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News Release

2018 National FFA Convention and Expo, October 24 – 27

INDIANAPOLIS, IN--The 91st National FFA Convention & Expo will celebrate its third year of a nine-year commitment in Indianapolis beginning October 24th. More than 65,000 FFA members and guests from throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are expected to be in attendance at this year's event, which will run through October 27th.

This year, the theme of the convention and expo was "Just One". One moment, one encounter, one opportunity is all it takes to radically change the course of a person's life. The National FFA Officer team is excited to share in the experience of the National FFA Convention and Expo with all attendees.

The convention and expo will kick off with the National FFA Band leading a grand march down Georgia Street in downtown Indianapolis on Wednesday, October 24th. The march will end at Bankers Life Fieldhouse and will usher in the start of the opening session. Eight general sessions will be held in the fieldhouse. On the morning of Saturday, October 27th, the eighth general session will be held in Lucas Oil Stadium where American FFA Degrees, the highest degree for an FFA member, were bestowed upon more than 4,000 members.

The Iowa FFA Association is expecting representation from over 3,000 attendees involved in all facets of the event. The following is a summary of results and accomplishments of Iowa FFA members in the respective national events.

Erica Baier is National FFA Secretary

Erica Baier, an agricultural education major at Iowa State University and FFA member from the Earlham FFA chapter, will complete her term as the National FFA Secretary. She will deliver her retiring address during the seventh session of the conference on Friday, October 26th.

Baier is the second FFA member from Iowa to be elected to National FFA Secretary in the history of FFA. She previously served the Iowa FFA Association as the 2015-16 South Central State Vice President.

Savannah Keitzer is Iowa's National Officer Candidate

Savannah Keitzer, an Agricultural Communications major at Iowa State University and FFA member from the Mediapolis FFA Chapter, is Iowa's National Officer Candidate. National officers commit to a year of service to the National FFA Organization. Each officer travels more than 100,000 national and international miles to interact with business and industry leaders, thousands of FFA members and teachers, corporate sponsors, government and education officials, state FFA leaders, the general public, and more. The team will lead personal growth and leadership training conferences for FFA members throughout the country and help set policies that will guide the future of FFA and promote agricultural literacy. The 2019-2020 National Officer team will be announced at the end of the Ninth General Session on Saturday, October 27th. Keitzer previously served the Iowa FFA Association as the 2016-17 Southeast State Vice President.

Zach Hamilton is National FFA Nominating Committee Member

Zach Hamilton, an Apparel, Merchandising, and Design major at Iowa State University with a minor in Public Relations and an FFA member from the Northeast FFA Chapter at Goose Lake, is serving on the National FFA Nominating Committee. Hamilton will serve on a committee of 9 members who over the course of 9 days will execute the interview and selection process of the National FFA Officers. Hamilton previously served the Iowa FFA Association as the 2016-17 State Reporter and the 2017-18 State President.

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American Star Finalists

Each year at the National FFA Convention & Expo, four FFA members are honored with American Star Awards for outstanding accomplishments in FFA and agricultural education.

The American Star Awards, including American Star Farmer, American Star in Agribusiness, American Star in Agricultural Placement and American Star in Agriscience, are presented to FFA members who demonstrate outstanding agricultural skills and competencies through completion of an SAE. A required activity in FFA, an SAE allows students to learn by doing, by either owning or operating an agricultural business, working or serving an internship at an agriculture-based business or conducting an agriculture-based scientific experiment and reporting results.

Sixteen American Star Award finalists from throughout the U.S. are nominated by a panel of judges who then interview the finalists during the national convention and expo. Four are named winners and receive cash awards totaling \$4,000.

--Gracie Danner of the West Liberty FFA Chapter was selected as an American Star Finalist in Agricultural Placement.

--Eric Koehlmoos of the South O'Brien FFA Chapter was selected as an American Star Finalist in Agriscience.

