

*Wisconsin FFA State
Convention Magazine*

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF FFA

TURN IT



June 9th-12th. 2025

2024-25 Wisconsin FFA State Officers



- Section 1:** Emma Johnson, Amery FFA - State Parliamentarian
Section 2: Amalia Draxler, Glenwood City FFA - State Vice President
Section 3: Jazmin Wagner, Melrose-Mindoro FFA - State Secretary
Section 4: Tyson Gehrke, Fennimore FFA - State Treasurer
Section 5: Cheyenne Johnson, Oregon FFA - State Vice President
Section 6: Abel Kooima, Waupun FFA - State Vice President
Section 7: Luke Schraufnagel, Thorp FFA - State Vice President
Section 8: Taylor Maroszek, Pulaski FFA - State Reporter
Section 9: Crystal Anhalt, Mishicot FFA - State Vice President
Section 10: Alyssa Schauer, East Troy FFA - State Sentinel
State President: Jescey Thompson, Gale-Ettrick-Trempealeau FFA

Meet the PR Team



From pictures and press releases to captions and social media posts, the Wisconsin FFA public relations team does it all. State convention is a time to celebrate the excellent work of our talented members.

During the convention, the public relations team, comprising managers, interns, and FFA members, worked to spread the story of Wisconsin FFA. While you may not always see them, they are hard at work writing stories, collecting pictures and videos, editing social media content, and publishing the work of this organization.

Within the public relations team, there are four media-specific teams: the creative writing, media publishing, interview, and visual media teams. Each team works diligently to bring state convention to the outside world. We thank them for all of their hard work and dedication to spreading the good word of the Wisconsin FFA.

Managers

Kendra Jentz
Lashawna Vogel

Interns

Brooke Mallek: Visual Media
Camden Russell: Interviewing
Amy Jentges: Media Publishing
Katie Cink: Creative Writing



Visual Media:

Mikaela Wagner
Briella Brusveen
Tatym Travis
Martina Mullins
Julia Chilson

Creative Writing:

Katelyn Haeft
Aubrey Behling
Marisa Mancheski
Abilene Bartz

Media Publishing:

Jasmine Gumtow
Meygan Thelen
Carsyn Peterson
Samantha Johnson
Payton Heins

Interviewing:

Natalie Kieffer
Kendal Kluge
Natalie Gray
Alyssa Anderson
Ava Forde

State Officer Fun Facts

Jescey Thompson

State President

Home Chapter: Gale-Ettrick-Trempealeau

Plans After State Office: Study Agriculture and Rural Policy at Iowa State University in hopes to work with elected officials after college

Favorite CDE or LDE: Prepared Public Speaking

Kwik Trip Order: Vitamin Water Lemonade, banana chocolate chip muffin, and any cheese



Emma Johnson

State Parliamentarian

Home Chapter: Amery

Plans After State Office: I plan to return to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls to study Agriculture Education and Soil Science in hopes to one day work as an agriculture teacher

Favorite CDE or LDE: Parliamentary Procedure

Kwik Trip Order: A Kiwi Guava Celcius, Fair Life Protein shake, and a Blueberry muffin



Amalia Draxler

State Vice President

Home Chapter: Glenwood City

Plans After State Office: Return to UW-Madison to study Agricultural and Applied Economics and Life Sciences Communication

Favorite CDE or LDE: Prepared Public Speaking

Kwik Trip Order: Peach bubbl'r, rice krispie bar, hard boiled eggs



Jazmin Wagner

State Secretary

Home Chapter: Melrose-Mindoro FFA Chapter

Plans After State Office: Continue studying at UW-River Falls majoring in Biology with a Minor in Animal Science

Favorite CDE or LDE: Horse Evaluation and Employment Skills

Kwik Trip Order: Tropical Vitamin Water, KT Mac n Cheese



Tyson Gehrke

State Treasurer

Home Chapter: Fennimore

Plans After State Office: Attend Iowa State University to major in Agriculture Business. After I graduate, I hope to enter a career in agricultural sales, or agricultural banking.

Favorite CDE or LDE: Ag Sales and Prepared Speaking

Kwik Trip Order: Frozen strawberry lemonade, cheese filled breadsticks, and garlic parmesan wings



Cheyenne Johnson

State Vice President

Home Chapter: Oregon

Plans After State Office: Attending Madison Area Technical College to study to become a Certified Veterinary Technician

Favorite CDE or LDE: Veterinary Science and Discussion Meet!

Kwik Trip Order: Sausage breakfast burrito and a peach monster!



Abel Kocima

State Vice President

Home Chapter: Waupun FFA

Plans After State Office: Continue working to become a Madison or Milwaukee Firefighter

Favorite CDE or LDE: Milk Quality Judging

Kwik Trip Order: White Monster, Gatorade, mystery meat roller item



Luke Schraufnagel

State Vice President

Home Chapter: Thorp

Plans After State Office: Attend a 4-year college pursuing Nursing and Biology with plans of attending medical school

Favorite CDE or LDE: Prepared Public Speaking

Kwik Trip Order: Box of glazers and a large pink milk



Taylor Maroszek

State Reporter

Home Chapter: Pulaski FFA

Plans After State Office: Attend Northeast Wisconsin Technical College for Photography and Graphic design

Favorite CDE or LDE: Livestock Judging and Middle School Quiz Bowl

Kwik Trip Order: Lipton Green Tea, Marble Jack Cheese Stick & Ham, Egg & Cheese Croissant Sandwich



Crystal Anhalt

State Vice President

Home Chapter: Mishicot FFA

Plans After State Office: Complete my bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education at the University of Wisconsin River Falls

Favorite CDE or LDE: Floriculture

Kwik Trip Order: Cherry Bubblr, Bagel Chips and Cream Cheese Spread, Onion and Chive, Mixed Berry Chobani



Alyssa Schauer

State Sentinel

Home Chapter: East Troy FFA

Plans After State Office: Attend the University of River Falls for Agricultural Education

Favorite CDE or LDE: Agricultural Sales or Parliamentary Procedure

Kwik Trip Order: Peach Bubblr, Bacon Mac and Cheese Bites, and a Chicken Sandwich



Turning Up Service With Wisconsin FFA

By Katie Cink

WISCONSIN FFA CONVENTION

TURN IT
UP



The Wisconsin FFA Day of Service has once again returned to the Madison community. FFA members put into action the “living to serve” line of the FFA motto by participating in community service projects on June 9th, the opening day of the Wisconsin FFA Convention.

Day of Service coordinator, Amelia Hayden shared the following sentiments about the event, “Wisconsin FFA chapters are coming together for our Day of Service to embody the last line of our FFA motto, 'Living to Serve.' We're hosting one of our largest days of service ever with over 900 volunteer spots available and giving students hands-on experience with how they can impact the world around them.”



Over 900 FFA members have the opportunity to pay it forward at 13 different locations in Madison. Members can help at multiple city parks by assisting with garden upkeep, trash pick up, and establishment maintenance. Additionally, at the UW-Arboretum, members worked with the site's horticultural team to tend woody plants by pulling weeds and spreading mulch around the trees and shrubs. Members can also volunteer at Goodman Community Center and the Ronald McDonald House. At these locations, participants aided with indoor cleaning, garden work, organization, and outdoor pick-up.

Wisconsin FFA members also had the opportunity to participate in on-site projects through collaboration with Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Members helped to assemble 60 beds for children and families in need in the Madison area. The Wisconsin Association of FFA will be collecting twin sheets, pillowcases, and comforter sets to donate as well.

A new addition this year is meal packaging for Meals from the Heartland. five hundred FFA members will be packing 100,000 nutritious meals. This opportunity helps expose students to the importance of fighting hunger in Wisconsin and abroad. This portion of Day of Service is sponsored by Cargill and Corteva.

Since the event's inception in 2009, FFA members have provided over 5,000 volunteer hours to the Madison community. Day of Service is one of the many events that FFA members can participate in to develop their premier leadership, personal growth, and career success at the 96th Wisconsin FFA Convention. Wisconsin FFA Day of Service efforts are made possible thanks to generous donations from Kerry and the National FFA Living to Serve Grant Fund!



