

Badger FFA Members Head to Nationals after success at State FFA Convention

The Wisconsin Association of FFA celebrated their 87th year of premier leadership, personal growth, and career success at the Wisconsin FFA Convention held at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison on June 14-16th, 2016. The event attracted over 3,000 members, advisors, parents, alumni, and sponsors to celebrate the year's success and support for students involved in agricultural education. Candice Franks and Larry Plapp are the Chapter's Advisors.

The Badger FFA Chapter was recognized for several accomplishments during the convention:

- **National Chapter Award Gold Ranking Overall-** The chapter will proceed to competition at the National level this fall against the other top ranked chapters. Only 26 Chapters, or the top 10% of the state's FFA Chapters, received this recognition. This is based upon the FFA Chapter's Program of Activities in *student development, community development, and chapter development*.
 - 6th place chapter (out of 255 chapters) in the area of Chapter Development
 - 6th place chapter (out of 255 chapters) in the area of Community Development
- **4th Place FFA Chapter for Food For America Program-** This is an award area to recognize FFA chapters for their agriculture literacy programming for elementary students. The Badger FFA Agriscience Fair and Discovery Barn at the Walworth County Fair are major components of that award.
- **Chapter Membership Recruitment Award-** This award recognizes the accomplishments of the chapter officers in their effort to recruit 10 or more new members and agricultural education students.
- **Veterinary Science Career Development Event:** The Badger FFA Chapter was named the 2016 State FFA Veterinary science Career Development Winner. Team members included: Casey Burmeister, Amanda Meier, Kendra Hoerth, and Alyssa Cowan. The objective of the Veterinary Science Contest is to showcase the members understanding of veterinary science procedures. The students identify different medical equipment, parasites, animal breeds and veterinary situations. The contest is made up of a written test, math application problems, and identification. The team will represent Wisconsin at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis in October.
- **Chapter Scrapbook:** The FFA scrapbook provides a legacy for generations of future FFA members of past members and activities. The Badger FFA received a second place red ribbon its scrapbook for 2015-16.

Also, several individual FFA members received awards during the Convention:

- **Braden Kundert** of the Badger FFA won the Wisconsin State FFA Prepared Public Speaking Career Development Event. Career Development Events (CDE's) are competitions that range from communications to mechanics and allow students to test their skills learned in agricultural education instruction. For the Prepared Public Speaking Event, Kundert wrote a six to eight-minute speech on an agricultural issue of current interest, complete with a bibliography. Kundert's speech was entitled "The Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Agriculture Industry: Growing the Economy?" Braden will represent Wisconsin in this competition at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis this October.
- **Levi Speckman, Dani Baker, Casey Burmeister, Callee Gilfoy, Heidi Lininger, and Amanda Meier** received their Wisconsin FFA Degree. The State FFA degree is the highest degree a state association can bestow upon its members. To be considered for this honor the FFA member must meet the following minimum qualifications: have productively earned and invested \$1000 or worked 1500 hours; been an FFA member for at least two years and had 360 hours of agriculture classroom instruction; given two agricultural related speeches, been involved in at least five FFA activities above the local level and participated in two community activities. The Wisconsin FFA conferred the State FFA degree to 334 members this year.

- **Levi Speckman**, 2015-16 president of the Badger FFA, received the three star leader award during the convention. The Three Star Leader Award recognizes a selected FFA member for being actively involved in chapter activities in Student Development, Chapter Development, and Community Development.

Four members were recognized on stage for their gold level proficiency awards at the State Convention including:

- **Casey Burmeister**, 2nd place GOLD rating for his SAE (Supervised Agriculture Experience) in Home and Community Development
- **Dani Baker**, 3rd place GOLD rating for her SAE in Agriculture Education.
- **Callee Gilfoy**, 4th place GOLD rating for her SAE in Swine production.
- **Braden Kundert**, 5th place GOLD rating for his SAE in Home and Community Development.
- **Heidi Lininger and Bryn Rohde** were selected to be the Badger FFA Chapter Voting delegates to the State Convention. These members had special responsibilities for the election of a new officer for Section 10 and for FFA Constitution changes and updates.
- **Motivational Speakers:** Additionally, the members and delegates of the Badger FFA chapter heard a powerful presentation by **Dave Roever**. Roever is a Vietnam War veteran whose life was forever changed on July 26, 1969. While on a mission as part of the Brown Water Black Beret unit of the Navy, Roever stood poised and ready to throw a grenade. Before he could release it, a sniper shot the grenade. When it detonated, Roever suffered severe burns on his face and body, and his eight-month Navy career was brought to an end. He spent the next 14 months in the hospital, learning how to live life with his new face and hands. It was a difficult time for Roever, but he learned an important lesson: “When you lose hope, you lose everything. Never, never, never lose hope.” The Badger FFA members were excited to meet Roever and purchase a book on his inspirational life.

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Badger Group:

Members attending the State FFA Convention in Madison June 14-16th include:

1st Row: Alyssa Cowan, Savannah Siegler, Bryn Rohde, PawHser Shoe, Amber Schooley, Levi Speckman

2nd Row: Dani Baker, Heidi Lininger, Amanda Meier, Callee Gilfoy, Paige Ludtke

3rd Row: Casey Burmeister, Braden Kundert.