



# 2025 Kansas State Degree

KS

KS0057

604606327

7



## Student Approval

Applicant Name

Grady Gleason

Chapter Name

Garden City

- I have maintained records to substantiate my supervised agricultural experience program which exhibit comprehensive planning, managerial and financial expertise and will provide these records to my local and state FFA advisors and staff, or their designated representatives, on demand.
- I have prepared this application and certify that the records are true, complete and accurate, and that I hereby permit for publicity purposes the use of any information included in the application.

2/10/2025 11:27:00 PM

Date

Grady Thomas Gleason

Candidate's Signature

## Advisor Approval

- I have reviewed this applicant's supervised agricultural experience (SAE) records and verify they exist and exhibit comprehensive planning, managerial and financial expertise.
- I have verified the application and find that the statements contained herein match the applicants SAE records and are such that I am able to recommend the applicant for the Degree/Award.
- Furthermore, I verify that the applicant has conducted him/herself in a manner to be a credit to the organization, chapter, school and community.

Date

Chapter Advisor Signature

## Parent/Guardian Approval

- I have examined this application and find that the records are true, accurate and complete. We hereby permit for publicity purposes the use of any information included in this application.

2/10/2025 11:28:00 PM

Date

Sara S Gleason Gradygleason07@gmail.com

Parent/Guardian Signature

## Principal or Superintendent Approval

- I hereby certify this applicant has achieved a high school record of "C" or better and has a satisfactory record of scholarship and participation in school activities.

2/11/2025 9:45:00 AM

Date

Ryan Meng rmeng@gckschools.com

School Principal or Superintendent



# 2025 Kansas State Degree

**KS**

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**7**



## Applicant Contact Information

Name as you want it to appear on the certificate

**Grady Gleason**

Gender

**Male**

Address

**1415 Mels Dr.**

Email Address

**gradygleason07@gmail.com**

Parent/Guardian Name

**Steve Gleason**

Parent/Guardian Occupation

**Head Accountant and Office Manager KCF**

Name on the FFA Chapter Roster (if different)

Name Pronunciation

**Gray-Dee Glee-son**

City

**Garden City**

State

**KS**

Zip Code

**67846**

Home Phone

**(620) 937-9296**

Parent/Guardian Name

**Sara Gleason**

Parent/Guardian Occupation

**Landscape Design**

## Chapter Information

FFA Chapter Name

**Garden City**

School Name

**Garden City High School**

School Address

**2720 Buffalo Way Blvd.**

School City

**Garden City**

School State

**KS**

School Zip Code

**67846**

School Phone

**620-805-5464**

Chapter Advisor(s)

**Melissa Hensley; Elizabeth Meyer; Pat Venjohn**

## FFA History

Year FFA Membership Began

**2021**

Year Received Greenhand Degree

**2022**

Year Received Chapter Degree

**2023**

Had continuous active FFA membership for the past 24 months?

**Yes**

Have your State and National FFA Dues been paid?

**Yes**

## Education Information

High School Graduation Year

**2025**

If not, give date left school

Years of Ag Education Offered (grades 7-12) in high school last attended

**4.00**

Ag Education completed in High School

**Years: 3.00 Hours: 180**

Postsecondary/Vo-Tech Education Completed

**Semesters: Quarters:**

Four-year College Completed

**Semesters: Quarters:**

Major

School Attended

Military Duty - Dates of Full-Time Active Military Duty

World Experiences in Agriculture - Date of International Placement





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Basic Award Setup Information

### I. Application Dates

Began Agricultural Education  
8/1/2021

Application Ending Date  
12/31/2024

### II. SAE Types

- ☐ Exploratory, Supplemental, or Improvement
- ☐ Research
- ☒ Placement
- ☐ Entrepreneurship

### III. Assets

1. Current/Operating Assets	Value at Beginning Date	Value at Ending Date
a. Cash on hand, checking and savings	\$0	\$20,380
b. Cash value - bonds, stocks, life insurance	\$0	\$0
c. Notes & Accounts Receivable	\$0	\$0
d. Current Inventory (Entrepreneurship Experiences)		Itemized ending inventory values are reported on "Ending Current Inventory" page.
1. Investment in harvesting and growing crops	\$0	
2. Investment in feed, seed, fertilizer, chemical, supplies, prepaid expenses, and other current assets	\$0	
3. Investment in merchandise, crops and animals purchased for resale	\$0	
4. Investment in raised market livestock & poultry	\$0	
2. Non-Current Inventory	Value at Beginning Date	Value at Ending Date
a. Investment in non-depreciable draft, pleasure, and breeding animals	\$0	Itemized ending inventory values are reported on "Ending Non-Current Inventory" page.
b. Investment in depreciable draft, pleasure, and breeding animals	\$0	
c. Investment in depreciable machinery, equipment, and fixtures	\$0	
d. Investment in depreciable land improvements, buildings, and fixtures	\$0	
e. Investment in land	\$0	

IV. Liabilities	Value at Beginning Date	Value at Ending Date
a. Accounts and notes payable	\$0	\$0
b. Current portion of non-current debt (the portion of non-current debt during this calendar year)	\$0	\$0
c. Real Estate Mortgages (total real estate mortgages minus current portions)	\$0	\$0
d. Other non-current liabilities (total other non-current liabilities minus current portions)	\$0	\$0

V. Personal Cash Income & Expense	Total Value
a. Sources of cash gifts	\$150
b. Sources of cash from Ag related (non-SAE) and personal earnings	\$0
c. (Deduct) Total Personal Expense/Draw	\$58
d. (Deduct) Education Expenses Taken Out	\$0





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Supervised Agricultural Experience - Placement and Exploratory

### 2021

Pathway	Employer or Project Name Job Title, Responsibilities, or Project Description	Unpaid Hours	Paid Hours	Total Hours	Gross Earnings	Current Expenses
Plant Systems	<b>Gleason Designs</b> My SAE technically started in the month of August, but in reality, I have been helping my mom for several years prior to this date. At first, I assisted with minor things, like moving plants, digging holes, and helping to lay down weed barrier. My project is ongoing, as I work every month for Gleason Designs in some capacity.		68	68	\$748	
Animal Systems	<b>S&amp;G Club Lambs</b> Prior to starting my SAE, I had 4-H lambs. I helped my grandpa care for his flock. As I got older, I gained more responsibilities. I am now in charge of various activities such as watching the flock, and record keeping.	282		282		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>282</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>\$748</b>	

### 2022

Pathway	Employer or Project Name Job Title, Responsibilities, or Project Description	Unpaid Hours	Paid Hours	Total Hours	Gross Earnings	Current Expenses
Plant Systems	<b>Gleason Designs</b> The year of 2022 saw a definite increase in the number of recordable hours worked, as well as an increase in skills. I assisted with many more tasks, such as mowing and weed-whacking clients' lawns without supervision, and working at a jobsite with direction, but not supervision. My mom can give me a list of tasks, and I can ensure that they are all done properly.		496	496	\$5,952	
Animal Systems	<b>S&amp;G Club Lambs</b> My records for my SAE start in Jan. 2022, although my project is continual. In January, I helped lamb out over fifty ewes. I learned the importance of record keeping, animal health, and the lambing process. The important outcomes for this year are the continuation of improved genetics for my herd. In June of 2022, I placed 5th Overall in Senior Showmanship at the Finney County Spring Show. I also I earned the 3rd Place Overall in the Breeding Ewe Show.	927		927		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>927</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>1423</b>	<b>\$5,952</b>	

### 2023

Pathway	Employer or Project Name Job Title, Responsibilities, or Project Description	Unpaid Hours	Paid Hours	Total Hours	Gross Earnings	Current Expenses
Plant Systems	<b>Gleason Designs</b> This year, I had another increase in recordable hours. I have also become my mom's assistant, in that I help manage the other employees when she is not on the job site. I know what needs to be done at each job, and I can manage and direct the other employees effectively and efficiently. In order to achieve this, I had to become proficient at communicating, not only with my mom, but also with the employees and the client.		526	526	\$6,835	
Animal Systems	<b>S&amp;G Club Lambs</b> In June 2023, I placed 4th Overall in Senior Showmanship at the Finney County Spring Show. In July 2023, I had Reserve Champion Breeding Ewe, 1st and 2nd Place Market Lambs, Reserve Hampshire Market and Reserve Grand Champion Senior Showman at the 2023 Finney County Fair. I also received 4th Overall in the Carcass Contest. This was an improvement over my 2022 placings; I attribute this to improvement in genetics and management.	1177		1177		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1177</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>1703</b>	<b>\$6,835</b>	