Agriscience Fair

The Agriscience Fair is for FFA members who are interested in the science and technology of agriculture. Students can compete in 36 divisions across 6 systems areas: Animal; Environmental & Natural Resources; Food Products & Processing; Plant; Power, Structural, & Technical; and Social. Divisions are set based on junior (grades 7-8), intermediate (grades 9-10) and senior (grades 10-12) projects and whether the project is conducted by an individual or a pair.

--Animal Systems Div. 1 National Finalist: Grace Klein, North Fayette Valley FFA

--Animal Systems Div. 2 National Finalist: Tyler Menne and Ben Gibson, North Fayette Valley FFA

--Animal Systems Div. 5 National Finalist: Bailey Beckman, Crooked Creek FFA

--Food Products and Processing Systems Div. 1 National Finalist: Abigail Wassom, Clay Central Everly FFA

--Food Products and Processing Systems Div. 2 National Finalist: Nathan Crooker and Davan Crooker, North Fayette Valley FFA

--Food Products and Processing Systems Div. 3 National Finalist: Katherine Grebner, Beckman Catholic FFA

--Food Products and Processing Systems Div. 5 National Finalist: Shelby Westhoff, North Fayette Valley FFA

--Plant Systems Div. 3 Bronze: Claire Wills, Central Lee FFA

--Plant Systems Div. 5 Bronze: Chase Krug, Linn-Mar

--Power, Structural and Technical Systems Div. 1 National Finalist: Soren Cleveland, Grundy Center FFA

--Power, Structural and Technical Systems Div. 2 National Finalist: Alyssa Bohr and Kyella Frieden, North Fayette Valley FFA

--Power, Structural and Technical Systems Div. 5 National Finalist: Avery Tauke, Beckman Catholic FFA

National Chapter Award

The National Chapter Award program recognizes FFA chapters that successfully complete an annual Program of Activities (POA), which includes a series of activities designed to encourage its members to grow as individuals, to work as part of a team and to serve others.

AGWSR FFA, Two Star

Audubon FFA, Two Star

Benton Community FFA, Three Star

Brokaw FFA, Two Star

Carroll Area FFA, Two Star

Decorah FFA, Two Star

DeWitt Central, Two Star

East Buchanan FFA, Three Star

Harlan FFA, Two Star

Independence FFA, Two Star

La Porte-Dysart FFA, Two Star

Marengo FFA, Two Star

North Fayette Valley FFA, Two Star

North Scott FFA, Three Star

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North-Linn FFA, Three Star
Oelwein FFA, Two Star
Panorama FFA, Two Star
Red Oak FFA, Three Star
Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA, Two Star
Vinton-Shellsburg FFA, Two Star

Wapsie Valley FFA, Three Star
Waverly-Shell Rock FFA, One Star
Webster City FFA, Two Star
West Liberty FFA, Three Star
Westwood FFA, Two Star

Proficiency Awards

The Agricultural Proficiency Awards honor FFA members who, through their SAEs, have developed specialized skills that they can apply toward their future careers. Four "National Finalists" are selected for each of the award areas and will go on to compete for a national proficiency award. National Agricultural Proficiency Award winners are announced onstage during the National FFA Convention.

--Dairy Production Placement National Finalist: Collin Costello, North Scott FFA
--Grain Production Entrepreneurship National Finalist: Cale Pellet, Atlantic FFA

National FFA Band, Chorus, and Talent

Every year, members from across the nation audition to be involved in the National FFA Band, Chorus, and Talent. National FFA Band and Chorus members have various rehearsals and perform on stage at National FFA Convention. Talent has the opportunity to perform on stage at one of the General Sessions. One of the Talent acts is selected after multiple competition rounds as top talent at the end of convention.

