

Dear Arkansas FFA Members and Advisors,

It is with great honor that I introduce myself to you. My name is Lea Ellison Phelps, more frequently known as "Lulu," and I am proud to represent the Sheridan FFA Chapter in the Southern District. As a dedicated member of my FFA Chapter for the last four years, I have held various leadership positions, currently serving as the Chapter President, and have actively participated in numerous competitions and events.

Throughout my time in the FFA, I have engaged in a diverse array of activities ranging from Prepared Public Speaking to Livestock Evaluation, reflecting my deep-seated passion for agriculture and its pivotal role in our daily lives. Having grown up in South Mississippi as the daughter of a row crop farmer, I grew to have a deep-seated appreciation for the agricultural industry from a young age, participating in cattle shows since the age of six.

Relocating to Prattsville, Arkansas in 2016 marked a significant chapter in my journey, setting the groundwork for me to join FFA during my freshman year in 2021. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I persevered and actively engaged in virtual CDE contests and classroom instruction, laying the groundwork for my continued involvement in in-person events during the rest of my FFA Career.

Due to my FFA experience, I discovered the transformative power of public speaking, which not only broadened my horizons but also provided me with unique opportunities, such as representing my county in the Young Farmers and Rancher Collegiate Discussion Meet, a first for a high school student in Arkansas. Through these experiences, I honed my communication skills and developed a refined understanding of fostering inclusive conversations about agriculture with people of all ages and walks of life.

Attending the Arkansas FFA State Convention in 2022 was a defining moment for me, igniting within me a desire to serve as a state officer. The prospect of being a voice for fellow members of this exceptional association fills me with a sense of purpose and responsibility. My overall goal is to advocate tirelessly for those who may not have a platform. I want to represent those members who feel like they cannot belong because they face challenges that most do not understand. I want to draw upon my own experiences as someone with Multiple Sclerosis and Moderate Sensorineural Hearing Loss to build inclusivity and resilience in and out of the Arkansas FFA Association. I want to be here for YOU so that you CAN find your home in FFA, no matter where you came from or where you are going.

Arkansas FFA, I am deeply committed to the values of FFA and I am eager to contribute meaningfully to its mission. I am honored to have the opportunity to introduce myself to you and look forward to the possibility of serving YOU in the future.

Thank you for considering my candidacy.

Sincerely,



Lea Ellison "LuLu" Phelps