### 2024



Pathway	Employer or Project Name Job Title, Responsibilities, or Project Description	Unpaid Hours	Paid Hours	Total Hours	Gross Earnings	Current Expenses
Animal Systems	<b>S&amp;G Club Lambs</b> This year, I continued to gain knowledge on the sheep industry and responsibilities over the sheep flock. In 2024, I picked out which rams' semen we would be using to breed the ewes with. I also pulled multiple lambs and cared for the immediately post-birth unsupervised. In the show ring, I had a successful year. I was third overall in the Shropshire breed at the Kansas State Fair. I was able to take the knowledge I learned about nutrition and genetics and apply it to the sheep flock.	1467		1467		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1467</b>		<b>1467</b>		





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Financial Balance Sheet Statement - Assets & Liabilities

<b>A. Assets</b>	<b>Beginning Value</b>	<b>Ending Value</b>
<b>1. Current Assets</b>		
a. Cash on hand, checking and savings	\$0	\$20,380
b. Cash Value - Bonds, stocks, life insurance	\$0	\$0
c. Notes & Accounts Receivable	\$0	\$0
d. Current Inventory (Entrepreneurship Experiences)		
1. Investment in harvesting and growing crops/plants	\$0	\$0
2. Investment in feed, seed, fertilizer, chemical, supplies, prepaid expenses, and other current assets	\$0	\$0
3. Investment in merchandise, crops, and animals purchased for resale	\$0	\$487
4. Investment in raised market animals	\$0	\$0
<b>e. Total Current Inventory</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$487</b>
<b>f. Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,866</b>
<b>2. Non-Current Assets</b>		
a. Non-Current Inventory		
1. Investment in non-depreciable draft, pleasure, and breeding animals	\$0	\$0
2. Investment in depreciable draft, pleasure, and breeding animals	\$0	\$0
3. Investment in depreciable machinery, equipment, and fixtures	\$0	\$0
4. Investment in depreciable land improvements, buildings, and fences	\$0	\$0
5. Investment in land	\$0	\$0
<b>b. Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>3. Total Assets</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,866</b>
<b>B. Liabilities</b>		
<b>1. Current Liabilities</b>		
a. Accounts and Notes Payable	\$0	\$0
b. Current Portion of Non-Current Debt (the portion of non-current debt during this calendar year)	\$0	\$0
<b>c. Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>2. Non-Current Liabilities</b>		
a. Real Estate Mortgages	\$0	\$0
b. Other Non-Current Liabilities	\$0	\$0
<b>c. Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>3. Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Financial Balance Sheet Information - Personal Contribution & Net Worth

### C. Summary of Contributed Capital (Personal Finances in Balance Sheet)

1. Beginning Value	\$0
2. Sources of Cash Gifts	\$150
3. Sources of Cash from Ag Related (non-SAE) and personal earnings	\$0
4. Sources of Non-Cash Contributions (Current and Non-Current)	\$559
5. (Deduct) Non-Cash Sales for "Used at Home"	\$0
6. (Deduct) Total Personal Draw	\$58
7. (Deduct) Education Expenses Taken Out	\$0
8. Net Personal Contribution	\$651

D. Net Worth	Beginning Value	Ending Value
1. Contributed Capital (Represents the value of personal contribution)	\$0	\$651
2. Retained Earnings (Represents the value of SAE net income, entrepreneurship, placement, research)		\$20,216
<b>3. Total Net Worth</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,866</b>
<b>4. Total Liabilities &amp; Net Worth</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,866</b>

### E. Accuracy Check for the Balance Sheet (Assets = Liabilities + Equity) & Growth

1. Beginning Value	MET	
2. Ending Value		MET
3. Difference (met = \$0)	\$0	\$0
<b>4. Total Growth in Equity</b>		<b>\$20,866</b>

### F. Financial Management Ratios

1. Current Ratio (Measure of Liquidity) (Current Assets/Current Liabilities)		
2. Working Capital (Measure of Liquidity) (Total Current Assets minus Total Current Liabilities)	\$0	\$20,866





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Financial Balance Sheet Statement - Earnings & Productively Invested

### G. SAE Earnings

1. Placement SAE Earnings (Cash)	\$13,535
2. Entrepreneurship SAE Earnings (Cash & Non-Cash)	\$6,681
<b>3. Total SAE Earnings (Retained Earnings)</b>	<b>\$20,216</b>

### H. Productively Invested

1. Change in Net Worth (Productively Invested from Operations)	\$20,866
2. (Add) Total Educational Expenses (Personal Use)	\$0
3. (Deduct) Net Sources of Assets from Gifts or Non-SAE	\$651
<b>4. Total Growth in Productively Invested</b>	<b>\$20,216</b>

### I. Unpaid Hours

1. Total Unpaid Hours	3,853
2. Factor Per Hour	3.56
3. Unpaid hours allowance (hours x rate)	13,717

### J. Qualification Check

	Your Value	Condition
<b>Qualified under at least one option (Details of each option are listed below)</b>		<b>Met</b>
<b>Option 1 Conditions - Qualification on Finances</b>		
a. Productively Invested at least \$2000	\$20,216	Met
b. SAE Earnings at least \$2000	\$20,216	Met
<b>Option 2 Conditions - Qualification on Unpaid Hours</b>		
a. Unpaid Hours at least 600	3,853	Met
<b>Option 3 Conditions - Qualification on Combination</b>		
a. Unpaid Hours/600 + Productively Invested/\$2000 is at least 100%	1,653%	Met
b. Unpaid Hours/600 + SAE Earnings/\$2000 is at least 100%	1,653%	Met







# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Skills, Competencies, and Knowledge

### A. Skills, Competencies, Knowledge

AFNR Performance Indicator		Contributions to Success
1	ABS.01.01 Apply micro- and macroeconomic principles to plan and manage inputs and outputs in an AFNR business.	Throughout this past year, prices of supplies have gone up drastically. This has caused me to have to shop around for the best quality feed for the best prices.
2	AS.03.01 Analyze the nutritional needs of animals.	Feed and nutrients are one of the most important aspects of a quality show animal. Because I have been showing animals for a long time, I am better able to recognize the nutritional needs of my animal.
3	AS.02.01 Demonstrate management techniques that ensure animal welfare.	There are several ways to ensure animal welfare; proper feed and water, clean facilities, proper vaccine schedules and veterinary care, and appropriate record keeping. Throughout the years, I have become proficient at identifying the needs of my animals.
4	AS.02.02 Analyze procedures to ensure that animal products are safe for consumption (e.g., use in food system, etc.).	Through YQA, I am more knowledgeable about administering shots, the importance of withdrawal times, and the effects on the human food system if these precautions aren't followed.
5	AS.03.02 Analyze feed rations and assess if they meet the nutritional needs of animals.	Again, the nutritional needs of a show animal are an extremely important aspect of having quality animals. By assessing a ration, I am able to decide if that feed is a good fit for my animals.
6	AS.04.01 Evaluate animals for breeding readiness and soundness.	Evaluating animals on breeding soundness is different than evaluating for market quality, although there are similarities. By knowing what breeding traits and goals I want for my flock, I can make better decisions regarding the AI of my ewes.
7	AS.04.03 Apply scientific principles to breed animals.	Recently, I have been trained to AI my herd. This allows me to have a large selection of genetics from different rams to choose from. Because of this, I am able to improve the genetics of my herd much quicker than if I were to have one or two rams.
8	CRP.09.03 Demonstrate behaviors that contribute to a positive morale and culture in the workplace and community (e.g., positively influencing others, effectively communicating, etc.).	Many times throughout the last several years, I have been asked by younger members for advice regarding training, feeding, showing, and show preparation of my lambs. Even though they are my competition, I am always willing to lend a helping hand. Good sportsmanship contributes to a positive morale in the show ring and sheep industry.
9	PS.01.01 Determine the influence of environmental factors on plant growth.	My plan was to create landscape plans for areas in southwest Kansas. This is a challenge because of the massively varying weather systems. We spent several years in a drought, some summers will see temperatures in the 100oFs for several weeks, or we could see half of our yearly rainfall come in a 24 hour period. Our landscape designs must factor in all of these scenarios to ensure the survival of the design.
10	AS.07.01 Design programs to prevent animal diseases, parasites and other disorders and ensure animal welfare.	Diseases and parasites are extremely detrimental to an animals health, happiness, and overall performance. Vaccine schedules and a good working relationship with a veterinarian are imperative to herd health.





