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News Release

2017 National FFA Convention and Expo, October 25 – 28

INDIANAPOLIS, IN--The 90th National FFA Convention & Expo celebrated its second year of a nine-year commitment in Indianapolis beginning October 25. More than 65,000 FFA members and guests from throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands were in attendance at this year's event, which ran through October 28.

This year, the theme of the convention and expo was "I Can. We Will." The national officer team was excited to share this with all of those in attendance.

The convention and expo kicked off with the National FFA Band leading a grand march down Georgia Street in downtown Indianapolis on Wednesday, October 25. The march ended at Bankers Life Fieldhouse and ushered in the start of the opening session. Eight general sessions were held in the fieldhouse. On the morning of Saturday, October 28, the eighth general session was 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 was represented by 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

Students from Arizona, California, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, and Oklahoma have been elected by delegates throughout the United States to serve on the 2017-18 National FFA Officer team. Erica Baier, an agricultural education major at Iowa State University and FFA member from the Earlham FFA chapter, was elected national secretary.

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.

Baier is the third FFA member from Iowa to be elected to National Office in the last five years and served the Iowa FFA Association as the 2015-16 South Central State Vice President. The previous two National FFA Officers from Iowa were Abrah Meyer (2014-15 Iowa FFA President) and Steven Brockshus (2012-13 Iowa FFA President).

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Kellie Einck is American Star in Placement Winner

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. Einck is the first star winner from Iowa in 19 years (Andrew Tygrett, 1998).

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: Ella Hommel, Grundy Center FFA
- Animal Systems Div. 3 National Finalist: Owen Grover, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Animal Systems Div. 5 9th Place Overall: Justin Wessel, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Environ. Services/Nat. Res. Systems Div. 1 1st Place Overall: EmmaKay McClain, Clay Central Everly FFA
- Environ. Services/Nat. Res. Systems Div. 3 National Finalist: Reegan Zinkula, Grundy Center FFA
- Environ. Services/Nat. Res. Systems Div. 5 National Finalist: Caitlin Kennedy, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Food Products and Processing Systems Div. 1 National Finalist: Nathan Crooker, North Fayette Valley FFA
- Food Products and Processing Systems Div. 3 4th Place Overall: Shelby Westhoff, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Food Products and Processing Systems Div. 4 National Finalist: Breanna Duehring and Miranda Johansen, North Fayette Valley FFA
- Plant Systems Div. 1 National Finalist: Haley Berends, Clay Central Everly FFA
- Plant Systems Div. 3 National Finalist: Brooklyn Pardall, Central Lee FFA
- Plant Systems Div. 5 3rd Place Overall: Mason Burlage, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Power, Structural and Technical Systems Div. 3 1st Place Overall: Avery Tauke, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Power, Structural and Technical Systems Div. 5 National Finalist: Megan Ertl, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Social Systems Div. 1 National Finalist: Grace Klein, North Fayette Valley FFA
- Social Systems Div. 3 National Finalist: Adam Wessels, Maquoketa Valley FFA
- Social Systems Div. 6 National Finalist: Mirannda Kettelkamp and Caitlin Hagen, Linn-Mar FFA

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National Chapter

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	Nashua Plainfield FFA, Two Star
Audubon FFA, Two Star	North Fayette Valley HS FFA, Two Star
Benton Community FFA, Two Star	North-Linn FFA, Two Star
Brokaw FFA, Two Star	Oelwein FFA, Two Star
Creston FFA, Two Star	Panorama FFA, Two Star
Decorah FFA, Two Star	Sibley-Ocheyedan FFA, Two Star
East Buchanan FFA, Two Star	Vinton-Shellsburg FFA, Two Star
Griswold FFA, Two Star	Wapsie Valley FFA, Three Star
Independence FFA, Two Star	Webster City FFA, Two Star
La Porte-Dysart FFA, Two Star	West Liberty FFA, Three Star
Marengo FFA, Two Star	Westwood FFA, Two Star
Mid-Prairie 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.

