

Vision of Virginia

SUMMER 2023



CONTENTS

B NATIONAL STATE OFFICER SUMMIT

C AU REVOIR, OFFICERS!

E LEARN ABOUT OUR NEW LEADERS!

G CONVENTION 2023: RADIATE!

N FFA CAMP

O GEARING UP FOR SUCCESS

P HERE BY THE OWL

R THE FUTURE OF FARMING

T EXPLORING AGRICULTURE AT THE 2023 VIRGINIA AG EXPO

U MR. O. BEVERLEY ROLLER

UPCOMING events

OCTOBER

29-NOVEMBER 5: National FFA Convention

NOVEMBER

26-DECEMBER 2: NAAE Convention

NOVEMBER

27-29: VA Farm Bureau Conference

DECEMBER

10-12: VACTE Conference

2023 WASHINGTON D.C. NATIONAL STATE OFFICER Summit



by **Liberti Sell** – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Reporter

During our time at Washington D.C. the 2023-2024 State Officer team had the pleasure of meeting with Senator Kaine, Senator Warner, Representative Cline, and Representative Spanberger to talk about this upcoming Farm Bill and other upcoming agricultural topics. With the Farm Bill being renewed every 5 years, 2023 being that year, it was a perfect opportunity for the Virginia FFA to communicate and understand where our representatives stand on the bill. It allowed us to discuss and gather thoughts on what the bill is and how it might affect us. As a younger generation of Farmers, technology has evolved and may allow us to improve on the way we do business.

The National State Officers Summit was the gathering of FFA State officers from all 50 states and Puerto Rico. It was a great showing with representatives from almost every state. It allowed us to see how agriculture is accomplished throughout our country. Giving everyone a new perspective on innovation and adversity and how to implement and overcome both. We not only were able to increase our understanding of agriculture on a larger scale but made amazing friends and connections who will most definitely be a resource we use now and in the future.



Smiling for a picture, the 2023-2024 State Officer Team visits with Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger.

VIRGINIA FFA ASSOCIATION

115 Hutcheson Hall - 0908
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Phone: 540-231-3823

www.VaFFA.org
Email: gseibel@vt.edu

**Kelcey
Weston**
President

**Grace
Walbroehl**
Secretary

**Nate
Zerkel**
Vice President

**Kirin
Miller**
Vice President

**Anne Kathryn
Martz**
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**Jadyn
Smith**
Treasurer

**Liberti
Sell**
Reporter

**Adam
Hawkins**
Sentinel

Get Published Here!

AU REVOIR, Officers!

by Kirin Miller – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Vice President

After a year of traveling to chapters, advocating for agriculture and serving all facets of the association, the 2022-2023 Virginia F.F.A. State Officer Team has completed their term. They have all had an extensive impact on the members, advisors and stakeholders during their time in office, but F.F.A. has also affected each one of them in a huge way. Let's hear what they have to say about their year of service!



Emily Jenkins giving her retiring address at State Convention.



Jordan Petrie hosting a session at State Convention.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR TIME IN SERVICE?

“Seeing the diversity of agriculture, getting to interact with the members on a different level and having so many opportunities brought to me.”

~ Emily

“Being able to interact with the members and getting to learn about them and their experiences.”

~ Jordan

“When we got to sit down with Virginia’s First lady Suzanne Youngkin during F.F.A. Week!”

~ Elizabeth

“Spending time with F.F.A. members; getting to know members across the state and learning about their love for agriculture was definitely the highlight of the year.”

~ Jill

“Learning more about agriculture in different areas of the state through the members’ S.A.E.s.”

~ Gabriella

“Meeting people from other parts of the state that experience agriculture in a completely different way than I’ve been exposed to.”

~ Makenna

“Getting to visit schools across the state and meeting so many amazing members!”

~ Carly

“Seeing younger students experience the possibilities of our organization for the first time.”

~ Savannah

“I had the privilege of meeting members at leadership camp, chapter visits, banquets, and other fun events.”

~ Katie



Elizabeth Bates, Scott Stump (National F.F.A. C.E.O.), and Cheryl Zimmerman (National F.F.A. Executive Secretary) at the Microsoft TechSpark event.



Savannah Goodwin reading a book to students in her old kindergarten classroom during Ag Literacy Week.



Carly Thomas facilitating a workshop during FFA Week.



Makenna Garrett speaking at Suzanne Youngkin's (First Lady of Virginia) release of the Virginia-made wine Cornus Virginicus in support of FFA and 4-H members.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON YOU LEARNED THIS YEAR?

"Cherish every memory and be the best person I can be, even if I feel like I am failing at something or not doing as well as everyone else."

~ Emily

"It's ok to make mistakes, but you have to be able to recover from them and be able to adapt to change."

~ Jordan

"Don't measure your success only through work. Having a full life is about the positive relationships you've built and the joyous milestones along the way."

~ Elizabeth

"It is ok to not have your life 100% planned out; take the time to enjoy those moments rather than stressing about the future."

~ Jill

"You are capable of anything you set your mind to."

~ Gabriella

"Say yes to every opportunity. It's so worth it to experience new places with new people doing something outside of your comfort zone."

~ Makenna

"How to be a humble servant. At the end of the day, titles do not matter – it's who you are and how you treat others that leaves an impact."

~ Carly

"Rather than staying in a negative mindset about change, I found myself grateful that I had taken a leap of faith and gotten off the beaten path."

~ Savannah

"Take time to foster relationships with people who may have been through similar situations as you and can teach you a lot about life."