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Leadership/FFA Activities

Activity	Chapter	Area, District or Region	State	National Finals Multi-State	National
Chapter Leadership Training			24		
Dairy Judging CDE		21			
Employability Skills		24			
Horticulture CDE		21,22,23,24			
Kansas State Convention			22,23,24		
Leadership Test LDE		23,24			
Livestock Judging CDE		22			
Meats Judging CDE		22,23,24			
National FFA Convention					24
Office: President	23				
Office: Reporter	22,24				
Ritual LDE		24			
State Leader Lab			24		
SW District Banquet		22,23,24			
Veterinary Science CDE		22			





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Community Service

### 2021

Individual / Group / Organization to whom service was PROVIDED	Service performed and whom you performed the service with if applicable	Hours
The Ranch House - Assisted Living Facility	Volunteered to plant flowers outside.	6.00
Finney County Extension Office	Volunteered to clean-up landscape/flower beds in preparation for fall and winter.	7.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13.00</b>

### 2022

Individual / Group / Organization to whom service was PROVIDED	Service performed and whom you performed the service with if applicable	Hours
West Plains Extension District - Fall Festival	Volunteered my time and labor to help set-up for the annual Fall Festival; as well as clean-up after its conclusion.	5.00
Finney County Fair	Volunteered my time and labor to help set-up for the annual Finney County Fair; as well as clean-up after its conclusion.	4.00
Finney County Farm Bureau - Day on the Farm	Volunteered to teach fourth graders from local schools districts in Southwest Kansas about Sheep Production and the Sheep Industry as a whole.	7.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16.00</b>

### 2023

Individual / Group / Organization to whom service was PROVIDED	Service performed and whom you performed the service with if applicable	Hours
Finney County Extension Office	Volunteered to clean-up landscape/flower beds in preparation for fall and winter.	8.00
Finney County Fair	Volunteered my time and labor to help set-up for the annual Finney County Fair; as well as clean-up after its conclusion.	4.00
Finney County Humane Society	Volunteered to clean water/food dishes and took dogs outside.	5.00
The Ranch House - Assisted Living Facility	Volunteered my time to sing Christmas carols to those in an assisted living facility, brightening their day.	1.50
Finney County Farm Bureau - Day on the Farm	Volunteered to teach fourth graders from local schools districts in Southwest Kansas about Sheep Production and the Sheep Industry as a whole.	7.50
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26.00</b>

### 2024

Individual / Group / Organization to whom service was PROVIDED	Service performed and whom you performed the service with if applicable	Hours
Finney County Fair	Volunteered my time and labor to help set-up for the annual Finney County Fair; as well as clean-up after its conclusion.	4.00
Finney County Fair	Volunteered to help advertise for the Finney County Fair by reaching out to businesses and then painting important dates and activities on their windows.	3.00
Garden City Public Schools - After School Program	Volunteered to teach first through fourth graders in the Garden City Public School System about the importance of agriculture to our area and its impact on their daily lives.	24.00
Finney County Farm Bureau - Day on the Farm	Volunteered to teach fourth graders from local schools districts in Southwest Kansas about Sheep Production and the Sheep Industry as a whole.	7.00
Garden City Downtown Vision	Volunteered to clean and decorated display boxes on Main Street in Garden City; the boxes are used to advertise local community events and activities.	3.00
Garden City - Food Truck Friday	Volunteered to set-up tables and chairs at Steven's Park in preparation of Food Truck Friday.	2.00
Garden City Arts - Harvest Festival	Volunteered to set-up tents, tables and chairs, as well as run an arts and craft booth at the annual Harvest Festival.	6.00
Wreaths Across America	Volunteered to lay wreaths on veterans' graves to symbolize their ultimate sacrifice made.	1.50



The Ranch House - Assisted Living Facility	Volunteered my time to sing Christmas carols to those in an assisted living facility, brightening their day.	1.50
		<b>TOTAL 52.00</b>

## Qualification Check

	Your Value	Condition
At least 2 different activities	19	MET
At least 25 hours	107.0	MET





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## Checklist of Minimum Qualifications

Item	Value
Candidate has been an active FFA member for at least 24 months.	MET
Candidate has the Chapter and Greenhand FFA Degree.	MET
Applicant must have completed at least 2 full years (360 hours) of agriculture, or all of the agriculture offered at the school last attended.	MET
Non-cash income and expense is balanced each year on the Income/Expense Report.	MET
Accuracy Check for the Balance Sheet (Assets = Liabilities + Equity) & Growth	MET
Candidate has recorded of at least 25 hours community service and at least 2 different activities. (Organizations and activities must be manually reviewed in records.)	PENDING REVIEW
Student qualifies for the Degree with earnings, productively invested, and hours.	MET
Student has done at least 8 activities above the chapter level. Activities must be manually reviewed in records.	PENDING REVIEW
Candidate has obtained the required electronic signatures and approvals.	MET





# 2025 Kansas State Degree

## State Degree Manual Review Sheet of Qualifications

Circle	Initial
Y N	

1. Has the candidate been a chapter officer or serve on a major committee as listed below.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chapter FFA Officer: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ FFA Committee Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ FFA Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle	Initial
Y N	

2. Has the candidate performed at least 10 Parliamentary Procedure abilities?

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____  |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____  |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Circle	Initial
Y N	

3. Has the candidate given a six-minute agricultural related speech or demonstration? Please provide details below.

1. (Title) \_\_\_\_\_ (Length) \_\_\_\_\_

Circle	Initial
Y N	

4. Has the candidate attached signed SAE agreements (or SAE plans) for all SAEs listed in the application?  
(Attached to this application)

Circle	Initial
Y N	

5. Are all the Skills, Competency, and Knowledge listed in the application complete and accurately represents the student's experiences.

Circle	Initial
Y N	

6. As the advisor, I have reviewed the complete application and information listed in this manual review sheet and confirms the candidate's information is accurate and meets all qualifications.

**All information is accurate and represents the work of the student.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of FFA Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# State Star in Agricultural Placement

**KS**

**KS0057**

**604606327**



## Applicant Information

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Candidate Name

Grady Gleason

FFA Chapter Name

Garden City

## Star Type

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Application Type

Star in Agricultural Placement

Application Level

State

## Primary Pathway

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Plant Systems

## Submission Order

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Organize and print your entire application in the following order:

1. FFA Degree Application
2. FFA Star Application
3. Additional Application Attachments





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Performance Review A

### **1. Describe the SAE project(s) included in this application as completely and specifically as possible in the space allowed.**

My Landscape Management SAE is placement based. This project involves me assisting my boss with all of her clients across Southwest Kansas. Maintenance of existing landscape jobs and installation of new landscapes are the main aspects of Gleason Designs, of which I am employed. My boss, also known as my mother, has many existing customers—known as her regular customers. We do everything from seasonal decorating, containerized gardening (flower pots), and seasonal maintenance which includes: weeding, trimming bushes, raking leaves, deadheading and cutting back perennials, re-mulching, etc. We also take care of new customers with installation of new landscape projects. These projects range from brand new houses or businesses to existing ones that we get to completely redo. In a typical year, I help with 2-3 brand new installation jobs. These jobs consist of: gradework, installation of boulders, drip irrigation, planting (trees, shrubs, perennials), weed barrier, spreading mulch or rock, laying flagstone walkways, and sod installation. During this time, we have the obligation to also take care of regular Gleason Designs customers. These jobs are all important duties that keep Gleason Designs as a trusted family owned and operated company.

### **2. Briefly explain how your roles, responsibilities, and/or management decisions related to this award area changed.**

Even though my SAE began in August, 2021, I have actually been working for my mom since grade school. At that time, I worked just a few hours a week with small and tedious jobs, such as, watering plants and handing supplies to my mother. I was her head “go for.” By the start of my SAE, I worked more substantial hours as a much more active employee. As of now, I am a project manager, as well as a crew leader when my mother is absent. I am responsible for communicating and discussing with other employees about what needs to be done and the best means for doing that. I now take a more active role in helping make decisions for new jobs, as well as picking plant material that will be used for installation at these jobs. My role is very important because of the responsibility and leadership that comes with my position. I take pride in the fact that I have built trust and am seen as a viable employee to fill these positions.

