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Georgia brings home National President and 15 National Championships from 87th National FFA Convention

LOUISVILLE – The Georgia FFA Association’s trip to the 87th National FFA Convention was highlighted by 15 national championships and the election of Andy Paul of Lexington as the 2014-2015 National FFA President. Among Georgia’s national winners were 5 national proficiency award winners, the national Nursery/Landscape Career Development Event (CDE) winner, eight national Agriscience Fair winners, and the high scoring individual in the national Livestock Evaluation CDE.

Andy Paul, a member of the Oglethorpe County FFA chapter, was elected from a field of 42 candidates to serve as the 2014-2015 National FFA President. Paul went through an extensive process that included a written test, writing exercise and six rounds of interviews throughout the week. He was selected to lead the team of six national FFA officers that will represent the more than 600,000 FFA members across the nation. Paul is a sophomore at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC) majoring in Agricultural Education. He will take a one year leave of absence from ABAC to travel more than 100,000 across the United States and to Japan representing Agricultural Education. Paul’s parents are Jeff and Marsha Paul and his agricultural education teachers are Mr. Robert Jackson and Mr. Travis Sertich. Paul is the 15th Georgian to be elected to serve as a National FFA Officer and the third to serve as National President.

Tanner Jones, Liston Mehserle, Ben Parker, and William Schofill of the Perry FFA chapter were named national winners in the Nursery/Landscape career development event (CDE). Their advisor is Dr. Argene Claxton. In the Nursery/Landscape CDE, students complete a team problem solving activity, a team Skills Challenge, a general knowledge exam and the identification of various plants, pests, disorders, equipment and supplies relevant to the nursery industry. The team from Perry bested other state winning teams from across the nation to earn their national championship. All members of the team earned Gold individual rankings. Ben Parker was the top scoring individual in the nation. Jones placed 2nd, Mehserle placed 5th and Schofill placed 8th.

Lori Edwards of the Sonoraville FFA chapter was the high scoring individual in the national Livestock Evaluation CDE, and the Sonoraville team placed 2nd. Other top five CDE finishes from Georgia include Franklin County finishing 2nd in the national Marketing Plan CDE, Perry finishing 2nd in the national Floriculture CDE, Kylie Bruce of the Franklin County FFA earning 3rd in the national Creed Speaking CDE, and North Oconee FFA placing 5th in the national Environmental/Natural Resources CDE.

Knapp Boddiford of Southeast Bulloch (Diversified Crop); Christopher Crump of Banks County (Landscape Management); Sam Herring of Lowndes County (Specialty Crop); Camille Schroer of Lowndes County (Equine Science); and Cole Sosebee of White County (Wildlife Management) were each named national FFA proficiency award winners for the success they earned in their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs. Only four students from across the nation are named National Finalists in each of the 49 proficiency areas. Georgia was third in the nation with a total of 19 national proficiency award finalists.

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Brinson Coggins of Lowndes County (Animal System – Division 2); Jade Wester and Fallon Cawthon of Franklin County Middle (Animal Systems – Division 3); Hunter Corbett and Emily Warren of Lowndes County (Environmental Systems – Division 4); Kellie Smith and Tyler Ertzberger of Franklin County Middle (Food Products & Processing Systems – Division 3); Callie Warren and Chance Hingson of Lowndes County (Food Products & Processing Systems – Division 4); Auriel Wright of Northeast Bibb (Plant Systems – Division 2); Courtney Barber of Ware County (Social Systems – Division 1) and Chandler Kudyk and Jackson Summer of Lowndes County (Social Systems – Division 4) were each named national winners in the 2014 Agriscience Fair. Georgia had national finalists (top 15) in all 24 divisions of the Agriscience Fair.

Twenty-Seven Georgia FFA chapters received a national 3-Star ranking, the highest ranking offered in the National Chapter Award program. Those chapters included Bagley Middle (Chatsworth), Berrien County, Crawford County, Colquitt County, East Jackson (Commerce), Eighth Street Middle (Tifton), Emanuel County Institute, Etowah (Woodstock), Franklin County High, Franklin County Middle, Gladden Middle (Chatsworth), Hephzibah, Loganville, Madison County High, Madison County Middle, Miller County, North Habersham Middle, Pelham Middle, Screven County, Southeast Bulloch (Brooklet), Stockbridge, Thomson, Treutlen County, Troup County, Wayne County, West Jackson Middle, and Wilbanks Middle (Demorest). The West Jackson Middle chapter was named a national finalist for Outstanding Middle School program; and the ECI, Madison County Middle and Wilbanks Middle chapters were each named Models of Innovation finalists in the Student Development category.

