

## Montana FFA Foundation

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State Advisor's **UPDATE:** 

Happy New Year! I hope you all enjoyed the Christmas holiday season and are looking forward to the winter months and all of the great activities that go along with this time of the year. Snowmobiling, basketball games, ice skating, feeding cows, more basketball games, and FFA activities are just a few of the things that are currently taking place across Montana. Unfortunately, this time of year also brings below zero temperatures and poor roads!

Due to the FFA Foundation's great work, the annual John Deere Ag Expo was a huge success. Over 1400 of Montana's FFA members got the opportunity to compete for great prizes and recognition. In addition, younger students learned leadership skills by participating in the Montana Leadership Conference while older students enjoyed the Premier Leadership

Conference. The social and networking opportunities that exist during a conference like this are appreciated by all in attendance and something that you cannot place a value on.

The state officers will soon wrap up their chapter visits for the year. Thank you to the advisors and chapters who have welcomed and hosted our state officers. At the end of their year, almost every officer says that "chapter visits were their favorite activity". Very soon the officers will be "gearing up" for the State FFA Convention. This year's convention will be held in Great Falls beginning March 22<sup>nd</sup> and concluding March 25th. Get your rooms now and get ready for another great convention. Additionally, the State FFA Officers along with the other CTSO officers will participate in a January meeting with the Governor to discuss vocational education.

The KMON competitions as well as the Fergus and Melstone mechanics competitions are coming up soon. Good luck to the members who will choose to participate in these great activities. Another activity that is coming up in February is the Montana Association of Agriculture Educator's legislative breakfast in Helena. This is held to thank legislators for their support of FFA and Career and Technical

Education in Montana.

Hope to see you all at State Convention!



Jim Rose State Advisor



Pictured to the left: Albert Koenig with the Bainville FFA conducting a chapter visit. Pictured to the right: Six of the eight state officers who just finished a chapter visit.

#### REPORTER'S UPDATE

As the calendar year ends, the FFA calendar roars on with exciting contests, chapter visits, and conferences. Just one month ago, over 1,400 members gathered once again in Bozeman to participate in the annual John Deere Ag Expo. It was a weekend full of workshops, guest speakers and Career Development Events (CDEs) that allowed members to develop their leadership skills, try out some of the competitions offered and meet lots of new friends from across the Treasure State. It was especially exciting to be able to hold a brand new CDE for Montana, Agricultural Education. Participants were able to learn about what it means to be an agricultural educator, while they developed lesson plans, practiced public speaking and were tested on a huge range of topics in agriculture. It was a great turnout for the contest, and superintendents of the CDE, Trevor Motley and Todd Lackman are excited to hopefully see the event continue for many years to come. There were plenty of other contests offered including extemporaneous speaking, marketing plan, agricultural issues, job interview, mechanics and others. The John Deere Ag Expo is one of the largest events held throughout the year and this year's expo was a huge success.

The Montana FFA Association is proud to have nearly 100 chapters across our wonderful state. As state officers, we are honored to be able to visit each of these chapters during the next couple months. A few of these chapter visits have already been conducted, and we are very excited to continue our travels to every corner of the state. There are plenty of other events and important dates fast approaching, such as Torgerson's Gold Conference in Bozeman (January  $6^{th} - 9^{th}$ ), the KMON in Great Falls (January  $20^{th} - 21^{st}$ ) and Fergus Mechanics in Lewistown (January  $28^{th}$ ). We are so excited to see you all at State Convention in March!

#### Best Regards,

Kacie Cummings, State Reporter



## Welcome Cloud Peak Energy

Cloud Peak Energy was introduced to the Montana FFA Foundation by their Senior Government Affairs Manager, Todd O'Hair. Todd is a former FFA Member of the Park Chapter and served as State FFA President from 1985 – 1986. The skills Todd honed during his years as an FFA member served him well as he worked for a United States Congressman in Washington, D.C. and Governor of Montana as the Natural Resource Policy Advisor. "The public speaking skills and the leadership training that came with my years in FFA were undoubtedly the foundation for my life's work later on," says O'Hair. "I had no idea where my path would take me, but I have realized no matter what direction I take, the skills I learned in FFA were instrumental for a successful life."

