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## **Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers gives back through scholarship program**

PLYMOUTH, Wis. — Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers, a farmer-led watershed conservation group, is helping local students pay for college.

Three students are being awarded a scholarship from the farmer-led group this year. Brady Bleck and Brianna Meyer will each receive a \$1000 scholarship, and Payton Vorpahl will receive a \$500 scholarship to continue their education.

These three students have all excelled academically in their schools as well as in extracurricular activities.



Bleck, son of Jeff and Lea Ann Bleck of Glenbeulah, is a 2023 graduate of Plymouth High School. He plans to attend UW-Madison and pursue a career in chiropractic care. He has been extremely involved in his dairy competitions through Sheboygan County 4-H, Junior Holstein Association and FFA. His involvement in agriculture stems from his uncle's dairy farm, where he also learned the importance of conservation.

"The conservation practice that stands out to me is strip farming," Bleck said. "You can see the narrow strips of alternating crops along many of the hillsides along the highway. These strips help to stop erosion by creating natural dams for water to help decrease the amount of soil lost from wind and rain."



Meyer, daughter of Larry and Jennifer Meyer of Chilton, is a graduate of Chilton High School. She will attend UW-Madison for the pre-vet dairy science program. She has been very active in agricultural organizations, including Chilton FFA, Chilton Tip-Top 4-H, the Wisconsin, National and Manitowoc/Calumet Junior Holstein associations and the Wisconsin Junior Brown Swiss Association. She has received many honors and awards through these organizations and has grown her passion for caring for animals.

"Serving my agricultural community as a veterinarian has been my long-term career goal," Meyer said. "Being raised in the heart of America's Dairyland, I couldn't imagine a better fit to serve rural America and the ag community that has grown so dear to my heart than working with dairy cattle daily."



Vorpahl, daughter of Martin and Tera Cater Vorpahl of Random Lake, is a graduate of Oostburg High School. Set to attend UW-River Falls this fall, she is enrolled in the Dairy Science program. Her 4-H involvement includes beef, dairy, rabbits, art, photography and quiz bowl judging for livestock, meat and dairy. After college, she hopes to attend veterinary school and return to Sheboygan County as a large animal veterinarian. A conservation practice she finds important is the use of cover crops.

“Implementing cover crops prevents soil erosion and nutrient loss,” Vorpahl said. “The cover crop takes root in the soil to avoid natural erosion from wind or rain. It’s beneficial because it allows the soil to stay intact and returns nutrients to the soil.”

The SRPF Board fully supports the scholarships and the impact on future leaders through funding the development of these students.

“The SRPF scholarship committee was impressed by the strong response from applicants this year,” SRPF board member and selection committee chair Brian Huenink said. “It made our job difficult to select the winning applicants; this was a welcome challenge! Candidates were from farm and non-farm backgrounds, but all clearly saw the advantages of conserving our soil and water resources.

“Our three winning candidates exceeded our expectations, resulting in not one but three scholarship awards. Each of the candidates selected had a firm grasp on their career path and clearly defined the impact this scholarship would have on completing their goals.”

#### **Resources:**

[Brady Bleck](#)  
[Brianna Meyer](#)  
[Payton Vorpahl](#)  
[SRPF logo](#)

#### **Tweet about this:**

@srpfarmers awards scholarships to three students passionate about dairy and understand the importance of conservation.

#### **About Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers:**

Sheboygan River Progressive Farmers is a nonprofit farmer-led conservation group in the Sheboygan River watershed in Sheboygan and Fond du Lac Counties in Wisconsin whose members explore farming strategies that lead to improved soil health, greater farming efficiency, sustained profitability and reduced environmental impact. Members share information gained through field trials with fellow farmers and strive to foster an understanding of the role of agriculture in the community. More information: [srpfarmers.com/](http://srpfarmers.com/)

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