their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects., Farm Credit, the CHS Foundation (two) and General Mills respectively, sponsored their grants. The four SD recipients were selected from 1,296 applications nationwide.



**Lacie Weber** will use her grant to construct new pens for her pig project, allowing for biosecurity protocols and feed management practices.



**Joseph Grady's** grant will grow his capacity to raise and sell show sheep, and mentor youth in the show ring.



**Lauren Roling's** grant will assist in growing her Ag Education SAE by implementing grain bin safety education for farmers and community members with all kinds of media and events.



**Benjamin Vandembark** will use his grant for upkeep of his poultry SAE facilities, feeders, and adding chickens. and test food options for his flock based on weekly weight gain and egg production.

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# Student Competitors Rise to the Top

Over December 4th and 5th, FFA members, advisors, and judges gathered in Pierre for the State LDE Competition. Over those two days, students showcased their leadership skills and abilities to hope to find their or their school's name on the top of the list. The top three individuals and top two teams advanced to the state competition from each of the seven districts. On Monday, students were able to interact with STAR Partners during the career carnival. Interacting with industry professionals allowed them to gain knowledge over various areas of agriculture. Before everyone headed home in the snowy weather, a banquet was held to acknowledge our new winners. The first place winners will compete at National Convention next October.

Sponsors for the 2022 State LDE Banquet were BioZyme, South Dakota Division of the MidWest Dairy Association, ADM Grain of Harrold, Miller, and Tulare, Agtegra Cooperative, BankWest, Bayer, Butler Machinery Company, C & B Equipment, CHS Foundation, Dacotah Bank, Farm Credit Services of America, Farmers Mutual of Nebraska, First Dakota National Bank, Pioneer/Corteva, South Dakota Corn Utilization Council, The First National Bank of Sioux Falls, Titan International, and Twins Cities Region Northland Ford Dealers.



**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. Scotland (pictured left to right): Katelyn Rempfer, Jenny Stark, Katelyn Jonas, Patience Starwalt, Bailey Vitek, Tori Dvorak, and Emily Dvorak.
2. Willow Lake
3. Lennox Sundstrom
4. Belle Fourche
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: Patience Starwalt, Scotland  
 Members At-Large:  
 Katelyn Rempfer, Scotland  
 Katelyn Jonas, Scotland  
 Karin Sweeter, Lennox-Sundstrom  
 Nora Terhark, Willow Lake  
 Tori Dvorak, Scotland.



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 Ag PhD. The travel scholarship is sponsored by Ag PhD and Central States Fair/Black Hills Stock Show. The results were (pictured left to right 1st, 2nd, 3rd):

Sponsor Central States Fair/Black Hills Stock Show representative, Dani Herring

1. Kathryn Loewe, Lennox-Sundstrom
2. Evelyn Ernst, Selby Area
3. Remington Jacobsen, Tea Area
4. Taya Chelmo, Kimball
5. Drew Pederson, Garretson
6. Bailey Feistner, Sanborn Central/Woonsocket
7. Nick Kappenman, Madison Central
8. Allie Westra, Beresford



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 (pictured left to right 1st, 2nd & 3rd):

1. Bennett Gordon, Sturgis
2. Sydney Lockhart, Hot Springs
3. Harlee Nielson, Hitchcock-Tulare
4. Elana Andrews, Beresford
5. Preston Rounds, Deuel
6. Gretta Larson, Lake Preston
7. Emily Knodel, Freeman
8. Gage Anderson, Lemmon


Thursday, February 23rd  
<https://sdffaoundation.org/#donate>




**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 and Natural Resources. The travel scholarship is sponsored by Kindra Gordon, Sadie Vander Wal and the Lance Howe Family. The results were (pictured left to right 1st, 2nd, 3rd):

Sponsors Sadie Vander Wal and Jordanne Arbach

1. Bennett Gordon, Sturgis
2. Morgan Mackaben, Belle Fourche
3. Faith Genzlinger, Howard
4. Mya Dissing, Tri-Valley
5. Sheridan Deering, Wall
6. Emily Robbins, Elkton
7. Ashton Massey, Menno
8. Drew Pederson, Garretson



**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, Dacotah Diamond Auctions and Equipment, Hoegemeyer Hybrids, YieldPro Ag, Bobbie Jo Donovan, and Kevin and Amber Blagg. The team results were:

1. Tri-Valley (pictured left to right): Sponsor YieldPro Ag Representative and team advisor Tanner Peterson, Tanner Van Asselt, Brady Braaten, Derek Van Asselt, and Ireland McAreavey.
2. McCook Central
3. Brookings
4. Sunshine Bible Academy
5. Parker

