



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

www.paffa.org



Foundation to Build the Next Generation of Leaders

Pennsylvania FFA Foundation

EAST BERLIN, Pa. — During the last six years, the Pennsylvania FFA Foundation has awarded over \$96,000 in grants to FFA members, agriculture educators and FFA chapters across the state through the Learning by Doing Grant.

The foundation believes agriculture education students should have the maximum opportunity to grow and succeed, leaving high school as prepared as possible for the world ahead.

This year, the foundation received a large increase in applications for the grant due to reasons that include canceled livestock sales, eliminated annual chapter fundraisers, and decreased school funding due to transitions to virtual education. The foundation was able to increase support to award \$30,000 in grants this year — an increase of \$18,000 over 2019, all thanks to companies like those listed below. New donors this year are Pioneer Seed, Farm & Home Foundation of Lancaster County, AgChoice and MidAtlantic Farm Credit, Lancaster County Ag Council, Bell & Evans, and Farm Credit Foundation for Agricultural Advancement.

“Throughout the years, agricultural companies have shown their continuing commitment to FFA members in Pennsylvania,” said Sarah Sparks, executive director of the Pennsylvania FFA Foundation. “In today’s climate, we know every dollar is being stretched; the fact that these companies rise to the need by finding value in our members and our commitment to students and educators speaks volumes. Experience is often quoted as life’s best learning opportunity. Through this grant program the foundation has been able to enhance curriculum, provide tools and equipment, and expand the ‘experience’ opportunities available in agricultural education classrooms.”

All funds allocated through the Learning by Doing grants are intended to make a lasting impact on the future of Pennsylvania’s agriculture education. For more information visit www.paffa.org/ways-to-give.

Congratulations to the following 2020 Learning by Doing grant recipients.

Ag Educators and FFA Advisers

- Thomas Hojnowski
- Anna Herman
- John Siefert
- Victoria Brown
- Brandon Witmer
- Doug Brown
- Tom Ritchey
- Kelse Brown
- Phil Haussener
- Claudia Brady
- Kacey Rice
- Melanie Berndtson

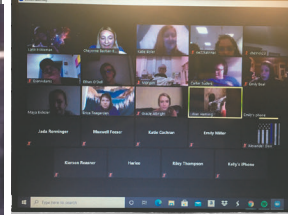
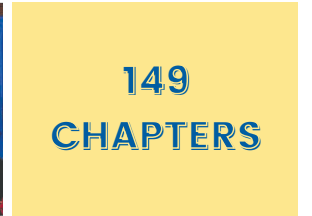
- Chad Hoover
- Melanie Swendsen
- Abigail Camasta
- Allee Hoover
- Adria Russell
- Ellis Turner
- Andrew Smith
- Molly Pifer
- Courtney Martin
- Hailey Bucha
- Nicole Pierce
- Vita Failla
- Jenna Smith
- James Patterson
- Natasha Maddox
- Brianna Grim

FFA Members with Supervised Ag Experiences

- Benjamin McElroy
- Megan Garber
- Jaylen Ray
- Mackenzie Kerkeslager
- Abigail Mitchell
- Jedda Levy
- Cale Rice
- Michael Lewis
- Tristen Foley

Local FFA Chapters

- Otto-Eldred
- Bermudian
- Athens
- H.G. Parkinson
- Northeast Bradford Rockwood
- Headwaters
- Blackhawk



PENNSYLVANIA FFA 2020 WRAPPED

Pennsylvania FFA photo

That’s A Wrap!

ALAYNA HARRELL
State Reporter

Pennsylvania FFA state officers have seen a year like no other. For many, this year can be considered a historic roller coaster ride.

Our association has seen countless highs and lows, and has had a blast while facing each obstacle and succeeding with achievement.

Our 2020 started with a successful Mid-Winter Convention and Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success conference. Last year was the first time that the ACES conference was split into two tracks based on members’ ages.

Pennsylvania FFA also hosted its first-ever virtual State Convention. This convention was held on

YouTube, where we received 2,554 views on our eight session videos. We were honored to have special guests U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and Dr. Temple Grandin.

In October, we organized our monumental virtual COLT (chapter officer leadership training) and hosted over 300 Pennsylvania FFA chapter officers. These leaders worked with the state officer team to prepare for their upcoming year in FFA.

Soon after our COLT conference, Pennsylvania FFA released our video series, “Inside the Jacket.” This series is geared toward first-year FFA members, and covers a variety of topics relating to FFA. From official dress to FFA history, we cover just about all of the nitty-gritty detail an FFA mem-

ber should know. We have published 14 episodes and plan to release more.

Not only did the Pennsylvania FFA experience monumental events, but we also had some record-breaking statistics. We had an increase of membership — a total of 13,070 members, the second highest membership for the association. We also currently have a total of 149 FFA chapters in the state.

This year, we faced countless challenges, yet the Pennsylvania FFA came back stronger than ever. We are blessed to have had a successful 2020 and appreciate the resilience our organization has. Here is to another record-breaking year for our association, chapters and members.

Life: It Goes On

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION



CODY LEHMAN

I remember March of 2020 like it was yesterday. I went to school as usual, sat through my classes, talked with friends, and was thinking about what assignments were due that week. Nearing the end of my senior year, I was looking forward to my chapter’s banquet, competing in the Senior Prepared LDE, and attending the State Convention for the final time.

COVID-19 was just a headline on the news, and rumors were circulating about schools being shut down, rumors we were certain could not be true. And as I walked into the parking lot to leave for work a friend called to me jokingly, “See you in the fall for graduation!” That afternoon, we got the call saying that school was closed for the next

two weeks. Those two weeks turned into the rest of my senior year; it felt like my world came to a screeching halt.

Whether it was being stuck at home for weeks on end, learning that your favorite FFA event had been canceled, or not being able to spend time with friends and family, everyone had their fair share of disappointment in 2020. For many, it felt like life just stopped. But as Robert Frost said, “In three words I can sum up everything I’ve learned about life. It goes on.”

Despite the challenges we have faced this year, Pennsylvania FFA has chartered an incredible new chapter with 55 members, teachers and students, who have gone above and beyond to find new and creative ways to remain involved, and my teammates and I have had the honor of representing 13,070 Pennsylvania FFA members, the highest membership our association has seen in 42 years. Throughout the past seven months, I have been continually amazed and inspired by the way FFA members and the agricultural community have chosen to overcome the less-than-ideal circumstances 2020 threw at them.

Though we are faced with difficulty, we are not defined by it. So if you feel stuck, if it seems like life isn’t going as planned and it’s one disappointment after another, take heart: This is not your defining moment. Tomorrow is a new day full of new opportunities, and no matter what happened yesterday, life goes on.

Cody Lehman is the State Vice President.