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winter 2018



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## Supporting Tomorrow's Producers Today

As today's farmers and ranchers retire from production agriculture, America will need new producers to replenish the industry. The future of the nation's food supply and the quality of life in rural communities depend on it.

For decades, the number of farmers has been going down, while the average age has been going up. The 2012 Census of Agriculture, the latest census, revealed that the average age of U.S. farmers was 58.3 years, which suggests that many will retire in the coming decade.

Meanwhile, there are more job openings for highly skilled workers in agriculture-related fields than students graduating in food, ag, renewable resources and the environment, according to a five-year forecast by Purdue University in 2015.

At AgTexas, we are committed to supporting the next generation that will drive agriculture. A critical component of our mission is assisting young, beginning and small (YBS) farmers, whether they are focused on conventional or emerging business models. We make loans of all sizes, to producers of all ages and experience levels. In 2017, 19 percent of AgTexas' new loans went to young farmers, while 34 percent were to beginning farmers and 46 percent to small farmers.

We also encourage YBS producers and future agriculturalists through our Young Advisory Board, participation in the Tenth District Farm Credit Council's annual Young Leaders Program, FFA and 4-H donations, internships and our Ag Youth of the Month Scholarship program.

Attracting and financing young, beginning and/or small operators requires special techniques, such as adjusted underwriting standards. Our lenders take time to work with YBS applicants whenever necessary to explain the credit delivery process, prepare cash flows, and conduct enterprise analysis and break-evens. Through the production cycle, our staff is available for consultation on decisions such as crop insurance needs, other insurance programs, hedging and evaluation of projected operational performance.

AgTexas Farm Credit Services applauds the next generation of farmers, ranchers and young people pursuing careers in agriculture. Through Farm Credit, they can count on access to the dependable credit and financial services needed to succeed.

Tim McDonald  
Chief Executive Officer

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# Stephenville Cattleman Participates in Farm Credit Young Leaders Program

This June, Wesley Wood of Stephenville saw firsthand how Farm Credit uses money raised on Wall Street to support agriculture and rural communities. A member-borrower of AgTexas Farm Credit Services, Wood was among 27 agricultural producers selected for the 2018 Farm Credit Young Leaders Program in New York City and Washington, D.C.

The 13th annual program began with visits to a Wall Street brokerage firm and the Federal Farm Credit Banks Funding Corporation. There the group learned how investors' purchase of highly rated Farm Credit notes and bonds provides steady funding that local lending cooperatives like AgTexas put to work in rural communities.

This portion of the tour was exceptionally meaningful to Wood.

"Every single Farm Credit member should learn where their money comes from," he said. "It's an amazing process."

Next the group traveled to the nation's capital to exchange ideas with public officials. While on Capitol Hill, Wood discussed policy issues with Sen. John Cornyn, Rep. Filemon Vela and congressional staff. That same day, the Senate passed its version of the farm bill, setting the stage for a compromise bill of this vital agricultural and food legislation.

Wood has cow-calf, stocker, cattle-feeding and brokerage operations. He independently buys most of his cattle supply, runs stockers on grass and winter pasture, and



Wesley Wood, left, celebrates the completion of the 2018 Farm Credit Young Leaders Program with Stan Ray, Farm Credit Bank of Texas chief administrative officer and president of the Tenth District Farm Credit Council, which hosted the program.

retains ownership of many head of cattle through harvest.

He also partners with a broker that supplies cattle for 16 feedyards in five states, and serves on the Erath County Appraisal District's agricultural appraisal advisory board. His wife, Brandi, is a physical therapist who co-owns Sports Rehab and Physical Therapy clinics in Stephenville and Hico.

Wesley told Chad Alleva, regional vice president of lending in the AgTexas Stephenville office, that he was honored to be selected to the program.

"I had never been to New York City, so that was my favorite part of the trip," Wood said. "Meeting and networking with producers from other associations helped broaden my perspective of American agriculture."