Learning to Do

Doing to Learn



Earning to Live

Living to Serve



Not Your Average SAE: Exploring the Power of Passion Through Unique Proficiency Projects

By Abilene Bartz

When you hear "Supervised Agriculture Experience" or "Proficiency Award," your mind probably jumps to the classics—livestock, crop production, or lawn mowing. Across Wisconsin, some FFA members are breaking the mold and showing just how diverse and personal agriculture can be. Students fill out proficiency awards based on their SAE. These state finalists didn't just build projects—they built legacies. From sunflower fields planted in memory of family members to the roar of rodeo bulls bucking under arena lights, these young leaders found creative ways to make their mark on the agricultural world.





For Faith Sopa, agriculture isn't just about yields—it's about healing and purpose. After her premature twin brothers passed away shortly after birth in 2007, her family began planting sunflowers in their memory. What began as a tribute bloomed into something much larger. Today, Faith manages 70 acres of sunflowers annually, overseeing everything from planting and spraying to harvesting and communicating with buyers.

Her sunflower seeds are processed into sunflower oil or sold as birdseed, and the farm is also a tourist attraction! Members of the public can come to the fields to explore and take pictures. When asked if she has any advice for FFA members, she said, "Find your why, and it will take you wherever you could imagine." Her project is a living memorial, a business, and a lesson in finding purpose through agriculture.

Most students don't get hands-on experience with whitetail deer farming—but Caleb Pronschinske's SAE is anything but typical. His family started a whitetail deer operation in 2011, and Caleb quickly took an interest. As a child, his main responsibilities were feeding the deer and picking up shed antlers. As he grew, so did his responsibilities.



Today, Caleb co-manages the herd, learning how to care for animals while solving problems along the way. One innovation he introduced was hanging black plastic tarps around the pens to prevent the deer from injuring themselves by running into the fences, a common and fatal issue in deer farming. Caleb's long-term goal is to take over the operation and grow it into a full-time business. He encourages other students to start by locating a deer farm and applying for a job. His experience shows that even uncommon paths in agriculture can lead to powerful careers.

For Olivia Check, the rodeo ring isn't just an arena—it's home. Her family's history runs deep in the sport: her dad rode in the 2000 National Finals Rodeo and even competed in the 2002 Olympics. Following in his footsteps, Olivia now helps manage 55 bucking bulls—and her SAE has her doing it all.



She travels to over 50 rodeos a year, hauling bulls across the Midwest, gathering them on horseback, feeding, sorting, cutting horns, helping with vet work, and training with riders. On top of that, she maintains and repairs fencing and facilities, all while riding her own two horses—a ranch horse for daily chores and a barrel horse for competition.

She doesn't just dream of rodeo—she lives it. Her goal is to one day take over her dad's business and run the ranch. Olivia advises others to get connected. "Find someone in the stock contracting business and learn everything you can from them... Rodeo is all about connections," she says.

Not every SAE smells like success—literally. For Todd Day, his Supervised Agricultural Experience revolves around the family-run bear bait and wildlife attractant business he helps operate alongside his father. The business specializes in selling a variety of bait materials like surplus cereal, snack cakes, cookies, and pastries, all chosen for their ability to attract game with their strong scents. The operation also offers a line of scented oils. Some examples are bubblegum, bacon, blueberry, and cinnamon.



In addition to bait, the business has expanded to include wildlife-attracting fruit trees, such as apple, pear, peach, and chestnut, which are available in both 2-foot and 6-foot options. These trees provide long-term food sources for landowners looking to support wildlife or improve hunting opportunities on their property.

Looking ahead, Todd wants to start another business where he hunts and traps for other people who want animals removed. His biggest suggestion is to trust yourself. There will be times when it doesn't work out, but if you believe in yourself, good things will happen. He also says to “just reach out” because a lot of people want to help out younger generations with their dreams and goals. Todd’s experience shows that even less traditional paths in agriculture can lead to entrepreneurial success—and that dedication and hard work are key ingredients in any SAE journey.

Evan Henningfeld has been raising bees since third grade—and now he runs a growing family honey business with over 20 hives. His passion for pollinators sparked early, but he made it official in seventh grade by turning it into an SAE. What makes his project unique is the blend of business and science.

In addition to harvesting and marketing honey, Evan has launched research studies on the antimicrobial properties of honey, bringing an academic edge to his experience. His work combines beekeeping with biology, turning his project into a showcase of how agriculture and science can go hand-in-hand. He encourages other students to engage in agriculture classes and not be afraid to try something new.

These students are redefining what it means to pursue an SAE—and proving that agriculture is more diverse, creative, and personal than most people realize. Whether you're an advisor looking to inspire your chapter or a student looking for your own path, remember this: your SAE doesn't have to look like anyone else's. If it's driven by purpose, passion, and hard work, it's worth doing.

So—what will your SAE be?



Career Development Event Winners

Agricultural Communications: Big Foot FFA

Agricultural Sales: Wrightstown FFA

Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems: Waterford FFA

Agronomy: Baraboo FFA

Dairy Cattle Handler: Addison Fischer, Gresham FFA

Dairy Cattle Evaluation & Management: Baldwin-Woodville FFA

Environmental & Natural Resources: Green Bay Preble FFA

Farm and Agribusiness Management: Sun Prairie West FFA

Floriculture: Lake Geneva-Badger FFA

Food Science & Technology: Stanley Boyd FFA

Forestry: Bay Port FFA

Horse Evaluation: Chippewa Falls FFA

Livestock Evaluation: Spring Valley FFA

Land & Soil Judging: Potosi FFA

Marketing Plan: Viroqua FFA

Milk Quality & Products: Evansville FFA

Middle School: Iowa-Grant FFA

Meats Evaluation: Fennimore FFA

Nursery Landscape: Shawano FFA

Poultry: Brillion FFA

Veterinary Science: Ellsworth FFA

Wildlife: Edgerton FFA



Proficiency Winners

Agricultural Communications: Josie Bailey, Tomah FFA

Agriculture Education: Zoe Gross, Columbus FFA

Agricultural Mechanics Design & Fabrication: Jasmine Weiland, Stratford FFA

Agricultural Mechanics Repair & Maintenance - Entrepreneurship: Braden Wisner, Evansville FFA

