



For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Emily Barge, 717-346-0849; ebarge@centerfordairyexcellence.org

September 22, 2026

**NICOLE GUISE HALL RECOGNIZED AS 2026 RECIPIENT OF JAN HARDING RUSLAVAGE
MEMORIAL SERVICE & PROMOTION AWARD**

The Award Was Established to Honor Service of Janet Harding Ruslavage

Harrisburg, Pa. – Nicole Guise Hall, agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor for Millville Senior and Junior High Schools, was recently recognized as the 2026 recipient of the Janet Harding Ruslavage Memorial Service & Promotion Award. The award program was created in 2024 to honor the memory and distinguished service of Janet Harding Ruslavage to Pennsylvania's dairy industry by recognizing an individual between the ages of 18 and 30 who demonstrates exceptional service to and promotion of Pennsylvania dairy.

"My mom was a promoter for dairy all of her life, and she was a role model for many young ladies over the years. We bottled and sold our own Golden Guernsey milk at the farm, so she felt promotion and service to the industry was really important. We are proud that this award was established with donations from many individuals across the industry to recognize the outstanding contributions of young people serving and promoting Pennsylvania's dairy industry," said Jeff Harding on behalf of the Harding family.

"We are proud to present this award to Nicole. Just five years into her teaching career, Nicole elevates the depth and quality of her agricultural education for her students while serving in key leadership and volunteer roles far beyond the classroom. From the Pennsylvania FFA Program to PA Farm Bureau's Ag Promotion and Education Committee, it's hard to believe she has only been teaching for five years. We are inspired by Nicole's desire to connect the community to agriculture and dairy," said Judy Ligo on behalf of the Harding family.

As an agricultural educator, Nicole interacts with and inspires about 25 percent of the student population at Millville Senior and Junior High Schools through hands-on and differentiated instruction across 12 agriculture, food and natural resources pathway courses. Within the Pennsylvania FFA, Nicole serves as the chair of the Milk Quality & Products Career Development Event, a statewide competitive event focused on dairy. She has also secured more than \$47,000 in grants to expand experiential learning opportunities and enhance agricultural programming in the classroom. She is extremely active in the

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's Ag Promotion and Education Committee and led an outreach program to connect 100 percent of the K-2 students at Millville to dairy programming.

"Receiving the Harding Award is such an exciting and meaningful, full-circle moment for me. From exhibiting 4-H dairy projects, serving as a Dairy Princess, and now being a high school agriculture education teacher, the dairy industry and dairy promotion have been a constant and important part of my life. I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunities this industry has given me and I'm excited to continue promoting dairy and inspiring the next generation of agricultural leaders," Nicole shared.

Along with her classroom connections, Nicole actively promotes dairy within her local community. She led the coordination of a "Cows and Cones" event at a local creamery, complete with interactive displays and children's activities facilitated by local FFA students. Not only is Nicole an advocate for agriculture and the dairy industry herself, but she guides her students in being agricultural ambassadors at these type of events by answering questions, sharing information, and building connections with those who attend. She also created and led the first "Dairy Day" with 50 Millville first-graders who adopted a calf, connecting them to a local farmer in the area. Nicole's work as an advocate for agriculture has been recognized through many awards, including the 2025 National Teachers Turn The Key Award.

Nicole received a \$3,000 cash award and was recognized at the annual Pennsylvania Dairy Princess State Pageant in September. To qualify for this award, individuals must be a Pennsylvania resident, must be between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, and must be a high school graduate and pursuing a career in or related to the dairy industry.

To learn more about the award, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/janet-harding-ruslavage-award. The Dairy Excellence Foundation helps to manage the Harding Fund, award and nomination process. Contact Jayne Sebright, Executive Director of the Dairy Excellence Foundation, at jsebright@centerfordairyexcellence.org with questions about the award.

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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/.

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

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