~ Katie



Katie Powell, Matt Lohr (VA Secretary of Agriculture), and Glenn Youngkin (Governor of VA) at the Agrospheres ribbon cutting event.



Jill Reiter at the Young Farmers Summer Expo.



Gabriella Martin at her chapter's banquet.

WHAT IS A PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE WITH VIRGINIA'S F.F.A. MEMBERS?

"Take those opportunities and hold tight to the memories, the moments and the sentimental items because one day you might look back and you won't get to experience some of these things again."

~ Emily

"It's ok to be yourself, don't be afraid of what others might think about you and don't let others' opinions stop you from being yourself or hold you back."

~ Jordan

"Say 'yes' to every opportunity given. You never know who you will meet or the amazing places you'll get to see!"

~ Elizabeth

"Branch out, try new things, and always believe in yourself!"

~ Jill

"Do not let your fears get in the way of your success."

~ Gabriella

"Take advantage of the opportunities around you and be confident in your ability to do something outside of your comfort zone!"

~ Makenna

"Love others, be a friend to all, and always be the first to lend a helping hand to those around you."

~ Carly

"Be kind, always. You'll never know the true depth of your light and how it may be paid forward."

~ Savannah

"Whether it's talking to new people at an area event or trying out a new contest, it's important to soak up every moment that you have in this organization."

~ Katie

On behalf of the 2022-2023 Virginia F.F.A. State Officer team, we would like to thank the members for making this a fantastic year full of opportunities for growth and memories that will last a lifetime! Now, onto the next adventure!



LEARN ABOUT OUR New Leaders

by Stacy Doss – VA FFA Intern

In June, a new slate of state officers was selected to serve as leaders for Virginia FFA for 2023-2024! We had the chance to catch up with them and learn a little more about their FFA stories.

Question Guide

1. What is your favorite part about your S.A.E. project?
2. How did you first learn about and join FFA?
3. What are your favorite hobbies outside of FFA?



President: Kelcey Weston

1. Working with horses is by far my favorite part about my SAE. I have fallen in love with the process of getting new rescues at the barn and watching them grow throughout their training. Seeing their progress is one of the most rewarding things that I have experienced.
2. My dad and uncle were both active members of the FFA throughout their high school careers. Simply knowing how much they enjoyed their FFA experience was enough to persuade me to become a member. While I had heard their stories about the organization, I had no idea how much of an impact it would end up making on my life.
3. For the past 15 years of my life, I have been a competitive dancer. I have trained in the styles of lyrical, jazz, modern, tap, hip-hop, contemporary, pointe, and ballet. Dance has always been a huge outlet for me and a great way to express my feelings.

1. I love that the farm I work at for my SAE used to belong to my father's grandparents. I grew up visiting Cedar Lane Farm each year for the annual Family and Friends Bonfire. Even though the farm is no longer in my family it is still very special to me that I get to see and work at the place my grandmother grew up.
2. For me FFA is a family tradition. My mom and uncle were FFA members in high school in the Nelson County FFA Chapter and my uncle went on to become a state officer. My sister was a chapter officer when I was younger; so, I always knew I wanted to join FFA. After joining in middle school, I fell in love with the organization.
3. I love anything outdoors! My favorite activities are hiking, kayaking, rappelling, and rock climbing. A fun fact is that for two years I've been trained in single pitch top rope belaying. Being in nature always helps me to relax and feel at peace.



Secretary: Grace Walbroehl



Vice President: Nate Zerkel

1. My favorite part of my SAE project is that I get to work with my hands on restoring a tractor, while also building skills that will help me for my career. Learning how to work on equipment and working with my hands is always fun and good for me to learn.
2. When I was in 8th grade, I took my first Ag class after watching my brother have so much fun in his ag classes. He was an FFA member, and he would come home and tell us about how much fun he had doing a contest or going on a trip, and I thought that seemed like so much fun. So, I joined in 8th grade and have loved it ever since.
3. My favorite hobby outside of FFA is definitely working on my own project truck, and tractors. For example, I have a GMC pickup that I have been working on for a few months, and it is so much fun to work on and get the truck to where I want it to be. I also love to go fishing also, usually I like to go bass fishing, but I am trying to branch out more!

1. My absolute favorite part of my S.A.E. project, being a milk hand on a dairy farm, is the friendship and connections I've been able to make through my boss. Since starting to work there in November 2022, I've been able to judge a 4-H contest, attend the 2023 Young Farmers Winter Expo., and develop a lifelong friendship with my boss and mentor.
2. When I was in eighth grade, two of my friends encouraged me to join because of how much fun they were having competing in Parliamentary Procedure. I switched my elective to the agriculture class and fell in love with it! I joined again in high school, and since then have been able to find my passion and participate in so many things I never would have if not for FFA
3. My biggest hobby is definitely music! I sing, play the acoustic guitar, bass guitar, ukulele, and keyboard, and even write my own songs. I've had the opportunity to get one of my songs recorded by winning a songwriting contest, been in bands and choirs, and even was in the National FFA Chorus last year!