Agricultural Mechanics Repair & Maintenance - Placement: Jacob Rohm, Seymour FFA

Agricultural Processing: Mindy Dix, Granton FFA

Agricultural Sales - Placement: Jacob Dykstra, Big Foot FFA

Agricultural Services: Tyler Leuch, Waunakee FFA

Agiscience Research Animal Systems: Owen Hemling, Beaver Dam FFA

Agiscience Research Integrated Systems: Rebecca Konkel, Big Foot FFA

Agiscience Research Plant Systems: Gavin Baxter, Big Foot FFA

Beef Production - Entrepreneurship: Liv Lucas, Greenwood FFA

Beef Production - Placement: Hannah Oleson, Adams-Friendship FFA

Dairy Production - Entrepreneurship: Marshall Kleiman, Granton FFA

Dairy Production - Placement: Kaydence Hodroff, Campbellsport FFA

Diversified Agricultural Production: Emma Brunner, Waupaca FFA

Diversified Crop Production - Placement: Luke Schubert, Mineral Point FFA

Diversified Horticulture: Aidan DeMunck, Plymouth FFA

Diversified Livestock Production: Megan Schultz, Adams-Friendship FFA

Environmental Science & Natural Resources Management: Rylee Nelson, Waupaca FFA

Equine Science - Entrepreneurship: Josie Laue, Ithaca FFA

Equine Science - Placement: Maggie Tutor, Ashland FFA

Food Service: Emily Gatzke, Campbellsport FFA

Forage Production: Rylan Bruins, Waupun FFA

Fruit & Nut Production: Aubrey Behling, Edgar FFA

Goat Production: Ava Medo, Wittenberg-Birnamwood FFA

Proficiency Winners

Grain Production: Alexandria Johnson, Watertown FFA

Nursery Operations: Anna Robinson, Mineral Point FFA

Outdoor Recreation: Max Luedtke, Beaver Dam FFA

Poultry Production: Khammi Alsum, Wisconsin Dells FFA

Sheep Production: Olivia Tomko-Santos, Manawa FFA

Small Animal Production & Care: Sylvia Durrant, Pittsville FFA

Specialty Animal Production: Evan Henningfeld, Big Foot FFA

Specialty Crop Production: Faith Sopa, Amherst FFA

Sustainable Agriculture: Trinity Ihm, Lancaster FFA

Swine Production - Entrepreneurship: Taylor Maroszek, Pulaski FFA

Swine Production - Placement: Brinna Goplin, Whitehall FFA

Turf & Landscape Maintenance: Piper Alsum, Randolph Cambria Friesland FFA

Vegetable Production: Taylre Tietz, Watertown FFA

Veterinary Science: Ashlee Olson, Oregon FFA

Wildlife Production & Management: Adrienne Lorrigan, Slinger FFA



Leadership Development Event Winners

By Marisa Mancheski

Earning a state title in a Leadership Development event is a highly sought after achievement by FFA members all across Wisconsin. Each competition has unique rules and scoring systems. After practicing rigorously for many weeks and advancing through District and Sectional competitions, the hours of hard work pay off when one winner is chosen at State Convention.



Parliamentary procedure is an intense team competition consisting of a knowledge-based test, individual questions, and an 11-minute demonstration. A team consists of five members and one chair. The judges score the team on their knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order and how well they exhibit this knowledge. The 2025 Wisconsin Parliamentary Procedure Winning Team is Amery FFA and consists of team members Kallie Andersen, Suki Gatica, Evelyn Braaten, Kooper Klugow, Darby Trent, and Riley Schultz.

Discussion Meet is a real-world skill-building competition. A knowledge of current agricultural events and issues is required to succeed in this contest. It consists of a round table discussion between multiple members on a current agricultural topic. Members are scored based on the content of their discussion, how well they immerse themselves into the conversation, and their decorum when speaking to other competitors. The 2025 Wisconsin Discussion Meet Winner is Lachelle Dahlstrom! She is a member of the Osceola FFA.

Creed Speaking is a 7th through 9th-grade competition and focuses on developing memorization and an understanding of the FFA Creed. Competitors are asked to memorize and recite the Creed to a panel of judges and then are asked to answer a series of questions relating to the Creed and what agriculture means to them. The 2025 Wisconsin Creed Speaking Winner is Justin Brandel! He is a member of the Lake Mills FFA. There is also a Spanish Creed speaking contest, where contestants recite the Creed and answer questions in Spanish. The 2025 Wisconsin Spanish Creed Speaking Winner is Kalani Vazquez! She is a member of the Arcadia FFA.



Quiz Bowl has a High School and Middle School competition. The Middle School contests require members to memorize FFA-related facts and are then quizzed by judges. The 2025 Wisconsin Middle School Quiz Bowl Winning Team is Amery FFA and consists of team members Mason Bruder, Gavin Friberg, Reagan Friberg, Cora Lambert-Nihiser, and Allissandra Mount. The High School level of this competition not only focuses on FFA-specific trivia but Agricultural topics as well. The 2025 Wisconsin High School Quiz Bowl Winning Team is the Amery FFA.



Extemporaneous Speaking is considered one of the most difficult LDEs; members are given 30 minutes to write a speech on a randomly selected agricultural topic, which they then present to a panel of judges. This contest is formulated to help members develop quick thinking skills and help prepare them for the workforce. The 2025 Wisconsin Extemporaneous Speaking Winner is Eleanor Rhodes! She is a member of the Lomira FFA.



Prepared Public Speaking is another competition that focuses on public speaking and builds memorization and speech-writing skills. Members write and memorize a 6-8 minute speech prior to competing and then present it to a panel of judges. The 2025 Wisconsin Prepared Public Speaking Winner is Josie Roberts! She is a member of the Portage FFA.



Employment Skills are truly one of the LDEs that prepare students the best for the workforce. Students are asked to fill out a resume and cover letter and distribute them to the judges. The contestant is then rigorously interviewed by a panel of judges. The winner is selected based on their materials and their employability. The 2025 Wisconsin Employment Skills Winner is Isabelle Davenport! She is a member of the River Falls FFA.

Agricultural Issues Forum requires a team of 3-7 members to thoroughly research an Ag Issue and its benefits and disadvantages. They must present their findings to local businesses before competing. This event helps build analysis skills and encourages members to study a variety of issues that the agriculture industry is currently facing. The 2025 Agricultural Issues Forum Winning Team is New London FFA and consists of team members Vincent Backes, Layne Eidenberger, Morgan Williams, Danielle Tank, and Brya Schmidt.



Conduct of Chapter Meeting is another team LDE, requiring seven members. The team members demonstrate knowledge of parliamentary procedures, perform opening and closing ceremonies, and answer questions. This LDE tests members' knowledge of proper FFA meetings. The 2025 Conduct of Chapter Meetings Winning Team is Waterford FFA and consists of team members Riley Benhart, Peyton Chwala, Grace Hying, Clarissa Klingsten, Cheyenne Lees, Brooke Linneman, and Ayden Longo.

The Full Circle of FFA

By Aubrey Behling

Have you ever wondered how FFA is going to benefit your future or if you will ever use it after high school? In 1929, Wisconsin FFA was officially organized. Since then, a long-lasting alumni of accomplished individuals has been growing. Alumni members have become doctors, business owners, and even the president of the United States.

Wisconsin FFA alumni section five officer Jerry Wendt describes Wisconsin FFA as, “an organization that focuses on the individuals and helps them develop personal skills.” The lessons learned in FFA go beyond the organization as members learn countless life and soft skills. He emphasizes how FFA builds skills such as, “confidence, public speaking, personal goals, communication, and business management.”

He cherishes his time in FFA and has seen how FFA has changed his students' lives. Jerry believes that “hands-on experiences within the FFA provides students the opportunity to grow and be more successful.” As students become more involved, a complete cycle of opportunities becomes available. Wisconsin FFA offers learning and career exploration to students, provides internships, and ultimately offers job opportunities. Alumni and supporters help FFA students find themselves, guide their future, and create endless opportunities.



Stories Along the Way

By Katelyn Haeft

Insane events appear during the journey to and from every FFA event. This year, there were many stories that members of the FFA have shared with us from their journey to the Wisconsin State FFA Convention.



From Section 9, we had stories from the Wrightstown FFA and the Bay Port FFA. We heard stories from Laydia Meulemans, Chloe Baranczyk, Julia Reyall, and Clara Reondl. In the Wrightstown FFA, Laydia talked about how one of her members forgot her jacket, meaning that they had to turn back, but as they drove away, once again, another member forgot her pins for her jacket. Chloe, Julia, and Clara all shared with us the laughable story that every FFA has, no matter where they are coming from: crazy advisor driving. First, on this absurd drive to the convention, the Bay Port FFA had no car to ride in! Thankfully, just a few minutes prior, there was a vehicle that was turned in that they were about to use to get to the awesome event. Children were screaming, brake checks and one too many curbs hit.

From Section 10, Audrey Weinreich told us what happened to the Kewaskum FFA on a different ride to an event. Wrong turns were made, and speeding over hills made the ride feel like a rollercoaster. Makenna Young from La Crosse explained what occurred on the roads in Section 3. Break checks once again slowed down the rush to get to the excitement of the Wisconsin State FFA Convention. The break checks were not the only thing stopping them from arriving at the convention fast; one member was not added to the group chat, resulting in her having to go with the middle schoolers.

In every FFA, you can always find at least one story about an advisor driving. Stories in the van to or from FFA events are going to be core memories, no matter who is with you or where you are going. These experiences will stay with us for the rest of our lives and will bring our spirits up if we are ever in the dumps.



