

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**John  
Dvorak**

**Level:**  
Senior

**Major:**  
Agricultural  
Business  
Management,  
Entrepreneurship  
Certificate

**Hometown:**  
Oconomowoc, WI



Thank you very much for the opportunity to receive the Renk Scholarship within the CALS school. My name is John Dvorak, and I am a sophomore here at UW-Madison, pursuing a degree in Agricultural Business Management with a certificate in Entrepreneurship. I am also fortunate to be on the Men's Rowing team. I am from Oconomowoc Wisconsin, just an hour east of Madison, where I enjoyed competing in downhill ski racing, sailing on the local lakes in the summer and working for my family's companies. It's my nature to be family and community-oriented, so I have truly enjoyed working at our family's restaurant and helping with our real estate/property management downtown.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I decided to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and I am the 3rd generation in my family to pursue an education here. I grew up around machinery, construction, farming, and hard-working entrepreneurs who I look up to. With this exposure, I knew I wanted a career to combine that, and pursuing a degree in Agricultural Business Management would prepare me well for my future. I am currently working for VJS Construction Services Project Management team, which is where I will continue my internship this summer on a jobsite in Madison.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

My current academic interests are in the Business Management courses as well as the Real Estate courses. I currently enjoy all of my AAE courses, as they have taught me valuable skills and knowledge that will help me past my time here at UW. I also enjoy my ABM major that I am pursuing, as well as my Entrepreneurship Certificate. The courses overlap between the two very well, which makes it enjoyable as well as impactful to my passionate side of working in the field that I am studying. I have been interested in Agricultural Business Management and Real Estate since I was a kid. I grew up running machinery and working outdoors with my Uncle, as well as flipping houses and working with my Dad in real estate. I learned from a young age, this is what I want to do when I grow up.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

My most proud achievement would be in highschool, when I started my own company. I first came to my Dad with the business pitch in my Freshman year, of a landscape and snow removal company. I ran the numbers, calculated accounts to make it profitable, contacted friends and business associates to help, as they have started their own similar companies. It wasn't till my Senior year that I was able to fully get it going to what I had dreamed of. I cut grass for myself as well as landscape with my buddies' companies, however, it wasn't the same as Senior year. I was able to buy my plow for my truck, and fully engage in snow plowing during the winter months. I then had multiple lawn contracts in the summer, and did hardscape jobs, as well as mulch installs, and property management throughout the year. It taught me the life lessons that hardwork and determination will pay off in the end, if you can see your vision and put the right pieces in place to make it come together. This has been my foundation in all that I do, and will continue to do in my future, as I aspire to start another company out of school.

### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

As I touched on above, my career aspirations are to start my own business out of school. At the moment, my dream is to have my own construction management/property management company, involving real estate, and then doing home flippers on the side.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

I enjoy working with my hands, out on the job site moving around, as well as networking and growing my knowledge, including my professional connections. I have watched my Dad do this from a young age, and would like to do something similar and even work with him, and start a business together. I have always liked working on my own/for myself, and taking the lead as well as guiding and teaching others. I think that by running my own operation one day will take all of my passions, and connect them to allow me to create a successful company. I also would like to stay in my hometown of Oconomowoc, and give back to my community, with developing and creating new positive sites, stores, restaurants, and continue to have a popular downtown setting with great individuals who share the same values.

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Kat  
Eugster**

**Level:**  
Junior

**Major:**  
Agricultural  
Business  
Management

**Hometown:**  
Stoughton, WI



I am so grateful to be receiving the Renk Scholarship. Due to your generosity, I am able to continue pursuing my degree at UW-Madison. I am not receiving any financial aid from my family, so scholarships like this truly have such a big impact on my education. I surely wouldn't be able to attend this wonderful university without your thoughtful assistance. I am deeply appreciative of your support, and I look forward to another successful year at Madison!

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I chose to attend UW-Madison because it had excellent agricultural and business colleges. I plan to return to my family farm after graduation, so UW-Madison had the perfect combination degree (Agricultural Business Management) to set me up for a successful future of running a farm and business. I also live a short 20 minutes from campus, so I can comfortably return home around classes to work on the farm and continue earning money to pay for my education. And finally, UW-Madison has an unmatched student culture that I was excited to be a part of.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I am majoring in Agricultural Business Management because I plan on returning to my family farm after graduation to become a 4th generation farmer. Ag Business provides me with a *thorough understanding* of how to run a business, with a focus on agricultural topics in the business field. Our farm is expanding every day, as both my brother and I are both interested in continuing the business. ABM is truly setting me up for a successful future on the farm, and I cannot wait to jump in full force after graduation.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

I am most proud of my small flower business I started Junior year of high school. I needed to make extra money for college, and my family farm had recently opened a large sunflower field for the public to view and take photos with. The natural progression was to sell cut sunflowers to the customers, but my parents were too busy to jump into a completely new avenue during our peak harvest season. So, I did my research on varieties and growing techniques, and began selling cut sunflowers the next year. Again, my parents were too busy, so I did all the planting, picking, supply purchasing, and selling. That first year, I sold hundreds of bouquets, and now it is my main source of income second to my hourly wages from the farm. This was my first real entrepreneurial experience, and I am very proud of the successful business it has become.

### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

I plan on returning to my family farm after graduation. Our farm is an agri-tourism farm, so we have a petting farm that is open to the public and we host special events on weekends. Some of these events include a lavender field, sunflower field, fall festival, apple orchard, and Christmas tree cutting. Along with this, our farm has also been producing vegetables for the Madison area for 30+ years. More recently, we started a CSA where people can purchase their summer's worth of vegetables in the early spring as an "investment" of sorts to support their local farmer. Running our farm is a very busy lifestyle, but it's one I grew up with, and have truly learned to love. I can't wait to join the farm full time after graduation.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Jaden  
Henneman**

**Level:**  
Senior

**Major:**  
Agricultural  
Business  
Management,  
Psychology,  
Criminal Justice  
Certificate

**Hometown:**  
Whitewater, WI



I am very appreciative of the Renk Scholarship! To accept it means that I will be able to better focus on my classes and participate more in my organizations instead of worrying what my financial situation will be like for the upcoming school year. This financial relief makes me double my academic effort and to make the best of the education offered to me, which allows me to make my family and myself proud with what I do. The generosity of this scholarship fund and the Renk Family gives me inspiration to succeed and be able to continue to help those around me. I hope that one day I can give back to UW-Madison and the agriculture industry so that those involved can give back as well.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I chose UW-Madison because I came from a small town in southern Wisconsin, and I knew I needed a new place that still had the ability to make me feel at home. I also needed a school that had large roots and investments in agriculture, especially within dairy education. I liked the fact that UW has many other options in case I wanted to branch out and learn different things than can help me later in life. The biggest draw was the inclusivity of the campus and how diversified it felt when touring the campus and walking around the city.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

My primary major is Agribusiness Management, and the reason this came about was because of my family and their careers within agriculture. I have been heavily influenced in taking agriculture classes throughout my education since I grew up showing dairy cattle for my mom's work which later led me to 4H which led to FFA in high school. All of this showed me that I can follow my wish of starting up my family's dairy farm again, while also having the other family farm open as a wedding or event venue. That is why I choose business management as a major instead of the sciences or other educational areas of agriculture.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

When I was elected president of my collegiate student org, Criminal and Juvenile Justice Student Association. I was proud to see that my leadership skills were able to be seen by others, especially fellow officers, and be able to show that what I was capable of doing within the position. Plus, I was happy to professionalize the organization after it had taken a back burner during COVID. I am most proud of this accomplishment after the fact, especially when I became associates of many valuable contacts that I could use in the future.

### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

I would like to return one of my families' farms to the 30 cow milking facilities that it was fifteen years ago and eventually while continuing the remodel of the other one into a wedding or event venue that promotes local agricultural businesses and brands. I would also like to receive my teaching license within Agricultural Education and become an FFA advisor to help the ag kids just mine did when I was in high school. I am currently going to school for psychology and criminal justice as well in case my goal of becoming a dairy farmer is not viable with the current economy.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## Renk Scholarship

**Cole  
Hicken**

**Level:**

Sophomore

**Major:**

Agricultural &  
Applied Economics,  
Life Sciences  
Communication

**Hometown:**

Waupun, WI



One of the most stressful and challenging aspects of college occurs outside of the classroom. It's the financial burden that continued expenses can have on your bank account. The Renk Scholarship offers me great opportunity to wipe some of that financial stress free from my mind. I can instead direct my focus on classes, extracurriculars, and preparing myself for my desired career field in the future. It's scholarships like this one that create great levels of opportunity not only now, but into the future as well. The funds provided is money that does not have to come from loans or other areas that will diminish the extent of my own personal goals. I'm forever grateful for the investment in my education and my future overall.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

From birth I've always been a badger fan. Vivid memories of football games in Camp Randall, basketball games in the Kohl Center, and volleyball games in the Fieldhouse are all coming to mind. As I grew older the appealing aspect of a rigorous and challenging education system drew me in. The thought of receiving an education at such a premier public school that was also close to home was a no-brainer. UW-Madison is also the only school in the area that offers a degree in Agriculture and Applied Economics. The stars aligned and everything pointed towards me attending my dream school and becoming a badger.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

The agricultural industry is something that I've been deeply rooted into from birth. I've been very active in FFA, and my passion for the survival and success of agriculture is immense. This passion has pushed me to stretch my horizons and major in both Agricultural Economics and Life Sciences Communication. I feel that both of these majors offer me different perspectives to the agricultural world and are directing me towards my future career goals. While I currently have an undetermined final goal of a career path, I think that keeping my options open in the Ag industry will be beneficial and lead me in the correct direction.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

As a part of the FFA Organization they offer proficiency awards in varying areas related to the agriculture industry for students to compete for based off of their Supervised Agricultural Experience, or SAE. Over the past few years, I've had the opportunity to build my own SAE by working summers as well as weekends for a local landscaping company. Through my work at the company and my work in FFA I was selected as the Wisconsin State Winner in the Landscape Management area. While the award and recognition were nice, it was truly the moments when I could stand at my state winning booth and share my passion of the landscaping industry with everyone. Aside from discussions with customers I often feel I'm held back from expressing my true passion and collected knowledge of landscaping. By winning this award I was offered that very opportunity and I couldn't be happier.

### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

Plans are a continuously changing item, but at the moment I intend to enter the agriculture field in pursuit of being an agricultural economist. I often find myself as a



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

perfectionist, and while this has its downfall in a lot of situations the economics field would not be one. Optimization of crop yields, profit maximization, etc. are all different topics that I'm very interested in. By increasing overall output of local farms not only are the farmers wages increasing, but it creates an efficient means of feeding consumers and the world for the lowest possible costs (monetary wise as well as environmentally).

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Hunter  
Huschitt**

**Level:**  
Senior

**Major:**  
Agricultural  
Business  
Management, Food  
Systems Certificate

**Hometown:**  
Monroe, WI



I would like to begin by sincerely thanking you for awarding me with the Renk Scholarship. I am very humbled and honored to be given this award. I plan to work hard to positively represent the scholarship to the best of my ability. I would also like to thank you for your investment in my future. Your generosity will allow me to better focus on my studies and has inspired me to work my hardest. I hope to learn from your example of generosity and apply it to my daily life, as well as my future. Thank you again for your generosity and support.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of**

#### **Wisconsin-Madison?**

Attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison was always a goal of mine since a young age. I am privileged to have the opportunity to grow inside and outside of the classroom. I have always been a big Wisconsin sports fan and love being a part of that community. Being a part of a unique and intelligent student body, yet close to home, is why I chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

#### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

Throughout high school FFA and 4-H developed a passion for agriculture inside of me. I am interested in studying agriculture business management to develop my passion sparked in 4-H and the FFA and grow the passion into a career. Although I have been involved in production agriculture, I know it is not what I want to do for a career. Throughout my time as a supply chain intern I have learned I could see myself in a career where I get to work in a business but still feel my direct impacts to the agriculture industry. This is where I have grown in my passion for business to combine the two.

#### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

One of the greatest achievements of my life was being accepted into the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I believe my admission represented all of my work and accomplishments in high school. These accomplishments include being elected my 4-H and FFA chapter president. As well as the successful completion of a rigorous academic schedule that has helped prepare me for my current coursework.

#### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

My career goal is to combine my passion for agriculture and desire to work hard, to have a career in agribusiness. Having a career in agribusiness, I will strive to lead rural America and the agriculture industry into a growing and positive future. Being raised in the rural town of Monroe, I have witnessed first hand how generous and connected the agriculture community is. From support at livestock auctions, donations to FFA Chapters, and willingness to lend a helping hand at any time, the agriculture community has provided me and other youth with many opportunities. It is my personal goal to be in a position where I too can contribute to the future of agriculture in such a way.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Jacob  
Kafer**

**Level:**

Senior

**Major:**

Agricultural &  
Applied Economics,  
Business  
Management  
Certificate

**Hometown:**

Omro, WI



I am grateful to receive the Renk Scholarship. This scholarship will help me continue my education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It's very humbling being in the Agricultural & Applied Economics program and to have this scholarship support students like myself. I will do my best to represent a Renk Scholarship recipient the best way possible and I'm again extremely grateful to receive this scholarship.

**Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison because I felt it was the best way for me to learn and grow as a person. Being from a smaller town, it pushed me out of my comfort zone moving to Madison. I have also found the classes to be rewarding and have prepared me well for my future. I can contribute a lot to who I am today because of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and am forever thankful for that.

**Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I am majoring in Agricultural & Applied Economics with a certificate in Business Management. I chose this academic path because of my background in agriculture as I grew up on a dairy farm. I felt that this major would help me expand on my prior knowledge and set me up for the most success in the future. The classes have been enjoyable yet challenging and all the professors have been really supportive which is why I'm happy I chose to be an Agricultural & Applied Economics major.

**Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

An achievement I'm most proud of is being selected to play in the Wisconsin Football Coaches Association All-Star Football Game. It showed me that hard work does pay off if you put the time and effort into it. It was humbling to play for something bigger than yourself as everybody involved raised money for the Wisconsin Children's Hospital. It was just an overall great experience and I was honored to be a part of it.

**What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

Upon graduating college, I plan to go to law school hopefully here at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I've always had an interest in law and I want to pair that with my experience in agriculture. After law school, I hope to become an agricultural lawyer somewhere in Wisconsin. The ultimate goal is to find something as a career where I look forward to working everyday and am making a difference in the world.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## Renk Scholarship

**Cora  
Kleist**

**Level:**

Sophomore

**Major:**

Animal Sciences,  
Life Sciences  
Communication,  
Business  
Management  
Certificate

**Hometown:**

Richland Center, WI



I would like to sincerely thank you for this outstanding opportunity. This scholarship means a great deal to not only myself, but also my family. I come from a long line of rough, strong spoken farmers who have taught me the value of an education and a work ethic. The Renk Scholarship will give me the opportunity to complete my education at UW-Madison with less financial burden and stress. I cannot express my appreciation! Thank you!

**Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I chose to attend UW-Madison to expand my horizons.

I come from a small town just south of Wisconsin where everyone knows everyone and being different is looked upon negatively. I chose Madison for the opportunity to meet new people and enlarge my perspective of the world.

**Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I hope to join the educative agricultural community by double majoring in Animal Science and Life Science Communications to educate less fortunate individuals about farming and livestock practices. I chose the science and communications fields because I feel there is a common bridge when communicating sciences to the public.

**Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

My greatest achievement in my life was understanding at a young age that it takes all kinds of people from all walks of life to maintain an equilibrium. I believe that knowledge cannot be taught and for that reason, I must commend myself. The knowledge of balance allows me to think and see outside the box.

**What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

I aspire to be a well rounded individual. Wherever life may take me, I believe I will be happy. My goal in life is to educate consumers on food products and farming practices to help aid the growth of clean, sustainable farming.



## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Kylie  
Konyn**

**Level:**  
Junior

**Major:**  
Dairy Science,  
Business  
Management  
Certificate

**Hometown:**  
Escondido, CA



The dairy industry is not a financially self-sustaining industry. Regardless, it is an industry in which my family shares a common love for and a desire to provide a fresh wholesome product for consumers. Through our dairy, I have felt a strong connection to my passion and my future. I am extremely grateful for the Renk family for awarding me the Renk Scholarship to aid in my educational goals of becoming a dairy cattle geneticist or nutritionist. This scholarship will allow me to pursue my education in America's Dairyland.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of**

#### **Wisconsin-Madison?**

My roots are based in California, however, I am excited for my future and education in Wisconsin. After attending World Dairy Expo nearly seven years ago I fell in love with Madison, Wisconsin. Throughout my middle and high school years, I performed numerous science fair experiments modeled from previous UW-Madison research. I am excited to be immersed into the dairy industry in Wisconsin and to be involved with an amazing dairy science program and industry.

#### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

My current educational plans are to obtain my B.S. in Dairy Science. It is then my intention to pursue my M.S. in Animal Genetics or Nutrition. Both of these areas of science have developed as a result of my love for the dairy cattle industry. Looking forward towards the future, these two areas have some of the highest levels of possibilities in aiding dairy farmers with sustainable practices. I aim to assist in this development in my future.

#### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

Of all the activities that I am involved with, the thing that I would never give up is my involvement on my family's farm. Through our dairy, I have felt a strong connection to my passion and my future. Whether it be caring for the calves as a young girl, or my current role in blood testing, assisting with vet checks, performing embryo transfers and in vitro fertilization on my animals, and meeting with different company representatives, I have learned lessons which have helped to form me into who I am today. Through the farm, my passion for public speaking and education has grown tremendously. It is through my participation that I have been educated in many fields such as the biology of a cow, the chemistry involved in a properly balanced ration, and the importance of speaking multiple languages in order to be able to communicate with fellow employees and workers. Most importantly, it is through the farm that I have had the support of my family with which I can try, fail, and get back up again until I am able to succeed. The pride which I have gained as a result of my role on the family farm far exceeds that of any academic or public achievement as it has come from the humblest of roots and is cherished not only by me, but in the hearts of those around me who are always supporting me.

#### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

My goals for the future intertwine aspects of my education and my dairy herd. As previously mentioned, I would like to obtain my B.S. in Dairy Science. It is then my intention to pursue my M.S. in Animal Genetics or Nutrition. Using my education, I would



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

like to secure a career at the forefront of one of those two industries, whether it be in a lab doing research or out in the field working with others and involved in an industry that I love. I also plan to assist my family with the development of niche marketing, small scale creamery. It is my goal to develop a value-added opportunity on our dairy through direct marketing of our Jersey milk. It is through hard work, education, and dedication that I plan to achieve these goals.

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Olivia  
McDonald**

**Level:**  
Junior

**Major:**  
Life Sciences  
Communication,  
Business  
Management  
Certificate,  
Entrepreneurship  
Certificate, Food  
Systems Certificate

**Hometown:**  
Janesville, WI



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



I would like to thank the donors of the Renk Scholarship Institute for allowing me to receive this generous award. This money will go a long way in funding my education at UW-Madison as I pursue a degree in Life Sciences Communications with certificates in Agricultural Business Management, Food Systems, and Entrepreneurship. It means the world to me that the Department of Life Sciences Communications are willing to help young women like myself who have a deep passion to advocate for the agricultural industry through speech, writing, and journalism. Your support is helping me to fulfill my dreams of being a beacon of change and hope for the industry that I hold near and dear to my heart. Thank

you again for all your support, I truly cannot express how much I appreciate it!

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I chose to attend Madison for several different reasons. I grew up in southern Wisconsin and Madison always amazed me. The city was always bustling with art, culture, food, and people from all around the globe. I knew from a very young age that I wanted to be a part of that environment. Alongside this, I knew that UW-Madison had a prestigious agricultural programs with several different options and avenues to travel down. I also knew that I wanted to go into agricultural journalism, and what better place to start my career than Madison. I knew that if I went to school at UW-Madison I would be able to get a good education while being able to take advantage of all the networking opportunities that being a UW student provides. Finally, I was made aware of the Association of Women in Agriculture club my sophomore year of high school and the thought of being in an organization that supported, encouraged, and equipped young women like myself to be a part of the agricultural industry was something I wanted to be a p