### **3. Briefly explain what is the single greatest challenge you faced in this award area and how did you overcome that challenge?**

The greatest challenge I have faced as an employee for Gleason Designs was in August, 2023. My brother was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes, and my mother had to fly to Denver with him. During that week, I was responsible for leading a crew and finishing an installation job. I was responsible for making important decisions and recommendations. For each employee that I had, I was asked to find a job that they would be successful in doing. Through this process, we were efficient and felt accomplished for being so highly productive, even without the presence of my mother. I gained even more respect for her; dutifully running her business. It is challenging and can be stressful at times. There is so much responsibility when owning and operating a business; everything from employees’ schedules and their differing strengths at each job, taking possession of the inventory needed for each job, and making sure that we had consistency and quality with each job. It was challenging to have all that responsibility for a whole week; dealing with customers and employees was extremely eye opening. In the end, I was extremely proud of the way I handled it all, and so was my boss!







# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Performance Review B

**Briefly explain your two greatest accomplishments or findings in this award area.**

### **Accomplishment/Finding #1**

While taking a more active role, I was given more responsibilities and the ability to make some decisions. When making these decisions with my mom, I learned that color is very important. The color scheme used in the area must be to the customers' liking and should be appealing to the surrounding area. A lot of color is not always necessary, but it should be used in appropriate places. Flowering shrubs and perennials that bloom continually all growing season are important but so are evergreens for winter aesthetics. Within the landscape, the use of height is vital. The tallest shrubs and perennials should not be towards the front; but in the back with a gradual decrease in height towards the front for better viewing of all the landscape.

### **Accomplishment/Finding #2**

While taking a more active role, I was given more responsibilities and the ability to make some decisions. When making these decisions with my mom, I learned that color is very important. The color scheme used in the area must be to the customers' liking and should be appealing to the surrounding area. A lot of color is not always necessary, but it should be used in appropriate places. Flowering shrubs and perennials that bloom continually all growing season are important but so are evergreens for winter aesthetics. Within the landscape, the use of height is vital. The tallest shrubs and perennials should not be towards the front; but in the back with a gradual decrease in height towards the front for better viewing of all the landscape.

**Name one issue, trend, technology or public policy that has impacted your SAE project or the industry your SAE project falls in and describe the specific impact on your SAE project.**

Before and immediately following the start of my SAE, Gleason Designs lost some of its regular customers; some of which were clients for over fifteen years. The reason for this was the COVID-19 Pandemic. Landscaping and yard maintenance are more of a luxury, rather than a necessity. During this time, many had to focus on their own health and safety and could no longer afford these luxuries. The pandemic had a major impact on the industry, but the area has since corrected itself. Now that the world has moved on from the pandemic, many are excited and encouraged to pay for this endeavor. Many new, along with some old customers have come back or have become new clients of Gleason Designs. In a way, the business is "blooming!"





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Performance Review C

**Specify your career objective and describe the career exploration and research steps you performed to select this career.**

In the previous years, I have narrowed down my career choices to two solid options: Agricultural Loans/Economics and Politics. I have spoken with many different people who are experienced in these fields, as well as I have done my own research. I am fortunate enough to have narrowed down these options so that I can take a more in-depth look at each field and take certain classes in high school that fit my pathway. My job with Gleason Designs has opened many doors for me. I have met many people through my work and built some great relationships along the way. These people have seen my work ethic and quite possibly could be my future employers.

**Describe two experiences, activities, or opportunities provided by this SAE project and explain how they have helped you explore this career choice.**

### **Experience/Activity/Opportunity #1**

One experience that I had that was provided by my SAE project was talking with the son of a client of Gleason Designs. He is a water rights lobbyist advocating for regional farmers, with water rights being a major issue in southwest Kansas. It was a great opportunity talking with him and learning about how the state legislature works. He gave his honest opinion on the political field and I found his expertise to be extremely valuable. I feel as if my SAE has helped to shape me to feel comfortable around others. It has really built my self confidence and given me a path to utilize my leadership skills in leading others.

### **Experience/Activity/Opportunity #2**

Another valuable opportunity that I received was working at a local bank—landscaping their property. Here, I formed a relationship with multiple employees at this bank and I truly believe that they could be my future employer. I spent time talking with many advisors at the bank. I learned about all aspects at a bank and what specifically goes into getting an Agricultural Economics degree and how I could use that degree. They explained their journey to their major and I have been able to apply those personal accounts to my journey, as well.





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Learning Outcomes & Efficiency Factors

Learning Outcome or Efficiency Factor		Beginning Level	Level Attained	Description
1	Accurately Identify Plants	<u>2021</u> 25 plants	<u>2023</u> 100+ plants	My continuous involvement in my SAE has led me to identify many new plants which I came across in my three years. By default, my ability to identify has increased by over 300%. I have also gained a deeper understanding on many of these plants including: water usage, sunlight, height/spread, etc.
2	Complete 80% of tasks given to me with 100% accuracy	<u>2021</u> Completed - 50%	<u>2023</u> Completed - 100%	Through the amount of time and the number of jobs that I have worked at Gleason Designs, I can complete 100% of my tasks with 100% accuracy. My improvement helped me to increase my responsibilities and further the efficiency of the company.
3	Employees Trained	<u>2021</u> 0 Employees	<u>2023</u> 11 Employees	As crew manager at Gleason Designs, I must train any new employees so that they may become productive members of my team. Teaching safety, plant identification, maintenance/installation tactics, and appropriate conduct are all aspects of this leadership position.
4	Integrate Boulders and Flagstone in Landscapes	<u>2021</u> 3 Projects Integrated	<u>2023</u> 13 Projects Integrated	After three years, I have learned how to successfully use large rocks and boulders in landscapes. The use of the boulders adds character and decreases the amount of plants: conserving water. Flagstone is a more creative and natural walkway that I enjoy using in landscapes that I install.
5	Worksite Safety	<u>2021</u> 0 Injuries	<u>2023</u> 0 Injuries	As my responsibilities have increased, so has the importance of safety at the job site. As crew manager it is my responsibility to ensure the safety of everyone at the work site and the consequences fall on me: I take this very seriously. Increased safety measures also increases efficiency.





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Skills, Competencies, and Knowledge

### A. Five Primary Skills, Competencies, and Knowledge within your Pathway

AFNR Pathway Standard		Description of Activity
1	PS.01.01 Determine the influence of environmental factors on plant growth.	Creating landscape plans for areas in southwest Kansas is a challenge because of the massively varying weather systems. We spent several years in a drought, some summers will see temperatures over 100oF for several weeks, or we could see half of our yearly rainfall come in a 24 hour period. Landscape designs must factor in all of these scenarios to ensure the survival of the design.
2	PS.01.02 Prepare and manage growing media for use in plant systems.	My hometown of Garden City sits on the side of a hill. The northern side of town has a thick clay soil while the south side of town is much more sandy. It is important that I understand to location of the job site so that I can better pick appropriate plants to use.
3	PS.01.03 Develop and implement a fertilization plan for specific plants or crops.	I make sure to fertilize trees and the grass in late summer/fall. In late spring or early summer I make a plan to fertilize all small perennials and annuals, as well as blooming shrubs.
4	PS.03.04 Apply principles and practices of sustainable agriculture to plant production.	Water conservation is a must in Southwest Kansas, as we are frequently in drought conditions. Plants like yucca and sedum are great for my area because they require minimal water which helps to preserve water when we are experiencing a drought.
5	PS.04.01 Evaluating, identifying and preparing plants to enhance an environment.	I make sure to know the colors that a customer would like to implement. I can use these ideas to build a landscape that supports complementing colors that the customer appreciates.

### B. Two Supporting Skills, Competencies, and Knowledge from any Pathway

AFNR Pathway Standard		Description of Activity
6	PS.04.02 Create designs using plants.	Creating designs using plants is another main idea behind landscape designs. Designs must be functional, appealing, enhance quality of life, and balance man made aspects with nature. A good design will help prevent erosion, improve air quality, and purify the soil.
7	PS.03.04 Apply principles and practices of sustainable agriculture to plant production.	Southwest Kansas sees a variety of weather patterns and systems. The plants we choose to go in our designs must be able to survive the harshness of our winters, the heat of our summers, and the droughts that we experience. If a design system relies too heavily on irrigation, we are depleting a finite resource for an inedible product. Therefore, we are careful to add plants that need little to moderate amounts of water.

