

Dear Arkansas FFA Members and Advisors,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce myself, Meagan Burnett, as a proud representative of the Sheridan FFA Chapter in the Southern District. Growing up in South Arkansas over the last 17 years, I have always been involved with the agriculture industry. When I was little, I always enjoyed working my family's commercial beef cattle herd with my dad by my side, learning about everything he knew. Without my dad, my passion for agriculture would never have ignited. Since then, I have been heavily involved in cattle production, goat production, hay production, and horse showing. I signed up for Survey of Ag in the 9th grade, and I instantly fell in love with the idea of FFA and purchased my jacket the first chance I got. Since that moment, I have competed in livestock evaluation, horse evaluation, and Ag Communications, as well as creative speaking, prepared speaking, extemporaneous speaking, and parliamentary procedure.

Before I put on my blue corduroy jacket for the first time, I was a shy kid with little to no self-confidence. FFA has uncovered my true self, a different person who isn't shy. FFA has shown me that I don't have to be scared to talk to people and that I can make friends anywhere. It has shown me the bond that people in agriculture share with each other and that everyone understands where you come from. With each zip of my FFA Jacket, that quiet and lack-confidence shell I wore cracked and faded away.

AR FFA State Convention 2022: I was a freshman with growing confidence, and now my eyes are set on a new prize, State Office. Watching them run up on the stage and present themselves with so much confidence gave me a sense of pride and belonging. It made me think, "What would it feel like to have that much confidence? What would it be like to stand up on that stage and talk like nobody is watching your every move?" These thoughts gave me a desire to feel that confidence. Those thoughts gave me the desire to run for chapter office. Those thoughts gave me the chance to better myself. Without watching those State Officers talk on stage at my first State Convention, I probably wouldn't be writing this letter right now. They gave me the desire to be someone younger members could look up to.

I want to be the State Officer who embraces their shy past and steps on stage to inspire the next generation of 1st-year members to accept the challenges, zip up their jackets, and leave that shell of fear and reservation behind. I want to continue to be dedicated to the organization that was dedicated to me. Arkansas FFA, I am Meagan Burnett, and I am ready to help you Break the Shell.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Meagan Burnett