



BLUE & GOLD NEWS

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

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Ambitions by the Rising Sun

FROM THE OFFICERS STATION



JAMES WINKLOSKY
PRESIDENT

Hello, my name is James Winklosky. You see, I am not the first in my family to join the FFA. It all started with my dad during 1981-82 becoming a state officer, then my two brothers and me. That didn't hold me back from doing what I love.

As a freshman I was ambitious to start my agricultural class and go to

competitions. The first leadership development event was the FFA Creed. I remember memorizing it and thinking I got this. That was not the case. I placed 11th at the regional event. That didn't stop me from competing.

If anything, it got me to compete more because my goal was to get those gold pins on my jacket. That taught me how to persevere and not give up on my goals through going and doing these events. I met so many amazing FFA members who affected my life and still do, because of their commitment to the betterment of the state's agriculture.

Because of that I proceeded to compete in extemporaneous speaking for two years and tractor driving. This is where my passion began, because I learned through FFA that I love working with my hands.

I believe this helped me throughout my FFA career and running for state office, because it gave me the skills to relate to members from different backgrounds and the knowledge about all parts of FFA.

But this isn't the only thing that helped me. I made connections with the people I got to meet along the interview process and the people in the preparation stage of running for state office.

A lot of people ask why I ran for state officer and it is simple, really. The reason I ran for state office is so that every student has the same opportunities and to feel included. There were times in school where I did not feel included and I did not want anyone else to feel that way.

That's why I ran to promote inclusivity in the FFA and to make sure everyone's opinions were heard. Thank you, Pennsylvania FFA, for giving me this opportunity and being my home for a year. And thank you to the members because you are the reason I do this every day.



Pennsylvania FFA
Destiny Porter, a senior at W.B. Saul High School in Philadelphia, used her artistic ability to bring her passion for art and love of FFA together to paint an agriculture-themed mural for her art class mid-term project that she began in 2022.

FFA Member Creates Mural of Ag Innovator

DESTINY PORTER
W.B. Saul FFA

As a senior at Walter B. Saul High School in Philadelphia County, I only got involved in FFA during my junior year.

In ninth grade I participated in FFA Week, joining fire pits and dodgeball, as well as group activities. But to be honest, I was not interested in FFA; it had nothing to do with art.

As a creative person, I only wanted to do fine art and be my own person. A friend of mine encouraged me to join FFA last school year.

At first, I did not understand what FFA was all about, though I understood it was all about leadership and representing.

As an 11th grader, I saw the opportunities the seniors had. They were able to travel and do all these fun things while getting experiences and opportunities.

So I started trying to obtain every chance I could in order to get involved with being an officer and getting certain opportunities that will help me

in the long run. I mostly looked forward to traveling and going to FFA conferences, as well as going to nationals and ACES, and just trying new things.

As well as getting to do art along with the events, I was able to include my art skill in FFA Week. The mural was an art mid-term project that I started in 11th grade. I didn't know what I was going to paint until my agriculture teacher asked if I could add George Washington Carver.

I was relieved to at least have some idea of what I wanted to do. Going through many pictures of him and trying to find him facing sideways was a problem, as was the scale, especially since it's a 6-feet-by-14-feet piece. The inspiration came from a previous art piece I did called "Aqua Choices."

The mural was based on what I learned from my school — crop rotation. Carver invented an important peanut crop rotation, which allowed me to do a transfer position from right to left before and after crop rotation was introduced.



Pennsylvania FFA
The Pennsylvania FFA state officers pose at the first weekend of ACES on Feb. 11-12. From left, Callie Whiting, Grace Benton, James Winklosky, Jeremy Rose, Ben Torrey and Zaleigh Wade.

Leadership Conference a Success

In February the state officers had one month they'll remember forever. The team spent three weekends hosting the Agricultural Cooperation Establishes Success Leadership Conference at the Sheraton in Harrisburg, where they had the opportunity to interact with 1,942 advisers and members.

For ACES, the officers wrote leadership workshops for upper and lower tracks to meet the needs of all students who attended the conference. The workshops covered everything from conversation skills to handling setbacks.

The state officers were impressed with seeing all of the members they have met from chapter visits, area leadership conferences and other FFA-related events they have attended throughout the year. As the most-attended conference of the year comes to an end, the officers continue to plan for the rest of their year.

National FFA Week Honors Members, Alumni

National FFA Week is one of the most special weeks for the organization during the year, and you can believe that the state officers' schedules were packed.

The team traveled over 1,000 miles during the course of the week between doing chapter events in the evenings, a chapter visit in Philadelphia, and of course delivering the regional Golden Owls.

The officers were moving in and out of hotels day and night over the course of the week. As National FFA Week came to a close, the state officers headed back to Hershey to finish off with the final weekend of ACES.

Golden Owl Recipients Honored

The officer team agrees that one of the most important parts to an FFA chapter is an excellent ag teacher and FFA adviser.

Throughout the state officers' travels and endeavors in February, awarding Golden Owls across the commonwealth was one of the important journeys.

The officers really put on the miles, presenting Michael Clark from Greenwood FFA with the South Central Golden Owl, Kayla Pohle from Honesdale FFA with the Northern Golden Owl, Allyson Balmer from Tulpehocken FFA with the Eastern Golden Owl, and Gerald Hughes from Penns Manor FFA with the Western Golden Owl.

The Golden Owl Award is sponsored by Nationwide Insurance and recognizes one teacher from each of the four regions who were nominated by their students, colleagues, community members and others.

On behalf of the state FFA, we would like to congratulate all of the Golden Owl region recipients.

The state Golden Owl will be awarded at the Pennsylvania FFA State Convention in June at Penn State. We wish our teachers nothing but the best of luck.