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Earning to Learn

More than 600 different scholarships are available for FFA members. Could one make the difference in your education?

As part of its commitment to develop career success through agricultural education, the National FFA Foundation – with financial support from businesses and individuals – awards more than \$2 million in postsecondary scholarships each year, including for trade schools and two-year programs. Applications for the 2021-22 National FFA Scholarship Program will open in November and close in January. Any FFA member currently enrolled as a senior in high school or as a freshman, sophomore or junior in college can apply. One single application enters you for multiple scholarship opportunities.

“Make applying for scholarships your most important thing,” says Sarahi Medina, a 2020-21 recipient of a \$2,000 John Deere scholarship. “Even if you think your chances are slim, you may actually get it, and it’s a big help.”

Medina, who served as reporter for the Buckeye FFA Chapter at Buckeye Union High School in Buckeye, Ariz., is entering her sophomore year at Estrella Mountain Community College in Avondale, Ariz., where she is majoring in animal science. She plans to transfer to the University of Arizona and pursue a career in food production.

“My associate degree will be 100 percent paid for, thanks to my FFA scholarship and membership in my college’s honors program,” Medina says. “It’s been super helpful.”

Learn more about FFA scholarships and apply at [FFA.org/scholarships](https://www.ffa.org/scholarships).

How to #SpeakAg With Consumers

In an era when consumers want to know where their food comes from and how it was grown or raised, we asked three #SpeakAg Ambassadors how to effectively communicate with consumers.

Q: Where do consumers get most of their information about agriculture?

A: In my experience, consumers get most of their information about agriculture from two main sources: personal experiences and the media. Personal experiences are very compelling and common in places like Iowa and other rural communities steeped in agricultural tradition. Even those of us who don’t live on farms, myself included, most likely know someone who is directly connected to agriculture, or we see production agriculture in our everyday lives. However, roughly 80 percent of Americans live in urban areas, according to the last census, so many people aren’t able to have these direct experiences because of where they live.

– Grace Long, Iowa

Q: What are some effective methods for communicating with consumers about food production and food safety?

A: Some examples are short, informative video clips that can be shared on social media platforms, shorter articles or fact posts about these topics, as well as in-person conversations with others. The way that you communicate with consumers varies depending on their agriculture background, age and other variables. You just have to assess your target audience and create an action plan for how you can best reach them!

– Hope Showalter, Virginia

Q: How do you prepare to share agriculture’s story with consumers?

A: The best stories are the ones that you connect with. If you can find a way to tell agriculture’s story in a way that has directly impacted you, it helps your audience develop a personal connection with agriculture. One of the best ways to achieve that is to look at it from their point of view. Once you understand why they feel the way they feel, you’ll be able to bridge the gap between their beliefs and yours.

– Devin Rossa, Arizona

Do You #SpeakAg?

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