

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Ag Voices of the Future: Students Sharpen Ag Policy Knowledge on the Hill

ST. LOUIS, MO (July 21, 2023) – A select group of nine college students from across the country completed the Ag Voices of the Future program July 10-13 while in Washington, D.C. Sponsored by the American Soybean Association and Valent U.S.A., the program gives students an inside look at how agricultural policies are made in the nation’s capital. The class was held in conjunction with ASA’s summer board meeting and other soy events.



An application process for the Ag Voices of the Future program was initiated this past winter in partnership with the collegiate organization Agriculture Future of America. Students had the opportunity to apply for the AFA Leaders Conference and Ag Voices of the Future program through the same application. The following students were selected for this year’s Ag Voices of the Future class:

- Lakin Booker, University of Tennessee – Knoxville
- Colby Brandt, Iowa State University
- Owen Brown, Oklahoma State University
- Julia DeSalvo, Southern Arkansas University
- Reagan Koester, Purdue University
- Cody Loganbill, Oklahoma State University
- Eliza Patchin, Iowa State University
- Caleb Simpson, University of Missouri – Columbia
- Makenna Stundebeck, University of Missouri – Columbia

“We are proud of our partnership with ASA to provide students with a hands-on educational experience focused on ag policy,” said Matt Plitt, Valent U.S.A.’s president and CEO. “Valent is committed to advancing all aspects of ag education, and this program provides our next generation of leaders with the opportunity, access, and education that will enable them to develop skills and knowledge to shape the future of ag.”

The students received education on effective advocacy and the significant legislative, trade and regulatory issues that impact farmers. The program also gave students the chance to visit with others who work in Washington, D.C., to learn more about careers related to agriculture policy.

"It's important that young people have an understanding of the significant policy issues that directly impact the productivity and economic wellbeing of our farms and the soybean industry," said ASA President Daryl Cates, a farmer from Columbia, Ill. "ASA appreciates Valent's support of this valuable program that helps to cultivate future voices for agriculture in D.C."

The three-day program was packed with activities and valuable networking opportunities, including the chance to hear from ASA and Valent's industry and government affairs representatives and a House staff member about their current position and past career experience. The group attended an ASA policy issues briefing, Capitol Hill visits with farmer-leaders, a visit to USDA, presentation from EPA, and session on soy's role in addressing global food security issues. The students completed a writing workshop with a top speech writing firm and enjoyed an evening tour of the National Mall and memorials.

ASA will issue an announcement this winter on how to apply for the summer 2024 Ag Voices of the Future program. For more information, [click here](#).

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The American Soybean Association (ASA) represents U.S. soybean farmers on domestic and international policy issues important to the soybean industry. ASA has 26 affiliated state associations representing 30 soybean-producing states and more than 500,000 soybean farmers. More information at soygrowers.com.

Valent U.S.A. LLC, headquartered in San Ramon, Calif., develops and markets products in the United States, Canada and Mexico that advance sustainable agriculture, protect crops, enhance crop yields, improve food quality, beautify the environment and safeguard public health. Valent products include a well-known line of quality herbicide, insecticide, fungicide and plant growth regulator products for agricultural, seed protection and professional use. Valent is a leader in marketing and sales of both traditional chemical products and biorational products developed by its affiliate, Valent BioSciences LLC. For more information about Valent or our full product line, please call 800-6-VALENT (682-5368) or visit valent.com.

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