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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Sonoma-Marín Fair is giving away \$35k in Awards & Scholarships

Students pursuing careers in agriculture are invited to apply for a chance to be recognized for their achievements



PETALUMA, CA – May 16, 2019 – It pays to participate in local Fairs. Nationwide, fairs honor outstanding community members for their excellence in fair exhibits and the agricultural industry. These awards not only offer prize money, but they provide visibility and public recognition for exceptional contributions in our communities. The Sonoma-Marín Fair gives away about \$35k dollars each year in award money and scholarships for those who apply and participate. There are a ton of ways to earn recognition and cash for outstanding achievements and creativity.

Most of these awards are funded through sponsorship, local families, and businesses interested in rewarding students pursuing careers in agriculture or who are emerging leaders. It is a Fair’s legacy to provide a venue for young farmers and ranchers, ag scientists and agribusiness people, to showcase their leadership skills, animal husbandry, and even knowledge of technology.

One of the most generous is the McClelland Family Scholarship & Perpetual Trophy, awarding the winner \$1,200. This is open to all 4-H or FFA Dairy Cattle Exhibitors on the basis of exceptional endeavors, ability and sportsmanship. Each accepted applicant will be interviewed personally by a member of the McClelland Family during Fair. The cut off to apply is June 7.

The McClelland Family is one of many local families that not only grew up at the Fair, showing and working during the summers, but also carry on a legacy of leadership, activism and philanthropy. Scholarships such as this one is just one example of their ongoing contributions to the future farmers and ranchers in our community.

“Many of the sponsors of scholarships and awards do so as a tribute to one of their family members who made a lasting impact in the community. Whether it was guiding youth to excel, achieving industry excellence, or serving others, these individuals have become shining examples for our youth. The sponsoring families honor the legacy of these individuals, while encouraging the same excellence in the next generation,” shares Allison Keaney, Ph.D., Sonoma-Marín Fair CEO.

Another great award for high school ag students is the President's Cup – Outstanding FFA Exhibitor and the Directors' Cup – Outstanding 4-H Exhibitor. Both of these pay up to \$450 in award and scholarship monies. Qualifications are based on the students' leadership, citizenship, project work, community service, academic achievement, personal poise, and oral ability during an interview. This is a great opportunity for students to showcase their overall success as a civic leader, not just in agriculture. The scholarship rewards young leaders for being well rounded and pursuing excellence in all that they do. These programs not only groom our future leaders, but they also provide a foundation for kids to learn life skills through practice and participation.



New for 2019, the Sonoma-Marin Fair has added an exhibit competition for FFA chapters to create a showcase display in one of the livestock Barns during Fair. The Agribusiness Showcase competition is sponsored by the Parks Home Ranch and pays \$500 for first place.

In addition to the Sonoma-Marin Fair's Junior Awards Program, they offer hundreds of ways to exhibit in the non-livestock departments. These include Arts & Crafts, Fine Art, Floriculture, Foods, Industrial Education, and Computer Science just to name a few. Each category has several classes that provide a multitude of ways to showcase talents. The cost to enter is about a \$1 each and prize monies can reach \$25.

Keaney says, "we humans are enriched by our creative endeavors. Fairs provide an opportunity to share those creative gifts and talents with each other and be recognized for mastering one's craft."

Anyone interested in applying for one of this year's scholarships can find more information in the 2019 Participants' Guidebook. The deadline to apply is early June. The Guidebook can be picked up for free at many local Chambers of Commerce, Sonoma County Library branches and at the Sonoma-Marin Fair's Administration Office, located at 175 Fairgrounds Drive in Petaluma. You can also download a digital copy from the Fair's website at sonoma-marinfair.org/scholarships.

Mark your calendars for a summer to remember during "Eight Decades of Fun" at the Sonoma-Marin Fair, June 19-23, 2019. With new competitions and contests, FREE concerts, unlimited carnival rides, and delicious fair food you will want to come all 5 fun-filled days. Enjoy heart-warming entertainment during the World's Ugliest Dog® Contest, the thrill of Sprint Car Racing, and the joy of connecting with our local agricultural community. For details, visit sonoma-marinfair.org or call (707) 283-3247. Be the first to know about all of the fun by following us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

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