**Ag Sales top individual sellers** were also selected from each presentation room and is sponsored by Sorum Farms. The top individual sellers were (pictured left to right):

Room 1: Ireland McAreavey, Tri-Valley  
 Room 2: Jonathon Schock, McCook Central



The **Conduct of Chapter Meetings** event is designed for 7th-9th graders, not just 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): Callie Kaufman, Addison Ecklein, Lexi Pulse, Mandi Schock, Avery Alley, Kaylee Klinkhammer, Aubrynn Erickson, and Karlee Klinkhammer.
2. Willow Lake
3. Deubrook
4. Harrisburg
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 (pictured left to right 1st, 2nd, 3rd):

1. Zetta Kuhl, Hot Springs
2. Vivian Johnson, Madison Central
3. Julia Tinker, Brandon Valley
4. Gracie Pedersen, Tri-Valley
5. Jessica Hadrick, Faulkton
6. Bobbi Eide, Gettysburg
7. Hope Baysinger, Mitchell
8. Ellie Storm, Sturgis

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## Student Competitors Rise to the Top (cont.)



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. West Central (pictured left to right): Sponsor Legend Seeds, Inc. representative Pete Nielsen, Advisor Linda Peterson, AJ Ingalls, Madison DeMent, and Mya Davidson.
2. Howard
3. Doland
4. Hot Springs
5. Lemmon



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 left to right 1st, 2nd & 3rd):

1. Rebecca Feldhaus, Howard
2. Katelynn Scherff, Dell Rapids
3. Caroline Witte, Wessington Springs
4. Quynn Nielson, Sioux Valley
5. Dan Soukup, Wagner
6. Ashlynn Lamp, Milbank
7. Keaton Fielder, Selby Area
8. Ember Gabriel, Phillip



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 Central States Fair/Black Hills Stock Show. The team results are as follows:

1. Rapid City Stevens (pictured left to right): Sponsor Central States Fair/Black Hills Stock Show representative and team coach, Dani Herring, Advisor Genetie Hendrix, Daphne White, Ethan Hendrix, Elliot Hendrix, Tyler Sears, Alexa Roland, Madison Hoffman, and Jessica Jones.
2. West Central
3. Howard
4. Parker
5. Beresford



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 and Farm Progress/ Dakota Farmer. The travel scholarship is sponsored by Farm Progress/Dakota Farmer and Dakota Farm Talk. The team results are as follows:

1. West Central (pictured left to right): Shayne Luzmoor, Allison Brost, Sydney Neel, and Lexi Nichols.
2. Colome
3. McCook Central
4. Deubrook
5. Lemmon

## Past State Officers Broaden Horizons

Three 2021-2022 State Officers participated in the International Leadership Seminar for State Officers. Tessa Erdmann, Trinity Peterson, and Hadley Stiefvater traveled to Costa Rica from January 2-15. While in Central America, they toured a variety of agricultural related destinations. Some of their visits included the Hacienda Sur cattle ranch, where they learned about their Brahman-Red Wagyu program, participated in a rainforest chocolate tour, learned about pineapple production at a pineapple plantation, and discovered how vanilla and other spices are grown at the Villa Vanilla Spice Plantation. They were able to expand their knowledge on global agriculture and learn about unique agricultural practices.



# State Convention Sneak Peek

- The 95th SD FFA Convention is going to be one of the most memorable. While it is still in our historic town of Brookings, the stage lights will be turned on at the Swiftel Center. This new venue will exhibit hard working members showing their talents and technique in their CDE's. Since last year, members have been able to **REFLECT** and **TAKE ACTION** to improve their skill set and gear up for this convention. Please join us **April 16th-18th** for the convention, where we'll celebrate the enterprise and success of our members, sponsors, and alumni. 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 Agri-Business, and Star in AgriScience winners** for outstanding Supervised Agricultural Experience projects.
- **Congratulate American Degree recipients** from 2022.
- **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 2023-2024 State Officer Team.

## Ready to Step Up and Lead?

If you are currently a high school senior or college freshman looking for an opportunity to give back and serve the South Dakota FFA Association, serving as a state officer or ambassador could be just the thing for you! As current state officers, we invite you to apply if you are passionate about making a difference in the lives of members, open to becoming the best version of yourself, and willing to embrace what could be the greatest year of your life! Already thinking of running? Remember that

the interview process is an experience in itself and will help you learn more about yourself while the committee puts together the most effective team. As a new officer you will travel across the state and nation, lead retreats and workshops, learn about diversity in agriculture, serve members and advisors in various roles, and become the face of South Dakota FFA. To learn more about these positions, reach out to the State FFA Office 605-688-4380.