### C. Three Career Ready Practice and/or Cluster Skills standards

AFNR Pathway Standard		Description of Activity
8	CS.03.04 Use appropriate protective equipment and demonstrate safe and proper use of AFNR tools and equipment.	Personal protective equipment is extremely important. I use a variety of hand tools and power equipment, which requires eye and ear protection, at the minimum. Since I am mostly outdoors all day in the heat of the summer, sunscreen, and covering my body with hats or long sleeves is a must as well. When using machines that are operated around my feet, such as an edger or weed-whacker, I make sure to wear long pants and boots.



9	CRP.04.03 Model active listening strategies when interacting with others in formal and informal settings.	Listening to customers and asking questions is integral to ensure that our customers are happy with our final product. Our customers have a design in mind, its our job to accurately convey that design to paper and then an actual product. Sometimes customers can't articulate exactly what they want, so it is up to us to ask guiding questions to get as close to their design as we can.
10	CRP.09.02 Implement personal management skills to function effectively and efficiently in the workplace (e.g., time management, planning, prioritizing, etc.).	Each job requires our labor to be billed to the customer. This means that every minute we are billing the customer must be accounted for in terms of the final product. Whether it is shopping for the plants, laying brick or stone, or mowing lawns, I have to make sure that all of the jobs are done efficiently and effectively. Customers do not and will not pay for time that is unproductive.





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Resume

### Objective

To receive recognition as the Southwest District FFA Star in Ag Placement.

### Agricultural Classes/Coursework

Intro to Agriculture: 2021 - 2022

Plant & Soil Sciences: 2022 - 2023

Animal Science: 2023 - 2024

Welding I: 2024

### SAE

Sheep Production - Placement

Landscape Management - Placement

### FFA Leadership

- \* Garden City FFA Chapter President (2023-24)

- \* Take part in the Multi-State Ag Innovators Experience program (training, teaching, etc.)

- \* Help new others with their sheep projects (shearing, feeding, showing, grooming, etc.)

- \* Attended National Ag Day in Colby with the entire National FFA Officer team present

- \* Represented FFA at Farm Bureau's Day at the Farm (2021, 22 & 23)

- \* Attended Hugoton FFA Leadership workshop with State FFA Officer team present (2022)

### FFA Activities

- \* SW District Dairy Judging CDE participant (2021)

- \* SW District Vet Science CDE participant (2021)

- \* SW District Livestock Judging CDE participant (2021)

- \* SW District Creed Contest LDE participant (2021)

- \* SW District Greenhand Test 3rd place individual (2021)

- \* SW District Horticulture CDE 1st place individual & team (2021 & 2022)

- \* Received Greenhand Degree (2022)

- \* SW District Sheep Proficiency Award participant (2023)

### Community Service

Retirement Home - Volunteered to plant flowers outside

Garden City Public Schools - Donated winter clothing

Retirement Home - Volunteered to make baked goods

Finney County Extension Office - Volunteered to clean-up the landscaping beds around the extension office before winter

Retirement Home - Volunteered to sing Christmas Carols for residents

Finney County Humane Society - Volunteered to clean pens and take dogs for walks

Miles of Smiles - Donated ink cartridges

### School and Extracurricular Involvement

4-H

- \*Projects: Sheep, Leadership, Service, Foods/Nutrition, Shopping in Style

- \*State Finalist – Sheep Project Award (record keeping)Mar 2023 & 24

- \*One of three original Ag Innovators Experience Program leadership team members in Kansas (2022)

National Honors Society

- \*Excel in the pillars of: character, leadership, scholarship, & service

Resist

- \*Present to local elementary, intermediate, and middle

schools/county and city commissioners about the dangers of tobacco and nicotine



## **Awards and Honors**

- \* Awarded the Finney County Ag Award (2021)
- \* National Proficiency Silver Award - Landscape Management (placement)
- \* State Proficiency Winner - Landscape Management (placement)
- \* 1st Individual - District Employability Skills LDE
- \* 1st Individual - District Hort/Floriculture CDE
- \* 3rd Individual – District Greenhand Test
- \* 5th Individual - District Leadership Test

## **Certifications**

None

## **Skills**

- \* Mastered lambing season needs for ewes as in added nutrients and assisted with birthing lambs, as well as set up lambing jugs
- \* Mastered lamb care: Nutri-drench, colostrum, ear tagging, overeating & tetanus shots, tail docking & castration, as well as setting up self feeder lamb pens
- \* Focused on expenses for my sheep flock and show lambs (feed, additives, equipment, etc.)
- \* Gained a better understanding of how to implement additives into my show lambs' diet
- \* Selected rams for AI program to improve our flock genetics
- \* Mastered steps of the proper way to landscape (soil prep, planting, drip irrigation installation, tree staking, weed barrier & ground cover installation)
- \* Yearly seasonal maintenance of lawn & landscape beds

## **References**

Janet Harkness  
4-H Agent  
Scott County 4-H Extension 210W4th St  
Scott City, KS 67871  
(620) 872-2930  
jlp27@ksu.edu

Paula Alexander  
Sr Animal Welfare Manager Tyson Foods  
3105 IBP Rd  
Holcomb, KS 67851  
(620) 277-2614  
paula.alexander@tyson.com

Melissa Hensley  
Ag Instructor  
2720 Buffalo Way Blvd  
Garden City, KS 67846  
(620) 805-5400  
MHensley@gckschools.com

Elizabeth Meyer  
Ag Instructor  
2720 Buffalo Way Blvd  
Garden City, KS 67846  
(620) 805-5400  
EMeyer@gckschools.com





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Personal History

**Provide a narrative story of your personal achievements. Work within the character count and review your PDF to limit your final report to a maximum length of 3 pages.**

### LET IT SHINE: A PERSONAL NARRATIVE

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. I've always loved the song, This Little Light of Mine, embodies the story of my passion for agriculture and my determination to not let anyone smother my little light.

My name is Grady Gleason, and I'm currently the Reporter of the Garden City FFA chapter. The FFA organization has shaped much of who I am today, and it continues to guide me as I pursue my passions. The more I've reflected on it, the more I realize that we all have our own lights. We all have talents and passions that set us apart, but they often require a little work to discover. For me, figuring out what truly drives me has been a journey, one that I've come to believe is part of God's plan for my life.

Growing up, I was surrounded by agriculture. My family has been deeply involved in FFA for as long as I can remember. Both my mother and uncle were state FFA officers, and my aunt and cousin are Kansas FFA advisors and ag teachers. To top it all off, my grandfather served as the state FFA advisor. Agriculture and FFA run through my veins, and many people in my family have encouraged me to find my own way, my own road.

But, as I got older, I realized that while agriculture is important to me, it's not the only thing I'm passionate about. I've spent a lot of time thinking about my future—trying to figure out what I truly want. Do I want to attend Garden City Community College and join the meats judging team with a scholarship? Or do I want to go to Kansas State University and run for a state FFA office?

The truth is, this choice wasn't easy. Like most people my age, I have faced influences, both good and bad. There are those who encourage me to follow my dreams, to pursue the path I'm passionate about, and then there are those who try to throw water on my fire. Sometimes, these voices make it hard to figure out what I want, but I've come to realize that I am the only one who can truly determine my path.

It wasn't until last spring, at Kansas Leader Lab, that I had a breakthrough. I had an epiphany that changed everything. As I sat there surrounded by people who share my interests, I felt something stir deep inside me. I realized what my true passion was. I came home that day, feeling like I was on top of the world, excited about the future and the possibility of serving as a leader in FFA.

But, as is often the case, not everyone shared my enthusiasm. One person tried to dampen my excitement, to blow out the candle I had just lit. But I wasn't about to let that happen. The fire inside me burned brighter than ever before. I was determined to keep shining, no matter what.

I am a firm believer that true passion isn't something that can be extinguished easily. It burns deep within you, and when you find it, it lights up your entire life. For me, that passion is to lead others and serve in FFA. I want to help inspire others to discover their own passions and let their lights shine as brightly as possible. I choose to light up my own life and the world around me. I want to ignite a fire in others, to help them find their own passions and share them with the world.

### FROM 4-H AND FFA TO A SUCCESSFUL FUTURES

For over a decade, 4-H and FFA have been more than just extracurricular activities to me—they have been the foundation for my personal and professional development. Through leadership roles, hands-on agricultural experiences, and community service, I have gained skills that will allow me to be a confident and capable adult. These organizations have shaped my ability to lead, serve, and think critically, preparing me for the future in ways I never imagined when I first joined.