Today, Todd works for one of the largest coal mining companies in the United States, Cloud Peak Energy. In his role as Senior Manager, Todd is responsible for a variety of public affairs activities associated with the company including lobbying, public education, and other public relations activities.

Headquartered in Gillette, Wyoming, Cloud Peak Energy owns and operates the largest coal mine in Montana, the Spring Creek Mine located near Decker, Montana. The Spring Creek Mine ships coal to coal-fired electrical generating stations to a variety of customers including Minnesota, Michigan, Washington and some Asian countries such as South Korea.

Cloud Peak Energy is a significant contributor to the Montana economy, paying over \$52 million in taxes to the state of Montana in 2015 and spending around \$17 million on goods and services. Cloud Peak Energy also actively recruits employees from Montana to work at the wide variety of positions at their mines and offices. The Montana FFA program provides essential training and education necessary in today's world. From public speaking to mechanics education, the work the Montana FFA is doing is a natural fit for the workforce at Cloud Peak Energy. And importantly, Cloud Peak Energy believes students benefit from the FFA program, no matter what FFA members decide to pursue their life goals.

And that's why Cloud Peak Energy is proud to be a sponsor of the Montana FFA Foundation.





Albert Koenig, state FFA president, spoke during John Deere Ag Expo at the award session.

Congratulations to all students and chapters at John Deere Ag Expo, including the Corvallis FFA chapter pictured below.



### Face of FFA

The "Face of FFA" for December comes to us from the Judith Gap FFA Chapter, and we are proud to recognize Reilly Allik as this month's recipient! Reilly has been an FFA member for four years, three with the Wheatland FFA, and one in Judith Gap's Chapter. Reilly has been a tremendous asset to both chapters that she has been with, as seen by her impressive list of FFA contests in which she participates. Reilly will dedicate time to competing in eleven different contests this year and hopes to continue succeeding in a variety of events. At the Montana Range Days event this summer, Reilly was in the top three Range hands and won the Range contest during the Montana State Fair later in the summer.

While Reilly stays busy with FFA contests, she has a variety of other agricultural interests as well. She raises, shows, and sells her own market hogs every summer all while working a summer job with the Wheatland County Weed Department. Outside of FFA, Reilly serves her school and community as the Student Body President, plays volleyball and basketball, runs track, stays involved in academic clubs, and even plays in the pep band!

When asked about her favorite FFA memory, Reilly said, "Every day is a good day in the FFA, but if I had to pinpoint one favorite, I would choose the first day of my first State Convention. It was not until this day that I realized just how much the FFA meant to me, and how far it could take me with its numerous opportunities." Due to Reilly's passion for helping others and agriculture, she plans to attend Montana State University to major in Agricultural Education after she finishes high school, as well as run for State FFA Office. Reilly says her goals are driven by a need to leave a lasting impression on the lives of young agriculturalists, just as her advisors have left on her. Reilly says, "Despite my small school, I am so incredibly proud to be a part of something so much bigger, the wonderful Montana FFA, and I am looking forward to another great year!"

Congratulations Reilly! We are so honored to be able to recognize you as the Face of FFA for the month of December, your passion for agriculture and future students is commendable, and Montana FFA is lucky to have a member with such dedication and determination!



Pictured below is Riley with her hog at the Wheatland County Youth Fair.

### Note from the President



Greetings, Happy New Year!

I'm sure by now everyone has recovered from the holidays and is back to their regular routine. I hope that all of you were able to enjoy family and friends and reflect and the past year and have optimism for the coming year.

For our family, we were confronted with the passing of my grandfather. Grandpa was an honest man. A man that spent his entire life (97 years) living in agriculture. As I was reflecting on what grandpa did with his life and the lives of those around him I couldn't help but think of the FFA motto. Learning to Do; Doing to Learn; Earning to Live; Living to Serve. Grandpa worked the land his entire life and learned by doing.

There was no Google or an app on the cell phone. The more he did the more he learned. Not always successful but he continued to learn. He was a steward of the land that earned a living for him and his family. A living that was built with his own hands and determination. He lived to serve. He served his family and neighbors. Both in ways that build legacies. A legacy that is now into its fourth generation as a working cattle ranch.

