



BLUE & GOLD NEWS

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

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Leadership Conference Award Winners Named

Pennsylvania FFA was proud to honor John Kroft, a senior from Dover FFA, and Robert Grega, a sophomore from Somerset Area FFA, with the Sam Hayes Founders Awards this year.

Every year at the State Legislative Leadership Conference legislative breakfast, members are separated into a house and senate. In the house and senate, a member is voted on by their peers as the most active participant throughout the day as well as the conference, winning them the Founders Award, which was started by Sam Hayes, a past Pennsylvania secretary of agriculture.

John Kroft

FFA has become a huge part of my life and has shaped me into the person I am today.

I became an FFA member my freshman year of high school and started my first supervised agricultural experience in my exploratory ag class. My first SAE was restoring my family's 1948 Farmall M, which I just finished in my senior year of high school and enjoy taking to the local tractor shows.

I became more active in FFA halfway through my sophomore year when I decided that it was time to start breaking out of my shell and start putting my fears behind me. I decided to start putting a lot of time and effort into FFA and ran for an officer position in April of 2021.

On May 28, 2021, I was elected as the Dover FFA sentinel for my junior year. Then, at the awards program on May 6, 2022, on my birthday, I was elected as the 2022-23 Dover FFA president for my senior year.

I never thought that FFA would leave such a lasting impact on me and my future, but it is truly an organization that every school should have. It is so beneficial to students and their futures because it cultivates premier leadership, personal growth and career success.

I attended the SLLC conference in Harrisburg this year. This is by far my favorite FFA event, and I went in with a few goals: I wanted to meet as many people as I could and make as many friends as I could, and I wanted to win the Sam Hayes Founders Award.

The Founders Award is an award that is voted on by all 600 students who were in attendance at SLLC. All students were asked to vote on a student who showed active involvement in the conference and was a good representative of the FFA organization.

At the end of the three-day conference, I was awarded the Founders Award, but more important, I made a ton of new lifelong friends and memories along the way.

My goal is to attend Penn State at University Park in the college of agriculture. I made this decision because of the tremendous impact that FFA has left on me, and in December of 2022, I received my acceptance letter from Penn State in the mail.

I have also made the decision to run for Pennsylvania FFA state officer at the state convention in June and hope to be able to serve the Pennsylvania FFA organization one more year before I start my college career. FFA truly has a very meaningful and special place in my heart.

Robert Grega

Greatness comes through dedication. These are the words that I live by, for it is with dedication that I pursue all goals in life.

Furthermore, I have taken these words into my FFA pursuits, striving to represent Somerset FFA in an honorable manner and develop myself as a leader and exemplar of dedication. FFA has given me many opportunities to develop myself, whether in speech competitions or help with chapter affairs.

I am truly thankful for all that FFA has offered me. I further extend thanks to my FFA adviser, Mr. Harrold, who mentioned the Student Legislative Leadership Conference to me and said it would be a perfect opportunity to develop myself as a leader.

Right he was, for I was honored with the Founders Award for my dedication to being a leader that puts not just myself forward but also my fellow FFA members.

I am only a sophomore, so I still have two more years to enjoy the great organization that is FFA, and I have no doubt that I still have much more growth as a leader ahead of me. But when the time comes for graduation and life after high school, I hope to take the valuable lessons that I will have learned from the FFA to West Point, where I will become a leader in the U.S. Army.