Leaders Impacting Leaders

By Katie Cink

The Wisconsin FFA State Officers are impactful leaders who are looked up to by many FFA members. Their positive and encouraging influence is felt throughout the state. This dedication to others is evident throughout the lives they touch. But how did these young leaders get their start? Let's take a look at the people who inspired and impacted the Wisconsin State Officers.



For many state officers, their passion and dedication to agriculture stem from their parents. For Luke Schraufnagel, this interest started early. Both of his parents, who were involved in agricultural education, instilled this love in him early on. Later, his father would go on to become his advisor. Luke speaks about their impact on his life, "My first mentors have been my mentors for my entire life, which is my mom and my dad...I had the cool opportunity of having him as my teacher and my dad. I saw it in the classroom and at home. He is always pushing me to never settle for less than my best. He was always encouraging me and pushing me to pursue excellence, whether that was in agriculture or public speaking." Luke's dedication to agriculture has rubbed off on the people around him. He has a lively energy that many of the section seven residents look up to.



Like many FFA members, the teachers and advisors around them have had a tremendous impact on their lives. Alyssa Schauer shares how her advisors have been influential to her, “My advisors got me involved in FFA and started me on a journey through agriculture. I didn’t grow up in an agriculture background. They taught me everything I needed to know about the agriculture industry. They helped me develop a passion within agriculture and a desire to help others.”

She notes another important mentor of hers, Mary Schrieber. Mary is a past teammate who served as a chapter officer alongside Alyssa, “Her leadership inspired me to be confident in myself and be confident when leading other people.” This impact on Alyssa’s life has led her to become an influential leader within the organization and for many FFA members across the state. Her enthusiasm for agriculture and commitment to kindness have made her a leader in her community, impacting future leaders.



Tyson Gehrke adds on the impact of his high school business teacher, “She really got me involved in business classes and pushed me to do more. She pushed me to get a technical diploma while I was still in high school. She saw potential in me and pushed me to go do it.” This influence on his life has enabled him to do the same for FFA members. Tyson has been recognized as a motivator and mentor, helping others achieve their goals. He takes great pride in being a leader and acknowledges those who helped him, “I would not be in the position I am today without those people in my life. I want to become one of those people for others.” He hopes he can “Plant the seeds for the next generation of leaders.”

The role of being a leader to a whole state can be a lot, but Cheyenne Johnson, like many officers, takes on the challenge headfirst. When asked about her feelings on being a leader, she said, “It feels like an honor. Not many people get this opportunity every year. I am lucky enough to be that person. When I go on chapter visits, honestly, it is one of my favorite things in the entire world. Seeing students look up to you and want to have fun... it is wonderful to be that person to provide for them.”



While being a good leader is essential, it is most important to be yourself while doing it. Taylor Maroszek shares a lesson her parents taught her early on, "You are the only you." Being her authentic self has allowed her to shine and leave a lasting impression on those around her. When asked about the key qualities of a leader, she said, "Leaders need to be genuine and be themselves but also not afraid to speak up and voice their opinion. At the same time, you need to be able to listen. A good leader knows when to speak up but also when to sit down."

Taylor's ability to be a leader in section eight has been evident throughout the year. Two students from a local chapter spoke on her ability to touch the lives of others, "She is a really kind and thoughtful person. It really shows up on stage that she is genuine...it is inspiring for me because one day I could be a state officer too."

These officers have had many people in their lives who have helped guide them on their current path. They are now doing that for FFA members across the state. The impact on their lives during their time in state office will not stop once they retire. Their passion, dedication, and influence will live on in the lives of those they have touched and continue to impact many more.



Agriscience Winners

Animal Systems:

Division 1 – Individual – Grades 7-8: Natalie Meckley, Bloomer FFA

Division 3 – Individual – Grades 9-10: Henry Cash, Osseo-Fairchild FFA

Division 4 – Team – Grades 9-10: Lydia Meulemans and Lainey Slater, Wrightstown FFA

Division 5 – Individual – Grades 11-12: Owen Hemling, Beaver Dam FFA

Division 6 – Team – Grades 11-12: Brett Harvey and Alex Bender, Big Foot FFA

Environmental Services/Natural Resources Systems

Division 1 – Individual – Grades 7-8: Cody Thompson, Bloomer FFA

Division 3 – Individual – Grades 9-10: Gage Sieg, Bloomer FFA

Division 5 – Individual – Grades 11-12: Ava Hoodjer, DeForest FFA

Division 6 – Team – Grades 11-12: Emily Zimmerman and Brilie Esser, Big Foot FFA

Food Products and Processing Systems:

Division 1 – Individual – Grades 7-8: Jayce Henningfeld, Big Foot FFA

Division 2 – Team – Grades 7-8: Jocelin Anderson and Alaya Harry, Sparta FFA

Division 3 – Individual – Grades 9-10: Sophie Pernsteiner, Osseo – Fairchild FFA

Division 5 – Individual – Grades 11-12: Evan Henningfeld, Big Foot FFA

Division 6 – Team – Grades 11-12: Brody Kynell and Jonah Henningfeld, Big Foot FFA

Plant Systems

Division 1 – Individual – Grades 7-8: Madison Moen, New Auburn FFA

Division 2 – Team – Grades 7-8: Laurie Zimmerman and Layla Leinon, Osseo-Fairchild FFA

Division 3 – Individual – Grades 9-10: Holden McCray, Osseo – Fairchild FFA

Division 4 – Team – Grades 9-10: Cheyenne Lees and Logan Myszewski, Waterford FFA

Division 5 – Individual – Grades 11-12: Moira Gerard, Lake Geneva – Badger FFA

Division 6 – Team – Grades 11-12: Gavin Baxter & Rebecca Konkell, Big Foot FFA

Social Systems:

Division 1 – Individual – Grades 7-8: Alexander Sarauer, Bloomer FFA

Division 2 – Team – Grades 7-8: Shelby Schroeder and Rylee Olson, Sparta FFA

Division 3 – Individual – Grades 9-10: Tyler Weeks, Big Foot FFA

Division 4 – Team – Grades 9-10: Sophia Zakrzewski & Peyton Bjorkstrand, New Auburn FFA

Division 6 – Team – Grades 11-12: Reid Henningfeld & Elijah Henningfeld, Big Foot FFA



Agricultural Artwork Contest Winners

5th-8th Grade 2D

1st Place: Claire Presley -
Adams-Friendship FFA

9th-12th Grade 2D

1st Place: Zoe Bauer - Lomira FFA
2nd Place: Emma Steimkey - Rio FFA
3rd Place: Matthew Burtard - Watertown FFA

9th-12th Grade 3D

1st Place: Henry Cash - Osseo - Fairchild FFA
2nd Place: Henry Drone - Riverdale FFA
3rd Place: Willard Belisle - Watertown FFA



Scrapbook Contest Winners

Digital Scrapbook

1st Place: Badger FFA
2nd Place: New London FFA
3rd Place: Hudson FFA

Traditional Scrapbook

1st Place: Edgar FFA
2nd Place: Baraboo FFA
3rd Place: Wisconsin Dells FFA



Talent Competition Winners

1st Place: Sawyer Bruins - Waupun FFA
2nd Place: Coleson Billie - Waupun FFA
3rd Place: Cheyanna Harper - Marion FFA
4th Place: Lorraine Taylor - New
Richmond FFA
5th Place: Adeline Gerke - Tomah FFA



The Ultimate FFA Playlist

Curated by Amalia Draxler, Cheyenne Johnson, Abel Kooima, Emma Johnson

Road Trip Essentials

Life is a Highway
Rascal Flatts



Telephone
Lady Gaga and Beyoncé



Parachute
Chris Stapleton



All Too Well
Taylor Swift



Best Pump Up Songs

Wobble
V.I.C.



