



# Iowa FFA Foundation

*Cultivating partnerships supporting agricultural education in Iowa*

March 2023 | [www.iowaffafoundation.org](http://www.iowaffafoundation.org) | **Donate**

## ***Executive Director's Reflections***

Friends,

As I write this the weather continues to be very "Iowa!" To our friends who reside outside our boards allow me to explain this – 10 degrees one day, 55 degrees the next, followed by 7 inches of snow the next (or at least that was what we recorded at our home!). But as we think of this ever changing weather, we are reminded by the newness of spring awaiting just around the corner. In fact, as the snow melts, I can witness my tulips and daffodils starting to immerge from their frigid slumbers.

Bulbs are truly amazing – I fondly reflect Mr. Selness and me discussing the sheer incredible nature of a flower bulb, often in reference to the Easter Lilies we raised in our greenhouse. We both found it truly remarkable, that to achieve the precious beauty of the Easter Lilly, this big clunky round blob needed to be buried into the soil, to freeze over the winter only to immerge in all its glory in the spring – remarkable.

Funny – as I now reflect on Mr. Selness and all ag. educators – I question if maybe he was reflecting on his career? I don't think it would take a difficult leap to view students the same as bulbs. Each clunky, awkward and need to be deeply rooted and develop over a significant



investment of time. Yet each student is full of ambition and contains the power inside to be simply amazing at their chosen endeavor!

This reminds me of another great ag. educator we recognized recently, so I ask – what do a leading veterinary researcher and attorney, a former United States Ambassador, an entrepreneur and a leader in the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation all have in common?

They are the legacy of one – JUST ONE - Agricultural Education instructor and FFA Advisor. Because of the great work of former Audubon FFA Advisor Mr. Jim Hamilton, Steve Juelsgaard was excited to learn science – leading to his discovery of many critical veterinary advances with Genentech. Because of Mr. Hamilton, Charles Manatt had the confidence to lead a national delegation as the United States Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. Because of Mr. Hamilton, Nordahl Brue understood risk and how to run a business as he founded Brueggers Bagels. Because of Mr. Hamilton, Ed Wiederstein was able to lead the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation as President a few years back. Friends, an agricultural education instructor's legacy doesn't just end at the classroom doors – the seeds they plant yield for generations to come.

Thank you to the gardeners known as Ag. Educators who invest the incredible time to plant, nourish and grow the next generation of magnificent agricultural leaders.

Sincerely,

Josh

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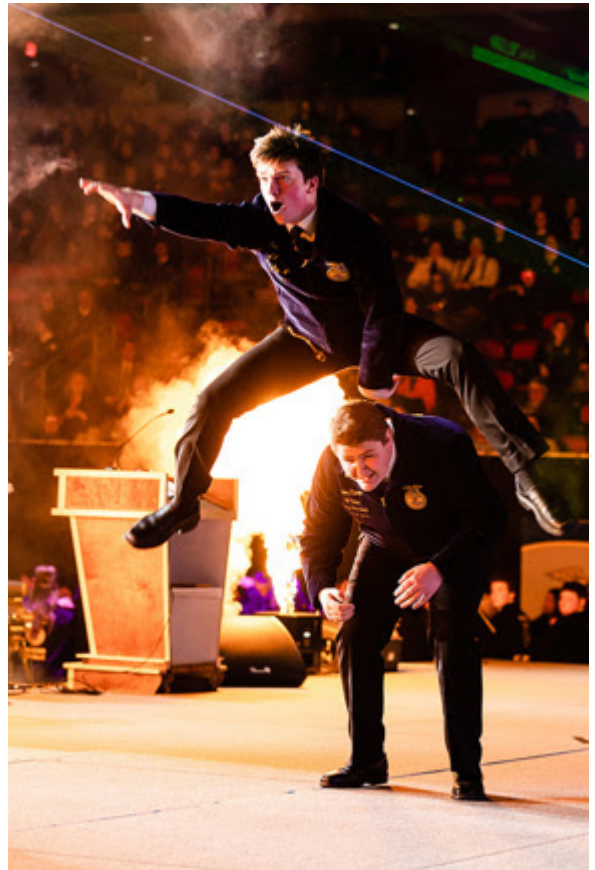
## Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference Is Only 33 Days Away!