Grandpa was very instrumental in my successful FFA career. I lived in town but spent all of my summers and free time on his ranch. Learning to Do; Doing to Learn; Earning to Live; Living to Serve. I see the ethic he instilled in me each time I see a group of FFA members. Their optimism and "can do" spirit gives me tremendous hope for a bright future for Montana agriculture.

For me to truly honor my grandpa's legacy I looked to the FFA Foundation. The Foundation is able to accept memorials to benefit the future of agriculture and FFA students in Montana. It seemed only fitting that my wife and I contribute to the Helping Hands campaign, in grandpa's name. This is the current campaign that is being implemented by the foundation to ensure future FFA members have the same opportunity in the future that we enjoy today.

Losing a loved one is never easy. I encourage all of our FFA supporters to remember the foundation in your estate planning. You can be assured your generosity will be used to carry on the legacy of your loved one and benefit our youth and future at the same time.

As we begin 2017 state convention will quickly be upon us. I looked forward to this rejuvenating part of the FFA experience. Thanks in advance to the city of Great Falls for being our hosts. Good luck to all of you as you prepare for this exciting event.

Forever Blue

Curt Robbins
President, Montana FFA Foundation



## Greetings from the Executive Director



Another year is upon us and January seems to create a sense of rejuvenation and freshness to everything from the fields and boardroom to the classroom. At the Montana FFA Foundation, a sense of excitement begins as we start planning for another State Convention and a great year ahead. Each year, the enthusiasm and growth we witness in the lives of our students and through the support we provide for their development prove to be an exciting story to watch unfold.

A new year also allows us to look back at 2016 and measure our successes in developing future leaders, creating opportunities for students and growing the next generation of agriculturalists. 2016 was the best year Montana FFA Foundation has ever experienced. We were able to give over \$300,000.00 in support to local chapters, students, and the Montana FFA Association. We commend all our wonderful donors and partners who see the value in FFA and continue to give so charitably. Agriculture has a promising future because of the generosity of our donors, which directly impacts the lives of our FFA students. I am thankful and excited to be a part

of this organization that gets to share in the lives of students and donors. I know our work is not done as we strive to support our students more in 2017. Thank you for all you do to support Montana FFA and I wish you all a very blessed and prosperous 2017. Please join us at an FFA event soon! If you want to know more about how to get involved, please make sure to sign up for our e-news blasts at www.montanaffa.org.

Best to you in the New Year,

Jaime Edmundson

Jaime Edmundson Montana FFA Foundation Executive Director





## State convention

Believe it or not, State FFA Convention is coming up in March! It will be held in Great Falls this year; the State FFA Officers are in the middle of planning the event and are very excited to join the over 1,500 students, advisors, and guests!

Interested in joining our State FFA Convention Tradeshow? Simply enter the link below into your browser to register and gain more information!

https://montanaffa.z2systems.com/event.jsp?event=13



**Great Falls, MT** 

22-25

March 2017

To:
-Place an Ad in our Convention Program
-Host a Trade Show Booth
-Get Involved

.

Email support@montanaffa.org

## Welcome new Board members

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At the FFA Foundation, we are excited to welcome two valuable board members to our team, Scott Aspendleider and Rik Miller! Both individuals have years of experience and knowledge in which they will bring to the board.



"I grew up a city kid from Culbertson without any direct connection to agriculture other than knowing that it was a large part of our small community. FFA was my first meaningful opportunity to connect with agriculture, allowing me to learn its importance and to put my hands on it. The skills I learned through competing in agronomy, parliamentary procedure, prepared speaking and business management set me up with skills to be successful in college and then personally and professionally later in life. FFA and that tie to agriculture led me to a degree in Civil Engineering from MSU and to starting an engineering firm with a focus on Water Resources and Irrigated Agriculture. The FFA gave me the foundation and tools to build a company and a great team working within agriculture. Now as we grow as a business and look to expand our team I look for the same traits that you as members learn through the FFA. I'm excited for the opportunity to work with the future leaders of our communities and the Agricultural and Water Resources Industries. You, members of the FFA, are the future and have the world at your fingertips and I can't wait to work with you and help you achieve all that's laid in front of you. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of the Blue Jackets again."



