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August 11, 2023

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO DAIRY LEADERS OF TOMORROW HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES *The Scholarships Recognize Students Who Are Advancing Their Education in Dairy-Related Fields*

Harrisburg, Pa. – Adria Russell of Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania and Isaac Dechow of Centre County, Pennsylvania were recently awarded scholarships through the Dairy Excellence Foundation’s Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow (DLT) Program. The students were recognized with the scholarships after completing and passing at least one of the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow certification exams and associated coursework during their high school careers. As college freshmen for the 2023-24 school year, both Adria and Isaac received a \$3,000 scholarship to support their academic studies in dairy-related fields.

“These students not only excel in the classroom, but they are extremely passionate about finding careers serving the dairy industry in the future. From the large number of hours they have invested into dairy showmanship to leadership roles within their high school FFA groups, these students already have an active role in the Pennsylvania dairy industry,” said Michelle Shearer, Workforce Development Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “Now college freshmen, they are expanding on the knowledge they gained throughout their high school Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow courses and applying it to their career goals. We can’t wait to see the imprint they continue to make on the industry in the years to come.”

Congratulations to these two students:

Adria Russell is a freshman studying animal science at The Pennsylvania State University. With both sets of her grandparents owning dairy farms, Adria developed an interest in animals and agriculture growing up in Huntingdon County, Pa. She began by showing Holstein dairy cattle in 4-H and FFA at her local fairs and moved on to regional, state-based and national shows over time. Throughout her high school career, Adria also held various leadership roles including the Commanding Officer of the Juniata Valley Marching Band and Regional 4-H Camp Counselor. Through the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program, Adria has attended several hands-on Exploration Experiences where she discovered she enjoyed working in a lab setting instead of directly on the farm. This ignited her interest in the genetics side of the dairy industry. Adria’s goal is to become an IVF embryologist and push dairy breeds to the next level.

“I am extremely blessed to be receiving this scholarship. It truly is amazing to see and experience the support that Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow (DLT) has for the upcoming

generations. I will be eternally grateful for the financial assistance they have given me," Adria said.

Isaac Dechow is a freshman studying pharmacology and toxicology in the college of agriculture at The Pennsylvania State University. Growing up in Centre County, Pa., Isaac spent time on his grandfather's dairy farm where he trains cows and leads them at the county fair. He also owns a herd of dairy goats that he milks and breeds. As FFA President and Senior Class President, Isaac gained experience with forming leadership teams, public speaking, and marketing and selling chapter products for FFA. The Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow Program helped Isaac gain a better understanding of the decisions farmers make on a day-to-day basis and how the body systems of a cow work. His goal after college is to work as a toxicologist in an animal-related field to ensure dairy or other farm-related products are safe to be consumed.

"I am honored to be recognized as a 2023 DLT scholarship recipient. I hope this scholarship will allow me to further my ag education and to push the dairy industry to new heights in the future," said Isaac.

The Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program is managed by the Dairy Excellence Foundation and impacts more than 25,000 high school students each school year. The goal of the program is to prepare high school students to work in the dairy industry through classroom instruction, independent studies and virtual learning, on-farm experiences, and scholarship opportunities.

To qualify for the scholarship, students must be enrolled in a college or university beginning in the fall following their graduation from high school. This year's recipients were selected based on their academic performance, evidence of leadership, character and integrity, and their commitment to pursuing a future career in dairy.

To learn more about the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow scholarship program, visit www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com or contact Michelle Shearer at mshearer@centerfordairyexcellence.org or 570-768-8316. The 2024 scholarship application will be available on March 1, 2024.

Images:

Adria Russell



Isaac Dechow



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The Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax deductible organization that is Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) approved. Established in 2010, the foundation's mission is to build and invest in programs that cultivate and empower the next generation of producers, consumers, and advocates for the Pennsylvania dairy industry. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/.

Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow (DLT) is a program designed specifically to prepare high school students to work in the dairy industry. A three-part model program, Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow offers classroom instruction, on-farm experiences and scholarship opportunities. The DLT curriculum includes four main courses: Introduction to Dairy, Introduction to Dairy Herd Management, Introduction to Dairy Business Management, and Introduction to Dairy Technologies. The program is managed by the Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax deductible organization that is Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) approved. Learn more about the program at www.dairyleadertomorrow.com.

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