"Every single Farm Credit member should learn where their money comes from. It's an amazing process."  
— Wesley Wood

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# AG YOUTH OF THE MONTH PROGRAM



*Central Texas: Payton Byars*



*Central Texas: Kailei Gaines*



*Central Texas: Lindsay Leck*



*Panhandle: Hope Herrera*



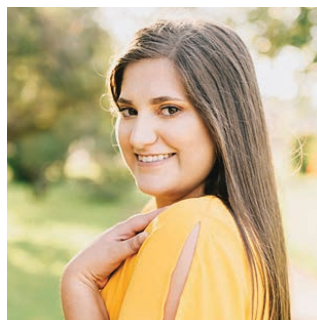
*Panhandle: Abbie Hunt*



*Panhandle: Haydon Miller*



*South Plains: Faith Cox*



*South Plains: Rachel Crandall*



*South Plains: Barrett Isbell*

**A**s we congratulate the 2018 Ag Youth of the Month Scholarship winners one more time, the 2018-2019 program is in full swing. At the regional banquets held in April, we presented a total of \$21,000 in scholarships. We think it's a good investment in these students and the rural communities they represent.

A few notable firsts occurred in the class of 2017-2018:

- **Beverly Fehr's** name was drawn for a \$1,000 scholarship, and she gave it to her friend and classmate, **Megan Letkeman**. Both of these young women are graduates of Seminole High School.
- Twins **Haydon** and **Payton Miller** of Dimmitt were recognized as monthly Ag Youths of the Month and they EACH won a scholarship — what are the chances?
- In July, one of our scholarship winners, **Cory Sinkule**, a Penelope High School Wolverine, was named Texas FFA president!



Central Texas: Cory Sinkule



Central Texas: Montana Steele



Panhandle: Hannah Crandall



Panhandle: Hydie Dyer



Panhandle: Payton Miller



Panhandle: Keenan Nixon



Panhandle: Rori Phillips



Panhandle: Macey Thurman



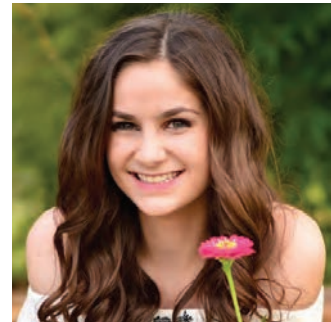
South Plains: Megan Letkeman



South Plains: Reagan Perez



South Plains: Daniel Poage



South Plains: Lauren Smithwick

## WINNERS

### CENTRAL TEXAS

Payton Byars  
Kailei Gaines  
Lindsay Leck  
Cory Sinkule  
Montana Steele

### PANHANDLE

Hannah Crandall  
Hydie Dyer  
Hope Herrera  
Abbie Hunt  
Haydon Miller  
Payton Miller  
Keenan Nixon  
Rori Phillips  
Macey Thurman

### SOUTH PLAINS

Faith Cox  
Rachel Crandall  
Barrett Isbell  
Megan Letkeman  
Reagan Perez  
Daniel Poage  
Lauren Smithwick

To see more AgTexas Ag Youth of the Month honorees, check out the photo albums on our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/agtexas](http://www.facebook.com/agtexas).

To read more about the AgTexas Ag Youth of the Month program, check out our website, [www.agtexas.com/news/ag-youth](http://www.agtexas.com/news/ag-youth).

# A CRITICAL COMPONENT

Young Advisory Board connects AgTexas with young producers.

At AgTexas, we are committed to supporting the next generation that will drive agriculture.

As CEO Tim McDonald mentioned in his message in this issue, supporting young and beginning farmers is a critical component of the AgTexas mission. On the pages following the CEO Message, we have illustrated a few of the outreach methods AgTexas uses to fulfill our mission. Each provides a means of connection to the young women and men who could be the future of agriculture throughout the AgTexas territory; and perhaps the people who might someday sit on the board of this association.