- Scott Aspendleider, Montana FFA Foundation Board Member

Students carefully evaluate sheep during the livestock evaluation contest at John Deere Ag Expo, the largest competition in the northwest.





"For over 30 years I've been involved in FFA and have had the opportunity to see first-hand the tremendous opportunities that the program provides to students for leadership and personal growth development that serve them well throughout the rest if their life, regardless of their future occupation or educational goals. In my opinion, career success for anyone is directly attributable to personal motivation, determination, preparedness, and perseverance. The FFA program and its foundational core values, principles, teachings and experiences are aligned with the elements of career and lifelong success. In industry and business, employers are looking for people who are confident and dedicated, with a strong work ethic and ability to learn. FFA programs provide that kind of talent - young leaders who are prepared to learn and grow. It's been a great organization to be associated with at all levels and I look forward to doing my part in promoting and strengthening the ongoing success of the MT FFA Foundation."

- Rik Miller, Montana FFA Foundation Board Member

## John Deere Ag Expo

John Deere Ag Expo was held in the beginning of November and Mikayla Comes from the Fergus of Lewistown FFA chapter was asked to talk about her experience. See below!



"The Fergus of Lewistown FFA chapter has had the privilege of attending the John Deere Ag Expo for the past five years, and each year Ag Expo improves in excellence. The first JDAE that our chapter attended we had nineteen members competing in all Career Development Events. At the 2016 John Deere Ag Expo, we had 38 members competing in nearly all CDEs. Every year we are able to gain experience in contests that aren't put on numerous times annually, compete in some of our favorite CDEs, and even learn leadership tools that we can apply in our chapter and community, all of which would not be possible without our Foundation, Alumni, State Officers and generous sponsors. JDAE is a great way for our Greenhands to gain experience and confidence in contests that they have never participated in before. In addition, with this being one of their first large conventions, they are also able to get a better understanding and feel for what MT FFA is all about, and what to expect in their next four (plus) years wearing that blue corduroy. Aside from the contests, speakers, and workshops, JDAE is also one of our members' favorite times throughout the year, because they are able to connect with other members from all over the state of Montana. Our more seasoned members always look forward to returning to Bozeman for Ag Expo. It gives all of them an opportunity to shake out a few cobwebs from in between their ears and get back into the swing of competing and working on becoming better than the year prior. It is also the first time in the year where friendships made at leadership conferences and contests from previous years can be rekindled and strengthened. Piling into that bus at five am to make sure that our nine A.M. competitors aren't late may be one of the worst bus departures of the year, but the early morning chaos is all worth it when we walk into the SUB on Montana State's campus on Thursday morning knowing it is the start of a fantastic, FFA filled three days."

## Thank you, John Deere!





Congratulations to all chapters at John Deere Ag Expo!

## Montana Farm Bureau Spech Contest



#### 2017 Montana Farm Bureau Foundation Youth Speech Contest

Montana Farm Bureau Foundation is happy to announce that we will once again be holding our annual Youth Speech Contest in conjunction with the Montana FFA State Convention, March 22-25, 2017 in Great Falls. One of our Foundation's most important goals is to help with agricultural education and the leadership development of Montana's youth. This speech contest fits that goal very well and we are offering great prizes to make this an exciting opportunity. We know that FFA has similar contests for high school students and we want to complement, rather than compete, with those contests. Our Youth Speech Contest will be open to students in the 7th, 8th and 9th grade, who are not able to participate in the State FFA Prepared Speech Contest. Contestants must submit a transcript of their speech by March 1, 2017. Those will be judged prior to the FFA State Convention and the top 20 contestants will be invited to compete during the event.

Here are a few more details, but for more information, official rules or for a registration form contact Scott Kulbeck at scottk@mfbf.org or 406-587-3153.

Speech topic: Put yourself in the shoes of a local Representative or Senate candidate running for office in the Montana Legislature. Please prepare your 4 minute campaign speech indicating your top priorities for serving agriculture and rural Montana if elected.