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# Empower the Next Generation

**South Dakota FFA** has a lot to be proud of. We represent a mighty brand, and we have worked hard to honor it, grow it, and steward it for those who will follow in our footsteps.

**The South Dakota FFA Foundation** works passionately and quietly behind the scenes to **empower South Dakota FFA members** and agricultural education teachers. We empower the young people that will empower the future. There is no other organization that promotes students the way we do. The role of the Foundation is simple – help grow SD’s greatest resource: its youth.

Your personal investment will empower the future of the SD FFA by growing its youth.

1. **Use your voice** – record a short video advocating for FFA, tag us
2. **Connect** with the South Dakota FFA Foundation on Facebook
3. **Create a birthday, work or friend challenge** to match your donation to us during National FFA Week
4. **Utilize** company “Matching Gift” programs
5. **Donate** – support the core mission or a specific program: State Fair, Blue Jackets Program, Leadership Retreat, CDE/LDE travel scholarship, Agriscience Fair, etc.
6. **Leave a legacy** – a gift now that creates a better future. It is not bound by age or time served. A planned gift of land or assets, now or in your will or estate plan, will make an impact on the organization that had a strong impact on you, your spouse, or your children.

We’re proud of the work we’ve done. The question is, **What’s the future worth and who will invest?** Contact [gerri@sdfoundation.org](mailto:gerri@sdfoundation.org) to learn more!

## 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 career success.**

**Name:** Lori Tonak

**Home FFA Chapter:** Clark, SD

**Year Graduated High School:** 1977

**College:** South Dakota State University: BS Agriculture Education, 1981

**Current Position:** Instructor for the SD Center for Farm/Ranch Management, Mitchell Technical College

**What did you enjoy most about FFA?** As I only spent one year as a member, my experiences are from my time as a FFA advisor. My biggest enjoyment was to see the members’ growth in confidence and leadership from their first year of membership until graduation. Seeing a member that struggled academically excel at an FFA LDE/CDE is a close tie! Seeing past members giving back in the communities where they now reside also brings joy to my soul.

**How did your FFA experience contribute to your personal growth?** As an instructor, the members taught me life can never be taken too seriously. The hardest working members I ever had always found time to have fun while we were working and traveling. Of course, the fun had to be within the boundaries of the advisor’s rules.

**What advice would you give FFA members today?** Do not be afraid to take on a new challenge. Breathe deep when fear is overwhelming you and reach out for help from an advisor or a fellow member if you need to. FFA is a family and people are there to support you!

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**SOUTH DAKOTA  
FFA FOUNDATION, Inc.**

39393 133<sup>rd</sup> St.  
Bath, SD 57427

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## What Will Your FFA Week Include?

With FFA week fast approaching, what activities will you participate in? FFA week is celebrated across the state and nation with outreach events, fun nights, and community service projects. Whatever your week entails, don't forget to share it with the SD FFA Foundation on social media!



- **Teacher Appreciation:** Host a teacher appreciation breakfast or assemble and hand out goodie bags to show appreciation to your teachers. Cherry pie, in honor of George Washington's birthday, is also a fun treat!
- **Ag Olympics:** Bring your entire school together by hosting an Ag Olympics competition. Plan games like stick horse barrel racing, bale toss, milk the cow, and a calf roping relay.
- **Dress-Up Days:** Plan fun and interactive dress up days and involve all grade levels. Days that are always a hit are dress as an ag occupation day, camouflage day, FFA shirt day, and dress as a farmer or rancher.
- **Chapter Fun Nights:** FFA members have many responsibilities throughout the year, so why not have some fun? Have a chapter potluck, Wii Bowling tournament, or play board games.
- **Food Drive:** There is always a need for non-perishable food items. Make a competition between classes or grades for who can bring in and donate the most food items.
- **Ag Trivia Competition:** Whether you do a few questions over multiple days or all at once, announce ag trivia questions over the school intercom for students to answer. The class to call in or get to the office first wins!
- **Social Media Photo Challenge:** Challenge FFA members to make social media posts corresponding to a theme for each day. Themes can include your SAE project, favorite FFA memory, favorite FFA competition, and you in an FFA jacket.
- **Prepare Tie-Blankets:** Tie-Blankets are a community service project that require all hands on deck. Making tie-blankets is a fun service project to complete and they can be donated to your school's nurse's office or a community outreach center.