

Renk Scholarship

Cole Hicken

Level:

Junior

Major:

Agricultural and
Applied Economics
BS, Life Sciences
Communication BS

Hometown:

Waupun, WI



Post-Secondary education is something that not all have the opportunity to pursue. Because of this I am always grateful for the position that I am in. This being said, it's an expensive one, and the Renk scholarship is a great relief to the stress that the cost of education puts upon a student. This will allow me to focus my efforts on my education as well as other pursuits instead of focusing on making money right away to push me through college. This scholarship directly impacts my success in the future and I want to thank you for your support of Wisconsin students.

Why did you choose 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 and Applied Economics as well as 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 goal of becoming a loan officer.

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 loan officer. I want to be involved within the industry, but from the perspective of financing and the economy. Farmers and agriculturalists alike should be able to rely on specialists to aid them in successful pursuits. A supportive role that will progress the future of agriculture.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Cora Kleist

Level:

Junior

Major:

Animal Sciences BS,
Life Sciences
Communication BS,
Business
Management
Certificate, Digital
Studies Certificate

Hometown:

Richland Center, WI



I cannot express my gratitude for the opportunities presented by receiving the Renk Scholarship for another academic year. College tuition is a terrifying subject for myself and with this scholarship it is a little less scary. This scholarship has allowed me to continue to pursue a dual degree with dual certificates at UW-Madison and I am beyond grateful for the opportunity. Thank you to the committee and donors that have made the Renk Scholarship possible.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I chose to attend UW-Madison for the more inclusive culture as opposed to small town Wisconsin. UW-Madison also has provided great opportunities for scholarships, future internships, and certificates within agricultural fields.

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

I was raised on a small beef and swine farm. From a young age I was given the opportunity to exhibit these livestock on a county, state, and national level. In the process of being an exhibitor, I was able to witness the lack of consumer knowledge on the production process. I chose a double major in Animal Science and Life Science Communications to hopefully help bridge the divide between producers and consumers.

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

I cannot express just one achievement I am proud of myself for achieving. I feel as if my greatest achievements include overcoming barriers I least expected to reach an outcome. I find most of these opportunities to be academically. I am proud of myself for pushing through family and other issues to still strive to succeed in the classroom.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

I plan to work in educating consumers and producers on livestock practices in hopes of finding new advancements to aid in production. I aspire to decrease the gap among producers and consumers and to find safer, more effective practices for production.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

CALS 2023-24 Scholarship Recipient

Renk Scholarship

Emily Strauss

Level:

Junior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS,
Digital Studies
Certificate

Hometown:

Lake Mills, WI



I would like to sincerely say thank you for the award of the 2022 Renk Scholarship. This means a lot to me in that it helps to keep my debt ratio down while trying to complete my education. Since my senior year of high school I have been actively looking for scholarships to try to keep my student loans to a minimum. Through generous scholarships such as this I have been able to do that.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

UW-Madison has been my dream school since I was very young. I started my college career at UW-Platteville as I was a member of the Women's soccer team. By the start of my second year I just knew my heart wasn't in it and I didn't feel like it was a good fit for me. I decided to try to follow my dream and attend UW-Madison. That dream became a reality for me this past year as I transferred to UW-Madison..

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

I am currently an Ag Business major. I grew up on a dairy farm in Lake Mills, WI. I had always known since I was very young that I would go into something related to agriculture. My whole life revolved around agriculture. I volunteered at many events, showed cattle at many shows and did many fundraisers for ag related clubs. It is really all I knew and had not thought of going into anything else.