--National Band:

Austin Cook, East Buchanan FFA at Winthrop
Rebecca Gomez, Dallas Center-Grimes FFA at Grimes
Lydia Lee, West Lyon FFA at Inwood
Devin Miller, Central Lyon FFA at Rock Rapids
Maddy Stevenson, Roland-Story FFA at Story City
Alex Wingert, Red Oak FFA

--National Chorus:

Sienna Bieber, Anamosa FFA

--National Talent:

Lane Miller, Muscatine FFA

Career Development Events

Career opportunities abound within today's agriculture industry. Career Development Events (CDEs) help students develop the abilities to think critically, communicate clearly and perform effectively in a competitive job market. CDEs cover a variety of job skills in everything from communications to mechanics. Some events allow students to compete as individuals, while others allow them to compete in teams.

--Agricultural Communications – Ballard FFA, Team Members: Mattison Hill, Allie Pierson, Elizabeth Hyman, and Emma Kielsmeier
--Agricultural Issues Forum – West Liberty FFA, Team Members: Tatum Dickey, Lexi Buysse, Brent Meyers, Parker Werling, Cora Wickham, Katie Schneider, and Olivia Crook
--Agricultural Sales – Montezuma FFA, Team Members: Maddy McKeag, Chloe Latcham, Caymen DeJong, and Carissa Vanzee
--Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems – Muscatine FFA, Team Members: Andrew Van Nice, Patrick Pendleton, Brandyn Beemblossom, and Samuel Reinier
--Agronomy – Denison FFA, Team Members: Dawson Evers, Brady Fredericks, Hannah Holdsworth, and Parker Wessel
--Conduct of Chapter Meetings – Montezuma FFA, Team Members: Elise Boulton, Alex Cheney, Michael DeJong, Ashlyn Huff, Brayden Stockman, Dylan Holland, and Alyssa Cline
--Creed Speaking – Anna Campbell of Audubon FFA

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- Dairy Cattle Evaluation and Management – Little Switzerland FFA at Waukon, Team Members: Kaylee Gibbs, Grace Howe, Cayla Nolting, and Faith Palmer
- Dairy Cattle Handlers' Activity – Carter Nolting, Little Switzerland FFA at Waukon
- Employment Skills – Rachel Grober, New Hampton FFA
- Environmental and Natural Resources – LaPorte-Dysart FFA at LaPorte City, Team Members: Hannah Gates, Jacob Lowe, Wes Hanson, and Daniel Zeien
- Extemporaneous Public Speaking – Austin Gutknecht of Brokaw FFA
- Farm Business Management – Little Switzerland FFA at Waukon, Team Members: Dani Stock, Makayla Manning, Gabrielle Marti, and Nathan Helgerson
- Floriculture – West Liberty, Team Members: Alexis Partida, Madison Law, Taylor VanDusen, and Marissa McMichael
- Food Science and Technology – East Sac FFA at Lake View, Team Members: Carley Reese, Ashly Hauser, Bianca Kading, and Desiree Hilburn
- Forestry – Bellevue FFA, Team Members: Mike Toops, Eli Witt, Jebadiah Schwager, and Henry Paulsen
- Horse Evaluation – Pella FFA, Team Members: Camryn Norton, Zachariah Thorson, and Shianne Votava
- Livestock Evaluation – East Sac FFA at Lake View, Team Members: Taylor Houska, Justin Rupnow, Cale Niehaus, and Levi Steinkamp
- Marketing Plan – Ballard FFA, Team Members: Jim Chism, Jenna Hernandez, and Sierra Knight
- Meats Evaluation and Technology – South O'Brien FFA at Paullina, Team Members: Abby Boardman, Eric Mars, and Sean Negus
- Milk Quality and Products – Lansing FFA, Team Members: Charles Stendel, Rachel Walleser, Brooke Stanley, and Peter Boland
- Nursery/Landscape – Newton FFA, Team Members: Chazten Wells, Logan Chandler, Lindsay Campbell, and Jaden Adams
- Parliamentary Procedure – Wapsie Valley FFA at Fairbank, Team Members: Sloane Banger, Kennadi Neil, Hannah Miller, Anna Richards, Sam Schnor, and Reily Richards
- Poultry Evaluation – Louisa-Muscatine FFA at Letts, Team Members: Addison Randall, Maisy Howell, Gage Connor, and Emily Wagner
- Prepared Public Speaking – Emily Saeugling of Atlantic FFA
- Veterinary Science – Independence FFA, Team Members: Megan Corkery, Jaimee Rowland, Keegan Zimmerly, and Avery Hanaway