Vice President: Kirin Miller

**VicePresident: Anne Kathryn Martz**

1. My favorite part about my SAE is being able to talk to the local farmers! Learning about what makes each of their farms unique is the most interesting part of my job. It helps to give me a different perspective on what hard work and success mean to different people.
2. My school hadn't had an active FFA chapter in the past 30-40 years, until my sophomore year of high school. One day, I received an email about an upcoming flower competition. I love flowers, so I figured I should look into it. Before that day, I had never even set foot in my school's shop! A few weeks later, the ag teacher ended up encouraging me to run for an officer position. Even though I didn't have any previous FFA experience, I decided to do it anyway. Back then, I never would have thought that I would end up as a Virginia FFA State Officer, I didn't even know what that was... But since that day, the rest is history, and four years later, here I am!
3. My favorite hobby outside of FFA is definitely going to be shopping. I am the definition of a shopaholic, which also comes with being a workaholic because unfortunately, money doesn't grow on trees (as I've come to find out). While juggling four jobs, I've become a professional online shopper. Some of my less expensive hobbies include any and all river activities. You name it, I've probably done it... Perks of living on the Northern Neck!

1. My favorite part about my SAE project would definitely be getting to help injured animals. There is nothing more rewarding than helping a sick dog or cat get back onto the road of recovery. I have always loved being around animals, from when I was just a baby on my family's farm to working at a small animal veterinary hospital. It fills my cup to be able to be around animals and to help them.
2. I was taking Mrs. Bowman's Ag class in sixth grade, when Mr. Carpenter, our other Ag teacher, walked into the room. After they had a brief conversation, he turned around and talked me into running for an officer position at Carroll County Middle School. I ran, was elected as reporter, and the rest is history.
3. One of my favorite hobbies is horseback riding. Specifically riding Tennessee Racking Horses, my family has raised Racking Horses longer than anyone can remember. It is a rite of passage for every new generation coming up to have their first ride on a racking horse.

**Treasurer: Jadyn Smith****Reporter: Liberti Sell**

1. My favorite part of my SAE project was getting to hand out my homemade pies to the families and watch their reaction. The joy it brought the families to have a homemade pie and be able to enjoy local produce was fantastic and something I will remember forever.
2. My little sister was actually a part of FFA before I was, and went on a field trip to an auction with her Ag class. She then proceeded to call me and ask if I would not tell my parents that she was buying a show pig and asked if I would be willing to split the cost with her and it be our pet pig. I agreed to split the cost if I could name our pig Porkahauntis, she agreed and bought the pig in the middle of her field trip. When she brought the pig home, she opened the front door and walked it into the kitchen and my parents eventually accepted the fact that we now had a pig. After that day I knew FFA was going to be amazing and so much fun, and I wouldn't have changed it for the world.
3. Outside of FFA I am involved in a lot of things. Some of my favorites are being the sportscaster for my high school at all their sporting events, I love to dance and have been dancing since I was 4, and baking. I bake lots of different things but mainly cookies. I am also an avid reader. I love to read and am constantly spending too much money on books I found on Tik Tok.

1. My favorite part of my SAE project was getting to drive my 1954 Ford NAA tractor in parades, and most recently in the 4th of July parade. The tractor was my great grandfathers, and I was able to get it running to drive in parades.
2. Both of my parents are or have been FFA advisors so my whole life I have been around FFA, and I attended my first state convention when I was just 6 months old so when I got to middle school, I couldn't wait to join the FFA. Through the FFA I have learned many life skills that I will use in everyday life.
3. My favorite hobby outside of FFA is hunting and fishing. I love being in the great outdoors and enjoying nature. I do most of my fishing in Douthat State Park for trout, bluegill, and perch and I hunt on land my family owns in Shenandoah County.

**Sentinel: Adam Hawkins**

CONVENTION 2023: *Radiate!*

by Jadyn Smith – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Treasurer and
Kelcey Weston – VA FFA 2023-2024 State President

The 97th Annual Virginia State Convention was held on June 20-23. This year Virginia Tech's campus welcomed over 2,000 members, advisors, special guests, and chaperones. Students came from every corner of Virginia for members to compete in over 30 CDEs and LDEs. For the first time in 97 years the Virginia State Convention had the honor of hosting Mrs. Suzanne Youngkin, the First Lady of Virginia. Our convention was also joined by Andrew Seibel, the 2022-2023 National FFA President.

Why is state convention so important? Because it is the only opportunity that members from across the entire great state of Virginia get to meet, from the tip of the state to the very bottom and from the beaches to the mountains, we all meet on common ground. The contests here are at the highest level in the state, this is where months of dedication gets to pay off. This week is where the most skilled competitors could earn a ticket to the national convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, or to the Big E in Massachusetts, where all the eastern states come together to compete.





In addition to our many competitive events, members took part in the 2nd Annual Career Expo. Here they met with industry professionals and enjoyed time learning about various careers in the agricultural field.

Our sessions were filled with excitement as we honored member accomplishments! 171 members walked across Burruss Hall stage to receive their State FFA Degree and 36 members were declared State Proficiency Winners. We also heard retiring addresses from our state officer team and heard moving and impactful keynotes from Andrew Seibel and The First Lady of Virginia, Suzanne S. Youngkin.



STATE WINNING CDE AND LDE TEAMS/INDIVIDUALS ARE...



