

Spring 2021



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www.outstandingfarmers.com



NOYF

2022 Awards Congress

National Outstanding Young Farmers

Two groups of finalists to be recognized in South Carolina at 2022 NOYF Congress

Following the cancellation of the 2021 NOYF Awards Congress due to COVID-19 concerns, the OFA officers decided to interview the 2021 finalists and invite all finalists to the 2022 Awards Congress for the announcement of the four national winners. All finalists for the 2021 NOYF Awards will be recognized at the 2022 NOYF Awards Congress, which is planned for Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, in February of 2022. Both the candidates from 2021 and the new class of 2022 will be honored at the 2022 Awards Congress.

Those named national finalists for 2021 are Allyson Angelini, CT; Matthew and Melissa Bottoms, GA; Jarred and Shelby Moose, IA; Gary and Tina Schoenfeld, MN; Hillary Barile, NJ; Jeroen and Traci van der Ploeg, NM; John and Morgan Morrison, WA; and Philip and Laura Finger, WI. They were selected for the award based on their progress in an agricultural career, extent of soil and water conservation

practices, and contributions to the well-being of the community, state, and nation.

Allyson Angelini of Ledyard, CT, grows mixed vegetables on Full Heart Farm, which specializes in family meal-based CSAs. With a degree in Sustainable Agriculture Education,

Angelini started her business from the ground up and has used her experiences to educate others through her writing and instruction.

Matt and Melissa Bottoms of Concord, GA, operate both a nursery and a row crop farm. As a fifth-generation farmer, Bottoms
(continued on page 2)



2021 NOYF Finalists announced

(continued from page 1)

has focused on increasing yields, improving plant quality, and marketing his products while working closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Jarred and Shelby Moose of Monona, IA, raise soybeans,

hay, and cattle on the family farm. Through his farming career Moose has worked to increase conservation practices such as no-till, terraces, and manure spreading.

Gary and Tina Schoenfeld of Waseca, MN, raise soybeans, hay, beef cattle, and sheep. The Schoenfelds have integrated

precision planting, grid sampling, and no-till farming practices to increase their efficiency and conserve soil and nutrients.

Hillary Barile of Shiloh, NJ, produces sod, wheat, barley, and soybeans on Rabbit Hill Farms. Transitioning away from potato farming and into malthouse sales has expanded the business in a more profitable direction.

Jeroen and Traci van der Ploeg of Clovis, NM, raise wheat, corn, and beef cattle along with their dairy operation. The van der Ploegs have diversified their farm by incorporating a milk and yogurt company as well as a specialty shop to direct market their products.

John and Morgan Morrison of Mount Vernon, WA, grow grass seed, spinach seed, and small grains. Morrison is a beta tester for new irrigation technology as well as experimenting with cover crops to build soil health.

Philip and Laura Finger of Oconto, WI, operate a dairy and grow alfalfa, corn, and soybeans. Concentrating on meeting milk production goals and improving soil quality have been top priorities for the Fingers.

The NOYF program selected its first group of national winners in 1955. The program is sponsored by John Deere, administered by the Outstanding Farmers of America, and supported by the U.S. Jaycees, the National Association of Conservation Districts, and the National Association of County Agricultural Agents.

The 2022 NOYF Awards Congress will be February 3-6 at the Omni Hilton Head Resort. Details and registration will be available this fall on the OFA website and in the fall edition of the Spirit.

OFA COORDINATORS' REPORT

Rich and Debbie Norz (NJ 2010)
ofaprogram@gmail.com



Plan early for NOYF 2022

Wishing everyone a bright day from New Jersey. We are looking forward to the 2022 convention where we will be celebrating the Class of 2021 and 2022. Creativity and understanding are how this is all going to make it happen. Knowing we have your love and support; this is going to be the best congress yet as two classes are welcomed together.

So, who is ready for to visit the Southern Region? Everyone's hand is raised, right? Some of the things the region is looking into is a low country boil, a riverboat cruise and downtown Savanna, Georgia. While our congress will be happening at the Omni Hotel located in Hilton Head South Carolina it's only a stone through away from the charm of Savanna.

Currently we are working on setting up the on-line platform to be able register for the 2022 NOYF Congress. Hotel room reservations are open to booking, please go to the www.omnihotels.com website, then go to reservations. The hotel is Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort, then enter the dates you wish to stay (the Congress dates are 2/3/2022 to 2/6/2022)

and enter the reservation code of 012722OUTSTANDI to get our Convention rate. If you have your hotel room booked and your Congress Registration form in by the 15th of December 2021 by midnight you will be entered into a drawing for the for a free 2-night stay at the Omni Hilton Head Resort. Watch our Facebook page OutstandingFarmersOfAmerica for pictures of the resort and planning updates throughout the year.