Unstoppable
Sia



I Walk Alone
Saliva



Love Runs Out
One Republic



Personal Theme Song

Is What It Is
Chance Pena



Batman Theme Song
Neal Hefti



Self Made
Little Big Town



Hey Ya
Outcast



Go-To Karaoke Song

Picture to Burn
Taylor Swift



Chicken Fried
Zac Brown Band



Higher
Creed



Grenade
Bruno Mars



Recent Favorites

Wake Up Call
Maroon 5



Coastal
Kenny Chesney



Before You Leave Me
Alex Warren



Bloom
The Paper Kites





Turning Up Wisconsin FFA

By Katie Cink

This year, the members of Wisconsin FFA have “Turned Up” their leadership, service, and dedication to agriculture. From foraging new paths to becoming the leaders of tomorrow, FFA members have truly shown what it means to “Turn Up” Wisconsin FFA. State Officers Amalia Draxler, Cheyenne Johnson, Abel Kooima, and Emma Johnson share their insights on the theme of this year.

Each state officer team chooses a theme for the upcoming year. The chosen theme sets the tone for Wisconsin FFA and its members. This year's team is full of energy and passion, which makes “Turn it Up” the perfect theme.

Emma Johnson speaks on the meaning and choice of the theme, “Turn Up” Wisconsin FFA is all about taking our organization to the next level — amplifying our energy, impact, and commitment to leading with purpose. For our team, that means every action we take is intentional. We don’t just show up — we show up with meaning, with goals, and with a drive to make a real difference. While it's important to honor where we've come from, this year’s focus is on where we are going and how we can create the biggest impact. FFA builds the next generation of leaders, and when we act with purpose today, we shape a better tomorrow for agriculture, our communities, and the world.”



Members have shown up and showed out this year. A prime example of this is competing in Career and Leadership Development Events. Amaila Draxler speaks of the member's enthusiasm, “I have been very impressed by all of our members’ drive, dedication, and passion. Whenever I talk to a member before a CDE or LDE, they are engaged and excited. They go the extra mile to make banquets great and bring the energy at leadership conferences.”

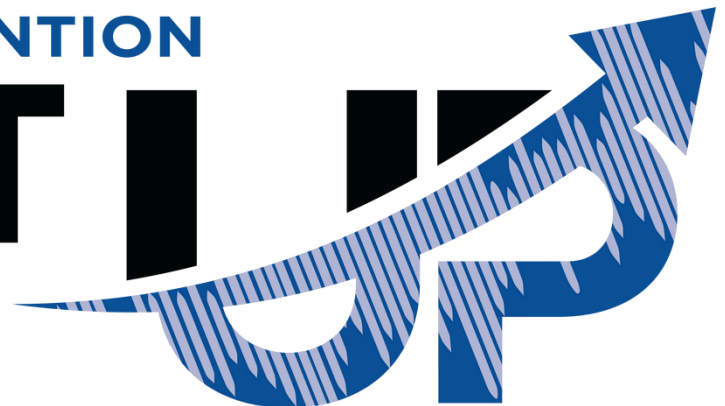
Cheyenne Johnson also mentions the impact she has seen, “Wisconsin FFA members have truly turned up their year through community service, supporting others, and learning new things every day! Whether we are at a conference or a chapter visit, members around our state have given others around them the opportunity to progress!”

Another way members have been “Turning Up” Wisconsin FFA is by their attitude towards service and leadership. Cheyenne Johnson mentions the impact she has seen, “Wisconsin FFA members have truly turned up their year through community service, supporting others, and learning new things every day! Whether we are at a conference or a chapter visit, members around our state have given others around them the opportunity to progress!”

Emma Johnson has also seen members influence across the state, “I’ve got to give a big shoutout to our 400+ delegates. They have been preparing for our delegate business session like no other year before to ensure they show up educated and fired up to make real change happen. Their passion and preparation have made a huge difference. I’ve especially loved seeing what has been happening in Section 1. Members there have stepped out of their comfort zones in the best ways, whether it’s students performing on stage at convention or fifth graders coming up with wild and awesome Agriscience Fair projects. That’s what “Turning Up” looks like: going for it, trying new things, and making your mark. This year, FFA members didn’t just show up — they showed up loud, proud, and ready to lead. These students have truly been inspiring.”

WISCONSIN FFA CONVENTION

TURN IT UP



State FFA Traditions

By Katelyn Haeft



FFA has had many traditions that have carried through from year to year. Traditions in FFA have been happening since 1928. Some traditions that are still true to the way of the blue are the FFA Creed, Official Emblem, and the famous blue jacket.

The FFA Creed has allowed many members to have one item to connect over. The Creed permits all members to understand the importance of why FFA is important in all our lives; it demonstrates in each paragraph the reasons why people continue to join FFA. FFA members connect over the future of agriculture, actions over words, the ups and downs of agricultural life, leadership, being respectful, self-reliance, bonds in the community, and the importance of keeping traditions alive.

The Official Emblem represents the past, hopes, and future of the FFA. Each part of the emblem- the cross-section of an ear of corn, the rising sun, the plow, the owl, and the eagle- has deep meanings that each member of the FFA needs to keep in mind and carry with them through every part of their journey.



The unity that the members create can follow them into new chapters of their lives. These different paths will have new opportunities to build, grow on, and hopefully lead to more pathways. In every path, hard work and dedication will have to be the backbone of success. New pathways, in the end, will lead to fresh horizons to plant seeds to grow in the future. Through this all, the end goal for every FFA member is to be an owl, to have wisdom, and to be successful in the agriculture industry.

The FFA Jacket is the longest-standing tradition. The jacket, as a whole, is a visual representation of the goals of the FFA. The jacket connects each generation, year to year, to the FFA. When parents come to any FFA event, they think back to the years and activities when they were wearing the blue jacket. The jacket further shows the unity that the FFA has and that we all have agriculture in our lives.

Traditions can still be created. This year's Wisconsin President, Jecesy, had one tradition that encouraged his last year's team to show up to each event. The Breakfast Crew was what awakened most of the Wisconsin State Team last year. Some members wake up early to run and get breakfast for the other members before they wake up. The early birds were able to get started with their day right away by grabbing food, and the night owls were able to snag their beauty sleep.

Jazmin Wagner's favorite tradition this year was made right at the start of their team journey. When they see each other, either at other events or conferences, they circle up and start singing. This is a wonderful way to build positive vibes right at the beginning of every event. Cheyenne Johnson explains more about how, at the end of events, they do a cinnamon roll hug to wrap up the end and to have one final goodbye until the next event. No matter where or who, everyone is able to make traditions on their FFA journey.

Mary Schrieber Inspires with Visionary Keynote: Transforming Obligations into Opportunities

By Marisa Mancheski

*2024-2025
Central
Region Vice
President*



Mary Schrieber captivated her audience with a compelling keynote speech that reframed how we approach our daily tasks. Schrieber articulated a future in FFA where mindset shifts can transform obligations into new opportunities. Her engaging style and clear vision resonated deeply, particularly when she discussed turning "have to dos" into "get to dos," setting a positive tone for the rest of state convention.

Schrieber emphasized the power of perspective, illustrating how reframing mandatory tasks can unlock motivation and creativity. She shared practical techniques for identifying the underlying value in each task, no matter how mundane it may seem. By focusing on the potential for personal and professional growth, Schrieber encouraged attendees to approach their responsibilities with renewed enthusiasm.

The speech was punctuated with real-world examples of her own obligations as a National Officer and personal anecdotes, making her message relatable and actionable.



Roots in FFA

By Aubrey Behling

Roots run deep within Wisconsin FFA. With its long-lasting history, traditions such as the blue jacket have continued to make Wisconsin FFA unforgettable. But while most only think about the physical traditions, FFA runs in people's bloodstreams as well.

Many families have long lines of lineages with FFA. For example, past state and national officer Cortney Zimmerman has her roots deep in Wisconsin FFA. Her mother, Cheryl Zimmerman, started her love of FFA at a young age when she became a member of the Pecatonica High School chapter. Mrs. Zimmerman is currently the Executive Director of the Wisconsin FFA Center and the National FFA Executive Secretary.