AG COMMUNICATIONS
Team: Abingdon



AG ISSUES
Team: Central



AG MECHANICS - JUNIOR
Team: Powhatan



AG MECHANICS - SENIOR
Team: Randolph-Henry



AG SALES
Team: Randolph-Henry



**AGRISCIENCE FAIR - FOOD
PRODUCTS AND PROCESSING
SYSTEMS**
Individuals: Ella Beagle and Avery
Caffrey from J. Frank Hillyard



**AGRISCIENCE FAIR - POWER,
STRUCTURAL, AND TECHNICAL
SYSTEMS**
Individuals: Branson Arbogast and John
Haviland from J. Frank Hillyard



**AGRISCIENCE FAIR - SOCIAL
SCIENCE**
Individuals: Megan Wolfcale from
Eastern View



**AGRISCIENCE FAIR - SOCIAL
SCIENCE**
Individual: Maddie Smith from Eastern
View



**AGRISCIENCE FAIR - ANIMAL
SYSTEMS**
Individual: Nathan Paris from Chatham



**AGRISCIENCE FAIR -
ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**
Individual: Madisyn Corron from Eastern
View



AGRONOMY - JUNIOR
Team: Charlotte Central Middle



AGRONOMY - SENIOR
Team: Appomattox



AVIAN BOWL
Team: J. Frank Hillyard



CREED
Individual: Colton Moye from Giles



DISCUSSION MEET
Individual: Courtney Begoon from Fort
Defiance



EMPLOYMENT SKILLS
Individual: Ayla Janney from Broadway



**ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL
RESOURCES**
Team: Broadway



**EXTEMPORANEOUS PUBLIC
SPEAKING**
Individual: Katie Payne from Broadway



FARM BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
Team: Nelson Senior



FLORICULTURE
Team: John S. Battle



FOOD SCIENCE
Team: James Wood



HIPPOLOGY - JUNIOR
Team: Fort Defiance



HIPPOLOGY - SENIOR
Team: Riner



HORSE EVALUATION - JUNIOR
Team: Wilson Middle



HORSE EVALUATION - SENIOR
Team: Riner



HORTICULTURE AWARD
Team: John S. Battle



LIVESTOCK JUDGING - JUNIOR
Team: J. Frank Hillyard



LIVESTOCK JUDGING - SENIOR
Team: Massanutten Technical Center



MARKETING PLAN
Team: Strasburg



NO PHOTO

MIDDLE SCHOOL AGRICULTURAL MECHANICS AND TECHNOLOGY
Team: Wilson Middle



MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOD AND FIBER
Team: RE Aylor



MIDDLE SCHOOL PLANT SCIENCE
Team: J. Frank Hillyard



NO PHOTO

MIDDLE SCHOOL SMALL ANIMAL CARE
Team: Wilson Middle



NO PHOTO

MIDDLE SCHOOL QUIZ BOWL - WRITTEN
Team: Wilson Middle



MIDDLE SCHOOL QUIZ BOWL - ORAL
Team: J. Frank Hillyard



NO PHOTO

MIDDLE SCHOOL ESSAY WINNER
Individual: Alexis Davis from Wilson Middle



MILK QUALITY AND PRODUCTS
Team: Sherando



NURSERY AND LANDSCAPE
Team: John S. Battle



PREPARED PUBLIC SPEAKING - JUNIOR
Individual: Virginia Burton from Chatham



PREPARED PUBLIC SPEAKING - SENIOR
Individual: Rebekah Sanderson from Randolph-Henry



STAR JUNIOR CHAPTER
Team: Signal Knob



STAR SENIOR CHAPTER
Team: Central



TALENT WINNER
Individual: Leah Moore from Rappahannock



TURF GRASS MANAGEMENT
Team: Atlee



VETERINARY SCIENCE
Team: Eastern View

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State Stars



Star in Agribusiness - Daniel Heath from Clarke

Daniel's love for antique machinery was sparked by his father and grandfather. His love for this equipment, especially Farmall tractors, led Daniel to begin restoring antiques as his SAE. His grandfather taught him all the restoration techniques he now uses. He commonly restores tractors by replacing the engine and drivetrain; as well as restoring the body. Daniel takes his machinery to steam and gas shows to exhibit in both the pageant and pulling/driving portions. After taking his newly restored machinery to a few shows, he then decides whether to keep the item or sell it to help fund more restoration projects for his SAE. Through his leadership experiences in FFA, Daniel has gained skills that assist him in making sound business decisions. After school, Daniel plans to attend community college to complete his Associate's Degree, then transfer to complete a Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science.

Star in Ag Placement - Houston Bryant from Nelson

Throughout his life, Houston has worked on his parents' chestnut farm, growing and harvesting chestnuts for Virginia Chestnuts. Although his responsibilities change with the seasons, Houston's workload is constant. His spring and summer duties consist of prepping the orchard for harvest, while he spends September through November harvesting and processing chestnuts. The cycle starts over again once he begins germinating trees in December, some of which are sold through their nursery while others are planted back into the orchard. Through his leadership experiences in FFA, Houston has gained valuable knowledge and skills that help him strategize and make decisions for the future of the orchard. Houston's role within the family business has expanded as he has gotten older. He now plays a much larger part in the business, helping parents make decisions that impact the orchard. Houston plans on going to college to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering.



Star in Agriscience - Georges Saison from Rappahannock

Interested in learning more about the impact vernal pools have on the ecosystem, Georges began volunteering at his local National Wildlife Refuge when he was 11. He is the youngest volunteer to have served as a vernal pool researcher of the Rappahannock Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Georges is responsible for looking after multiple vernal pools, observing biomasses, recording pH levels, and recording the wind velocity in the area. His leadership experiences in FFA have contributed to him having an inquisitive mind and being able to advocate for the importance of vernal pools and the impact they have on the ecosystem.



Star Farmer - Blake Caricofe from Buffalo Gap

Growing up on his family farm, Blake has been involved in agriculture and has developed a passion for raising livestock. For his SAE he raises cattle and swine, as well as producing hay and corn for the family farm. He raises his cattle and swine for local youth to exhibit at their fairs and market animal shows. He also raises cattle for beef production. His daily duties include feeding, breeding, and maintaining herd health. He also raises hay, rye, and corn to feed his livestock, mixing custom feed mixes himself. He has developed knowledge of raising and marketing his livestock through local events and FFA opportunities. After high school Blake plans to attend the University of Tennessee Knoxville and pursue a degree in Agribusiness.



