



NEWS RELEASE

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Clark pampers pets, earns high honors Northridge FFA member named national FFA agri-entrepreneur

INDIANAPOLIS – Cathryn Clark, 16, of Johnstown, Ohio, is one of 10 students from across the country who will receive a National Agri-Entrepreneurship Award and \$1,000 during a ceremony at the 82nd National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 23. The award program recognizes young people who start or are planning to start their own businesses.

Clark first recognized the need for pet-sitting service in her community, while she was volunteering at Shearer Pet Hospice in Columbus, Ohio. Pets that are in hospice care require 24-hour attendance, which can be difficult for an individual to take on by themselves. Many pet owners needed assistance with their pet's around-the-clock care.

The idea that a pet-sitting service could be a success was reinforced when her friends and neighbors, upon hearing about her work with the pet hospital, started asking her to help them take care of their pets. She was getting offers to pet sit, or take the family dog for an extra walk.

So, she started "Clark's Ark Pet Sitting Service." She cares for both large and small animals and either travels to the animal's home to check in on them, or boards them in her own home over night. Many of her customers love the convenience of her service, and the idea of leaving their pets in a "home" atmosphere, as opposed to a hospital or kennel-type atmosphere.

"I have always been involved with animals. My mom does search and rescue for animals and is a vet tech; I have worked with her since I was little. I wanted something that I could do anywhere." Clark has learned to be organized and self-motivated through her business enterprise. She has also learned that with hard work and responsibility comes many rewards.

Clark is a senior at Northridge high school where she is a member of the student council and the National Honors Society. She is also involved with Teens Against Drugs and Serteens. Clark is the daughter of James and Cheryl Clark. Her FFA advisor is Ryan Rismiller.

USDA Rural Development sponsors the National Agri-Entrepreneurship Award Program as a special project of the National FFA Foundation, Inc.

The National FFA Organization, formerly known as the Future Farmers of America, is a national youth organization of 506,199 student members – all preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture – as part of 7,429 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The National FFA Organization changed to its present name in 1988, in recognition of the growth and diversity of agriculture and agricultural education. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth and career success** through agricultural education. The National FFA Organization operates under a Federal Charter granted by the 81st Congress of the United States, and is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture. The U.S. Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for FFA as a service to state and local agricultural education programs. Visit www.ffa.org for more information.

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