In 1985, she served as a Wisconsin State FFA Officer. During college summers, she worked for the National FFA at the Washington Leadership Conference. Post-college, she taught agricultural education for the Waupaca and Stratford school districts. Cortney's late father, Mark Zimmerman, also was an FFA alumni and past Wisconsin State FFA Officer. Post-college, he began teaching for the Spencer school district, where he taught for 33 years.



Besides her parents, Cortney Zimmerman also has her brother Aaron, two sisters, Ashley Crowson and Katelyn Zimmerman, a sister-in-law, Leeah Zimmerman, and a brother-in-law, Jack Crowson, who are FFA alumni and current Agricultural Educators. Also notable, her sister, Ashley, and brother, Aaron, were Wisconsin State FFA Officers.

Another member with deep roots in FFA is Taylor Russell. She is a third-generation FFA member. Her grandfather, Doug Mundt, first started the family tradition unknowingly when he joined FFA in high school. He passed on his love of FFA to her father and uncle. Taylor's father, Nathan Russell, then continued the passion, eventually becoming a state officer and state president. Her mother, Jen Russell, also was a state officer and went on to become an agricultural educator. Her aunt, Jackie Mundt, took it a step further and became the first female national FFA officer from Wisconsin. Their family tradition of competing in the ag marketing CDE is one of Taylor's favorite aspects of FFA. Because of ag marketing, Taylor has found her passion and future career. Taylor thinks, "her future kids will be involved with FFA because all kids should be involved with FFA." She feels very proud to continue on the family legacy within FFA and be a part of its rich history.

To past state officer and president, Tolea Kama, "inheritance is tangible, its materials, but now when she thinks of leaving something behind, she thinks of her legacy." Her goal is for her children to inherit her legacy as she believes, "Legacy is your stamp on other people's stamp on someone's soul forever...it's what you leave in someone. Tolea and her husband, Jake Peissig, served on the 1999 state officer team and now have two children. They are excited to continue their legacy within Wisconsin FFA. With dozens of traditions in FFA, family lineage is the tradition with the deepest roots.



National Chapter Award Winners



1st Place:

Denmark FFA

2nd Place:

Waupaca FFA

3rd Place:

DeForest FFA

Gold Ranked Chapters

Denmark FFA, Waupaca FFA, DeForest FFA, Freedom FFA, River Valley FFA, Big Foot FFA, Verona FFA, Stanley-Boyd FFA, Marshall FFA, Sauk Prairie FFA, Chippewa Falls FFA, Owen-Withee FFA, De Soto FFA, Pardeeville FFA, Lodi FFA, Parkview FFA, Granton FFA, Thorp FFA, Portage FFA, Adams-Friendship FFA, Lake Geneva-Badger FFA, Wisconsin Heights FFA, Beaver Dam FFA, Osseo Fairchild FFA, Seymour FFA

Silver Ranked Chapters

Unity FFA, Campbellsport FFA, Edgerton FFA, Sun Prairie West FFA, Waterford FFA, Manawa FFA, Slinger FFA, Lomira FFA, Stratford FFA, Mauston FFA, Viroqua FFA, Barron FFA, Baraboo FFA, Wisconsin Dells FFA, Clear Lake FFA, New London FFA, Dodgeville FFA, St. Croix Central FFA, Winneconne FFA, Oconto Falls FFA, Greenwood FFA, Milton FFA, Randolph-Cambria-Friesland FFA, Spooner FFA, Cashton FFA, Wittenberg-Birnamwoo, Mishicot FFA, Tomah FFA, Dodgeland FFA, Cambridge FFA, Reedsburg FFA, Black Hawk FFA, Loyal FFA, Oshkosh West FFA, Auburndale FFA, Fennimore FFA, Bloomer FFA, Blair-Taylor FFA, Jefferson FFA, River Ridge FFA, Glenwood City FFA, Boscobel FFA, Union Grove FFA, Baldwin-Woodville FFA, Kewaskum FFA, New Glarus FFA

Growing Leaders



- 1st Place:** Denmark FFA
- 2nd Place:** Waupaca FFA
- 3rd Place:** Lake Geneva-Badger FFA
- 4th Place:** Big Foot FFA
- 5th Place:** Parkview FFA
- 6th Place:** Freedom FFA
- 7th Place:** DeForest FFA
- 8th Place:** Weyauwega-Fremont FFA
- 9th Place:** River Valley FFA
- 10th Place:** Seymour FFA

Building Communities



- 1st Place:** DeForest FFA
- 2nd Place:** De Soto FFA
- 3rd Place:** Weyauwega-Fremont FFA
- 4th Place:** Waupaca FFA
- 5th Place:** Sauk Prairie FFA
- 6th Place:** Chippewa Falls FFA
- 7th Place:** Denmark FFA
- 8th Place:** Verona FFA
- 9th Place:** Owen-Withee FFA
- 10th Place:** Stanley-Boyd FFA

Strengthening Agriculture



- 1st Place:** Marshall FFA
- 2nd Place:** Freedom FFA
- 3rd Place:** River Valley FFA
- 4th Place:** DeForest FFA
- 5th Place:** Waupaca FFA
- 6th Place:** Chippewa Falls FFA
- 7th Place:** Denmark FFA
- 8th Place:** Pardeeville FFA
- 9th Place:** Verona FFA
- 10th Place:** Mauston FFA

Wisconsin Stars

Star in Agribusiness

1st Place: Ashton Brusveen - Randolph-Cambria-Friesland FFA

2nd Place: Tyler Leuch - Waunakee FFA

3rd Place: Samantha Vosters - Freedom FFA

4th Place: Victoria Seif - Granton FFA

5th Place: McKinley Krueger - Campbellsport FFA



Star Farmer

1st Place: McKinley Krueger - Campbellsport FFA

2nd Place: Callie Behling - Campbellsport FFA

3rd Place: Hannah Oleson - Adams-Friendship FFA

4th Place: Ashton Brusveen - Randolph-Cambria-Friesland FFA

5th Place: Rylee Nelson - Waupaca FFA



Star in Agriscience

1st Place: Jordan Berg - Granton FFA

2nd Place: Evan Henningfeld - Big Foot FFA

3rd Place: Ava Hoodjer - DeForest FFA

4th Place: Victoria Havlik - Clintonville FFA

5th Place: Stanley Lang - New Auburn FFA



Star Placement

1st Place: Hannah Oleson - Adams-Friendship FFA

2nd Place: Luke Schubert - Mineral Point FFA

3rd Place: Rylee Nelson - Waupaca FFA

4th Place: Madison Kwak - Menomonie FFA

5th Place: Brinna Goplin - Whitehall FFA



Have a Seat!

Each year, the Wisconsin FFA State Officer team creates an item to display at convention. These items will be auctioned off in February at the Alumni & Supporters Convention, with the proceeds going back to the organization. As proud advocates for agriculture, each of these stools paints a picture of the officer behind it. So, pull up a chair and hear about the meaningful and impactful stories of the Wisconsin state officers.



Jescey Thompson

The iconic blue jacket is a symbol many FFA members hold near and dear to their hearts. The jacket represents the premier leadership, personal growth, and career development of the organization. Thompson says, “My life has been changed by my jacket. The experiences it holds from my years in FFA are paramount to any other. Wearing it empowers us to make a difference and be leaders in our communities.”

Alyssa Schauer

Schauer’s journey in FFA has been one big adventure. She grew up outdoors, going camping with her family. Schauer reflects on her trip to Devils Lake with her chapter officer team back in East Troy, “This trip was the first time I felt truly welcome and myself within this organization.” The national blue background and scenic landscape paint a picture of her fond memories of the organization.



Crystal Anhalt

Anhalts passion for agriculture started in the classroom when she learned about floral design. Her enthusiasm grew as she started her supervised agricultural experience in horticulture. Anhalt mentions, "Like a well-rooted flower, this three-legged stool of ag education helped me grow, blossom, and gain experiences I'll carry with me for life."



Taylor Maroszek

A picture is worth a thousand words, and so is Maroszek's stool. Her love for photography is shown through her creative artwork. Maroszek believes in the power of a picture, "A picture holds all the memories that are near and dear to our hearts. The ability to recall emotions and life-changing events...is one of the most powerful tools we have."