2023 HONORARY FFA STATE DEGREE *Recipients*



BLAKEY BATES
SANDI BATES
LEANN BATTON
NATHON BATTON
RAYMOND BRYANT, JR.
JOHN CARPENTER
BRODY CROCKETT
MAVIS FARRAR
CHRISTIAN GOODWIN
ELIZABETH GOODWIN

ZACH JACOBS
BRIAN JENKINS
JEANETTE JENKINS
DEL. BARRY KNIGHT
SECRETARY MATT LOHR
CURTIS MARTIN
KAREN MARTIN
EVA MARTIN
KENNITH MARTIN
EDWARD MCCANN, JR.

MARTHA MOORE
DEL. WILL MOREFIELD
WHITNEY PERKINS
CAROL PETRIE
JOHN PETRIE II
RANDY POWELL
SHANNON POWELL
JOY POWERS
NAOMI REITER
SCOTT REITER

DIANE RICHARDS
RUTH SAUNDERS
JEFF STOUT
KEVIN THAYER
JED THOMAS
SHELLEY THOMAS
THE FIRST LADY OF VIRGINIA,
SUZANNE S. YOUNGKIN

2023 VIRGINIA FFA STATE *Degree Recipients*

APPALACHIAN AREA	Rural Retreat FFA	Highland FFA	CENTRAL	Northern Neck FFA
Abingdon FFA	Eli Bobbitt	Ethan Moore	Culpeper FFA	Blake Kleinschmidt
Aspen Bailey	Aiden Burkentine	Walker Williams	Chassidy Aberdeen	Patrick Henry (Ashland) FFA
Reagan Cox	Madison Dalton	Brianna Wimer	Isabella Hardaway	Presley Marks
Kelli Garrett	Sydney Fortuner	Kirsten Wood	Megan McClelland	
Cathryn Henley	Brelyn Moore		Grace Walbroehl	
John Henley	Samuel Smith	Nelson County FFA		Rappahannock High School FFA
James Hobbs	Emily Taylor	Houston Bryant	Eastern View FFA	Morgan Halsey
Jana Lee		Daniel Campbell	Morgan Butler	Anne Kathryn Martz
Dalton Minnick	BLUE RIDGE	Sydney Ellis	Madisyn Corron	
Carys Reedy	Broadway FFA	Candace Fitzgerald	Hannah McDermott	Spotsylvania FFA
Ella Woods	Creed Combs	Justin Higginbotham	Cameron Stanley	Chloe Mastin
	Ethan Foltz	Grace Huffman	Cassidy Wolfcale	Joshua Madison
Carroll County FFA	Cole Knicely	Neely Keyton		Justin Coppage
Camrey McMillian	Ciara Lazaro-Blas	Kristi Thacker	Fluvanna FFA	Deven Jones
Katlyn Newman	Erica Wood		Erika Schmack	Hunter Fortune
Jadyn Smith	Nathan Zerkel	Riverheads FFA		Connor Smith
Michael Worrell		Paige Buchanan	Goochland FFA	Marcus McGirr
	Buffalo Gap FFA	Keara Ewers	MacKenzie Forbes	
Grayson County FFA	Blake Caricofe	Zebulun Hemp	Cameran McKinney	NORTHERN
Bobby Boyer	Nicole Grady	Kevin Myrtle	Kaitlyn Payne	Brentsville FFA
Hayden Halsey	Tyler Hohenstein			Melanie Beard
Luke Johnson	Lori Teter	Spotswood FFA	Hanover FFA	
		Chloe Shepard	McKenzy Kirby	C.L. Payne FFA
Holston FFA	East Rockingham FFA			Lizzy Bosarge
Jacob Bott	Emma Cude	Stuarts Draft FFA	King William FFA	Tyler Crews
Dillon Bott	Maryahanna Rothgeb	Anna Grace Henderson	Kaleb Jimmo	Chase Fleet
Dustin Bott		Will Monroe	Trenton Johnson	Brandon Smith
Robert Millinger	Fort Defiance FFA	Turner Ashby FFA	Wylie Johnson	
Dustin St. John	Sierra Dedo	Mackenzie Crawford	Austin Sanford	Central FFA
	Braydon Eavers		Austin Weeks	Zachary Cooper
Lee FFA	Ryan Hurst			Benjamin Walters
Brittany Jarnagin	Tianna Lambert	Wilson Memorial FFA	Louisa FFA	
	Jessica Layman	Emily Klein	Emma Haney	Clarke County FFA
Pulaski County FFA	Makenna Miller	Delaney Morris	Haley Jimerson	Edward Barber
December Ward	Chloe Phillips	Isabella Zipf		Daniel Heath
	Alston Truslow		Mechanicsville FFA	
	Brooke Truslow		Chris Aldridge	
	Daniel Worrell		Ethan Randolph	