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

I would have to say I consider my acceptance to UW-Madison my biggest achievement to date. There is a lot you have to do and prepare in order to transfer to UW-Madison. I worked very hard, was inducted into an honor society, made sure everything was in on time. When I got the notification I was accepted all the hard work paid off. I had achieved a dream of mine.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

I would like to work in the field of marketing. Specifically, I would like to be an advocate for the dairy industry. The dairy industry has not been good for many years and needs all the promotion possible. I would like to work with Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin promoting Wisconsin Dairy products.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Faith Baerwolf

Level:

Freshman

Major:

Agricultural and
Applied Economics
BS, Life Sciences
Communication

Hometown:

Columbus, WI



I am very thankful to be receiving the Renk Scholarship. It is so great to have support from the Renk family while in college. The scholarship will help fund my education at UW-Madison. I am grateful for the financial help.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I chose to attend UW-Madison because it is one of the best agricultural schools in the state. It is also a great educational school. UW-Madison is also close to home so I can still learn from the family business while at school. UW-Madison also has great professors that I can learn from.

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

My major is Agricultural and Applied Economics. I am interested in this major because I have always been interested in business and how the economy works. I grew up watching my dad run his business and have always been fascinated with how everything works. I would always give my own ideas for the company.

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

The achievement I am most proud of is getting accepted into UW-Madison. I worked really hard in high school to be able to attend this university. I was actively involved in multiple clubs in high school in order to have a higher chance of getting accepted. I love attending this school, and I am glad all my hard work in high school paid off when the admissions decisions came out last year.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

My career plan is to eventually take over my family's business. I want to work somewhere else in the beginning so I can get outside experience I can take back with me. I can learn a lot from others and other companies. I want to continue and expand the business.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

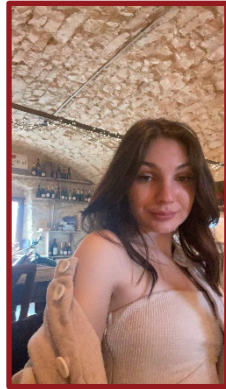
Renk Scholarship

**Gabrielle
Shedbalkar-
Harden**

Level:
Junior

Major:
Agricultural and
Applied Economics
BS

Hometown:
Shaumburg, IL



I am very thankful to receive the Renk Scholarship award. Receiving this award allows me to continue my education at UW-Madison and gives me the opportunity to graduate in Spring 2024 with a degree in Agricultural and Applied Economics. This scholarship gives me the chance to finish a degree I have found valuable for my future goals and gets me passionate to learn. I could not be more thankful to receive this award and to receive the financial gain to successfully finish my last year of college.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I chose to attend UW-Madison because of the atmosphere. It is surrounded by nature, and the school vibes are not comparable to anywhere else. UW-Madison has been a place where I love to spend not only the school year but summers too, it has become my second home and a place where I find comfort. Overall, the campus is unique and the classes allow me to challenge myself.

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

I am majoring in Agricultural and Applied Economics. I found my passion for economics in high school and wanted to further my studies of the subject in college. I did not want to take basic economics because I wanted to explore many different present topics in relation to the subject. The one thing that really interests me about the AAE major is that you can look at poverty and environmental factors on a different scale to really understand what economic situation they fall into.

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

The one achievement I am most proud of is that I push myself out of my comfort level to continue to grow as a person. Over the past three years, I have taken most opportunities that are presented to me even if I find them to be a little scary at first. Instead of sticking to what I know, I want to get to know other people and experiences. This is the exact reason why I am very proud that I continue to step out of my comfort zone because it guides me to nothing but rewarding experiences.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

In the future, I would like to work on a global scale. I would like to work with others around the world and possibly be centered in another country to try to help minimize some of the economic factors that are causing great hardships. Overall, I would like to work for the good of others and not just for myself or a corporation. I would like to explore other areas of economics and how it is applied in other economies rather than just the US.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Jacob Roden

Level:

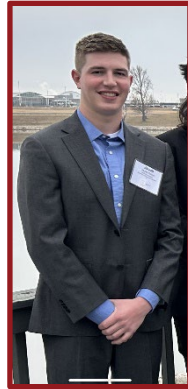
Sophomore

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS

Hometown:

Grafton, WI



The Rank Scholarship is very important to me because it greatly aids me in attending UW Madison. The financial aid will allow me to attend school and learn new things, meet new people, and have lots of great experiences. I plan on implementing my newfound knowledge to help others in the agricultural business and finance field. This scholarship will allow me to establish connections at school that will aid me in my professional and academic career.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I chose to attend UW-Madison because I believe it is the best university in the world for my intended area of study, agricultural business. I love the Wisconsin idea and want to help contribute to it. I have made lots of great friends and memories at UW-Madison and look forward to learning even more about the industry. I hope to get an internship in agriculture business this upcoming summer through the great connections I have been able to make here at UW.

