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Sark to put training to work for county's benefit

- By Steven Collins Senior Reporter

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CIRCLEVILLE— Stacey Sark with Pickaway Progress Partnership (P3), is learning how to take the lead in bringing more agriculture-based business to the community, thanks to her participation in an elite development program run by the Ohio Farm Bureau.

Sark is one of just 23 people in the state chosen to participate in the 2017-2018 AgriPOWER Institute, a series of training sessions centered on the needs of the agriculture and food industries. “Most of them are two- and three-day sessions throughout the state of Ohio,” Sark said. “In September, we’ll go to Washington D.C. and meet with legislators there.”

Sark said the first session was mostly learning about her own individual leadership style. Next, she expects to learn about public policy issues and how they relate to agriculture. “But it’s also training on people and leadership skills, and advocacy and working with elected officials, because that’s a different ballgame,” she said.

Sark said she hopes to use her new training to help attract and retain new business in Pickaway County. “One of the things we would like to strengthen is our attraction efforts for agriculture type-businesses in Pickaway County,” she said. “Our number one industry is agriculture in Ohio and in Pickaway County. We like to have a better understanding of the partners and the how-to’s in attracting and retaining and helping those business here expand if they so choose.”

This is the second year in a row that a Pickaway County leader has participated in the program; last year, both Jan Shannon and Bennett Mussleman took part.

Ryan Scribner, executive director for P3 called the program a great opportunity for Sark and the county. “I’m proud she was chosen to participate in this program,” he said. “Agriculture is a big part of community, economy and local culture in Pickaway County. We think that can work hand-in-glove with things like the AgriPOWER program. It’s great professional development and networking and expands our knowledge of local trends. We’re always looking for that sweet spot where agriculture and development can align.”

Sark will graduate from the program in March.

email scollins@circlevilleherald.com follow on twitter @Collins_Herald