Fauquier FFA Cailyn Caine Alana Henegar Lauren Lowenbach Taylor Parker Claire Scaring	Sherando FFA Chloe Boyd Adam Hawkins Clarke Heffern Hunter Legge Wesley Molden Brendan Ridings Cody Ridings Jacob Stout	Liberty FFA Maegan Cash Jenna Goff Anna Grohs Andrew Hiner KayLi Lindsay	SOUTHEAST AREA Amelia County FFA Cara Whitaker	Mecklenburg FFA Camdyn Pulley James McAden Melissou Piercy Lillie Puryear Skyler Reese Harrison Snead Lucas Spence Kadence Thomas Madison Thomas Kailey Toone
James Wood FFA McKenna Chenoweth Brooklyn Davis		Lord Botetourt FFA Nathan Badgley Raegan Carter Jonah Duncan Hailey Lusk Kirin Miller	Appomattox FFA Tyler Martin Cameron Henderson Connor Swanberg	
Luray FFA Jesse Lang Meghan Sours	SOUTH RIDGE AREA Chatham FFA Cody Scarce		Buckingham FFA Eli Bryant Daniel Farrish Jenna Oliver	Randolph-Henry FFA Jay Duffey Cristina Hailey Robert Pettus
Millbrook FFA Kinsey Knox	Franklin County FFA Faith Feazell	Magna Vista FFA Jordyn Beale Maggie Brown Mallory Kaczor Abbie Moxley	Dinwiddie FFA Corey Mann Makayla Reiter	
Page County FFA Hailey Comer Lauren Hensley Jocelyne Rinker	Gretna FFA Kenly Saunders	Smith Mountain FFA Alex Adkins Reagan Harvey Adrianna Jernigan Brianna Sloan Kaylee Thompson Kelcey Weston	Halifax County FFA Siyonna Hankins-Dixon	
Rappahannock County High School FFA Liberti Sell	Henry County FFA Hunter Barrow Tucker Roach			

2023 State Proficiency Winners

Agricultural Communications

Ben Puckett - Abingdon

Agricultural Education

Kelli Garrett - Abingdon

Agriculture Mechanics Design/Fab

Cody Ridings - Sherando

Agricultural Processing

Matthew Hartley - Sherando

Agriculture Mech Repair/Main. - ENT

Adam Hawkins - Sherando

Agriculture Mech Repair/Main. - PL

Clay Lambert - Fort Defiance

Agriculture Research - Animal Systems

Lohr Thomas - Broadway

Agriculture Research - Integrated Systems

Katherine Powell - Nelson

Agricultural Sales - PL

Kerrigan Bauserman - Strasburg

Beef Production - ENT

Stephanie Schweigert - Broadway

Beef Production - PL

Kari Alderman - Carroll County Middle

Dairy Production - PL

Lucy Johnson - Spotswood

Diversified Agricultural Production

Corey Mann - Dinwiddie

Diversified Horticulture

December Ward - Pulaski

Diversified Livestock

Hayden Campbell - Nelson

Environmental Science and Natural Resources

Georges Saison - Rappahannock

Equine Science - ENT

Savannah Goodwin - Louisa

Equine Science - PL

Megan McClelland - Culpeper

Fiber and/or Oil Crop Production

Trenton Johnson - King William

Forage Production

Colton Reiter - Dinwiddie

Forest Management and Products

Courtney Begoon - Fort Defiance

Fruit Production

Houston Bryant - Nelson

Goat Production

Anna Grohs - Liberty-Bedford

Grain Production - PL

Wylie Johnson - King William

Landscape Management

Logan Bond - Carroll Middle

Poultry Production

Julia Haviland - Broadway

Service Learning

Emile Shell - James Wood

Sheep Production

Aiden Shiflet - Fort Defiance

Small Animal Production and Care

Mackenzie Hinshaw - James Wood

Specialty Animal Production

Grace Stowe - Chatham

Specialty Crop Production

Bruce Jones - Appomattox

Swine Production - ENT

Blake Caricofe - Buffalo Gap

Swine Production - PL

Ashlyn Almarode - Riverheads

Turf Grass Management

Katlyn Newman - Carroll County

Vegetable Production

Candace Fitzgerald - Nelson

Veterinary Science

Jadyn Smith - Carroll County

Wildlife Management

Jeremy Fisher - Rappahannock



by Adam Hawkins – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Sentinel

On July 9-14 Virginia FFA held its annual FFA Leadership Camp at Graves Mountain Lodge. Chapters from across the state of Virginia had the opportunity to attend either one of the two days for day camp or spend the night at overnight camp where members attended workshops and completed service project through National FFA's Living to Serve Grant Program where meals were packaged and donated to a local senior center.

Throughout the week, members had the opportunity to participate in various activities such as the swim Olympics, participate in a talent show and attend the Madison County Fair. Attending this camp allows members to further explore

As the week comes to an end members who attended the overnight camp posed for a picture before heading to a pavilion for the banquet.

their leadership skills as well as socialize with members from other chapters within their groups. Members can also compete in contests such as Extemporaneous Public Speaking and Quiz Bowl to help strengthen their public speaking skills and their FFA knowledge.

Virginia FFA would like to thank Camp Directors Tess Seibel and Turner Trice for helping run camp this year and this year also marks the 58th year that Mr. Trice has helped with FFA Camp, and we are very grateful for his support over the years. We hope everyone had a great time at the Virginia FFA Leadership Camp this year and *we can't wait to see you next year.*



Members posing in front of the truck filled with the meals soon to be delivered straight to the nursing home.

Gearing up FOR SUCCESS



The team poses for a picture after having fashioned dresses out of toilet paper for State Vice President Nate Zerkel and State Sentinel Adam Hawkins during a workshop at basecamp. Lots of fun like this was had throughout the two weeks of training!

by Grace Walbroehl – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Secretary

Nerves and excitement run high as the 2023-2024 State Officers gather for the first-time post-convention to begin training for the year that lies ahead of them. The week following State Convention, the State Officer team arrived back in Blacksburg for their first session of training. “Basecamp” is a training that all State Officers go through where they discover new things about themselves and their teammates, discuss influential leadership skills, and have the opportunity to bond as a team for the first time. The team had a blast throughout the entire week as they grew in their capacity for leadership, formed friendships, and shared plenty of laughs.