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

I am interested in studying agricultural business. Growing up on a dairy farm had influenced my to continue to learn about agriculture and improve the industry. I would like to implement my knowledge to help others in agriculture. I am very excited to see what connections I am able to make to with others in the industry through my experience at UW-Madison.

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

An achievement in my life that I am very proud of is my WALSAA outstanding student award for my grades in FISC. My time in FISC really opened my eyes to all of the opportunities ne has in the agriculture industry. There are so many great people doing so many great things to make a positive impact on the whole entire world from being more efficient to feed a growing world population to the ways we are improving our practices to take better care of the land, water and air. Being named an outstanding student encouraged me that I could go on to further my education to improve the industry.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

I hope to pursue a career in the agribusiness sector. I enjoy working on farm however I would like to gain some experience off farm to see what else is out there. I would like to try to help many other farmers possibly through smart financial planning or future projections to help them become more profitable.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Jenna Wiker

Level:

Junior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS

Hometown:

Livingston, WI



I received the Renk scholarship and there are many reasons that I am grateful for this scholarship. I grew up in a rural, farming community in southwest WI and receiving financial has been very difficult leaving me to pay for most of my education by myself. This scholarship will greatly help relieve the financial burden and stress that comes with paying for tuition.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I chose to attend UW-Madison for many different reasons. One of these reasons is that I am from southwest Wisconsin so Madison was not too far away from home for me. However, I grew up in a very small town and wanted to experience something new and push myself out of my comfort zone and live in a city. I also chose UW-Madison because the college has a deep appreciation for the agricultural industry and I knew that I would be able to gain a lot of knowledge and relationships in my time at UW-Madison.

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

Growing up on a dairy farm I have always found the agricultural industry very interesting. I am an Agricultural Business Management major and I find the marketing side of agriculture particularly interesting and hope to learn more about it during my time here at UW-Madison. I would love to be able to use marketing to help small farmers post-graduation.

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

The greatest achievement in my life so far is that I did a year of college while still in high school. Throughout my high school career, I took a lot of college classes so that I could save money and graduate early from college. However, this took a lot of hard work and dedication but I am very proud that I stuck with it.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

After college, I plan on working in Agriculture related marketing. I am passionate about helping small farmers as well as rural communities and would love to be able to work for an agricultural marketing company that has these same goals. I would also love the ability to travel for my job and be able to learn more about agriculture in other parts of the United States but also the world.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

**Jonathan
Verhasselt**

Level:
Junior

Major:
Agricultural
Business
Management BS

Hometown:
Kaukauna, WI



I am very grateful to receive the Renk Scholarship. The Renk Scholarship will help me immensely in furthering my education. I have to pay for my own schooling, so the monetary value of the award will assist in paying for my school a ton.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I decided to attend UW-Madison for many reasons. I was very interested in agriculture from a young age because I grew up on a dairy farm. My brother and dad also attended Madison, and I only heard good things. So, with Madison being one of the top agriculture schools in the country and my family going here, I

decided it was my best option.

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

I am interested in agriculture because I grew up on a dairy farm. Since I was 12 years old, I was always a part of the dairy. Once I got a little older, I was interested in business as well. So, I chose to go into agricultural business management here at UW-Madison.