We are excited and nervous stepping to Sharon's sparkly shoes. Sharon has done an amazing job keeping the OFA informed, on-time and entertained for years. We want to take a moment and thank Sharon for mentoring us and hope we can provide the same opportunities for everyone at our congresses that she has in the past.

Any news regarding members, updating mailing lists or information concerning the OFA please contact us at ofaprogram1@gmail.com. We are looking forward to a great 2022 conference in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Andrew & Erin Kimmel (PA 2007)
ackimmel@windstream.net

Transitions occur in OFA board and coordinator positions

What a year we all have had dealing with Covid. I am sure we all have stories to tell, Lets hope that when we get together for NOYF Congress in 2022 that this pandemic is long past us. Just like the rest of our lives, the life of the OFA moves on. As you are all aware, our Congress scheduled for February of 2021 in Appleton WI was cancelled. The hotel was willing to move our date to February of 2023 without penalties. We will be holding our 2022 Congress at the Omni Resort in Hilton Head SC the first week of February. This will be a wonderful time to get together and catch up on all we have missed in the last year. This Congress will be especially eventful because we will have the finalist from 2021 and 2022 with us.

There had been several nominations made during the 2020 year including several state winners. There were many conversations and Zoom meetings to try and work this out. It was decided that we would go ahead with the process of judging all the candidates and conduct Zoom interviews with the finalist in February of 2021 almost

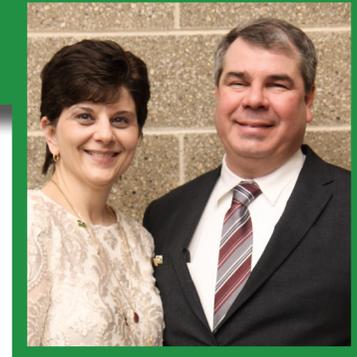
as if we were at Congress. This went very well, and we were able to judge the 8 finalists that were chosen. We also connected the 8 finalists so they can get to know each other over the next year.

If you remember on Saturday night Orion Samuelson usually tries to stretch things out just before announcing the winners to build anticipation. These 8 finalists will have to wait until the 2022 Congress to find out who the winners are. They will be announced at the same time the winners from the class of 2022 will be announced.

Greg and Carmen Bendixson were our President through

“Please remember to thank Greg and Carmen for their time and efforts on the board, and please thank Sharon Page also for all the time, effort and energy that Sharon has committed to the OFA over the years. The OFA could not have put on so many successful Congresses without their commitment and work.”

what was to be the 2021 Congress in Appleton WI. When we met to prepare for next year they passed the torch on to Erin and I as president. We want to thank Greg and Carmen for all



that they have done in their time on the board. As we move into the presidency, Don and Cheryl Hartman of Deming NM move into Vice President/Treasurer role and we are pleased to welcome Chris and Ginger Martin of Hawkinsville GA onto the board as secretary. We have also finished the transition of OFA Coordinator from Sharon Page to Rich and Debbie Norz and the NOYF Coordinator from Rich and Debbie Norz to Mary and Marlin Johnson.

So, as you can see the OFA has stayed busy through out this past year. Please remember to thank Greg and Carmen for their time and efforts on the board, and please thank Sharon Page also for all the time, effort and energy that Sharon has committed to the OFA over the years. The OFA could not have put on so many successful Congresses without their commitment and work.

We look forward to seeing you in Hilton Head next February. Please nominate a deserving young farmer from your state or encourage an extension agent or conservation district to nominate a deserving young farmer. The regional committee has worked hard to make this an exceptional congress.

NOYF COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Mary & Marlan Johnson (NE 1989)

noyfprogram@gmail.com



The weather in Nebraska has been GLORIOUS the past few days; a far cry from the -33 we had just a few weeks ago with rolling power outages!! This is Nebraska weather—stick around a few hours and it will change again.

Speaking of CHANGE—this past year was nothing but changes with Covid-19! We would like to CONGRATULATE the Finalists from the Class of 2021.

What a Top Notch group of individuals, with a passion for Agriculture, Goals, and Service to their respective communities!! Impressive!

We could not hold an “in person” Congress because of Covid-19 restrictions. Through multiple meetings, the Executive Board, OFA Coordinator, and ourselves decided the best step forward was a “Virtual Meet and Greet” with the finalists, followed by “Virtual Judging” of the finalists the next day.

