

Allie Leitza

August memories are those of the heat, swimming pools, returning to school, and the beginning of the fall sport season. But the best August memories are the scent of fresh saw dust filling the air, the sounds of livestock and chatter within the barns, making new friends, and spending time with old pals from previous years. August provides 4-H and FFA members of Laramie County with a chance to exhibit their hard work with pride and a sense of accomplishment. Each and every student in Laramie County should know that they have a place at the county fair. That is why programs such as the ambassador program are an important implementation to the Laramie County Fair. More times than not, we envision the county fair as an event for students with livestock. There is so much more to be had from such a great opportunity. Citizens of Laramie County can enjoy all aspects of the fair – it is not just a place for 4-H and FFA members. If selected as an ambassador, it will be my duty and I would highly enjoy the opportunity to travel throughout Laramie County to encourage youth and adults to make their August memories at Laramie County Fair. I am Allie Leitza of Pine Bluffs. I have been a member of the Pine Bluffs FFA Chapter for five years, and I am currently a freshman in college.

As the rest of my peers and I moved up to high school, I found my passion in the FFA, while the other were involved in athletics. After I got on stage to begin my first round of many public speaking endeavors, my interest and drive to influence others to be a part of the organization grew. My freshman year of FFA was a time for me to test the waters. I was a part of the Agricultural Issues and Agricultural Sales and Services CDE's. The next year, my AG Sales team and I found a new product to sell at the contest. We rebuilt our portfolio and presentation. These tasks helped me to communicate visually and vocally. In my membership of Pine Bluffs FFA, I have held the offices of Reporter, Secretary, and President. I have competed in Public Speaking events at the local, district, and regional levels. I have also participated in the Agricultural Sales and Service CDE for four years. Having been given the opportunity to be an FFA member has made me a confident and effective communicator, as well as to work with a team to accomplish a common goal. I will use these skills in the instance of being chosen to serve as an ambassador.

It was not until the summer before my sophomore year of high school that I entered the show ring. In the past few years, I have exhibited swine and sheep. I have also been the Secretary of the Lone Pine 4-H Club. My participation at the 4-H level was not as involved as I should have been, and I am very regretful of that fact. However, if selected to serve as a Laramie County Fair Ambassador, I plan to encourage individuals to be a part of the organizations, and to become more involved in Laramie County Fair – seeing as fair is an opportunity for more than just members with livestock. As an ambassador, I will put full energy into helping and encouraging students to participate in county fair – even if not in the show ring. My few experiences as a 4-H member taught me to work with dedication to work diligently, to understand and be aware of trials and rewards of not just agriculture but life. In the past few years I have assisted younger members prepare their projects for show. I have also shown pigs for fellow members

when they have more than one animal in a class. Due to my membership being a little more non-traditional than others, I have the desire to encourage individuals much like myself to find a place where they belong in 4-H, FFA, and Laramie County Fair.

Giving back is something that is really important to me. I have been a part of many community service projects like highway clean-up, student council bake sales to raise money for various charities, canned food drive, distribution of holiday commodities to the community, and blood drives for our FFA Chapter. I have also been a blood donor. I have also been blessed to be a part of some bigger projects. I was the chair for the Pine Bluffs High School recycling project for two years. I was also given the chance to assist Farmers State Bank of Pine Bluffs in their town beautification project. In our efforts we painted the house of an elderly woman in our community and improved the curb appeal of her home. For two years I was a part of the Pine Bluffs High School Mentor Program. I was given the opportunity to spend time with this student once a month at lunch. We planned parties and activities for holidays. As a mentor, I was a friendly face for the young student to count on. The service projects I have been a part of have been influential to me as a leader and a member of society. I plan to use these skills if selected into the ambassador program.

My family is a crucial part of my everyday life. They are the reason I have become the leader, student, and person I am today. They will also be the reason I will become who I become in my adult life. As a youngster, my dad and I raised feeder calves. The project was intended for me to learn the efforts that must go into raising livestock. He also wanted me to learn at a young age where and how the food we consume reaches the dinner table. My dad has taught me how to be a hard worked, and he provided me the foundation for my love of agriculture. My mom has always been a huge supporter of everything I have ever chosen to do. She is always encouraging me to do my best, to be dedicated, but most importantly, she has taught me that there is no goal I cannot reach. She has also played a role in my becoming a caring, compassionate person. I have a younger brother, Joe, who is currently a freshman in high school. The characteristic of his that I find myself wishing I had is his constant competitiveness. Even through trials and shortcomings in the classroom or sports venue, he has never given up.

I have always enjoyed going to school. To be given the opportunity to broaden my knowledge and to have the occasional challenge is something I am constantly looking forward to. As a high school student, I graduated with a 3.5 GPA. In my current studies at the college level, I am on my way to receiving a degree in Agribusiness. Upon earning that degree, I plan to transfer to a four year college where I will be working towards a Master's degree in Ag Communications with a focus in marketing.

The August memories I illustrated are just a few of the great things that come from the Laramie County Fair. I would like to be apart of spreading the word of that truth. As a Laramie County Fair Ambassador, I would greatly enjoy the privilege to do so. I would be my pleasure to be involved in the public relations of the Laramie County

Fair. It would also be my pleasure to lend a hand in making August memories for the citizens of Laramie County.