### LEADERSHIP THAT BUILDS CONFIDENCE

Serving as president in both 4-H and FFA has been one of the most defining experiences of my life. Leading the Happy Hustlers 4-H Club, the Finney County 4-H Ambassadors, and the Finney County 4-H Council challenged me to step outside my comfort zone. Organizing meetings, making important decisions, and guiding my peers taught me the importance of responsibility, adaptability, and teamwork.

In FFA, my leadership journey continued as chapter president, where I worked to ensure that our members had opportunities to grow and succeed. Whether it was coordinating events or preparing for competitions, I learned the value of delegation and time management. These roles reinforced my ability to communicate effectively, a skill that will be





essential in any career I choose to pursue.

#### HANDS-ON LEARNING THROUGH AGRICULTURE

My extensive experience with livestock, particularly in my Sheep Production SAE, has given me technical expertise that extends beyond the show ring. Over the years, I have mastered skills such as determining proper feed rations, post-lambing care, and artificial insemination techniques. Through trial and error, I have developed problem-solving skills that allow me to analyze situations and make informed decisions.

These experiences have also reinforced my dedication to hard work and perseverance. Raising and showing sheep requires daily commitment, patience, and a willingness to learn. The knowledge I have gained from managing my grandfather's flock will not only help me in the agricultural industry but will also translate into any profession where critical thinking and responsibility are necessary.

#### GIVING BACK THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE

Beyond leadership and agriculture, service has been a cornerstone of my involvement in 4-H and FFA. Through programs like Ag Innovators Experience and Farm Bureau's Day on the Farm, I have educated younger students about the importance of agriculture, ensuring that the next generation understands its role in their daily lives. Additionally, my participation in community service projects—from food bank volunteering to laying wreaths for veterans—has instilled in me a deep sense of responsibility to give back.

These experiences have shown me that true leadership is about more than personal success; it is about lifting others up and making a positive impact on the world around me. No matter where life takes me, I will continue to serve my community with the same dedication I have developed through 4-H and FFA.

#### PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

The skills I have gained through these organizations—decision-making, time management, financial responsibility, and effective communication—will carry me through every aspect of my life. Whether in higher education, a professional career, or continued community involvement; I am confident that the foundation I have built through 4-H and FFA will allow me to succeed.

Looking back on my journey, I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities and experiences these organizations have provided me. They have shaped me into a leader, a problem solver, and a dedicated member of my community. I walk into the future with confidence, knowing that the lessons I have learned through 4-H and FFA will serve me well as I strive to become a successful and impactful adult.

This Little Light of Mine embodies the values that have been central to my journey in 4-H and FFA—leadership, service, and making a positive impact. The song's message of shining a light—encourages me to inspire others that align with my experiences of guiding peers, educating younger students, and giving back to your community. As someone who has taken on leadership roles and dedicated time to helping others, the song's uplifting spirit resonates with me on a deep level. It's about using my talents and efforts to brighten the world around me—something I've done through my work in agriculture, community service, and mentorship. I am reminded of the importance of staying true to myself and my purpose, no matter where life takes me.





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

Safety Photo #1



## **SAFETY - IMPORTANCE OF PPE**

**Wearing proper personal protective equipment (PPE) is essential when using any sort of powered tool or implement. Here I have on eye protection, hearing protection, skin protection; for the sun and to protect against flying objects, and close-toe shoes to protect my feet from equipment and debris.**





## State Star in Agricultural Placement

Safety Photo #2



### **SAFETY - IMPACTS OF CARELESSNESS**

Many times I use hazardous chemicals that require a high level of knowledge about the dangers of misuse. I never mix more chemical than I need, and I always mix the directed amount with water, never more. With my title as crew manager, I must display my knowledge and show my seriousness so that no employee or customer is harmed. It is important for me to model responsibility and take the extra step to be careful.





## State Star in Agricultural Placement

Project Photo #3



### DRIP IRRIGATION

My experience with drip irrigation in landscaping has expanded my knowledge and shown me its importance. Plant identification and understanding is important so that the appropriate amount of water is used. Drip is used in all landscapes that I install. Some plants such as hedges, trees, and shrubs require more water while small perennials use less. Drip irrigation demands less work from the customer while conserving water, a major issue in southwest Kansas.







## State Star in Agricultural Placement

Project Photo #4



### **INTEGRATING HARDSCAPES INTO LANDSCAPES**

This project shows how to integrate stones and xerophytes, plants needing lower water levels, into a design. The stones will help prevent erosion, and they also cut down on maintenance of the area. The sparse placing of plants helps with water conservation, as this design doesn't require as much water as others do.





## State Star in Agricultural Placement

Project Photo #5



### **LARGE STONE WALKWAY**

Before my SAE started with Gleason Designs, the company landscaped a new house which involved a large stone walkway. Ten years later the customer reached out asking us to re-lay a portion of the walkway which had settled. As a senior member, I helped coordinate new strategies to satisfy the customer. This project involved leveling and re-laying the pavers. I laid polymeric sand in the cracks to act as a grout and keep the stone from shifting. The customer was very pleased.





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

Project Photo #6



## STAKING TREES

When a tree is first planted, I make sure to stake it to help stabilize them. I thread wire through a section of old hose to tie the tree to the t-post. I learned that it is important to use old hose so that the wire doesn't cut into the trunk. Gleason Designs is located in southwest Kansas where winds are strong and frequent. In the first couple of years, a tree doesn't have a large enough root system to sustain these strong winds. After maturing, the stake can be removed.





# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Checklist of Minimum Qualifications

- Missing, Error, or Not Met indicates a condition causing the candidate not to qualify for the degree.
- Review indicates a condition that will require additional explanation or documentation.
- Only computer-generated checks are shown here. The PDF application includes additional manual checks.
- Regardless of the qualifications shown here, FFA staff and reviewers may contact the advisor or applicant for additional information and evidence, including, but not limited to, SAE agreements and record books.

Item	Value
Candidate has chosen a Star Type and Primary Pathway.	MET
Candidate has fully described and selected one to five Learning Outcomes or Efficiency Factors.	MET
Candidate has fully described all ten Skills, Competencies, and Knowledge.	MET
All pictures include captions.	MET
All pictures include a digital upload.	MET
Required attachments have been uploaded.	MET







# State Star in Agricultural Placement

## Application Attachments

The following are attachments to include at the end of your application.

### **Attachment 1 - SAE Agreements**

Attach a copy of your most recent SAE partnership, rental, Family Corporation or occupational training agreement.

### **Attachment 2 - Student Recommendations**

Attach three one-page recommendations

1. Agriculture instructor recommendation
2. Two other recommendations (if your SAEs include placement, please include at least one employer recommendation)





**KS - Garden City**  
**Grady Gleason 604606327**  
**SAE Agreement - S&G Club Lambs**

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### SAE Information

Name:	S&G Club Lambs
SAE Type:	Placement
AFNR Pathway/Category:	Animal Systems - Sheep

### SAE Plan - S&G Club Lambs

Description
<p>My interest and motivation for this project started with my grandfather. He has a sheep flock of 65 ewes which I help lamb out every winter that he sells to 4-H and FFA members as show lambs. For this specific SAE, I am focusing on expanding my knowledge and skills of the sheep industry. My project doesn't have start and end dates, because there is always work to be done. Whether we are preparing to Artificially Inseminate the flock, have lambs, or walk in the show ring, I always have responsibilities with the flock. My project goals with my show lambs are to work using additives to better my show lambs nutrition, to work and walk with my show lambs 4-5 days a week during the summer months, and to place in the top 2 in Senior Showmanship at the Finney County Fair. I also have the goal of gaining more responsibilities with the flock. My project will be supervised by my grandfather, my mother, my father, and my FFA advisors. Important areas of safety include cleanliness of the operation, health of the animals, and understanding animal behavior.</p>

Time Investment
<p>I plan to spend 15-25 hours a week with my animals during school months, and 30-40 hours during summer months. Activities vary, but I commonly feed, water, clean, assess health, maintain records, and clip my animals. Key times of my project are breeding season, lambing season, and show season. My project relates to my career plan, which is to someday have my own flock of lambs to sell to the next generation of 4-H and FFA members.</p>