A HUGE “Thank You” goes to the judges for working with us through all these changes!! It worked very well, and the Finalists of the Class of 2021 will be honored at the 2022 Congress. The 2021 four National

Nominations open for NOYF 2022

Winners will also be announced at the 2022 Congress. In addition, the Finalists from the Class of 2022 will be honored at the same Congress, and the four National 2022 Winners will be announced. It will be a “Unique” Congress, honoring two classes. However; what better place to do this than at Hilton Head,

on our website: www.outstandingfarmers.com. It is very easy to fill out. Once this nomination form is completed, and sent in, the semifinalists selected will be asked to complete another, more detailed form, and have this form sent in by October 5, 2021. The Finalists who will attend the 2022 Congress will

be selected after this. Thank you to past OFA Members, and the NACAA for the past nominations; we look forward



NOYF

National Outstanding Young Farmers Awards Program

South Carolina! Throughout this year, Marlan and I will be reaching out to the 2021 Finalists, to make sure they are ready for Hilton Head in February.

Speaking of 2022—Do you have a young individual, involved in your community, and farming that you would like to Honor and Recognize? Nominations for the 2022 National Outstanding Young Farmer Program are due August 1, 2021. Yes, we are “transitioning” back to our former selection and judging process. Hopefully, gains in vaccinations, and loosened travel restrictions will allow this in the future. Eligible Nominees are Individuals who have not reached age 41 by January 1, 2022.

A short nomination form is

ward to seeing your New Nominees!

We will be reaching out to many of our OFA members for Nominations—the long term success of the OFA Organization is membership, the networks we all have used to advance our farming operations, and the new ideas each new class brings in! Be an OFA Advocate--Talk with a potential nominee about your experience with the OFA. Tell them the story about what the OFA has done for you and your farming operation. Be looking for that “OUTSTANDING” individual!!!

We look forward to seeing New Nominees!! Have a SAFE Planting Season—and as an OFA member told me, “Stay Positive and Test Negative!”



SECRETARY'S REPORT

Christopher & Ginger Martin (GA 2015)
christophermartinfarms@gmail.com



New OFA officers are excited to serve the organization

By now, most of you have probably seen us around at a former NOYF annual congress. We are Ginger and Christopher Martin of Georgia (Class of 2015) and we honored to be the newly selected secretaries of OFA.

For us, being introduced into and honored by this organization was life changing. We've met the best friends of our lives, people and families just like us. Facing the same challenges, celebrating the same successes, sharing similar stories, miles apart but close at heart.

Our individual heritage within the same county is unique. Both our great-great grandfathers were involved in the founding of our home county and its initial ventures into agriculture, separately, and grew their farms to be well known and respected. Christopher

is a fifth-generation farmer; however, we sidestepped into other agricultural avenues for the first decade of marriage after graduating college before circling around to farming in 2002. We started from the ground-up on our own, because to launch and expand his farm was Christopher's dream. We sold our family home in town and moved back across the river to the very roots of our families' beginnings over two hundred years ago.

We grow primarily cotton and peanuts. We have been involved in research, conservation, and sustainable agriculture since before we started Christopher Martin Farms and that continues to be our passion along with ag education and tourism.

Recently, we purposely downsized from over 4,000 irrigated acres to what Christopher likes to jokingly

call 'a hobby farm' (about 1000 acres) because our son Grantson (25) and daughter Wellsley (23) have graduated college and begun their careers and we have additional interests we want to pursue. Ginger launched an author career in 2019 and Christopher is her 'book manager' in his spare time since the farm's downsizing, plus he enjoys exploring entrepreneurial ideas and real estate opportunities. Travel is our main hobby. We'd love to visit your farm and you are invited to Georgia anytime to hang out with us and tour our acreage.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve this wonderful organization in the years to come. We are here if you need us!



Dues and Donations

- Annual Dues: \$25
- Lifetime Dues: \$250
- \$100 Challenge: \$100
- Spirit of Giving: \$_____
- OFA Foundation: \$_____

Submit to: Don & Cheryl Hartman
6495 HWY 418 SW
Deming, NM 88030

Introducing four of the 2021 NOYF Finalists



Allyson Angelini
Ledyard, Connecticut

Allyson Angelini of Ledyard, CT, grows mixed vegetables on Full Heart Farm, which specializes in family meal-based CSAs. With a degree in Sustainable Agriculture Education, Angelini started her business from the ground up and has used her experiences to educate others through her writing and instruction. After nine growing seasons, Angelini has built a 1.5 acre farm that feeds more than 200 families and supplies several restaurants each week.



