



[TOP](#)

Congressman Smith - Capitol Report Growing Leaders February 22, 2019

FEBRUARY 23RD 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Smith - Capitol Report Growing Leaders February 22, 2019

Congressman Smith Capitol Report
Growing Leaders
February 22, 2019

This week FFA students and chapters around the country participated in National FFA week and celebrated FFA's impact in our schools, communities, and our farms. FFA is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States and it's about much more than growing crops and raising animals; it's about growing leaders.

More than 25,000 young Missourians wear the FFA's famous National Blue corduroy jacket with Corn Gold lettering. It's a tradition that dates back to the 1933 FFA Convention in Kansas City, but the values and traditions FFA teaches young people today date back much further and have been held closely by Americans for hundreds of years. Agriculture is deeply rooted in America's history, as are the values of responsibility, accountability, hard work, and building up the community around you. FFA teaches students an appreciation for both the joys and discomforts of agriculture, a belief in their own abilities, and an aspiration to live an honest life.

Like many other alumni, I know my life wouldn't be the same had I never joined FFA. Twenty years ago this year I earned the American FFA degree, an achievement I'm still proud of today. Finding an organization I could be passionate about broke me out of my

shell and gave me the confidence to try new things outside of my comfort zone. In fact, the first time I ever visited our nation's capital was through an FFA leadership program. FFA has a wide range of activities that allow students to discover their passion in life and explore their unique talents. Students can exhibit or judge livestock, learn to manage soil and grasslands, and participate in one of the many contest teams. There's an activity for everyone in FFA, from agriculture sales to debating parliamentary procedure, practicing public speaking, and even joining the FFA choir. While they're pursuing their individual interests, students learn teamwork, communication skills, and become more developed leaders.

During my farm tour last year, I was blessed to meet a lot of FFA members from southern Missouri. At Valley R-VI School District in Caledonia, school officials partnered with the local agricultural community to create an FFA farm next to the school, giving students the incredible opportunity to learn the best agricultural practices firsthand. And when I held a Farmhall in Oran, I was impressed by the number of young farmers in attendance, many of whom started out in agriculture with FFA. They showed me the latest drones and technology that are becoming more common on farms today. I was reminded of the FFA creed, which states, "I believe in the future of agriculture... in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years."

When I met with Fredericktown R-I FFA students this week, I told the students that while FFA instills a deep appreciation for agriculture and prepares them for agricultural careers, their futures are hardly limited to a life on the farm. FFA members are future biologists, chemists, veterinarians, engineers, and entrepreneurs. FFA alumni include Members of Congress, athletes, famous actors, CEOs of major companies, and even former President of the United States Jimmy Carter.

The life skills, work ethic, and values FFA members learn will serve them well their whole life, regardless of the career path they choose. As we celebrate FFA week this week, we should celebrate all that FFA does to prepare students for their futures. FFA does more than just grow crops and animals – it strengthens agriculture, builds communities, and grows leaders.

LAST UPDATED ON FEBRUARY 23RD 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/vc65/Congressman-Smith--Capitol-Report-Growing-Leaders-February-22-2019>

[Go to post](#)

More from ShowMe Times:



SUBSCRIBE TO "POLITICAL BLOGS"

ShowMe Gold Sponsors