Luke Schraufnagel

Farmers feed and fuel our world. This stool perfectly captures that aspect. Schraufnagel describes his inspiration for the stool, "It reflects my passion for agriculture and production agriculture. The design celebrates the heart of rural Wisconsin and the hard work that goes into feeding the world."





Abel Kooima

Kooima's stool is a salute to the firefighting community. As a firefighter himself, Kooima understands the importance of those who serve. He reflects on the meaning of his stool, "It's a tribute to the commitment of firefighters everywhere. May it serve as a reminder of the strength found in service, family, and the unbreakable bond that holds us all together."

Cheyenne Johnson

As many Wisconsinites know, the Badgers are a HUGE deal. Johnson is a long-time Wisconsin Badgers fan with a passion for attending games. Johnson remarks, "This year, many of our favorite FFA events are in Madison, including the famous Wisconsin State FFA Convention!" She hopes you love this stool as much as she does. Roll Badgers!

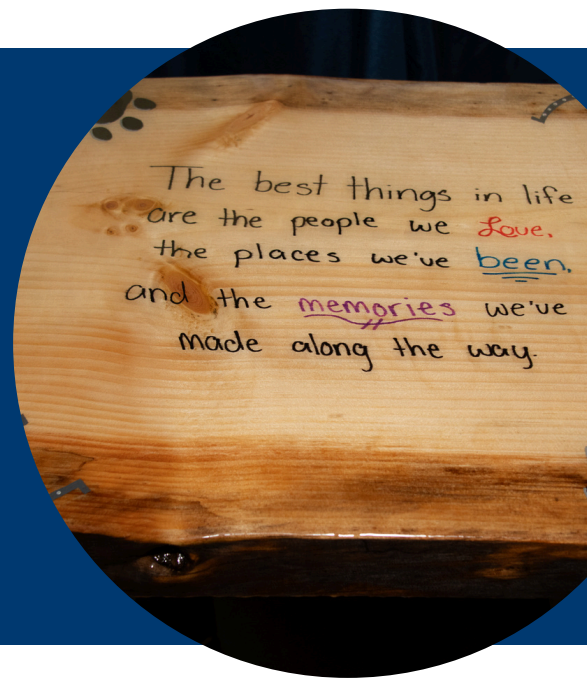


Tyson Gehrke

As a baseball enthusiast, Tyson Gehrke designed this stool with Brewers baseball-themed elements. Gehrke says, "This stool reflects my story of baseball and the Brewers. In the summer, nothing is better than sitting back after a long day and watching Brewers baseball."

Jazmin Wagner

As a long-time animal lover, Wagner showcases her passion for animals. Being on the road this year has given her the opportunity to reflect on her experience, "Woodworking is something that my dad and I have always connected with. This stool resembles my year as an officer as we traveled many places and gained so many new experiences!"



Amalia Draxler

Agriculture is the backbone and future of America. This especially rings true for Draxler. She grew up on a dairy farm originally founded in 1903. She says, "Farming supports my family's lifestyle, values, and goals. Similarly, this stool will support many friends and memories." Draxler hopes you will believe in the future of agriculture just like she does!

Emma Johnson

Johnson created a stool that reflects her passion for agriculture. However, the stool also represents the possibility of growth that lies within each of us. Johnson reflects, "Just like plants, we all need strong roots to grow. As FFA members, our roots run deep in agriculture, in tradition, in leadership, and in the values that bring us together. It serves as a symbol of where we come from and how far we can grow."



365 Days of Service: A Year in State Office

By Katie Cink



The lights dim in a full session hall in Madison, Wisconsin, at the 95th State FFA Convention. A hush falls over the crowd as the first few notes of the infamous Chicago Bulls theme song start to play. The tension in the Alliant Energy Center could be cut with a knife as members and guests await the announcement of the newly elected state officers. Huddled in a corner by the front of the stage is a group of excited, nervous, and anxious FFA members as they await the results of this strenuous process. They don't know it yet, but their lives are about to change forever. One by one, each of their names is called as cheers and applause thunderously roar throughout the hall. Confetti falls, the music blares, and a few tears are shed as the newly elected team stands on stage in front of the crowd.

But once lights are off and the confetti has been swept away, what happens to these new officers? Take an inside look at the busy, exciting, and whirlwind life of a Wisconsin State FFA Officer.

After the legendary Session Five on Wednesday night, the new team is whisked away early Thursday morning for a meeting to decide their positions and are fitted for their new jackets. During the final session that morning, their team is sworn in, and the new state president is elected from among the retiring team. After the final gavel has dropped and the stage has been taken down, the infamous board of directors meeting starts. The board of directors is composed of the state officers, their advisors, and state staff. It is the first meeting the team has had together. This meeting has been known to last over three hours as the new team receives a rundown of the year ahead.

After the new officers have settled in, they attend their first training together, called Base Camp. This is the time for the team to have bonding time, get to know each other, and learn more about team dynamics. They then attend the Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators (WAAE) Conference to get a better understanding of agriculture education. This is also the first time the team gets to try on their new jackets. For any FFA member, putting on the blue jacket is a significant part of their journey. The journey is even more special when it says “Wisconsin Association” on the back.



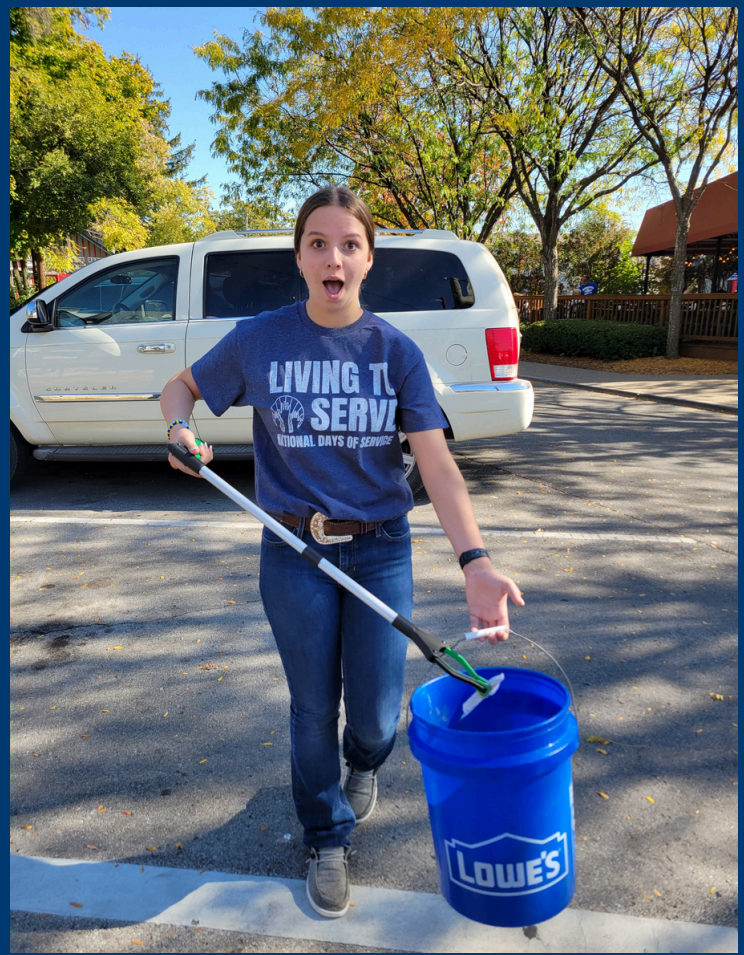
The rest of the summer is jam-packed with activities. July begins with Checkpoint One, which is a training retreat for state officers, where they learn how to write speeches and conduct workshops. During this month, they also attend the state officer summit in Washington, D.C., to gain a deeper understanding of their role as agricultural advocates. In August, the team works at the Wisconsin State Fair in the Discovery Barnyard, where they put their advocacy and education skills to the test. By the end of the summer, the team had connected and bonded with one another. The connections and trust built between teammates are key components of the team's success.