--Beef Production Placement National Finalist: Gracie Danner – West Liberty FFA
--Dairy Production Entrepreneurship National Finalist: Nathan Arthur – Sumner-Fredericksburg FFA
--Environmental Sci. and Natural Resources Management National Finalist: Jonathan McNees – Brokaw FFA
--Nursery Operations National Winner: Darin Knobloch – West Lyon 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, Gold 10th Place, Team Members: Grace Long (2nd Place Overall), Ashley Kahler, Caitlin Peterson (8th Place Overall), Jim Chism
--Agricultural Issues Forum - Osage, Bronze, Team Members: Adam Koch, Garrett Meitner, Whitney Hemann, Jarrett Huebsch, Joseph Sullivan, Joe Popp
--Agricultural Sales – Muscatine, Silver, Team Members: Ryan Calvert, Kyle Tomlin, Summer Neece, Hannah Spies
--Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems – Muscatine, Bronze, Team Members: Jacob Miller, Aaron Scott, Tanner Gerard, Nicholas Holladay

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- Agronomy – West Lyon, Gold 3rd Place, Team Members: Megan Blauwet (10th Place Overall), Jacee DeVries, Dayra Knobloch, Talia Knobloch
- Conduct of Chapter Meetings – Harlan, Silver, Team Members: Bobbie Schechinger, Lucy Borkowski, Elise Juhl, Grace Kenkel, Abigail Jacobsen, Courtney Mumm, Dalton Gross
- Creed Speaking – Morgan Peterson of West Liberty, Bronze
- Dairy Cattle Evaluation and Management – West Dubuque, Gold 5th Place, Team Members: Regan Demmer, Madison Strief, Garret Pfeiler, Trenton Hammerand
- Dairy Cattle Handlers' Activity - Rachel Hefel of West Dubuque, Gold, 2nd Place Overall
- Employment Skills – Maria Geisler of Hudson, Gold
- Environmental and Natural Resources – Maquoketa, Bronze, Team Members: Matt Baker, Trevor Dull, Roy Gerlach, Ethan Strathman
- Extemporaneous Public Speaking – Chandler Jahner of Pella, Bronze
- Farm Business Management – Montezuma, Gold 1st Place, Vance Bushong (2nd Place Overall), Ashley Armstrong, Shelby Helm, Aoife Lyons
- Floriculture – West Liberty – Gold 9th Place, Cora Wickham, Katie Schneider, Olivia Crook, Parker Werling
- Food Science and Technology – Maquoketa, Bronze, Team Members: Brie Bennis, Abby Diesing, Thomas Crossland, Mackenzie Said
- Forestry – Southwest Valley, Silver, Team Members: Avery Kwirant, Connor Shipley, Evan Fleharty, Kolton Schutt
- Horse Evaluation – Des Moines, Gold, Team Members: Nadine Garcia, Josephine Hill, Samuel Stevens, Zoie Wagner
- Livestock Evaluation – Louisa-Muscatine, Silver, Team Members: Jackson Soy, Brandon Burmeister, Will Kiesewetter, Addison Randall
- Marketing Plan – Ballard, Silver, Team Members: Carla Edleman, Dana Edleman, Clayton Poots
- Meats Evaluation and Technology – Wapello, Silver, Team Members: Kenna Lanz, James Wykert, Makenna West
- Milk Quality and Products – North Scott, Silver, Team Members: Grace Bustrom, Dylan Engelbrecht, Chloe Engelbrecht, Collin Costello
- Nursery/Landscape – Muscatine, Silver, Team Members: Carter Oldfield, Allen Tian, Elaina Lee, Kaleigh Bell
- Parliamentary Procedure – Wapsie Valley, Silver, Team Members: Megan Lahmann, Trystan Lampe, Julia Larue, Lydia Martins, Jacob Risse, Olivia Willey
- Poultry Evaluation – Wapsie Valley, Bronze, Jackson Willey, Austin Schares, Sean Banger, Britney Hershey
- Prepared Public Speaking – Lauren Mosher of Grundy Center, Silver
- Veterinary Science – Maquoketa Valley, Bronze, Team Members: Amanda Engelken, Mason Kruse, Lauren Goldsmith, Nicole Schilling

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 134 American Degree recipients from Iowa.