The Young Advisory Board was created to provide a connection to those already in agriculture, with an emphasis on the unique insights of those between the ages of 25 and 35. The perspective and focused input received from each of the charter members of this board has been invaluable, and we appreciate the time they have devoted to the meetings.

At the July meeting of the Young Advisory Board, two members reached the end of their term — Buster and Holly McLain of Gruver and Corey and Sommer Coats of Levelland. When you see these folks, please extend your thanks for their contribution to the betterment of AgTexas. We know they will have a good story to tell about their time on the AgTexas Young Advisory Board.

Recently, Buster McLain shared his observations about his service on the Young Advisory Board.

“I most enjoyed visiting with the other members — we shared stories about farming, our families, our struggles and our wins,” said McLain. “I was surprised at the differences in our operations, that while we are all in Texas we have different soil, climates and methods.”

“We worked with the AgTexas board from time to time. There are smart men on that board, and it was good to talk with them. That was my biggest takeaway, the relationships that Holly and I made.”

The remaining members of the Young Advisory Board are Jeremy and Sarah Brown of Tahoka; Michael Reinart of Stratford; Todd and Lindsay Kimbrell of Itasca; Joshua and Dana Drake of Weatherford; Jonathan and Melissa Williams of Meadow; and Kody Bessent of Lubbock.



*Corey and Sommer Coats farm approximately 3,500 acres in Hockley and Cochran counties, primarily cotton and a little milo with 1,600 irrigated and 1,900 non-irrigated acres.*



*Buster and Holly McLain work with his father and brother-in-law on approximately 18,300 acres of irrigated and dryland farmland plus grass pasture. It is a diversified operation of cattle, feed grains and wheat.*



From left to right, AgTexas summer interns Colton Adams, Abigail Hoelscher and Ashton Katusak tour Farmhouse Vineyards and the Whitehouse Parker tasting room near Brownfield, Texas.

## Be Open to Opportunity

### Summer Interns Report on Their Experience

By Abigail Hoelscher

If someone had told us that by the middle of summer there would be 6,000 miles added to our odometers, we might have been skeptical. Yet, eight weeks later that's exactly what happened — and now we know a lot more highways in Texas. We are the 2018 AgTexas summer interns — Colton Adams, Abigail Hoelscher and Ashton Katusak.

Over the course of the summer, we traveled to the three different regions that AgTexas serves — Central Texas, the South Plains and the Panhandle. We experienced the variety of the regions and their wide-ranging operations — from traditional row crop and cattle operations to vineyards, dairies and a turf grass operation.

At each office, we learned about the different roles employees have — it turns out that AgTexas is as diverse as the members it serves! We visited with customers and saw their daily operations for an even more in-depth look into the agricultural sector. In addition to our travels, we worked on an assigned project and provided a written and oral report to senior management at the end of the summer.

#### Lessons Learned

This internship has taught us many lessons, both in life and professionally. For instance, we learned to always be prepared with an introductory speech — by week two, the three of us could give each other's introduction, but it gave AgTexas customers and employees an opportunity to get to know us a little better and sparked some conversation. Perhaps the best lesson of the summer was to be open-minded when presented with an opportunity.

Coming to AgTexas, each of us had an idea of what our future might hold. After a few weeks, those plans completely changed for two of us. Thankfully, AgTexas gave us the

opportunity to determine what fit the best, whether it was marketing, appraisal, lending or credit.

We are grateful to have the chance to intern for such a wonderful company. The employees of AgTexas treated us like family, and we learned more from them than we might have in a classroom. Through this internship, we developed a better understanding and greater appreciation for what agriculture has to offer. Our internship turned three strangers into friends and helped make memories that will last a lifetime.

**"The employees of AgTexas treated us like family, and we learned more from them than we might have in a classroom."**

**– Abigail Hoelscher**



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