

APPLY *Yourself*

FFA SCHOLARSHIPS ARE DESIGNED TO FIT EVERY MEMBER'S INTEREST. GIVE THEM A TRY!

Did you know the National FFA Organization awarded \$2.5 million in scholarships in 2018, consisting of aid to 1,842 members from 44 states? That's a lot of cash for college! Since FFA members come from a wide variety of backgrounds, the FFA scholarship program exists to help students achieve success in a large number of fields in agriculture. The top five areas awarded are agribusiness systems; animal systems; power, structural and technical systems; plant systems; and biotechnology systems.

Ready to get started? Now's the time. The 2019 scholarship application opened on Nov. 15, and the deadline to apply is Feb. 6, 2019.

The 2019 FFA scholarship application is on a new platform that will provide a more robust experience for applicants. You'll be able to log into your password-secure account from any device with an internet connection, check the status of your application in progress, save your progress and return to complete your application, and upload required materials directly to your application. Submit just one application, and you'll be considered for all scholarships whose criteria you meet.

Visit FFA.org/Scholarships for more information and to apply. If you have questions, email Scholarships@FFA.org.

— By Jodi Helmer

CALENDAR

Nov. 25:

REGION II (B) REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE REGISTRATION CLOSES

Be sure to register for this RDC, which will be held in College Station, Texas, Dec. 7-8. Visit FFA.org/GoToRDC.

Dec. 17:

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE REGISTRATION OPENS

Claim your spot at this Alumni and Supporters RDC, which will be held Feb. 8-9 in Kansas. Visit FFA.org/GoToRDC.

Jan. 1:

SPRING SEMESTER LIVING TO SERVE GRANT APPLICATION OPENS

Looking for \$1,200 to implement a semester-long service-learning project in your community? Visit FFA.org/LivingToServe/Grants to apply.

Feb. 6:

NATIONAL FFA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE

Scholarships are sponsored by businesses and individuals and are given for a wide variety of experiences, career goals and higher-education plans. To apply, visit FFA.org/Scholarships.

Feb. 16-23:

NATIONAL FFA WEEK

Show your FFA pride along with members from across the country. Get ideas for your party plans and more at FFA.org/FFAWeek.

Feb. 19:

GIVE FFA DAY

Your gift at donate.FFA.org will help prepare and inspire FFA members to become active leaders in agriculture.

Talking Points: **THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC**

DID YOU KNOW THAT LIVING IN A RURAL AREA INCREASES YOUR RISK FOR OPIOID ABUSE AND OVERDOSE? THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC IS CONSIDERED A NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY AND KILLS AN AVERAGE OF 115 AMERICANS EVERY DAY.

AS AN FFA MEMBER, YOU CAN HELP SPREAD THE WORD AND BREAK DOWN THE STIGMA OF OPIOID ABUSE. THERE'S A NEW PROGRAM CALLED #FARMTOWNSTRONG DESIGNED TO HELP YOU AND OTHER LEADERS WAGE THE ATTACK. HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW.

Q: WHAT IS OPIOID ADDICTION?

A: Opioids include prescription pain relievers such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, morphine, and many others, plus heroin and synthetic drugs, such as the highly lethal fentanyl. Addiction often begins when a prescription painkiller

is used longer or differently than it was prescribed.

Q: WHY DO FARMERS AND RANCHERS NEED TO BE CONCERNED?

A: The rate of drug overdose deaths in rural areas has surpassed rates in urban areas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Last year, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) and National Farmers Union (NFU) conducted a survey of 2,100 rural adults, including farmers and farmworkers. They found that opioid abuse has directly impacted nearly half of all rural adults and three quarters of all farmers and farmworkers.

Q: HOW CAN #FARMTOWNSTRONG HELP?

A: At the start of 2018, AFBF and NFU joined forces to start #FarmTownStrong. They enlisted FFA to help build awareness and encourage discussion. The campaign's website, FarmTownStrong.org, offers resources for opioid abuse prevention, treatment, hotlines, drug disposal tips and ways to encourage communication to help solve the problem. Check it out for ideas on activating the #FarmTownStrong movement in your community.

— By Karen Bernick