



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

BUILDING THE FUTURE

www.paffa.state.pa.us

The Hand Holds Three ACES

CHRIS TOEVS
Pa. FFA State President

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Over the course of three weekends, the Pennsylvania FFA will impact more than 1,400 members at the Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success Conference. From there, the students will take what they learned back to their home schools where they can apply it. In addition, the students are challenged to take the tools they gained from the conference to their own Supervised Agricultural Experiences at home or at school.

The event kicked off last weekend, the second session will run today and tomorrow, and the final weekend will be Feb. 22-23 at the Harrisburg Sheraton.

Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success. To any grammar teacher reading the article, the last sentence may send you on a frenzy of misplaced capital letters. To FFA members and alumni, the first sentence reflects the overnight leadership conference the Pennsylvania FFA offers to members across the

state. The conference highlights key leadership abilities and communication skills that are applicable to the agricultural field.


This year's theme is "Paving the Way" to reflect every ag education student's ability to make their own way in life. The conference offers five different workshops to build on the theme of "Paving the Way:" Teach Ag, Washington Leadership Conference, FFA's History and Roadmap, Your Personal Roadmap, and Communicating Your Roadmap and FFA's. Each of the workshops gives the students the knowledge and tools they can utilize in the field of agricultural education.

The workshops Teach Ag, Washington Leadership Conference, and FFA's History and Roadmap all look at building the student's information surrounding key aspects of agricultural education and different tools to aid in their FFA career. Teach Ag dives into the importance of agricultural teachers in their fields today. These teachers are the reasons many students are at the conference, so the workshop educates them on how to come back

and be that tool of positive change for a student one day. Washington Leadership Conference is an interactive workshop that puts participants in the middle of the National FFA conference held each year in Washington, D.C. Then, FFA's History and Roadmap emphasizes the importance of knowing where the FFA came from to see where it's going. The hands-on workshop teaches students new aspects of the National FFA Organization so they may be better able to promote the largest student run organization in the nation.

The workshop, Your Personal Roadmap, empowers students to look at themselves. By giving tools to effectively understand their goals and personalities, students will craft their own life goals and understandings into an easy to read "roadmap." The roadmap is then brought back to their home schools where students are challenged to follow their own roadmap to help achieve their own goals in life, agricultural education and FFA.

The last workshop, Communicating Your Roadmap and FFA's, is the



Submitted photo

FFA members hold up "road signs" as part of one of the workshops at last weekend's ACES Conference in Harrisburg.


glue to bond everything together. As much as the information gained in all of the workshops above, the ability to communicate the information to others takes it to the next level. Throughout the state officers' year of service, all seven of us have seen first-hand the impact of effective communication. By giving them the instruments of their own success, participants will be able to take the

information from the previous four workshops and effectively connect with others about the importance of ag education, FFA, the Washington Leadership Conference and their own personal roadmap.

Additionally, the Pennsylvania FFA received funding from the Northeast Ag Foundation, CSX, and Ag Choice Farm Credit.

Expect the Unexpected

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION



AUSTIN SHAY

As the chapter visit season comes to an end, the one thing that I learned is that weather is a beast that cannot be tamed by anyone, especially state FFA officers. The excessive snowfall that has accumulated this winter has been a consistent struggle in traveling across the state.

It all started back in December with a wave of school delays. Chris Toevs and I were heading to a chapter visit in Juniata County in early December when I got a phone call telling me that it was cancelled. This sounds like a day off for the majority of people, but we used it to put the final touches on our ACES (Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success Conference) workshops. The visit was rescheduled for late January. Another early morning, Chris Toevs and I still were up and getting ready to head to the visit. I received the phone call again that it was cancelled. The polar vortex had won again. So we rescheduled for the beginning of February thinking that the third time is a charm. The morning of the rescheduled visit yet again another phone call alerted us that the visit was cancelled.

As a state FFA officer, we never know what is going to come our way, but we try to adapt and make the experience the best that it can be. But even though the polar vortex had a major presence throughout the winter season, the team visits as many chapters as we can with a few still to come.

Editor's note: Austin Shay is the Pa. FFA state sentinel.

Proficiency Award Applications Available

KAYLA WALLACE
Pa. FFA State Reporter

The time is once again coming around to apply for Proficiency Awards.

The Proficiency Award honors FFA members who have developed skills that they can apply toward future careers, though their Supervised Agricultural Experience. There are more than 49 areas that members can apply for, from agricultural communications to wildlife management, there is an area for every member.

The deadline for the 2014 awards is March 9.

The applications can be delivered by the chapter adviser or regional coordinator at the State Legislative Leadership Conference in Harrisburg, Pa. The winners will be announced at the State FFA Convention this June.

Each state finalist will receive \$25 and a plaque and the winner in each area will receive a plaque, a \$250 check and will qualify to compete at the 2014 National Convention in Louisville, Ky.

For more information on Proficiency Awards, visit the National FFA website at ffa.org and look under the programs tab for Proficiency Awards, or the Pennsylvania FFA Policy Manual at paffa.state.pa.us.

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