Whether they like it or not, they are bonded together for the rest of the year. This year's team takes the challenge head-on and leans on each other for support during this crazy year. State Vice President Amalia Draxler talks about her love for the team, "I rely on my teammates a lot. Emma and I carpool everywhere. We have a lot of time chatting and reflecting off of each other. Being in touch with myself helps me express my communication and my needs." She continues, "It is the best thing ever. I love having eleven teammates. Having eleven different people, eleven different personalities, and eleven different perspectives has been really eye-opening."

As the school year begins, so do the officers' busy schedules. As if summer wasn't crazy enough, fall is filled with chapter visits, traveling, and a whole lot of caffeine. The team has been traveling for three weeks for the Fall Leadership Workshops (FLW). During the day, they conduct two agriculture industry tours, and in the evening, they facilitate workshops. Throughout this time, officers are also conducting F.I.R.E. conferences, which stand for Foundations in Reaching Excellence, for members in 5th-9th grade.

Once FLWs and F.I.R.E conferences are done, there is still much to do. Chapter visits are in full swing, and the team prepares for the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. State Vice President Crystal Anhalt speaks on the change from wearing her chapter jacket to now wearing the Wisconsin Association jacket at the national convention, “It was a big shift. We had the responsibility of all our Wisconsin FFA members. We are representing them all at national convention. Being able to share and advocate for Wisconsin members at the national level was really cool.”



As state officers, they serve as delegates for the national organization. This is a powerful and impactful role as their decisions impact members across the country. State Vice President Abel Kooima shares how meaningful the experience was, “Not only are we going as a state officer, we are going to these meetings that are affecting the future of our members... This jacket isn't a Waupun FFA jacket, but these values from home are still sticking with me.” Each of the officers understands the importance of their role as a delegate and takes this experience seriously, with great honor and dedication.



With winter approaching, there is much to do. Believe it or not, the officers start planning for state convention. In December, the team attends the Wisconsin Farm Bureau annual meeting, where they network with others and assist with the Discussion Meet competition. During this month, the team attends Checkpoint Two, which serves as a halfway point in their term. Similar to Checkpoint One, the team dives deeper into how they function as a group by learning about different dynamics and evaluating where they are. After a much-needed Christmas break, the team spends New Year's Eve together to ring in the new year. This event was a personal favorite for many of the officers.

January starts, and the team hits the ground running with events, appearances, and competitions galore. During this month, some of the team was in attendance at the Green and Gold Premier in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Their biggest event of this month is the Half-Time conference. This is a conference based on leadership and excellence within the Wisconsin FFA Organization. Two leaders of each chapter attend the Half-Time conference to learn about how they can excel within the leadership of their chapter. This year, they had over 325 members attend!

In February, the team gears up for National FFA Week. During this month, the team attends the FFA Alumni and Supporters Convention. At this event, the team networks and connects with the alumni who have made a lasting impact on the organization. FFA week brings friends, food, and fun! The officers travel the state, attending numerous pancake breakfasts, trivia nights, and donkey basketball events. At each event they attend, they connect and cultivate a passion for FFA within each member they meet. President Jescey Thompson speaks on the impact of this connection with FFA members, "The moments that inspire and drive me are the individual conversations. In each of my conversations I am able to get to know them and be a mentor. Just getting to know them and understand their stories has been what drives me."

March, April, and May bring many more meetings, memorization, and meticulous planning. The team has their last board of directors meeting, along with convention preparations and committee work. At this point in the year, chapter banquet season has begun. The officers travel to their local chapters to deliver speeches and cheer on members. They also attend Career Development Events around the state. At the beginning of May, the officers finalize their convention scripts, read through them, and memorize them for the convention!



As convention quickly approaches, the officers have time to reflect upon their years of service. 365 days, they have served the members of Wisconsin FFA. 356 days of this past year, they have given their all to this organization. 365 days, they have been their true and authentic selves as they advocate for the industry we love. For many officers, this time of the year can be emotional. State Parliamentarian Emma Johnson reflects on what she and her team want to leave behind as their legacy, “I want to end the year with the knowledge that I was able to make one person feel strong, loved, and valued. I want to leave behind the feeling that you matter. I care that I made a student feel smarter or want to be more involved but most importantly I want a student to know I care about them and that they are loved and valued.”

In a year, these strangers have become family and have bonded over this adventure. Not only have they gained a family, but they have gained an experience unlike any other. Abel Koomia speaks on what the year has taught him, “I have learned to always be willing to learn, always be willing to listen, and always be willing to strike up a conversation. There is always an opportunity to learn no matter what jacket you are wearing. You're always a learner. Always keep a heart to serve. No matter what you are doing or where you are going there is always an opportunity to make an impact.” This team has always brought their true, authentic selves to every conference, contest, and anything in between. Their service and impact will leave a lasting mark on the organization, which they can now commemorate. While each year as a state officer is vastly different, they all share one thing in common: the love for agriculture and the people around them



Last but not least is June. The moment everyone has been waiting for: state convention. After a hard year's work, the dedication of all members, advisors, staff, and officers has paid off. This time is full of friends, fun, and fabulous celebrations! As the week winds down and the convention comes to a close, so does their time as state officers. They hang up their jackets for the final time as they mark a year of service, dedication, and passion. While their time in the jacket has come to an end, their impact on this organization has not. Their legacy will last forever in the minds and hearts of all that they have touched for years to come.

I take you back to the falling confetti, screaming crowds, and blaring music as the 2025-2026 team takes their place at the gavel. Starting the cycle over once again: the powerful, impactful, and inspirational Wisconsin FFA State Officers.



*Thank you to the 2024-2025 Wisconsin
FFA State Officer Team!*

State Officer Words of Wisdom



Jescey Thompson

"Have an open mind! It may not always go our way, or as we thought. Do your best every day, and the outcomes will lead you to success."



Emma Johnson

"The little moments sometimes mean the most."



Amalia Draxler

"Live life to the fullest! Enjoy every day and surround yourself with those who want to make a positive impact."



Jazmin Wagner

"Start those conversations and make those connections! They will outlast your time in the blue jacket and make impacts later in life!"



Tyson Gehrke

"Dream as if you will live forever, live each day as if it were your last."



Cheyenne Johnson

"Don't ever give up on your dreams. Like Cody Johnson said, 'If you've got a dream, chase it, 'cause a dream won't chase you back.'"



Abel Kooima

"If you want to go anywhere in life, you can not get there alone! Find a mentor, be a mentor, and work hard!"



Luke Schraufnagel

"When you choose kindness you have the power to affect change in so many ways."



Taylor Maroszek

"Be you! Don't spend time comparing yourself to others, you are the only you in the world so let your personality shine through in all you do!"



Crystal Anhalt

"In the end, it's not just the big wins that define us—it's the small, powerful moments that quietly shape our story."



Alyssa Schauer

"Don't be afraid to take steps outside of your comfort zone, you never know what adventure they will lead you to!"



2025-26 Wisconsin FFA State Officers



Section 1: Harley Prill, Bloomer FFA - State Vice President

Section 2: Taniele Ducommun, Stanley-Boyd FFA - State Vice President

Section 3: Corbyn Weber, Cochrane-Fountain City FFA - State Reporter

Section 4: Ava Forde, Prairie Du Chein FFA - State Secretary

Section 5: Sam Mell, DeForest FFA - State Vice President

Section 6: Brooke Luedtke, Pardeeville FFA - State Treasurer

Section 7: Parker Smith, Loyal FFA - State Vice President

Section 8: Evan Retzlaff, New London FFA - State Parliamentarian

Section 9: Layten Sobieski, Berlin FFA - State Sentinel

Section 10: Max Luedtke, Beaver Dam FFA - State Vice President

State President: Amalia Draxler, Glenwood City FFA

State Convention Partners

Platinum Level



Gold Level



CHS Foundation



Silver Level



Collin Weltzien

Bronze Level

GRANDE CHEESE

AMERICAN DRONE

**WISCONSIN
LANDSCAPE
CONTRACTORS
ASSOCIATION**