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I chose to study Life Sciences Communications to better understand how to communicate scientific and controversial information to the general public. I was also aware that LSC used to be an Agricultural Journalism major, and communication in any, way, shape, or form has always been my passion. I am curious to learn about why people believe the information that they do, how to research different misconceptions with surveys and other methods, how strategic communications can help aid efforts to curb misperceptions in agriculture, and how supporting the agricultural industry can help to make strides toward using communication as a bridge between the agricultural industry and the general public. I am also pursuing certificates in Agricultural Business Management, Food Systems, and Entrepreneurship. My Agricultural Business Management certificate will not help me to me be a well-rounded and informed individual around business concepts, but also to take back home to my own family farm and aid in the continuation and success of our family business.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

My most proud achievement to date was being chosen as the Association of Women In Agriculture Communications Coordinator for next year. Being able to embody and propel the purpose of AWA and all of the great things we as an organization are doing for the community and ourselves on social media is a truly a dream come true for me. This is also going to be a great opportunity to practice the skills I have been learning in my college career while also getting more hands on experience. I am very honored to be a part of the Association of Women in Agriculture and this organization has played an imperative role in the success and enjoyment of my college career. Now serving this

organization as an officer will give me the opportunity to share my love for AWA with the community, advocate for this organization, and highlight all the professional development we are taking part in. All of which are skills I hope to implement in my future career as well.

**What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

My career goals are to use communications and marketing to advocate for the agricultural industry. I have been a part of the agricultural industry for my entire life and I have seen first hand the struggles farmers face due to misperceptions held by the public regarding agriculture. My goal is to bridge the gap between the agricultural industry and the public through public relations, journalism, marketing, sales, or a combination of all of the above.. The agricultural industry is one of the most, if not the most, important industry in existence. I would be honored to be a part of this industry for the rest of my life, and I am looking forward to utilizing all I have learned in my years at UW-Madison to propel me forward in my future career path.

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Josephine  
Minz**

**Level:**

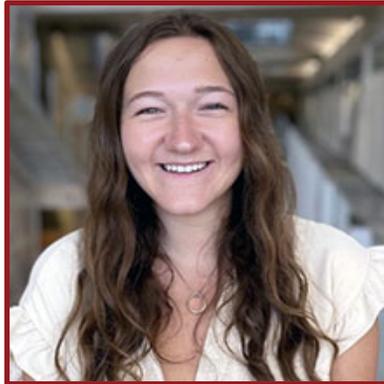
Senior

**Major:**

Agricultural &  
Applied  
Economics,  
Data Science,  
Economic Analytics  
Certificate

**Hometown:**

Waukesha, WI



I'm extremely grateful to have been awarded a Renk Scholarship. Being recognized for my hard work among the many (Agricultural and Applied Economics) AAE and ABM majors here at UW-Madison helps to encourage me to continue to push myself in my studies. Also, with the Renk scholarship comes opportunities to the network that comprises the Renk scholars. This adds so much additional value to the scholarship by providing me with an opportunity to connect with individuals with similar passions. Furthermore, through receiving this scholarship I am able to have a larger amount of financial freedom which allows for me to delegate more of my time towards clubs, my studies, and furthering my passions

for AAE during my time at UW-Madison. I would like to express my deepest gratitude and thanks for being selected as a Renk Scholar and receiving this award.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

In my original UW application, I wrote that I wanted to come to UW madison because of Babcock ice cream. While everyone laughs at this, it is in part because of the ice cream, and even more about the UW culture which hypes up the Ice cream. I choose to attend UW-Madison because of our culture to explore and innovate. UW-Madison's passion is to utilize and connect with the nature and land that surrounds us. I'm a born and bred badger fan who grew up going to Wisconsin Volleyball games. It was no shock to anyone when I choose to attend UW-Madison. However, I didn't choose Madison because I was used to it, I choose UW-Madison because of the campus culture and ability to pursue something I am passionate about alongside top-tier equally passionate scholars.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

Currently, I am doubling in Agricultura and Applied Economics (AAE) and Data Science with a certificate in Economic Analytics. I started off being just an AAE major and loved focusing in on environmental economics classes. It was a way to fulfill my love of numbers with my passion to protect the environment and better manage our resources. However, the sophomore year I realized I completed most of the classes needed for my major and started to explore a second major I quickly became interested in the multitude of different applications that Data Science has. Together, my majors combine to allow me to not only clean and organize data but then be able to produce deliverables that explain my data. I want to be able to elevate my environmental economics to the current market demands and innovations, which is using data science. I believe through my majors I will be able to make a difference in conservation and resource management, which is why I am so passionate about them.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

An achievement in my life that I am most proud of is how a project I worked on, Sol Solutions, within the club Enactus here on campus received over \$600,000 in funding for our solar bus implementation project. When I started on the project as a Freshman two years ago we didn't even know what type of solar project we wanted to do. After many scrapped ideas, many meetings, and long hours we were able to come up with a pilot program that is able to make bus stations safer and more accessible. The solar panels power a lightbulb and a tablet with bus times which help with safety via lighting at night and accessibility to the bus schedule for those without internet access. Our plan has scoped beyond the pilot to a campus-wide installation. I'm so proud that an idea I helped develop from scratch is now being implemented around campus and has been funded and supported by so many people.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

**What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

Post-graduation I hope to work in resource management and analytics. This summer I am interning for Alliant energy working in business strategy. I hope that through this, I am able to get a grasp of what it means to work in the energy industry and tie in both my energy economics and data science knowledge. I hope that I am able to use this experience to develop my skills and be able to then work at managing resources such as energy usage or agricultural resources when outside of college. I know I would like to go into some form of analytics and plan to go back for my master's in data science as well. While I am open for whatever opportunities come my way this is where I hope my future career endeavors take me.

