



**For Immediate Release**

**Media Contact:** Emily Barge, 717-346-0849; [ebarge@centerfordairyexcellence.org](mailto:ebarge@centerfordairyexcellence.org)

August 29, 2024

**SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN DAIRY LEADERS OF TOMORROW PROGRAM**

*The Scholarships Recognize Students Who Are Advancing Their Education in Dairy-Related Fields*

**Harrisburg, Pa.** – Emily Hornberger of Snyder County, Pennsylvania and Ava Kaskela of Chester 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 2024-25 school year, both Emily and Ava received a \$3,000 scholarship to support their academic studies in dairy-related fields.

“These students both have unique experiences in the dairy industry, and they are extremely passionate about making dairy a part of their future careers. From the time they have spent caring for their cows to the leadership roles they have embraced throughout high school, 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. Their futures look very bright, and we are glad to recognize their hard work and dedication with these scholarships.”

Congratulations to these two students:

**Emily Hornberger** is a freshman studying animal science at The Pennsylvania State University. She grew up on her family’s crop farm and developed an interest in dairy cows after caring for and raising a few calves. She took the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow courses during her time at Selinsgrove Area High School and learned about herd management, animal husbandry, and more. Because of her experience taking the courses and gaining in-depth, practical knowledge about the dairy industry, Emily is considering a career as a large animal veterinarian.

“This scholarship means the world to me. This financial support goes toward not only my education, but also my future. It’s crucial in my future aspiration of becoming a veterinarian. I will be forever thankful for the Dairy Excellence Foundation and its generosity,” Emily said.

**Ava Kaskela** is a freshman studying animal science at The University of Delaware. While Ava did not grow up on a dairy farm, she joined her local 4-H Program at the age of nine. She began showing and raising dairy cattle and began her own herd in 2019. She currently works on a dairy farm in Chester County and also has experience with dairy judging, dairy knowledge teams, and the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess and Promotion Program. Ava served as a National Ayrshire Youth Delegate for the years of 2021-2022 and 2023-2024. After taking the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow courses during her time at West Chester East High School, she learned more about the careers available in the dairy industry and made connections with dairy professionals. She hopes to become a livestock nutritionist in the future and manage her own dairy operation.

“Being awarded this scholarship is a great honor, and I am extremely blessed and grateful to be a recipient. It has been an amazing experience being part of a program that is such a strong support for the dairy industry’s youth. This scholarship will aid me in furthering my agriculture education, and being able to give back to the industry that has given so much to me,” Ava said.

The Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program is managed by the Dairy Excellence Foundation and impacts more than 34,500 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](http://www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com) or contact Michelle Shearer at [mshearer@centerfordairyexcellence.org](mailto:mshearer@centerfordairyexcellence.org) or 570-768-8316. The 2025 scholarship application will be available on March 1, 2025.

**Images:**

Emily Hornberger



Ava Kaskela



###

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/](http://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](http://www.dairyleadertomorrow.com).

**Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation ▼ 2301 North Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA 17110 ▼ 717-346-0849 ▼**

**[www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/)**