American FFA Degree

The American FFA Degree is awarded at the National FFA Convention & Expo each year to less than 1% of FFA members making it one of the organization's highest honors. In addition to their degree, each recipient receives a gold American FFA Degree key. There were 155 American Degree recipients from Iowa.

Caleb Finnegan, AC-GC FFA
Landon L. Foster, AC-GC FFA
Jonathon B. Lauritsen, AC-GC FFA
Kassandra Sheeder, AC-GC FFA
Zachary Allen Briggs, Albia FFA
Hannah JoAnn Curry, Albia FFA
Micaleah Lauren Dawn Stewart, Albia FFA
Madison Hoch, Algona FFA
Mitch J. Rickels, Anamosa FFA
Alesix Jo Boes, Atlantic FFA
Haley Jo Carlson, Atlantic FFA
Carly Westphalen, Atlantic FFA
Nick Jordan, Ballard FFA
Clayton Poots, Ballard FFA

Shelby Deaton, Baxter FFA
Steven Milbrandt, Bison FFA
Erica Noel Mehlhaus, Boone A&M FFA
Hannah Garland, Calamus-Wheatland FFA
Amanda Aaron Gorzney, Calamus-Wheatland FFA
Brett Kelting, Calamus-Wheatland FFA
Emma Rae Olson, Calamus-Wheatland FFA
Morgan Alissa Vanderheiden, Calamus-Wheatland FFA
Haylee Rose Valeika, CAM FFA
Grace Elizabeth Hansen, CAM FFA
Charles James Kies Jr., Cascade FFA
Michael F. Gehl, Cascade FFA
Sadie Gravel, Cascade FFA
Marty Joseph Knepper, Cascade FFA

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Joshua Lee Carlson, Central Plains FFA
Justin D. Shields, Central Trail FFA
Tanner Dale Loghry, Central Trail FFA
Hanna Ray Bjelica, Charles City FFA
Cully Jacob Forsyth, Charles City FFA
Aaron Wallace Wright, Charles City FFA
Matilyn Mae Ann Wheeler, Creston FFA
Grace Adams, DeWitt Central FFA
Rebecca Leigh Martin, DeWitt Central FFA
Brandon Gary Langbein, East Sac FFA
Nicole Sue Langbein, East Sac FFA
Mara E. Weis, East Union FFA
Mary F. Cheney, English Valleys FFA
Miranda Dreesen, George-Little Rock FFA
Lauren Parker, Gilbert FFA
Ben Hinners, Gilbert FFA
Corbin Paul Studer, Hawkeye FFA
Matthew Allen Bolton, Independence FFA
Leah M. Rosauer, Independence FFA
Riley Keith Barr, Indianola FFA
Morgan Kathryn Hamell, Indianola FFA
Jordan Keith Henry, Indianola FFA
Hunter Michael Albers, Indianola
Connor Dean Davidson, Indianola FFA
Nathan Scott Downey, Indianola FFA
Hannah Elizabeth Morey, Indianola FFA
Devin Alan Becker, Indianola FFA
Bailey Lyn Greubel, Indianola FFA
Wes Curtis Bedwell, Interstate 35 FFA
Micaela JoLynne Choate, Iowa Falls-Alden FFA
Ryan Michael Chalupa, Keota FFA
Mitchell Robert Hanson, La Porte-Dysart FFA
Jacob Holck, Le Mars FFA
Keaton John Koerselman, Le Mars FFA
Jackson James Sanor, Linn-Mar FFA
Megan Leiran, Little Switzerland FFA
Bethany Ann Stock, Little Switzerland FFA
Carmen Wille, Little Switzerland FFA
Kaylin Burr, Lone Tree FFA
Alex Yedlik, Lone Tree FFA
Hunter Riley Hamilton, Lone Tree FFA
Brady N. Houser, Lone Tree FFA
John Patrick Crowley, Maquoketa FFA
Isaiah J. Miller, Maquoketa FFA
Brooke Helen Lapke, Maquoketa FFA