After a quick week-long turnaround, the new State Officers were back at it again at Checkpoint 1, this time with some familiar faces! Checkpoint 1 training took place July 10th-14th, at Graves Mountain Lodge alongside the Virginia

FFA Leadership Camp. While the new State Officers were in training all week, the 2022-2023 State Officer Team was helping to lead camp. During Checkpoint 1, the team learned about good conversation skills and then enjoyed learning to write their own workshops. They were able to partner up and create four amazing workshops to use at COLTs and chapter visits throughout this year! So much fun was had in training and while hanging out with members during mealtimes and evening activities. The new State Officer Team also had the opportunity to participate in the camp service project alongside the FFA members and retired State Officers. The service project was packaging meals for community members in need. The team was then able to help deliver these meals locally. State Treasurer Jadyn Smith said the service project was her favorite experience at camp because “Sometimes we get so focused on what we want, we forget that some people don’t have the things that they need.”



All members, State Officers, and Past State Officers who helped with the service project smile for a picture in front of the truck loaded with food before it was delivered.



Here by the Owl

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE TEACHERS CONVENE FOR THE VAAE SUMMER CONFERENCE

Beating the Summer Heat

From July 17-21st, Virginia agriculture teachers gathered in Blacksburg, Virginia for the VAAE (Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators) Summer Conference. An annual event, this conference allows teachers time to collaborate with colleagues, learn from industry experts, and gain experience and certification to become better teachers for agriculture students. The conference was held at the Graduate Life Center at Donaldson-Brown, on Virginia Tech's campus. Air-conditioning was abundant and was a welcome relief during the July heat. The week's agenda included a short conference for early career educators (0-3 years), a mid-career short conference (7-15 years), a CDE/LDE fair, roundtable discussions, tours of local agriculture (specifically facilities at Virginia Tech), workshops, and hands-on sessions. Teachers also conducted area and state business to plan for upcoming events and activities and to elect new leaders for the coming year.



THE INN AT VIRGINIA TECH
AND SKELTON CONFERENCE CENTER

Dr. Larry Case delivers the VAAE Award Banquet keynote address.



Teachers line up for registration and reconnect with old friends.



Mr. Dave Winston from the School of Animal Sciences shares information about research being conducted at the Dairy Center at Kentland Farm.

OUTSTANDING EARLY CAREER TEACHER:

Josh Fleenor (Cumberland)

OUTSTANDING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHER:

Melessa Suder (Eastern View)

OUTSTANDING PROGRAM:

Eastern View

TEACHERS TURN THE KEY SCHOLARSHIP:

Bethany Grooms (Nelson Middle)

IDEAS UNLIMITED:

Sherry Heishman (Central)

TEACHER MENTOR:

Jessica Jones (Tunstall)

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT:

Dan Swafford

VAAE would like to thank VAAE President, Melessa Suder (Eastern View) and Sarah Jo Jones (Carroll County) for executing an excellent conference.

Evening Activities

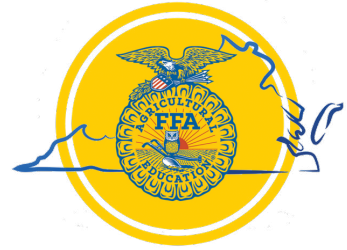
The evenings were full of fellowship, recognition, and good food. On Tuesday, the Ag teachers took part in an agriculture trivia night, building camaraderie and having a little fun. On Wednesday evening, current and retired teachers gathered at the German Club Manor to recognize the contributions of people who have retired from the profession. At this event, old friends are reconnected, and younger teachers glean wisdom from their predecessors. The next evening, the teachers joined together for the annual VAAE Awards Banquet where teachers are recognized for their hard work and dedication to the profession. This year, we were honored to have Dr. Larry Case, former National FFA Advisor, delivered the keynote address. In his speech, he spoke to the good work that has been done and shared some ideas about the ways we will need to step up to the plate for agriculture students in the future. During the address, you could hear a pin drop! After dinner, awards were announced. A special presentation was made to honor the life and work of Mr. Dan Swafford. His wife, daughter, and son were on hand to share reflections and to receive the award.



LaVeta Nutter, State FFA Advisor, and Dr. Mike Gutter, Virginia Cooperative Extension Director, collaborate with teachers during the Retired Teacher Reception.



THE FUTURE OF *Farming*



by Anne Kathryn Martz
VA FFA 2023-2024 State Vice President

After spending the week in DC, officers traveled to the beautiful town of Luray for the 2023 Farm Bureau Young Farmers Expo. The Virginia Farm Bureau Federation of Young Farmers is a leadership development and networking program for farmers and agriculture industry professionals between the ages of 18 to 35. The expo serves as a time where young farmers and others can network and gather to learn about key agricultural issues and explore agriculture in the area. During the state officer's time at the expo, they traveled all over the Page County area, getting the opportunity to tour different farming operations, listen to amazing guest speakers, and get up to date on the latest agriculture news... All in all, it was a blast!



Grace & AK posing for pictures at the first stop on the day of farm tours!



A team picture at the final stop on the farm tours... a huge dairy farm!