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Megan  
Moede**

**Level:**  
Senior

**Major:**  
Agricultural  
Business  
Management,  
Life Sciences  
Communication

**Hometown:**  
Algoma, WI



I was awarded the Renk Scholarship Award and I would like to thank you for your generosity and monetary support. With this scholarship I will be able to focus more on my courses and student organizations instead of working extra hours during the school year. Additionally, this scholarship encourages me to succeed, and the support gives me the confidence to meet my full potential. Thank you!

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has been my number one choice for post-secondary education for as long as I can remember. My mother is a proud alum and received her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from the university and my brother recently graduated from the Business Analytics MS program. I choose Madison for not only having family ties, but also for the renowned agricultural and dairy science programs, as I have grown up on a hobby dairy farm and hold a strong passion for the agricultural and dairy industries. I knew Madison was the perfect place to not only receive a quality education in this field, but to also be presented with an abundance of opportunities on campus to get involved with based on my interests. Finally, the environment of Madison, WI is second-to-none. In addition to the gorgeous campus, the student-life is highly ranked and the instructors are personable and care about their students' success.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I am a second year student currently pursuing a dual degree in Agricultural Business Management and Life Sciences Communication. Growing up on my small-scale farm in rural Wisconsin, showing dairy cattle at local shows and national expos, and mentoring dairy interest-oriented youth were all a staple of my childhood experience and fueled my interest in pursuing an agricultural-related degree. To begin my collegiate career I was originally solely an Agricultural Business Management major, however, after becoming involved with UW's NAMA (National Agri-Marketing Association) Team I soon became interested in a career in agri-marketing and communications and have recently declared a dual degree in Life Sciences Communications.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

One of my proudest accomplishments thus far has been winning the Supreme Champion Cow of the Junior Show at World Dairy Expo in 2019 with a homebred cow co-owned with my older brother. This is an achievement I hold very near to my heart as I live on a small hobby dairy farm of nearly 20 head of homebred animals and it is not everyday a homebred animal wins such a renowned title. I have been showing at World Dairy Expo since I was a child and for many years I sat near the bottom of my classes. It is a special feeling to be able to see improvement in herd genetics after many years of perseverance and dedication.

### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

I am currently pursuing a dual degree in Agricultural Business Management and Life Sciences Communication with a desire to secure a professional career in agri-marketing and communications. Due to my long-standing passion for the agricultural industry, I hope to carry that passion into my profession and effectively communicate agriculture to the broader public as well as overcome misconceptions and stereotypes within the



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

industry. As my career progresses, I hope to use my status as a proud alum to become a trusted resource for networking opportunities, as well as a guide for students who are forging their approach to outstanding success here at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Kylie  
Nickels**

**Level:**

Senior

**Major:**

Dairy Science,  
Business  
Management  
Certificate

**Hometown:**

Watertown, WI



I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for your generosity in awarding me the 2022 Renk Scholarship. I am very honored that you have trusted my academic capabilities, passion for agriculture, and passion for agriculture business management. This scholarship is very meaningful to me because I have put a lot of time, effort, and consideration in adding an Agriculture Business Management Certificate to my degree plan, and I look forward to this being extremely helpful in my career path in my future endeavors. Because of this scholarship, I have the opportunity to continue my education at one of the best agriculture schools in the country. Your kindness and generosity was greatly

appreciated.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

Since I was a little girl, it has always been by dream and goal to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison for my post secondary education. As I was growing up, I had a lot of great role models that taught me many aspects of farming from showing dairy cattle to taking daily care of them. Many of these mentors attended UW-Madison and I knew that I wanted to follow in their footsteps. I have also had the opportunity to become very familiar with the campus through attending youth camps such as Badger Dairy Camp hosted by the Badger Dairy Club. As a camp attendee, it allowed me the opportunity to experience what life would be like as a badger, and I enjoyed every moment of it.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

Living and working on a dairy farm my entire life has truly shaped me into being the individual I am today and has truly ignited my passion for the dairy industry. After being part of the industry for so long, I have had many great role models who helped me get to where I am today and some day I would like to have the opportunity to give back to the next generation. By obtaining a Dairy Science Degree from University of Wisconsin-Madison, it will allow me in the future to work in the industry of my dreams. Dairy cows and the dairy industry have truly been my passion since I was little and I would like nothing better than to continue growing my knowledge at one of the best schools.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

This past year at the 2021 World Dairy Expo, I was awarded the Merle Howard Award. This award honors the outstanding Junior Exhibitor at World Dairy Expo. There is no application necessary, and the award selection is based upon showmanship, professionalism, integrity, strong work ethic, courtesy, sportsmanship, attitude, and leadership. This has truly been one of the greatest achievements in my life as all of my hard work, dedication, and passion in the dairy industry throughout the years finally paid off. Another achievements that I am proud to have accomplished was winning High Individual at the National 4-H Dairy Judging Contest at the 2017 World Dairy Expo. This accomplishment had allowed for my team and I to participate in the 2018 International Dairy Tour throughout Europe the following summer. This trip was truly one of a lifetime as I not only got to judge in another country, but I also had the opportunity to witness different ways of farming in other countries outside of the United States. I also was able to meet many individuals across the United States and Europe that share the same passion about agriculture as myself.

### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

Throughout all of my work experiences on numerous farms, I have become extremely interested in neonatal calves and youngstock, specifically nutrition of these young



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

animals. This past January I attended the Purina Dairy Conference, which was an accredited class through the University of Wisconsin-Madison. After attending this conference, I had become extremely interested in a sales and consulting position with a nutrition company. I am currently extremely interested in finding a nutrition sales and consulting position that incorporates the nutrition of neonatal calves and youngstock on dairy farms. This summer I am going to complete my internship with Alta Genetics, with a focus on sales and consulting, while focusing on reproduction on commercial dairy herds. I would also like to keep building my herd of registered animals under our prefix, Dreamfix Holsteins and Jerseys.

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Kirstin  
Novak**

**Level:**

Senior

**Major:**

Agricultural  
Business  
Management,  
Entrepreneurship  
Certificate, Food  
Systems Certificate

**Hometown:**

Sullivan, WI



Thank you so much for awarding me with the Renk Scholarship. This scholarship through CALS means a lot to me because it shows all of the support that is out there for us agricultural students. This scholarship means that I can more easily pay for college and that means so much as I come closer to graduation.

**Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I chose to attend UW-Madison because both of my parents attended Madison and enjoyed their time here. I knew that CALS is a great program to be a part of and I knew since I was young that I wanted to

attend UW-Madison and major in Agricultural Business Management. I am happy I chose to attend UW because I have made a lot of great connections with professors, other members in the variety of student orgs I am in and professionals within the industry.

**Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I am mostly interested in the communication side of Agricultural Business Management. After graduation I plan on focusing on marketing whether it is at a firm or by starting my own business. I have mostly made this decision within the last year through the variety of classes that opened me up to this side of the business world. My plan is to stay involved in agriculture and stay focused on agriculture marketing to share the industry that I love with others.

**Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

This last year, my biggest academic achievement has been turning a class into a business opportunity. I took LSC 532, Web Design for the Life Sciences and I decided that I really enjoy working on websites and with others to create an online space for themselves. This has turned into a few different job opportunities already and I am excited to see what more it can turn into.

**What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

My career plans have changed a few times over the last few years. I always thought I was going to return home to the farm, but I found that I may want to spread my wings a bit more. My career plans are built around agriculture, marketing and small communities. My short term goal is to work with others in the agriculture industry whether that is on a farm or in a marketing firm to learn from others and gain knowledge. My long term goal is to create a web design business to focus on helping small businesses in small communities develop an online platform to market and share their stories.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Olivia  
Spaight**

**Level:**

Senior

**Major:**

Dairy Science, Life  
Sciences  
Communication,  
Business  
Management  
Certificate

**Hometown:**

Waterford, WI



Thank you for your supporting me as I seek my undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. It is an honor to be selected for the Renk scholarship again this year, and I truly appreciate this gift at a time when I am very active on campus. I am very excited to be exploring every opportunity I can while at UW. That being said, this scholarship helps lift some of the financial burden and will make it easier for me to continue to pursue an education, both in and out of the classroom, in a subject area that I love. Again, thank you for this meaningful gift and opportunity.

### **Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

UW-Madison had always been one of my top choices, especially growing up in a family who loved the Badgers. Upon realizing that I wanted to pursue a degree in Dairy Science and then a career in agriculture, I knew that Madison would be the best choice for me. I still believe that I made the right decision in becoming a Badger, seeing now the unparalleled opportunities, amazing support, and high-quality education I have access to at the University. From getting hands-on experience at World Dairy Expo to enjoying chemistry study groups at the Terrace, my experience in Madison has been so fulfilling. I can't see myself belonging anywhere else, and I am very happy I chose to sport the Cardinal Red and White.

### **Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I am currently studying Dairy Science and Life Sciences Communication with a Certificate in Agricultural Business Management. I am fascinated by both the scientific research and communications marketing that goes into the development of industry products and connections, and I am currently exploring both of these interests in the lab or through my extracurriculars. I am active in the Association of Women in Agriculture, Badger Dairy Club, Collegiate Farm Bureau, National Agri Marketing Association, and also have started working as a freelance creative to build my knowledge outside of the classroom. These opportunities help me build upon my academic foundation and grow into a more well-rounded individual. I am excited to explore more opportunities as I finish up my time here.

### **Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

Two years ago, I had the privilege of organizing Racine County Farm Bureau's first ever "Farm to Table" Dinner, which connected local producers and consumers for a meal sourced entirely within thirty miles of the dining location. Taking on a project like this at age 17 was a bit difficult, as I was still finishing up my senior year of high school. However, I'm really glad I stuck with it through the entire process and was able to learn so much about what it takes to accomplish a goal. Asking for donations, organizing speakers, and sourcing all of the food locally were steps that proved to be challenging, but so worth it in the end. I am very glad with how the event turned out and am happy to say that the "Farm to Table" meal is coming back this year after a two-year hiatus.