Nick Bagge, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Amanda Fortman, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Thomas Lehmann, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Kalvin Orcutt, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Savannah Lee Ann Keitzer, Mediapolis FFA
Jenny J. Petersen, Melcher-Dallas FFA
Cole Robert Fishwild, Midland FFA
Sydney Ann Stender, Midland FFA
Noah Maxwell Altenhofen FFA
Taylor Elizabeth Cruise, Monticello FFA
James Patrick Evans, Mormon Trail FFA
Megan Warin, Mount Ayr FFA
Cal William Daughton, Mount Ayr FFA
Ben Bierschenk, Nashua Plainfield FFA
Hailey Marie Schmitz, Nashua Plainfield FFA
Courtney Kay Davis, Nevada FFA
Rebecca Lynn Sabelka, New Hampton FFA
Jarret Jefferey Horn, Newton FFA
Joshua Michael Boleyn, North Fayette Valley FFA
Regan R. Pleggenkuhle, North Fayette Valley FFA
Matthew Ryan Appler, North Fayette Valley FFA
Ethan Frederick Lape, North Fayette Valley FFA
Colby Larson, North Fayette Valley FFA
Morgan Lynn Lauer, North Fayette Valley FFA
Spenser Schmitt, North Fayette Valley FFA
Tiffanie Dee Koch, North Fayette Valley FFA
Elizabeth LouAnn Fisher, North Linn FFA
Todd Gregory Holdgrafer, Northeast FFA
Adam Koch, Osage FFA
Kaitlyn Marie Boyer, Osceola Big Chief FFA
Jordan Handy, Pekin FFA
Mackenzie Martin, Pekin FFA
Cole Robert Spain, Postville FFA
Allison Marie O'Connor, Rockford FFA
Alyssa Staudt, Rockford FFA
Kelli Jo Wicks, Rockford FFA
Danielle Marie Furlin, Seymour FFA
Jacob Joe Agena, Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA
Andrew Lee Marco, Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA
Matthew Douglas Naig, Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA
Kyle John Peters, Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA
Riane Sue Vickery, Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA
Colby John Wagenaar, Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA
Haley Ann Wollmuth, Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA
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WesLee J. Gould, Starmont FFA
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Ben Eden, Vinton-Shellsburg FFA
Cheyanne Kylie Hunt, Wapello FFA
Lynn Marie Duffy, Wapsie Valley FFA
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Kyle Andrews, Wayne FFA
Riley Brown, Wayne FFA
Katie A. Gassman, Wayne FFA
Dakota Lovett, Wayne FFA
Kade Richman, Wayne FFA
Becca Bernice Jean Hermann, West Delaware FFA
Joe Baker, West Liberty FFA
Gracie Ellen Danner, West Liberty FFA
Hailey Daufeldt, West Liberty FFA
Noah Feldman, West Liberty FFA
Alyssa Grace McMichael, West Liberty FFA
Anthony Friederichs, Wilton FFA

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About Iowa FFA Association

The Iowa FFA Association is a youth organization of over 15,400 student members as part of 235 local FFA chapters across Iowa. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. The Iowa FFA Association was organized by delegates from 23 schools at Iowa State College on May 17, 1929 and is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture. The Iowa Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for FFA as a service to local agricultural education programs. For more, visit the Iowa FFA Association online at IowaFFA.com, on Facebook, and Twitter.