The 2023 Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference is quickly approaching. The event will once again be in Ames with full force as more than 6,500 members, advisors and guests flood Hilton Coliseum on April 17th and 18th. State Leadership Conference is a highlight for many Iowa FFA members and it would not be possible without partners like you. Because of your belief in the future of agriculture, members are able to compete in leadership development events, visit with future employers at the career show, be recognized for their outstanding SAE projects and so much more.

To say thank you, we would like to invite you to join us at the 2023 Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference as we recognize those donors who go the extra mile to support our mission. Be on the lookout for a e-mail from us with information of when and where your recognition takes place. If you are unable to join us, all sessions will be live streamed on the [Iowa FFA's YouTube Channel](#).

All other information, including draft session and event schedules can be found on the right hand side of [Iowa FFA's State Convention Page](#).

We are looking forward to having you join us in celebrating Iowa FFA's success over the past year. See you there!



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## Judges Needed for 95th Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference!

For FFA members, few experiences match the excitement of competing in Career and Leadership Development Events at the state level. For those whose dedication and hard work have paid off by earning a spot in the state contests, their talents will be on display at the 95th Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference, which will be held at Iowa State University April 17th and 18th.

Career and Leadership Development Events would not be possible without

dedicated volunteers to judge. Judges are needed for both Monday and Tuesday. For more information visit [www.iowaffa.com/judges](http://www.iowaffa.com/judges).



## Iowa Agricultural Career Show Booths Are Filling Up Fast!

Registration for the Iowa Agricultural Career Show at the Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference is still open! Each year 6,500+ student FFA members, advisors, parents, sponsors and guests travel to this conference to celebrate the achievements of FFA across the state of Iowa during the previous year. While at the conference, students take time to interact with exhibitors in the career show, helping students to understand the agricultural industry and gain valuable information regarding their career path. While many students are not of the age where they may participate in internships or be actively seeking full-time employment, students take an active role understanding the various components of each career pathway while trying to gain an understanding about how they can achieve their career goals.



Spots are filling up very fast - make sure you grab a booth while you still can! Click [here for more information](#) and to register for a booth!

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## Your 2023 Golden Owl Award Finalists Have Been Named!

Seven Agriculture Educators across the state of Iowa have been named as finalists for the 2023 Iowa Golden Owl Award. The finalists consist of one instructor from each of Iowa's six FFA districts and one from Iowa's post secondary institutions. Each finalist received a plaque and a check for \$500. The finalists will participate in a round of interviews prior to the 95th Iowa FFA State Leadership Conference in April, with the Iowa Golden Owl Award winner announced at the conference. The winner receives the coveted Golden Owl Trophy and a check for \$3,000. The award, in its fifth year, is made possible with the support of Nationwide.



**Debbie Barkela**

North Central District

Belmond-Klemme High  
School



**Kevin Blair**

Southwest District

Orient-Macksburg High  
School



**Rosa Sondag**

South Central District



**Emily Kruse**



Central Decatur High School

Southeast District

North Scott High School

**Jim Russ**

Northeast District

New Hampton High School



**Scott Smalley**

Post Secondary

Iowa State University



**Nationwide®**



**Matt Debrick**

Northwest District

West Sioux High School



## **HF389 is now HF559**

HF389 is now HF559. This House File creates a fund to offer state assistance for summer contract days. You can view the entirety of HF559 [here](#) and after you review it, call your legislator today to ask them to join us in supporting this critical issue!

No matter the size, your act of generosity will make a substantial impact to agricultural education in Iowa.

**Donate Now**



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Iowa FFA Foundation

FFA Enrichment Center [1055 SW Prairie Trail Pkwy. Ankeny, IA 50023](#)