- Open to students currently in the 7th, 8th or 9th grade.
- Your prepared speech needs to be between 2.5 4 minutes in length.
- FFA members, 4-H members and any other student in Montana are able to enter the contest.
- Prizes: 1st place = \$400.00, 2nd = \$300.00, 3rd = \$200.00, 4th = \$100 and 5th = \$50.
- Registration and a copy of your speech must be received by the Montana Farm Bureau Federation office by March 1, 2017.

# Thank You

The FFA Foundation would like to thank Josh Doely for his 6 years of service on the Foundation's Board of Directors. Josh was elected to the Foundation board in 2011, bringing his knowledge of the ag industry and his background as a Montana FFA State Officer. Josh was instrumental in the growth the Foundation has experienced the last several years and we want to thank Josh for his years of service, and passion for Montana FFA and the Foundation. Josh will be stepping off the board but Josh will still be an advocate and supporter of FFA for years to come.



Pictured to the left is Josh Doely on his horse, thank you for your service, Josh!

## Welcome Scholarship Endowment

2016 was a successful year, thanks to your continual support and generosity. Last year, we added on two new endowment sponsors:

Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity- Alpha Delta Chapter and Stockman Bank!



Stockman Bank is excited to establish the Next Gen Scholarship for Montana FFA students," comments Bill Coffee, CEO of Stockman Bank. "FFA promotes the type of skills and work ethic that are required to be successful in life. Many of us throughout Montana were fortunate to participate in FFA and use those acquired skills every day. Previous generations made our education and participation possible. Now, we appreciate the opportunity to award two deserving Montana students a scholarship to further their agricultural education and become emerging leaders in this great state. They will continue the FFA tradition of better days through better ways.

- Tricia Hansen, Stockman Bank

The Foundation is currently working to fund a one-million-dollar comprehensive endowed scholarship campaign. Our scholarship programs allow our students to continue their personal growth and education while developing an educated workforce for Montana and beyond. There are three areas we support through scholarships: FFA Scholarships, State Officer Scholarships, and Leadership Development Scholarships. The Scholarship Fund serves our students who wish to enhance their education after high school, develop and enrich their local communities, with emphasis on rural and underdeveloped communities, and help jump-start our students to create job opportunities within their local economies. College scholarships help our FFA students in all sectors of business – from nursing or engineering to ag and mechanics – and provide opportunities for our students and their communities.



"Alpha Gamma Rho is always honored to support Montana FFA any way we can. Both FFA and Alpha Gamma Rho share a common bond of agricultural, leadership, and development of the future generations. Alpha Gamma Rho puts forth our support to keep these ideals strong."

- Brant Marsh, Alpha Gamma Rho brother and Past State FFA Officer



Pictured above: Jaime Edmundson, Executive Director, and Ian Glennie, Philanthropy Chair of Alpha Gamma Rho.

## Congratulations Bulls for Blue & Helping Hands Receipients

## Thank you to our Bulls for Blue supporters! We were able to give a total of \$8,500 to our students to jumpstart their Beef SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience) because of YOU!

Bobcat Angus Hyline Angus Ranch Sitz Angus

Bulls of the Bitterroot Indreland Angus Stevenson Angus

DeBruycker Charolais Klompein Red Angus Stevenson Basin Angus

Diamond D Angus Mytty Angus Stevenson's Diamond Dot

Felton Angus Prickly Pear Simmental Sutherlin Farms
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#### **Recipients for Bulls for Blue include:**

<u>Destiny Fabel (Ruby Valley FFA)</u> – Destiny will use her grant money to purchase equipment for her cattle. Some equipment includes new halters, a blow dryer, and a large leather show halter.

<u>Max Andres (Missoula FFA) – Max will use his funds to purchase two heifer calves to build his herd and start making money for college.</u>

<u>Daniel Hopf (Hysham FFA) – Daniel will purchase hay silage and cattle clippers with his funds.</u>

<u>Teagan Turner (Missoula FFA) – Teagan is excited to use his funds to purchase two steers and donate half of one calf to donate to his local church; the remainder he will sell and start his college fund.</u>

<u>Cora Wood (Big Horn FFA)</u> – Cora will use her funds to purchase grain, hay, and vaccine for her cattle. She will sell her cattle in the summer and continue her college fund.