On Friday night, the expo kicked off with guest speaker Alex White talking about the importance of planning for your retirement early. That may not sound like it was interesting, but Jadyn left with a full page of notes! After dinner, we were all experiencing a rollercoaster of emotions as Dr. Rousawn Dozier told us his story. By the time he was done, we were all left inspired.

On Saturday morning, several state officers competed in various competitions held during the expo. Nate, Adam, and Kirin all competed in the discussion meet. While they didn't end up finishing in the top three, they all agreed that they had lots of fun! Earlier in the year, AK

had submitted an application and was selected as a finalist for the 2023 Outstanding Young Agriculturalist Award, so her “competition” was giving a speech about growing the future of agriculture. Out of the ten finalists selected, AK won! She will go on to give the same speech in November at the 2023 Virginia Farm Bureau Conference in front of six HUNDRED farmers and agriculturalists from all over the state!

After the competitions finished up, there was a panel discussion during lunch where young farmers and legislators discussed hot agriculture topics. After lunch, the farm tours got off to a great start. There were two separate groups who went to three different farms. Overall, the tours were very insightful and informative. The first stop was a small, but lively “you pick” operation, where we got closeups of different crops, mainly vegetables and LOTS of beautiful flowers! The second stop was at a local distillery/horse barn. After being able to tour the distillery, it was cool to be able to get up close and personal with all the horses at the barn! For the third and final stop on the tours, officers got the awesome opportunity to tour a massive dairy farm! The officers fell in LOVE with all the adorable calves around on the farm! After the tours wrapped up, everyone joined back up for dinner, where all the competition awards were announced.

On Sunday morning, the expo ended with an inspiring morning service and final discussion about last minute topics. The officers learned so much about the agricultural industry through many different aspects. The tours, panel discussions, and guest speakers provided everyone with lasting impressions and knowledge that they will use for many years to come!



We were in LOVE with all the calves! Kelcey couldn't get enough!



Team picture after AK was announced as the recipient of the Outstanding Young Agriculturalist Award!

Exploring

AGRICULTURE AT THE 2023 VIRGINIA AG EXPO



by Nate Zerkel – VA FFA 2023-2024 State Vice President

The state officer team pictured with Governor Glen Youngkin, Secretary Matt Lohr and Commissioner of VDACS Joe Guthrie.

The officer team was able to travel to Land of Promise farm in Virginia Beach to attend the Virginia Ag Expo. While they were at the expo, they helped set up and run the Virginia FFA Foundation booth, which promoted Virginia FFA and all it has to offer, and helped work in the welcome booth, where they greeted everyone who came to the expo. They were able to explore all of the different booths set up at the expo, and make connections with the company representatives, while also learning more about the company and what their focus is.

As the day went on it got more exciting. Governor Glen Youngkin had come to give a speech and meet people who went to the expo. The state officers had the privilege to meet the Secretary of Agriculture in Virginia, Mr. Matt Lohr, as well as Governor Youngkin. When talking to Governor Youngkin, he expressed how much he loves the Virginia FFA, and Virginia agriculture industry.

The state officer team pictured with Governor Glen Youngkin, Secretary Matt Lohr and Commissioner of VDACS Joe Guthrie

In Governor Youngkin's speech, he informed everyone that agriculture is

the number one industry in Virginia and growing fast. He also mentioned that Goodyear is making all their tires from soybean oil instead of crude oil. The Virginia government is showing their support of that by using Goodyear's tires on all their state vehicles.



State Officers Kirin Miller, Jady Smith, Grace Walbroehl, and Anne Kathryn Martz pictured talking to candidates for the Virginia Congress.

Mr. O. Beverley Roller

LEGACY FUND

Mr. O. Beverley Roller played an instrumental role in the promotion of the FFA in Virginia. He was a FFA member, agriculture teacher, state and national FFA officer, state FFA supervisor, agricultural industry professional, Virginia Delegate, and a church and civic club leader. Every individual that interacted with Mr. Roller believes that they are better for knowing him.

Mr. Roller was born and raised on a general livestock farm in Augusta County, which contributed to his affection for farming and later assisted him with his success in the FFA and as an agriculture teacher. Upon graduation from high school, Mr. Roller served as the State President from 1942-1943, and then was elected as the National FFA Vice President the following year. Following the end of his years of service, he attended Virginia Tech to continue his education. His education was interrupted with a one-year stint in the Merchant Marines during World War II. In 1948, Mr. Roller married his high school sweetheart, Dorothy Stroop, and graduated from Virginia Tech the following year.

Mr. Roller began his career as an agriculture educator in Augusta County where he served for 23 years in four local high schools. In 1972, he was appointed as an Area Supervisor of Agriculture Education in the Northern Area of Virginia. In addition to this role, Mr. Roller served as the State Advisor for the State FFA Officer team. Due to



his various roles in serving agriculture students, teachers, and young farmers, Mr. Roller received numerous awards honoring him for his excellent service. Following 15 years of service as the Area Supervisor, Mr. Roller retired in 1987 and returned to his family farm. Mr. Roller died on March 30, 2016, leaving behind a legacy of three children, nine grandchildren, and the many student leaders that he interacted with throughout his career.

Virginia FFA and its members are all benefactors of his extensive knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm, which he focused on FFA, agriculture, community service, and young people. Mr. Roller at one time stated, "The FFA is just as great as you want to make it. It'll do for you what you need in life, but it's up to you. It's not handed to you on a silver platter. It takes commitment, work, sacrifice, and a renewed emphasis on getting the most out of life that you can." The O. Beverley Roller Legacy Endowment fund contributes to the Senior Prepared Speaking Career Development Event.



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