Eleven Georgians were recognized for their support of agricultural education and the FFA as part of the Convention. Mr. Von Peavy (Tifton) was recognized with the National FFA VIP Citation. Mr. Sidney Bell (Watkinsville), Representative Brooks Coleman (Duluth), Dr. James Corbett (Valdosta), Mr. Tom Johnston (Thomaston), Mr. Barry Norris (Soperton), Dr. Jason Peake (Valdosta), Dr. Dean Pringle (Athens), Mrs. Jody Strickland (Perry) and Mr. Joe Wright (Talking Rock) each received the Honorary American FFA Degree for the contribution that they make to the agricultural education program and FFA. Mr. John “Chip” Bridges, state Program Manager for Agricultural Education, was named the 2014 Outstanding State Supervisor in the nation by the National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education (NASAE).

Seventy-nine Georgia FFA members received the prestigious American FFA Degree, the highest degree offered to an active FFA member. These students spent years developing their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs to reach this honor. Those receiving the degree include: Ansley Akin (Franklin County), Candace Barnes (Franklin County), Catherine Bennett (Burke County), Ashlyn Brooker (Brantley County), William Burt (Colquitt County), Barron F. Busby (Elbert County), Colt Calhoun (Miller County), Dylan L. Cantrell (Jefferson), William L. Chapman (Pickens County), Kaylee Chitwood (Mary Persons), Deanna Clay (Jeff Davis), Garrison W. Clenney (Miller County), Christian Delugach (Habersham Central), Sara R. Duncan (Franklin County), Kayla M. Eason (Newton County), Ryan English (Mary Persons), Denton Erickson (Lee County), Gregory T. Fain (Sonoraville), Whitney S. Frazier (Colquitt County), Caleb S. Garner (Treutlen County), Michael Garrett (Dawson County), Cheyenne Gordon (Madison County), Rachel Grimsley (Miller County), J.J. Harper (White County), Maggie M. Hart (Colquitt County), Dustin Haskins (Jeff Davis), Micah Henry (Wheeler County), Patrick Hickerson (Hephzibah), Alex Holman (Jefferson), Timothy Hubbard (Gordon Central), Colby Hunter (Seminole County), Kevin Jones (Madison County), Bri Kittle (Madison County), Taylor Lancaster (Elbert County), Wilson Landin (Seminole County), Logan Larmour (Burke County), Jordan Lunsford (Madison County), Dakota Meeks (Jeff Davis), Sierra Milligan (Swainsboro),

Ashton Mock (Miller County), Vincent E. Mohler (White County), Andrew Moore (Jefferson), Edward Moore (Perry), Joshua C. Moore (Dawson County), Hillary Nicholson (Fannin County), Gabe Outlaw (Bleckley County), Caleb Owenby (Fannin County), Caleb Patterson (Fannin County), Andy Paul (Oglethorpe County), Jenna Phillips (Miller County), Brandon Poole (Franklin County), Hillary A. Pope (Screven County), Lacy L. Powell (Eastside), Megan L. Powell (Johnson County), Hunter Pruitt (Sonoraville), Justin Rectenwald (Evans), Olivia T. Rigdon (Emanuel County Institute), Macie Rohler (Apalachee), Cole Roper (Franklin County), Kate Russum (Madison County), Hunter Saine (White County), Ashley E. Sapp (South Effingham), Brittany S. Sherrod (Emanuel County Institute), Brody Shiver (Mary Persons), Morgan South (Madison County), Cole Summerlin (Colquitt County), Savannah Tanner (Johnson County), Megan R. Todd (Dawson County), Megan Troupe (Turner County), Robert Veal (Johnson County), Jonathan Waters (Dawson County), Nathan Webb (Colquitt County), Casey L. Weredyk (South Effingham), Dustin R. Whittaker (Seminole County), Jacob Wilkie (Dawson County), Joshua D. Williams (Swainsboro), Tanner O. Wilson (Brantley County), Matthew Womble (Seminole County), Adair Woodward (Mary Persons).

Three Georgia FFA members earned the opportunity to perform their musical talents at the National FFA Convention. Landon Rowe (Irwin County) was selected to perform in the Talent program; while Aaron Cronon (Cedar Shoals) and Kayla Robinson (Ola) performed in the National FFA Band.

The Georgia FFA Association was recognized as a membership growth state. This marks the 16th consecutive year that the Georgia FFA has increased in FFA membership. Georgia was represented in Louisville by 25 official voting delegates, and more than 1,500 local FFA members, advisors and Alumni from across the state.

More than 64,000 attended the 87th National FFA Convention. The theme for the convention was *Go All Out*. A complete set of results and a variety of highlights from the 86th National FFA Convention can be found by logging on to www.georgiaffa.org and selecting the National Convention tab.

There are more than 610,000 FFA members nationwide. The Georgia Association has over 37,500 members, making it the 3rd largest Association in the nation. The FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success, through agricultural education.



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