Sarah Clark, Albia FFA
Colton Selvy, Albia FFA
Amanda Anderson, Algona FFA
Levi Eden, Algona FFA
Ashton Nyman, Algona FFA
Brody Vaske, Algona FFA

Thomas English, Anamosa FFA
Madison Hirl, Anamosa FFA
Clayton Saeugling, Atlantic FFA
James Brecht, Benton Community FFA
Dakota Feldmann, Benton Community FFA
Chase Janss, Benton Community FFA

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Jaelyn Diercks, Calamus-Wheatland FFA
Bailey Moellenbeck, Calamus-Wheatland FFA
Jessica Aupperle, CAM FFA
Timber Erickson, CAM FFA
Brice Becker, Cascade FFA
Evan Gibbs, Cascade FFA
Joseph Knepper, Cascade FFA
Ray Kurt, Cascade FFA
Brett Rugeberg, Cascade FFA
Emily White, Cascade FFA
Mikayla Hartl, Central City FFA
Addison Loges, Central Lee FFA
Michael Bouska, Charles City FFA
Daiton Tietz, Decorah FFA
Melissa Garcia-Rodriguez, Des Moines FFA
Mikel Wright, Des Moines FFA
Spencer Stoebner, Des Moines FFA
Chad Marlowe, DeWitt Central FFA
Jacqueline Francois, East Buchanan FFA
Jared Kelly, East Buchanan FFA
Adam Davis, Gilbert FFA
Ward Umbaugh, Guthrie Center Tiger FFA
Felicia Fehr, Hawkeye FFA
Edmond Henning, HLV FFA
Cristyn Eischeid, IKM-Manning FFA
Casey Karsten, IKM-Manning FFA
Ashlynn Lingle, IKM-Manning FFA
Haylee Lau, Independence FFA
Darby Bean, Indianola FFA
Katie Catron, Indianola FFA
Cameron Onstot, Indianola FFA
Brandon Pettit, Indianola FFA
KJ Rankin, Indianola FFA
Logan Adair, Interstate 35 FFA
Garrett Thompson, Interstate 35 FFA
Brandon Hanson, Iowa Falls-Alden FFA
Collin Gosse, Jesup FFA
Tanner Burton, Lamon FFA
Erik Murry, Lone Tree FFA
Jenna Bonert, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Kristi Goedken, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Kaleb Kruse, Maquoketa Valley FFA

Andrew Palmersheim, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Jay Wessels, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Trent Westhoff, Maquoketa Valley FFA
Greggory Jensen, Marengo FFA
Kayla Smith, Marengo FFA
Brittany VanBennekom, Marengo FFA
Mike Poggemiller, Mediapolis FFA
Eli Slouha, Midland FFA
Cortney Price, Monticello FFA
Zachary Timm, Monticello FFA
Katelyn Holmes, Mount Ayr FFA
Wyatt Jackson, Mount Ayr FFA
Jed McCreary, Mount Ayr FFA
Jade Lecy, Murray FFA
Justin Jones, Murray FFA
Katie Friederichs, Muscatine FFA
Logan Maas, New Hampton FFA
Susan Schwickerath, New Hampton FFA
Jacob Smith, Newton FFA
Jacob Baudler, Nodaway Valley FFA
Cody Baumler, North Fayette Valley FFA
Jacob Leuchtenmacher, North Fayette Valley FFA
Ethan Menne, North Fayette Valley FFA
Darin Ney, North Fayette Valley FFA
Jesse Stanbrough, North Fayette Valley FFA
Derek Thoms, North Fayette Valley FFA
Jessica Boess, North Fayette Valley FFA
Evan Boss, North Linn FFA
Austin Messer, North Scott FFA
Anna Radcliff, North Scott FFA
Garrett Schoonover, North Scott FFA
Zachery Hamilton, Northeast FFA
Brad Holdgrafer, Northeast FFA
Cassidy Jacobsen, Northeast FFA
Justin Swanton, Northeast FFA
Troy Rau, Oelwein FFA
Katie Stewart, Oelwein FFA
Kooper Brimm, Osceola Big Chief FFA
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Sarah Kelly, Wayne FFA
Morgan Knust, Wayne FFA
Morgan Smith, West Central Valley FFA
Elyse Buysse, West Liberty FFA
Brady Smith, West Liberty FFA
Chris McMichael, West Liberty FFA
Kayla Kaalberg, West Liberty FFA
Grace Rens, West Lyon FFA
Rebecca Van Regenmorter, West Lyon FFA
Tyler Prizler, Williamsburg FFA

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About Iowa FFA Association

The Iowa FFA Association is a youth organization of over 14,800 student members as part of 232 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.