



Student Leadership Excellence Recognized at 25th Anniversary of Southwest Agriculture Conference

JANUARY 12, 2018: The Southwest Agriculture Conference (SWAC) features leading applied agricultural researchers, provincial agriculture specialists, and innovative farm managers and producers, all sharing their latest production, management or marketing strategies. SWAC program presenters ‘give back’ to Ontario’s agriculture industry through sharing relevant experiences about modern farm technologies, big data, and leading best management practices. The goal of the Conference is to support Ontario’s future success at the farmgate and the Conference has been a desired life-long learning opportunity for 25 years.

Recipients of the **Westag Student Life Recognitions** (left to right) **Morgan McNulty**, Renfrew, **Samantha Reid**, Stirling, **Melissa Sinnige**, Woodstock, **Sara Meidlinger**, Morpeth, and **Natasha Lutigheid**, Chatham.

“At the annual conference, SWAC program speakers lead to Ontario’s agriculture industry to ensure its bright future. University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus students do the same to support the Ridgetown Campus’ ongoing success. To celebrate SWAC’s 25th anniversary Ridgetown Campus wanted to do something very special. “We’re celebrating by recognizing student leadership excellence, particularly to students who have a significant positive impact on our student body and/or our campus success,” says Ken McEwan, Director, Ridgetown Campus. The five-students selected by an independent campus committee, each “give-back” to Ridgetown through a wide variety of programs and leadership opportunities. ”

These students represent a student body excited about the future, and motivated by the diverse career opportunities in a global agriculture economy. Each of these students came to Ridgetown Campus for their own distinct reasons, excelled at Ridgetown, and have made significant contributions to their peers’ Ridgetown experience. Today, we celebrate SWAC's legacy of excellence with these 5 bright young women with a Westag Student Life Recognition award. These \$2,000 recognitions have been provided by our Ridgetown Campus’ Learning Trust in support of recognizing leadership participation. The honourees have supported student learning, student leadership, student services, and each of them supports campus student recruitment efforts.

Our honourees come from across the province and they all plan to compete their Associate Diploma in Agriculture. We’re proud to recognize, in alphabetical order; **Natasha Lutigheid** (Chatham-Kent), **Morgan McNulty** (Renfrew County), **Sara Meidlinger** (Chatham-Kent), **Samantha Reid** (Hastings), and **Melissa Sinnige** (Oxford).

These honourees contribute to a vibrant campus environment where 650 students learn, study and grow. The student experience at Ridgetown campus encourages academic excellence, leadership development, student participation, and career discovery.

Reaching the 25th anniversary of the Southwest Agriculture Conference is a significantly noteworthy achievement. This leading, continuing education program offers top-notch learning opportunities from university research experts, provincial agriculture professionals, and innovative producers to Ontario's modern agriculture producers and agribusiness. The conference is the result of a long-standing vision and commitment to technology transfer between three leading organizations: the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus. A committed team at the Ridgetown Campus' Business Development Centre manages conference details.

The 25th anniversary event celebrates a legacy of agriculture excellence. The SWAC event replaced the former long-standing Farmers Week. SWAC is now a sold-out event welcoming 1,400 people per day for the 2 day conference. Congratulations SWAC on this noteworthy occasion!

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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