

Keynote Address



KEVIN LAUE Keynote Speaker

Kevin Laue began fighting for his life before he was even born. With his umbilical cord wrapped around his neck in the womb, Kevin fought back using his arm as a shield. Due to a lack of circulation from the cord, he was born with an arm that ended just below the elbow. His disability is a testament to his toughness and refusal to quit: “It was either my arm or my head,” Kevin often jokes.

When Kevin was 10 years old, his father died of cancer and Kevin became determined to make his father proud by proving that he could be a success—not only in basketball, but in life.

Kevin had his share of adversity, although never backed down or gave in, even after getting cut from his seventh grade basketball team. Full of courage and perseverance, Kevin became the MVP of his team by his senior year of high school. Mid-season he broke his leg and lost all scholarship offers. Kevin attended Fork Union Military School for a post-graduate year to redeem scholarship offers in 2008. In March of 2009, he was awarded a scholarship from Manhattan College, a Division I school where he became the first Division I basketball player on scholarship with one hand.

In 2012, Kevin graduated from Manhattan College as an honor student with a 3.5 GPA. He is currently working with members of the United Nations representing persons with disabilities. Kevin is working as a motivational speaker, sharing his life story to inspire others.

*See Kevin speak during
the First General Session on
Monday, April 10th.*



Special Presenter



BILL NORTHEY
Iowa Secretary of
Agriculture

Secretary Bill Northey is an Iowa farmer that grows corn and soybeans on his farm near Spirit Lake. He started farming with his grandfather, Sid Northey, after graduating from Iowa State University in 1981.

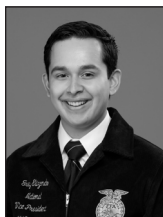
Sworn in January of 2007, Northey ran on a platform of expanding opportunities in renewable energy, promoting conservation and stewardship, and telling the story of Iowa agriculture. Northey was reelected in 2014 for a third term.

Northey also believes in agricultural service by serving as a co-chair with Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds for the Iowa Food and Family Project. This group strives to promote agricultural literacy in addition to supporting initiatives such as the Meals from the Heartland Service Project at the Iowa FFA Leadership Conference.

As Secretary, Northey has committed to traveling to each of Iowa's 99 counties to hear from farmers and rural residents with a stake in the future of agriculture. These meetings allow him to listen to their needs and better lead the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship as it seeks to improve the people of the state.

*See Mr. Northey speak during
the Second General Session on
Tuesday, April 11th.*

Special Presenter



TREY ELIZONDO 2016- 2017 National FFA Western Region Vice President

Originally from the Yoakum FFA Chapter in Texas, Trey Elizondo is serving as the Western Region Vice President. Elizondo is majoring in agricultural education at Texas A&M University. He is involved with the John 15 Catholic Freshman Leadership Experience, Camp Quality Texas, Connect Retreat, F.A.S.T. (Future Ag Science Teachers) and Saddle & Sirloin. During high school, he served as Yoakum FFA Vice President (2013-14), LaBahia District Treasurer (2013-14), Yoakum FFA President (2014-15) and Area X Association Vice President (2014-15).

For his supervised agricultural experience, he raised market steers to be shown at the chapter show and major stock shows through the state. His objective was to make a placing sale with his projects and use the money earned to pursue his degree at Texas A&M.

Upon graduating from college, Elizondo plans to pursue a career as an agricultural education teacher and work with leadership development for the Texas FFA Association.

*See Trey speak during
the Third General Session on
Tuesday, April 11th.*

*Join Trey at his workshops on
Monday, April 10th at 1:00 PM in
Scheman 230 and Tuesday, April
11th at 9:00 AM in Scheman 230.*



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PURPOSE TO ACTION