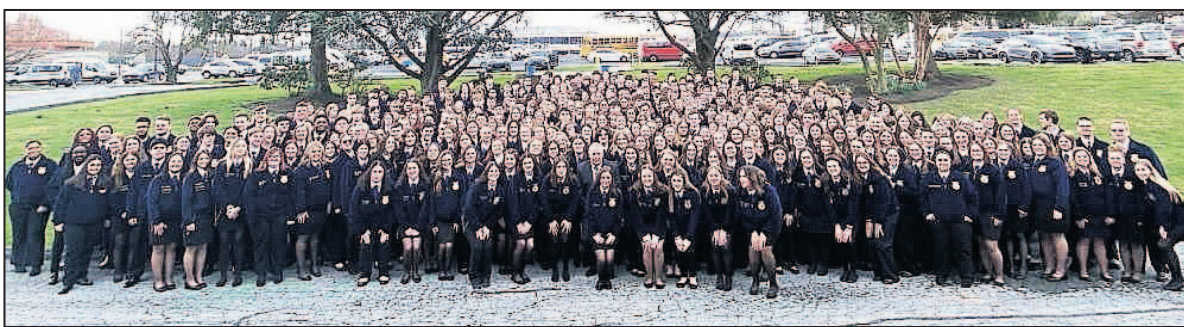
Finally, I am beyond thankful for the FFA, and I know for certain that the mark the FFA has left on my heart will stay there for the rest of my life.

Pennsylvania Hosts National Vice President



Pennsylvania FFA

Makenna Clifton, national FFA southern vice president, far right, stands with Big Spring FFA members and Pennsylvania FFA Vice President Benjamin Torrey, far left. Clifton visited the Cumberland Valley, Big Spring, Northern York and Battlefield chapters, interacting with students and attending workshops.



Pennsylvania FFA

Students gather at the FFA State Legislative Leadership Conference.

FFA Hosts Leadership Conference

The Pennsylvania FFA state officers were honored to host the State Legislative Leadership Conference. During the conference, over 600 FFA members and advisers from across the state gathered to learn how to advocate and how a bill becomes a law.

During the conference's opening night, members went through workshops on advocacy and dinner etiquette. The students used their knowledge to advocate for a nonprofit organization at the advocacy fair held in the evening.

The students were put into groups of approximately 10 members and given a specific nonprofit organization for which they made a flip chart on two pieces of construction paper

to detail their organization's goal for both money and volunteer hours.

Each group member also received fake money and labeled volunteer hours to give to other advocating organizations throughout the evening.

During the fair, 48 nonprofit organizations were advocated for.

The following day, members and state officers were wide awake for breakfast and the following review on proposed bills from FFA chapters that chose to participate to create more opportunities for the Pennsylvania FFA Association. The bills were then voted on, and the results will be shared in the coming weeks.

Later in the conference, the state officers led parliamentary procedure

workshops where students learned how to make a motion and amend bills. The members then split into caucus meetings before being separated into senate minority and senate majority.

Then, the bills were mock amended and changed by the members. The state officers proceeded to chair the committees.

As the conference concluded the following day, the legislative breakfast allowed FFA members to interact with their representatives and senators to talk about their experiences in agriculture and the FFA. The 2023 State Legislative Leadership Conference was a huge success.

What Are the State Officers Up To?

As Easter weekend has passed, the state officers have celebrated 10 months of being the 2022-2023 Pennsylvania team.

The team has experienced so many different opportunities to this point. They all would say it has been nothing short of incredible.

The officers have now begun their banquet season as they travel around the state to visit chapters to see what the members have had the opportunity to do throughout their year.

Collectively, the officers have compiled over 100,000 miles to this point, and the number won't get any smaller as they begin to count down their days until retirement.

The state officers have also begun state convention assignments, meaning they'll go through the process of planning, preparing and being ready for three sessions of awards, recognitions and so much more.

All six officers would agree that



they have grown and developed over the course of their term. To this point as a team, the officers have planned and completed chapter visits, state officer summit, Fall Leadership Conference, the National FFA Convention, Mid-Winter Convention, ACES (Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success) and the State Legislative Leadership Conference.

It's sad but also exciting as the officers talk about their plans and intentions for after office as the summer months are upon us. Before the team knows it, they'll all be heading off to college in the fall and attending to their future endeavors.

The 2022-2023 Pennsylvania state officer team will forever be thankful.



Pennsylvania FFA

Robert Grega, left, and John Kroft with their Sam Hayes Founders Awards at the State Legislative Leadership Conference.