

Felkins elected FFA state president



New state FFA officers wield the gavel.

By Melissa Blankenship

Tucker Felkins was elected the 2017-2018 state FFA president on Saturday, April 30 at the annual FFA convention in Macon at the Macon Centreplex. This is a position that no one from Cochran, or even Georgia FFA's central region, has ever held.

A junior at Bleckley County High School, Tucker is a hard-working student who sits at the front of the class, double checks his answers on every test, and studies for his FFA interview when everyone else is taking advantage of a few free moments to talk about anything but school. However, underneath that quiet, unassuming exterior is a determined, passionate leader who has been waiting for his chance to shine.

Tucker has been involved with FFA since middle school, and if you talk to him for even a few minutes, he will proudly show you his new key chain depicting the FFA emblem. That pride and enthusiasm for FFA comes from Tucker's belief that the agricultural skills he is learning will lead him and his fellow students to successful careers in agriculture.

FFA advisers Doyle Floyd and Walt Parks work tirelessly to teach skills that will provide their students with a sense of purpose and accomplishment. With Tucker, their efforts



*Tucker Felkins (center),
Doyle Floyd (left) and Walt Parks
(right)*

planted the seeds of confidence that gave him the drive to tackle an intense electoral process. Tucker had to take a 50 question exam on FFA facts, farm bureau farm facts, and parliamentary procedure. He had two personal interviews with the current state officer team and one group interview, which was scored based on the collaborative skills of the candidates as they worked together to solve a problem.



Tucker with fellow FFA officers

From the results of this process, the current officers and state advisers chose 12 candidates who were allowed to run for vice president. The candidates then gave a speech at the State FFA convention. From the results of these speeches, 6 vice presidents were elected, and from these 6, a president.

Tucker's speech promised to take Georgia FFA to the "Milky Way," and exhorted his peers with the slogan "Don't be a sucker, vote for Tucker." All puns intended! That speech generated an enthusiasm that propelled an unlikely young man from FFA Georgia's small central region to the top of the candidate pool. Fierce campaigning by his fellow BCHS FFA members and a charismatic grin brought Tucker the victory.

For Tucker the scariest part of the whole process was not giving a speech in front of thousands of peers and teachers as you might think. In fact, Tucker was most intimidated by the interviews conducted by the current state officers because he so admires them and considers them to be role models for his own leadership goals. When asked why he wanted to be state president, Tucker responded, "I wanted to be state FFA president in order to not only become a better leader but to also give back to an organization that has provided me with the skills and education that I will cherish for my lifetime."

As FFA state president, Tucker will travel to Michigan, Canada, and Washington D.C., where he may even get to meet the president. Yet with all the excitement comes added responsibilities, and he worries about keeping up with his school work while meeting the obligations of his new office. But those who have watched Tucker dream of becoming state FFA president and doggedly pursue that dream until it was reality are not worried about Tucker accomplishing anything he sets his mind to!



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