<u>Ethan Turner (Missoula FFA)</u> – Ethan will use his funds to purchase a calf at a relatively low price, raise him on a corn and canola diet, when it comes time to butcher he will be donated to the local Missoula Food Bank to be distributed to families throughout the community that are having a hard time putting food on the table.

<u>Saralyn Standley (Missoula FFA) – Saralyn will start a beef breeding SAE.</u> She will sell the calves after weaning and put the funds into a savings account for college.

<u>Judith Gap FFA</u> – Judith Gap will use their funds to refurbish all of the electrical Christmas decorations that the city hangs on the main street through town. The students will learn basic electrical skills to repair the decorations and replace the broken bulbs. The project will improve the look of the community!

<u>Chinook FFA -</u> Chinook FFA will use the grant money to maek 15 portable planters for community members to plant flowers, fruits, and vegetables. By doing this, Chinook FFA will be promoting health diets and providing an area for community members to grow their own food.



Thank you to our Helping Hands grant supporters! Kenyon Noble, Five Valleys Land Trust, Farmers State Bank, Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, Darell & Tammy Luther, Pat & Darcy Street, David Wichman, Rickey & Deb Arnold, and Tom & Carol Sparks.

In 2016, we gave a total of \$13,000 in Helping Hands Grants!

## GOLD Conference

To kick off the New Year, senior FFA members gathered in Bozeman on January 6<sup>th</sup> to kick off the fourth annual GOLD (Growing Our Leaders and Developers) Conference. This year's conference drew in 29 participants ready to learn about themselves, leadership, and what the ag industry has to offer future leaders. Facilitator Gwynn Simeniuk along with many other volunteers made this year's conference possible through the organization and hard work. This conference is brought to Montana FFA through the generous sponsorship of Torgerson's, not only in funds but in time as well. We were fortunate to be joined by Torgerson's staff to help conduct interview rounds, offer advice, and host some fun activities as well. The students that attended the conference gained many valuable skills and experiences, including team presentations, interview skills, speech improvement, and much more. When asked about the conference, Heidi Froelich of the Park City FFA said that GOLD Conference was, "A great way to meet members from across the state, as well as learn more about my leadership style." Several other members agreed with Heidi, including Kylie Burlingham of the Stevensville FFA, saying, "GOLD Conference prepared me for my near future and the years to come. It not only helped me see a different side to people, but it also helped me learn a lot about myself."

Justin Cape, Colton Hoppe, and Juan Pablo Du-Pond enjoyed GOLD Conference!



Thank you to our many volunteers who assisted with GOLD Conference, including Todd Lackman sharing his advice to the attendees.

For those thinking of attending GOLD Conference next year, Sheridan Johnson said it best when she said, "GOLD Conference is a fantastic opportunity for students to learn a lot about themselves, improve professional skills, and get serious about the future, all while having fun with some amazing people!" No matter where FFA member's futures may take them, after the time spent at GOLD Conference this year, I have no doubt that the agricultural industry is in good hands with these young leaders in the driver's seat. When asked about the conference, John Power of the Wheatland FFA Chapter said, "I am thankful that the Torgerson's representatives were able to help us with our interview skills." Montana FFA is fortunate to have such unique and talented individuals, all of whom were filled with gratitude for the new skills and advice gained. My state officer teammates and I found this conference to be outstanding, and Teal Luther of the Forsyth FFA agreed saying, "GOLD Conference was by far one of the coolest experiences of my FFA career." Well said, Teal! Thank you to all who work so incredibly hard to make this conference possible, and thank you to all of the wonderful FFA members who attended.

Ashely Koenig, State Secretary

## Thank you 2016 Sponsors

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Thank you so much to our sponsors for the year. You made a difference in over 5,000 students' lives across the Big Sky State. Thank you for making an impact.







### Montana FFA Foundation

502 South 19th, Suite 102 Bozeman, MT 59718

foundation@montanaffa.org (406) 582-4118

#### Correction:

We apologize about our Golf Tournament results last newsletter!

Congratulations to:

Montana State University Strand Union for winning our 2016 Blue & Gold Golf Scramble!

