



# BLUE & GOLD NEWS

## Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

www.paffa.org



# Member Spotlight on Rylee Fuller

Hello, my name is Rylee Fuller. I am a member of the West Perry FFA chapter. My freshman year I chose to take an agriscience and tech class thinking “it’ll just be an easy class.” As I took the course, I learned more about Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE) and decided to start my own.

When starting my SAE, I chose to do a market steer project. I began by purchasing a Hereford bull calf from a local farmer. Unfortunately, following the transportation of the bull to my farm, my calf had become sick.

Trying to navigate this challenge was difficult as I had never taken on raising an animal mostly on my own. After determining his symptoms and talking with my Dad and great-aunt, it was decided that I needed to administer antibiotics or there was a good chance my calf would not survive.

As I had never given an injection before and had only learned about them in my agriscience and tech class, I needed guidance. With my great-aunt by my side explaining what I needed to do, I gave my first injection.

Conquering this led me to be able to continue my project. The next step was to focus on nutrition and



**Pennsylvania FFA**  
**Rylee Fuller, a current West Perry FFA member, reflects on how her FFA journey began and where she would like to go in the future.**

I chose to grain feed and allow my steer the option to pasture feed. Daily, I fed and watered my steer morning and evening. During the week I would ensure his indoor stall was clean and bedded, as well as monitoring his health to ensure he did not become injured or sick.

As my project progressed I learned how to balance his feed intake to ensure he gained the proper amount of weight. I learned much more about animal husbandry and the importance of time management.

I finished my project by having my steer butchered and selling the meat to people in my community. I then entered my SAE for proficiency award at the state level, in the beef production entrepreneurship category. I won first in the state and was able to move on to nationals where I placed bronze.

This project helped me to discover my interest in cattle and explore ideas for future career paths. I love learning new things about cattle and how their bodies function and the things that affect their actions. I am especially interested in the reproductive aspects of cattle.

I hope to one day work as a herd manager, AI tech, or have cattle of my own.

feed intake. Navigating the proper feeding methods can be challenging, but after researching the best ways,

# Belonging by the Emblem of Washington

As a state officer, you get asked one question a lot: “Why did you run for state office?”

We all have our different answers, and we all have our own reasons. My reason was to share my story.

Growing up, I knew I always stood out. Being a Hispanic woman in agriculture, I just always felt different. Being in the show ring, you barely saw someone with a different skin tone like me. But I never let it hold me back, until I started going through middle and high school.

That’s when the comments started. I would be bullied for being myself, for my background, my skin and looks, or just being Mexican. I started to not be proud of who I was. I started to listen to other people’s opinions and believed that what they were saying was right.


Going into high school, any student wonders where they belong. For me, I was excited to join my FFA chapter. Many of my family members have been in FFA and even have held chapter officer positions. So, of course, I belonged there, right?

Well, my freshman year started and I was having fun, so I decided to get more involved and ran for a chapter officer position. When people started hearing that I wanted to be an officer, they started making comments.

“Someone like you doesn’t belong here,” or “There is no way they would pick you to be an officer,” or “If you get to be an officer, I won’t have respect for you or the organization.”

So when I was announced as the following year’s secretary, I was

### FROM THE OFFICERS STATION



**CALLIE WHITING**  
**TREASURER**

excited yet upset. I let them get the best of me, which made me believe that I should not be there.

This changed when I went to my first FFA conference. I got to meet new people, including the state officers. It was during this conference that I realized I’m welcome here. I was meeting people that saw me for me and were not judging me based on my skin. It opened my eyes and showed me that no matter what anyone says, I belong in FFA. This is where my true FFA journey began.

I started to be proud of who I was and became more and more involved. I went on as many FFA trips as I could, tried new events just so I could go to a contest and met some of the most amazing people from all over the state. I wanted to show all the members of Pennsylvania that no matter who you are, you belong in FFA.

I tell my story because I want to break the stereotype that some people have for the National FFA Organization. No matter who you are, what you look like, your interest or hobbies, you are welcome in FFA.



**Pennsylvania FFA**  
**The 2022-2023 Pennsylvania FFA officer team reflects on the past six months of service as state officers. From left are Callie Whiting, treasurer; Grace Benton, secretary; James Winklosky, president; Jeremy Rose, reporter; Ben Torrey, vice president; and Zaleigh Wade, chaplain.**

## Reflections on First Six Months

As the Pennsylvania FFA state officers take time to reflect on their first six months of their one-year term, there is one thing that they’ll forever agree on. It is that these past six months have been the best six months of their lives.

From running up on stage on June 9 as their names were announced, to running all over the state doing chapter visits and area leadership conferences, the experience

has been nothing but incredible. The relationship built between all of the officers is nothing short of impeccable.

The team members, as always, are beyond appreciative for the opportunities they are a part of, even if it means averaging five hours of sleep a night for a week. The best thing about this year is that the state officers have seen things they might have never been able to see without state office.

## Preparing for Mid-Winter Convention

If there’s one thing that makes FFA members excited, it has to be getting their Keystone degree.

Coming up in January, the state officers are excited to announce they will be awarding approximately 400 Keystone degrees to FFA members from across the commonwealth.

The Keystone degree is essentially the highest level of completion of the FFA standards while at the high

school level.

Though the state officers visit chapters on a regular basis, their nights are often filled with planning for Mid-Winter these days to ensure an outstanding event.

During the week of the Pennsylvania Farm Show, the team can also be found around the event, especially at the FFA Foundation food booth serving food and more.

## Officers Expand on Chapter Visits

The FFA state officer team has had great success thus far in its chapter visit season. The team has traveled thousands of miles and plans to continue in the coming months. Visits in schools in the north, south-central, eastern and western regions have been completed, and they have all been nothing but impeccable.

The most exciting thing about chapter visits is that

they allow the members of the team to evaluate their decisions on college and future careers.

The opportunity to travel and network with the agricultural education community in the commonwealth is definitely an advantage. All of the state officers are proud to make an impact on the members they meet on a daily basis. They team is excited to continue on with its chapter visit experiences.

## State Officers Attend Annual Farm Bureau Meeting

State officers had the pleasure of attending the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau at the Hershey Lodge Nov. 14-16.

Throughout the week, the officers had the opportunity to run mics on the delegate floor. During this time, the team listened to different policies made and voted upon that make legislative advancements for Farm Bureau members and agriculturalists statewide.

The state officers also participated in opening ceremonies during the opening dinner, which included a nice introduction on stage by the

Farm Bureau.

To round out a busy night on Nov. 15, the state officers enjoyed the Pennsylvania Friends of Ag Foundation’s trivia night fundraiser and had a fun time answering questions about Pennsylvania agriculture.

To put the icing on the cake, the state officers met Gian Paul Gonzalez, a motivational speaker from New Jersey who works with the New York Giants football team. He spoke about going “all in” and tied that philosophy to farming.

The opportunity to learn at the annual meeting with the Farm Bureau was amazing.



**Pennsylvania FFA**  
**The state officer team, along with some 4-H state council members, met with Gian Paul Gonzalez, a motivational speaker and chaplain for the New York Giants, while attending the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau annual meeting in Hershey.**