#### Learning Objectives (SAE Skills):

Skill Area	Planned Activities	Results or Outcome
<b>ABS.01.01</b> Apply micro- and macroeconomic principles to plan and manage inputs and outputs in an AFNR business.	I plan to help my grandfather cut feed and supply expenses to make a better profit.	Throughout this past year, prices of supplies have gone up drastically. This has caused me to have to shop around for the best quality feed for the best prices.
<b>AS.02.01</b> Demonstrate management techniques that ensure animal welfare.	I plan to keep accurate records to know when the animals are in need of vaccinations, as well as constantly monitoring the flock health.	There are several ways to ensure animal welfare; proper feed and water, clean facilities, proper vaccine schedules and veterinary care, and appropriate record keeping. Throughout the years, I have become proficient at identifying the needs of my animals.
<b>AS.02.02</b> Analyze procedures to ensure that animal products are safe for consumption (e.g., use in food system, etc.).	I plan to make sure that I am aware of withdrawal times of any and all medications.	Through YQA, I am more knowledgeable about administering shots, the importance of withdrawal times, and the effects on the human food system if these precautions aren't followed
<b>AS.03.01</b> Analyze the nutritional needs of animals.	I will help my grandfather to determine an appropriate ration of grain and roughage for the digestive health of the flock.	Feed and nutrients are one of the most important aspects of a quality show animal. Because I have been showing animals for a long time, I am better able to recognize the nutritional needs of my animal.
<b>AS.03.02</b> Analyze feed rations and assess if they meet the nutritional needs of animals.	I will help my grandfather in adjusting feed rations as the flock matures.	Again, the nutritional needs of a show animal are an extremely important aspect of having quality animals. By assessing a ration, I am able to decide if that feed is a good fit for my animals.

<b>AS.04.01</b> Evaluate animals for breeding readiness and soundness.	I help my grandfather to sort the flock into animals we consider desirable versus animals we intend to cull.	Evaluating animals on breeding soundness is different than evaluating for market quality, although there are similarities. By knowing what breeding traits and goals I want for my flock, I can make better decisions regarding the AI of my ewes.
<b>AS.04.03</b> Apply scientific principles to breed animals.	I would like to introduce artificial insemination in order to increase the genetic potential of my flock.	Recently, I have been trained to AI my herd. This allows me to have a large selection of genetics from different rams to choose from. Because of this, I am able to improve the genetics of my herd much quicker than if I were to have one or two rams.
<b>AS.06.03</b> Select and train animals for specific purposes and maximum performance based on anatomy and physiology.	I will help my grandfather in selecting the best ewes for our operation.	Selecting an animal for the show ring isn't the same as selecting an animal to go to market. There are certain qualities that an animal must possess in order to be able to make a good show animal and carcass animal.
<b>AS.07.01</b> Design programs to prevent animal diseases, parasites and other disorders and ensure animal welfare.	I will implement a plan for biosecurity measures, quarantining sick animals, and maintaining barn cleanliness.	Diseases and parasites are extremely detrimental to an animals health, happiness, and overall performance. Vaccine schedules and a good working relationship with a veterinarian are imperative to herd health.
<b>CRP.09.03</b> Demonstrate behaviors that contribute to a positive morale and culture in the workplace and community (e.g., positively influencing others, effectively communicating, etc.).	I plan to be a good sportsman in the show ring, teach others about raising lambs, and express the qualities taught in FFA and 4-H.	Many times throughout the last several years, I have been asked by younger members for advice regarding training, feeding, showing, and show preparation of my lambs. Even though they are my competition, I am always willing to lend a helping hand. Good sportsmanship contributes to a positive morale in the show ring and sheep industry.

## Signatures

Grady Thomas Gleason

Student

2/10/2025 9:10:00 PM

Date

Sara S Gleason

Parent / Guardian

2/10/2025 9:13:00 PM

Date

Melissa Hensley

Ag Science Teacher

3/13/2025 1:03:00 PM

Date

Vernon R. Schweer

Supervisor / Employer

3/14/2025 10:38:00 AM

Date

*The school, individuals or businesses participating in this educational program will not discriminate against participating students with regards to race, sex, creed, color, national origin, age or handicap as defined by law.*



**KS - Garden City**  
**Grady Gleason 604606327**  
**SAE Agreement - Gleason Designs**

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### SAE Information

Name:	Gleason Designs
SAE Type:	Placement
AFNR Pathway/Category:	Plant Systems - Landscape

### SAE Plan - Gleason Designs

Description
<p>My interest and motivation for this project was passed down to me from my mother. She has been self-employed as a landscape designer for over 20 years. Since elementary school, I have spent my afternoons and summers working with Gleason Designs on maintenance and installation. My SAE project officially started in August, 2021 but I have been working prior to and is a current project experience. My goals include: learning proper maintenance techniques; appropriate methods for installing plants, irrigation, etc.; and leading a crew as a supervisor. This valuable project experience will be supervised by Sara Gleason who is an industry professional with a degree in Landscape Design. Her experience includes managing landscape installation and upkeep at businesses and residencies in Southwest Kansas which I will assist in. In terms of project safety, important actions that I will take include: wear proper personal protective equipment; understand safety requirements for pesticides; and understand proper usage of power tools. I look forward to learning valuable lessons and achieving my goals in the Landscape Management placement SAE project.</p>

Time Investment
<p>I plan to invest five to fifteen hours per week over the warmer months toward my Landscape Management SAE. My project time will vary month to month, but common activities are commercial and residential maintenance and installation. I am receiving payment for my time, which may vary from ten to thirteen dollars per hour. I hope to also gain important experiences, such as customer communication and engagement. My project time relates to my career plan, which is to receive an Agriculture Economics degree, and my time installing landscape deeds for local banks has given me the opportunity to build connections with possible future employers.</p>

### Learning Objectives (SAE Skills):

Skill Area	Planned Activities	Results or Outcome
<b>CS.03.03</b> Apply health and safety practices to AFNR workplaces.	Reading and following safety labels for equipment and chemicals is extremely important, not only for my safety, but also for the safety of my coworkers and the environment. Not following the directions on the label can lead to serious problems.	I always carefully read and all warning labels when handling dangerous chemicals. These labels explain the proper steps to keep myself and others around me safe.
<b>CS.03.04</b> Use appropriate protective equipment and demonstrate safe and proper use of AFNR tools and equipment.	Personal protective equipment is extremely important. I will make sure to wear eye and ear protection, and since I plan to be outdoors a lot in the heat of the summer, sunscreen, and covering my skin with hats or long sleeves is a must as well. I will also be sure to wear long pants and boots when using machines that are operated around my feet, such as an edger or weed-whacker.	I make sure to wear the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when handling herbicides and various other chemicals. I carefully read through warning labels and wear gloves, long sleeves, long pants, close-toed shoes, mask, etc.
<b>FND.A2.03</b> Work with a career mentor	I plan on working with my mom; she has owned and operated Gleason Designs for the past 20 years.	On a daily basis, I communicate with my mother the tasks and goals that should be met on that day and travel with her to the job site to appropriately follow through.
<b>PS.01.01</b> Determine the influence of environmental factors on plant growth.	Plants all have different water, shade, soil pH, and nutrient requirements. Through experience, I will be able to learn what plants are best for each environment I encounter.	My plan was to create landscape plans for areas in southwest Kansas. This is a challenge because of the massively varying weather systems. We spent several years in a drought, some summers will see temperatures in the 100s for several weeks, or we could see half of our yearly rainfall come in a 24 hour period. Our landscape designs must factor in all of these scenarios to ensure the survival of the design.