Hillary Barile
Shiloh, New Jersey

Hillary Barile of Shiloh, NJ, produces sod, wheat, barley, and soybeans on Rabbit Hill Farms. Transitioning away from potato farming and into malthouse sales has expanded the business in a more profitable direction. Barile has met the challenge of growing small grains in the mid-Atlantic region where they are an uncommon crop, relying on her horticulture experience and her deep understanding of the malting process to meet her production goals.



Philip & Laura Finger
Oconto, Wisconsin

Philip and Laura Finger of Oconto, WI, operate a dairy and grow alfalfa, corn, and soybeans. Concentrating on meeting milk production goals by emphasizing cattle comfort and genetic selection along with improving soil quality have been top priorities for the Fingers, who both hold degrees in Dairy Science. The Fingers strive to present a positive face for agriculture through social media.



Matt & Melissa Bottoms
Concord, Georgia

Matt and Melissa Bottoms of Concord, GA, operate both a nursery and a row crop farm. As a fifth-generation farmer, Bottoms has focused on increasing yields, improving plant quality, and marketing his products while working closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop erosion control measures and improve nutrient retention.



NOYF ²⁰²² Awards Congress

National Outstanding Young Farmers

- February 3-6, 2022 • Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort
- Hilton Head Island, South Carolina
- www.omnihotels.com • Reservation code 012722OUTSTANDI
- *Book your hotel and submit your Congress Registration form by Dec. 15, 2021, to be entered into a drawing for the for a free two-night stay at the Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort*



OFA SPIRIT OF GIVING



OFA is a 501(c) 3 Tax Deductible Non-Profit Organization.

OFA DONOR FUND

Buck Teeter	1975
ONEOK	2017
Jack & Mary Lou Thomson Foundation	1955
John & Delores Brown	1965
Wisner H Buckbee	1965

PLATINUM \$5000+

Joe Gambini & Lois Armstrong	1965
Gerald Barnes & Neoma Loehr	1970

DIAMOND \$1000+

Kevin & Sharon Page	1991
Dana & Julie Stapleton	2002
Marlan & Mary Johnson	1989
Rod & Janelle Holth	Honary
Russ & Marilyn Rosenboom	1972
Dave & Jeanne Endres	2001
Ben & Kathryn Littlepage	1965
Rich and Debbie Norz	2010
TIM & Sara Sullivan	2005
Greg & Carmen Bendixson	2002
David & Bernie Shriver	1970
Joe & Ida DeFrancesco	2016
Ralph & Cleo Thompson	1970
John & Marge Walchli	1969
Andy & Hilde Burger	1966
Ken & Audrey Mason	1970
Robert & Roberta Call	1960
Ken & Marilyn Bush	1966
Robert Sakata	1956
Bob & Ella Mae Wade	1969
John & Gail Kautz	1966
Dan & Sheila White	1970
Kevin & Krissy Albert	2005
Don and Cheryl Hartman	2006

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GOLD \$500+

Joe Geremia	2011	CT
Bill Richards	1967	OH
Lloyd & Daphnie Holterman	1994	WI
Rod & Mary Birchen	1993	IL
Scott & Peggy Hildebrant	2002	MN
Willard & Ruth Pederson	1967	ND
Memory of Pat Barnes (Class of 07)	2007	
Willard & Pat Hennings	1965	WA
Eric & Marlene Haberer	1972	KS
Max & Connie Peterson	1974	IL
Bryce & Cheryl Chamberlain	1982	IL
Richard & Juanalee Alder	1966	NE
Sandy & Peggy Luderman	1982	MN
Dale & Joanna Koester	1959	ID
Mike & Sandy Hennenfent	1981	IL
Steve & Janeen Moest	1994	IL
Dennis & Doris Tubergen	1994	MI
Jay & Kristin Richardson	2004	WI
Mary Ann Brown	1965	GA
Steve & Dee Gordon	2012	OR
Glen & Angie Walters	2002	GA
Donald & Jeanette Reuvers	1967	MN
Earl and Sue Stanley	1974	VT

SILVER

Leo Sebek Memorial	2002	SD
Mark & Angie Ulness	2017	WI
Ken & Donna Dickneite	1996	MO
Rufus & Mary Sharard	1967	SC
Ruth Pederson Memorial(Uglem)	2012	ND
Mark & Trudy Peterson	2002	MO
Anderson Farm llc		
Deb & Bob Carpenter	1980	NY
John & Mary Shawhan	1977	OH
Karl Eby/Judy Erickson	1985	IA
Danny & Danette McAlhaney	2002	SC
George Maxey	1965	CO
Elaine Thompson	1981	CA



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Spirit

The Newsletter
of the Outstanding Farmers of America

Send submissions or comments to: Erin Slivka
6074 PN Bridge Rd • Winifred, MT 59489 • slivka.erin@gmail.com