

2023 Award Winners

The PA Livestock Association annually presents Outstanding Youth Awards for 4-H and FFA members as well as Livestock Scholarships during the Keystone International Livestock Exposition's Award Ceremony. On Thursday, October 5, 2023, nine youth will be presented with awards for their dedication to the livestock industry in the Commonwealth. The 2023 Livestock Hall of Fame winner will be announced and the Heritage Award will be presented.

Sierra Tice and James Voight, both from the Northern Lebanon FFA Chapter (Lebanon County) will be presented with the Outstanding FFA Awards. John Bruner of Indiana County will be receiving the Outstanding 4-H Award.

The following youth will receive \$2000 scholarships for their participation and involvement in the livestock industry:

- Mikayla DeReinzi is the daughter of Michael and Tracey DeReinzi, Saylorsburg, PA (Monroe County). She is a junior at Penn State University majoring in Animal Science.
- Kelsey Dobbin is the daughter of Jeremy and Jennifer Dobbin, Halifax, PA (Dauphin County). She is a freshman at Penn State University majoring in agricultural science.
- Tara Hausner is the daughter of John and Tina Hausner, Thomasville, PA (York County). She is a freshman at Duquesne University majoring in Accounting with plans to pursue a pre-law certificate.
- Mattie Horschler is the daughter of Ralph and Melanie Horschler, New Wilmington, PA (Lawrence County). She is a senior at Penn State University, majoring in animal science and ag business.
- Alli Jobe is the daughter of Lance and Colleen Jobe, Greensburg, PA (Westmoreland County). She is a senior at Penn State, majoring in Animal Science.
- Jenna Morris is the daughter of Todd and Liz Morris, Fawn Grove, PA (York County). She is a freshman at Iowa State University, majoring in Agronomy.

The PA Livestock Association will also induct the 2023 Hall of Fame winner, Rodney Gilbert. Rodney Gilbert, retired Livestock Manager for Delaware Valley University, has dedicated his life to the livestock industry. Having received his undergraduate degree in Animal Industries and his master's in animal science, both from the University of Connecticut, Rodney has served as an instructor, assistant professor, manager, mentor, coach, judge, and advisor to many in his more than forty-three years in the industry.

He has taught many students in topics ranging from introduction to Animal Science, Beef Science, Swine Science, Livestock Evaluation, Genetic Improvement and Grain and Forage Laboratory to Integrated Livestock, Sheep Management and Selection, and Sheep Shearing Schools. Rodney has received numerous awards for his outstanding commitment to education including the DVC Student Government Faculty Service Award for outstanding service to the

student body in 2012 and 2015 as well as the DVC Distinguished Faculty Award in 2010. During his time at Delaware Valley, herds and flocks were expanded and new modern facilities were constructed. Rodney successfully developed and implemented the successful freezer trade for Delaware Valley's beef, lamb, and pork programs.

When not busy with students, Rodney was active with the PA Livestock Association as a board member and several state breed associations. He has been a consistent supporter of the 4-H and FFA programs, as a presenter, workshop organizer, and contest coordinator. Rodney has judged numerous livestock shows in PA, NJ, MD, DE, NY, and New England. In his free time, he can be found volunteering at his church and serving as a Master Mason. Rodney currently resides in Wakefield, Rhode Island.

The 2023 Heritage Award winner is Martene Firestine of Womelsdorf, PA. Martene is a hardworking and dedicated individual that has a passion for agriculture. With a goal of raising scholarship money for youth in agriculture, she has managed two PLA food stand fundraisers for the last 18 years, raising enough money for 106 scholarships totaling \$111,000.

Martene is retired from the Conrad Weiser School District where she worked with special needs and troubled youth. She and her husband Mike of 45 years have raised 2 daughters, Margeaux and Morgan. Currently they have 1 grandson, Hudson, and another grandson will soon make his appearance later this year. They raise Hereford cattle; Corriedale, Hampshire, and Southdown sheep; sweet corn, pumpkins, and various other crops on their farm.

Martene is a behind the scenes person, working tirelessly to plan each event. She consistently seeks to raise the most amount of money possible to provide scholarships to our PLA youth. She does this by getting donations and working with vendors to get the best deals but also providing a wholesome, home cooked tasting meal to those that purchase food. She meticulously organizes the menu, product deliveries, and seeks volunteer workers to manage the booth. She does all of this because she has a love for giving back to our agriculture youth.