<b>PS.01.02</b> Prepare and manage growing media for use in plant systems.	Almost all of our clients are asking us to work with existing soil. Most of the soil in Kansas is a loamy sand, therefore, it may need to be adjusted and modified before we place plants in the ground.	My hometown of Garden City sits on the side of a hill. The northern side of town has a thick clay soil while the south side of town is much more sandy. It is important that I understand to location of the job site so that I can better pick appropriate plants to use.
<b>PS.01.03</b> Develop and implement a fertilization plan for specific plants or crops.	Most plants have differing nutrient requirements. I will need to know every plant species of every landscape design and their particular needs in order develop a fertilization plan.	I make sure to fertilize trees and the grass in late summer/fall. In late spring or early summer I make a plan to fertilize all small perennials and annuals, as well as blooming shrubs.
<b>PS.03.01</b> Demonstrate plant propagation techniques in plant system activities.	Seeds are not the only way plants reproduce. Being aware of the different ways plants propagate will allow me to make sure that the designs don't become too overgrown and spread where they are not wanted.	I am always knowledgeable of the size plants will grow to so I make sure to plant so that the customer will be satisfied when the plants are full size.
<b>PS.03.03</b> Develop and implement a plan for integrated pest management for plant production.	Lawns and landscaped areas can get diseases, weeds and insects, too, just like corn, wheat, and other crops. Researching the most common ones, along with ways to manage and control them, is an important part to keeping a designed area looking nice.	I have a list of industry professionals and provide the list to all of Gleason Designs' customers so that their landscape beds and lawn are unbothered by all pests.
<b>PS.03.04</b> Apply principles and practices of sustainable agriculture to plant production.	In southwest Kansas, one of our most valuable resources is the Ogallala Aquifer. The depletion of the Ogallala is due, in part, to irrigation. Therefore, I will need to make sure that I am using plants that are more native and sustainable to this area.	Plants like yucca and seems are great for my area because they require minimal water which helps to preserve water when we are experiencing a drought.
<b>PS.04.01</b> Evaluating, identifying and preparing plants to enhance an environment.	There are so many different plants, with different textures, colors, soil requirements, and light requirements. It will take a lot to learn and identify them all, but over the next four years, I should be able to learn many of them, through simple repetition.	I make sure to know the colors that a customer would like to implement. I can use these ideas to build a landscape that supports complementing colors that the customer appreciates.
<b>PS.04.02</b> Create designs using plants.	This is the whole idea behind Gleason Designs. I hope to be able to design a landscaped area by myself, but for now, I follow my mom's plans.	I enjoy having the opportunity to work with expansive landscapes as I can work with more plants and implement more of my own ideas that will satisfy the customer.

## Signatures

Grady Thomas Gleason

Student

3/13/2025 1:52:00 PM

Date

Sara S. Gleason

Parent / Guardian

3/13/2025 3:25:00 PM

Date

Melissa Hensley

Ag Science Teacher

3/14/2025 5:12:00 PM

Date

Sara S. Gleason

Supervisor / Employer

3/13/2025 3:25:00 PM

Date

*The school, individuals or businesses participating in this educational program will not discriminate against participating students with regards to race, sex, creed, color, national origin, age or handicap as defined by law.*



## Garden City High School

February 7, 2025

Dear Selection Committee:

It is my pleasure to recommend Grady Gleason as Southwest FFA District's Star in Agricultural Placement. Few people better demonstrate the values this award represents than Grady.

As Grady's former and current teacher, I have witnessed firsthand how his dedication to scholarship and scholastic success has grown throughout the past year. He always brainstorms unique solutions and exhibits top notch problem-solving skills. He is diligent in understanding academically-challenging work such as that in his collegiate courses, but also skilled in constructing project-based work such as those he completed in Welding I & II. These same skills have aided him in daily tasks as he works for his family's sheep operation and landscape design business.

Along with his commitment to scholarship, Grady demonstrates strong character. Not only is he responsible in his coursework, but he also holds himself to high integrity. He is hardworking, trustworthy, dependable, and honest. He sets an example for peers and mentors alike. Animal husbandry, handling finances, and record keeping are only a few of the many responsibilities Grady can be trusted with, without ever needing to worry about their completion or quality.

Above all, Grady displays leadership and service along with a passion for agriculture. He has served Garden City FFA Chapter as an officer for the past 3 years, where he currently serves as Chapter Reporter. He takes initiative and is quick to accomplish anything necessary to make our chapter successful. He steps up to any challenge placed in front of him and serves those around him with an outgoing personality and friendly attitude.

Grady embodies commitment, problem-solving, character, leadership, and service. He has centered his life around agriculture and holds a true inborn fondness for all its joys and discomforts. He would make an outstanding representative for Southwest Kansas FFA and I strongly encourage you to select him as District Star in Ag Placement.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Meyer  
Garden City Agricultural Education Instructor

February 7, 2025

Southwest District FFA

Re: FFA District - Star in Ag Placement

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter of recommendation on behalf of Grady Gleason to be considered for the *FFA District - Star in Ag Placement*.

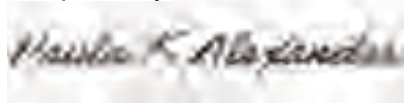
I have known Grady and his family for many years and have had the pleasure of watching him mature and grow. From an early age, Grady has balanced rigorous academics, extracurricular obligations, and community service at the highest level. He epitomizes an individual that is dedicated to excellence in everything for which he is committed. Grady has served as a Finney County Farm Bureau Ambassador as well as a 4-H Ambassador and held officer positions in both FFA and 4-H across multiple years. As a result, Grady has been able to hone his leadership skills, respect for others and strength of character.

He is passionate about agriculture and willingly shares that passion with others. Though he has participated in many competitive events, and taken on diverse learning projects and leadership functions, it is his commitment to his sheep flock and sharing his knowledge of the sheep industry that has always been unwavering. Not only has Grady grown his own sheep flock over the years, but he has taken on responsibility for many aspects of the daily care and management for his grandfather's flock. Together, with his grandfather, Grady has made breeding selections, expanded the farm infrastructure, and started succession planning as he works to determine his collegiate education path.

All the aforementioned qualities are worthy of merit on their own, however it is the leadership and selflessness I have witnessed from Grady that called me to write this letter. Grady's ability to share his shepherd knowledge and skills are invaluable. My daughter has been enrolled in the 4-H sheep project for 5 years. Not only has Grady shared his knowledge and skills with my daughter, but he has also willingly shared them with my husband and myself. Consistently, Grady has offered assistance with nutrition, shearing, showmanship and lambing. If it were not for Grady, we would not have had the courage to start her sheep flock. Three years ago, with the support of Grady, we made the decision to retain ownership of my daughter's breeding ewe. She was ultimately successful in lambing a set of twins under Grady's management and care. Last year another ewe was retained. This year, with Grady's support and encouragement, two more ewes were retained. Grady has been vital to my daughter's success with her sheep project. She is now the proud shepherd of four ewes and four lambs.

What we have experienced, personally, from Grady is not unique, however. I have seen him engage with hundreds of 4<sup>th</sup> graders from around the area and share his passion and knowledge of sheep. I have witnessed him willingly help other youth in 4-H; he is the first to volunteer for activities, lead by example and offer words of encouragement when someone is struggling. Some individuals may argue that academics and accolades are what makes a person successful. I challenge that the individual's strength of character, selflessness and servant leadership are what makes a person successful. Grady has demonstrated these attributes time and again and I have no doubt he will continue to do so in the future. He is a passionate person and commits fully to any activity in which he participates and strives for excellence in all he does. Please consider Grady for recipient of *FFA District - Star in Ag Placement* for his work and tireless dedication to not only his sheep flock but to others interested in sheep.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paula K. Alexander", written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Paula K. Alexander

February 10, 2025

Southwest District FFA  
Re: FFA District Star in Ag Placement

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this recommendation letter on behalf of Grady Gleason in hopes you will consider him for the Southwest District Star in Ag Placement.

Grady is not only my son, he also plays a major role as an employee in my landscape business—Gleason Designs. Grady started working with me at a young age. He started at the bottom and has worked himself up the ladder to crew manager. He has worked in all facets of my business. He started out helping me with purchasing, by pushing carts and loading materials needed for jobs. As he matured, he learned the proper ways to install grade works, irrigation systems, weed barrier, successfully planting trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses, and perennials, along with mulch, rock, boulders, flagstone, and paver's installation. Today he leads a team of employees and successfully completes all sizes from big to small installation projects. He even works directly with the customers to make sure they are satisfied. His leadership, passion, commitment and strive for excellence is appreciated by all.

As you can see, I am extremely proud of my son and the employee he has become over the years. As a past FFA member myself who served my state as vice president, I know what FFA can do for individuals. I have witnessed firsthand how Grady has benefited from this program. Grady possesses many great qualities, and he loves to share with others his passion for agriculture. Whether it is his landscape knowledge or his knowledge for the sheep industry. He shares a sheep flock with my father, Vernon Schweer, together, they care for sixty-five ewes.

Grady has competed in many FFA events. He has utilized his knowledge of horticulture and has won the district contest for three years. His willingness to learn, his passion for agriculture, his leadership skills, his competitive nature, and how he strives to succeed are some of the traits Grady possesses that make him a great employee. I know FFA has been a big part of that. Through FFA in the 4-H program, I have seen Grady's commitment to community service and willingness to volunteer. I believe he will always value giving back to organizations, agriculture, and his community in ways to show appreciation for all they have given him. FFA will be at the top of that list. With that, please consider Grady as a recipient for the FFA District Star in Ag Placement.

Respectfully,

Sara S. Gleason