### **What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

I hope to continue working within agriculture after I graduate Madison. Whether it be directly in production or more in the agricultural communications sector, I am hopeful that I will be able to work directly with producers and bring them the information that



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

they need to run a successful operation. Farmers and agriculturalists serve in many different roles and oftentimes seek out opportunities to learn and grow. I would deeply value the opportunity to grow alongside them and help the industry progress forward.

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Jonathan  
Verhasselt**

**Level:**

Sophomore

**Major:**

Agricultural  
Business  
Management

**Hometown:**

Kaukauna, WI



This scholarship is going to impact me immensely. I am paying for my tuition solely by myself, so this generous scholarship will help me have less student loans when I graduate. I got this scholarship from the Renk Agribusiness Institute, from the Renk family. I would like to thank the Renk family for this generous scholarship.

**Why you chose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?**

I decided to attend UW-Madison for multiple reasons. One reason was that my brother, dad, and uncles all attended UW-Madison. I also wanted to attend here

because they have a very prestigious agriculture program. I have been around agriculture all of my life.

**Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

My academic interests heavily involve agriculture. I have worked on our family farm since I was 11 years old. My grandpa started the farm, and I intend on the farm to stay in our family. I decided to major in Agricultural Business Management because farms now a days are operating more like a business and not like a small family farm.

**Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

The achievement in my life that I am most proud of is being named an all state football player. This is not the achievement I am most proud of because of the relation to sports, I am most proud of it because how hard I worked for it. I always loved football from when I was a kid, and after freshman year I made it my goal to be the best I could. I would work after practice and put a lot of time in the weight room.

**What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

My career plan is to graduate from UW-Madison with a degree in Agricultural Business Management. Then, I plan on working on my dad's farm right after college. I plan on taking over the farm when I am older and farming for the rest of my life. I am unsure if I will farm on that farm the rest of my life, and if that farm doesn't work out I will definitely still be involved in agriculture.



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

## CALS 2022-23 Scholarship Recipient

# Renk Scholarship

**Katie  
Weick**

**Level:**

Senior

**Major:**

Agricultural  
Business  
Management,  
Entrepreneurship  
Certificate,  
Sustainability  
Certificate

**Hometown:**

Chanhassen, MN



I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Renk family for their very generous donation. I can't tell you how appreciative I am to have been selected as a recipient of the Renk scholarship. Reading about this family's legacy of innovation in farming is truly inspiring. For me, this scholarship allows me to further my education, and focus my time on learning the tools and techniques that will allow me to excel in the agricultural industry. I am very excited to make the most of your generosity and take the next steps to becoming a leader in this field.

**Why you chose to attend the University of**

**Wisconsin-Madison?**

I was drawn to UW Madison because of the resources that they could provide as a larger school. I felt that I could pursue independent research in my interests using the resources the schools had to offer while getting the best possible education in my major. I am very glad that I have room in my schedule to study subjects in Agricultural Business, entrepreneurship, and sustainability. I also love how the Madison community of students and alumni give the campus an energetic atmosphere that provides a great balance between studying and fun. Cheering on our hockey or football teams after a long week of midterms is a huge bonus as well.

**Explain your academic interests and/or major and why you are interested in them?**

I came into college intending to apply to the business school, when I found that there was a major that combines my interests in business and agriculture, I was instantly interested. I wanted a major that would allow me to communicate with others on a daily basis and challenge me in creative, real world applications. I was interested in agriculture and learning about new, sustainable practices that could be implemented into agriculture to benefit farmers. I am also very interested in bridging supply chain gaps in ways that benefit the whole food system. I am minoring in entrepreneurship and sustainability to learn more about my specific interests in the inner workings of a business and new changes in sustainable agricultural practices respectively.

**Which achievement are you most proud of in your life and why?**

The first achievement that comes to mind when I think about what I'm proud of is my work as an Advising Fellow for Matriculate. Matriculate is a nationwide non-profit organization that trains and connects college students on how to mentor high achieving, low income students in one on one advising. I have been advising with this organization for a year now, and have helped three girls get into their best fit college. I meet with them throughout the year to check their progress, help them with their essays, and find scholarships and other aid to close financial gaps that could have prevented them from attending college. It is so rewarding to see these high school juniors and seniors mature throughout the process. I love getting the opportunity to celebrate all of their successes with them and give them the encouragement and motivation that they need.

**What are your future career plans or aspirations?**

In terms of my career, I am currently leaning toward working in the food supply chain and operations sector. I recently started taking classes related to supply chain operations and it has been one of my most interesting classes I have taken so far. I think it would be a great experience to work for a food supply company and see the processes that I am



College of  
Agricultural & Life Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

learning about in action. However, I am also interested in the financial side of agriculture. I am getting a certificate in entrepreneurship and I am hoping to one day get my Masters and run my own agricultural finance firm in the future. I love to help people, and advising farmers and agricultural businesses on their finances seems like it would be a very fulfilling career for me.