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

The achievement that means the most to me is getting into UW-Madison. Going here was a dream for me ever since I came here in 8th grade. I decided I wanted to go here and put in a ton of work in high school to try and make it happen. I would do all of the extra curriculars that were available and try my best in school to get good grades.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

My career plan is to take over the family dairy. Right now, we milk around 3,000 cows, and I would like to expand the dairy with my brother and cousins. I would like to make our operation as efficient as possible to not waste any resources. There are many different ways to do this that I would like to bring back to the farm.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Joshua Mumm

Level:

Junior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS,
Global Health
Certificate

Hometown:

Madison, WI



Being selected for the Renk Scholarship through the Agriculture and Applied Economics Department is a great honor and I cannot express my gratitude enough. The generous financial reward this scholarship offers will help me focus more on my education and experiences and less over student loans. Double majoring in Agricultural Business Management and Economics means that I need to take credit heavy semesters to graduate on time and leaves me little time to work as much as I'd like.

Financial burdens and school expenses are a huge weight on my mind, so I am extremely grateful for any assistance I'm fortunate enough to receive. This scholarship will greatly help me focus on my education and life experiences to better myself and give me invaluable skills I can take with me following graduation.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

Growing up in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, UW-Madison was the school kids aspired to go to. Being able to receive a high quality education for an in-state price in a more diverse area is why I choose UW-Madison. As an Agriculture Major, I could not ask for a better school to attend. I came into UW undecided and was not sure what my place here was until I found the ABM major in CALS. The agriculture department is knowledgeable, experienced, and has a desire to see their students succeed. What's so special about UW-Madison is the opportunities one has explore interests they have. With a huge variety of majors and student organizations, I have endless opportunities to meet unique people and have impactful experiences that will help shape me into who I am following graduation. While I wasn't sure the direction I wanted to go when I began at UW, I was able to explore my interests and gain experiences that allowed me to find a field I am passionate about.

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

Before this year I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I'd always been involved with business clubs in high school but also grew up in the country and the outdoors. Then, last summer I worked on a small hobby farm and land restoration area. This job gave me some experience in sustainable agriculture and conservative land management practices and instilled in me a passion for outdoor work. This job helped me decide to pursue a degree in agricultural business management and economics. These majors mix my passion for business with agriculture and food production. I hope to learn more about sustainable agricultural practices along with the financial and economic side of food production to utilize my degree to help decrease agriculture's environmental impact while keeping it profitable. To convince people to make sustainable change, food production needs to remain profitable without sacrificing the environment.

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

I have been into street and trail running since the pandemic but most of my experience has been in Wisconsin. It wasn't until last summer when I ran my first serious trail run. When compared to running in the Rocky Mountains of Montana and Colorado, Wisconsin couldn't have a more mellow terrain. When my brother suggested a 18 mile trail run with over 3,000 feet of elevation gain in Glacier National Park, I had no desire to do it. We were on a family vacation, and I had the "let myself relax" mentality. However, my brother wore me down and I finally agreed to run, and I am so glad I did. We ran Skyline Trial, and it stands out to be one of the most beautiful trails I have ever been on. The terrain was brutal and was much more difficult than anything I had run before, but despite the pain and soreness, we finished the run. This accomplishment showed me that I could push my limits and have the willpower to complete something regardless of my comfort to better myself.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

I'm hoping to utilize my degrees in ABM and Economics to pursue a career in sustainable agriculture. I have a passion for wildlife, land, conservation, and big wide open country. We need to learn better how to use the natural resources we have in an efficient and environmentally conscious way. The world needs to be fed, but it also needs to be sustained. I plan to first learn the production side of agriculture and how farms operate in the hope of eventually finding a career in agriculture policy focused on sustainability. To better regulate and dictate agricultural legislation, it's crucial to understand the operations of farms and what inputs go into production to learn how it can be improved. While I am still not set on a specific field in agriculture, I know that the ABM and Econ programs at UW will prepare me to make a difference and be successful in helping create a sustainable future for farming.

Renk Scholarship

Katie Weick

Level:

Senior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS,
Entrepreneurship
Certificate,
Sustainability
Certificate

Hometown:

Chanhassen, MN

I am so thankful to the Renk family for their generous donation and support! The Renk Scholarship takes a huge financial weight off of my education. This scholarship also gives me the freedom to pursue my interests in Agricultural Business Management, focusing on sustainability and supply chain management. This is my last year at UW Madison, and I am committed to making it count focusing on my classes and work at the Center for Dairy Research. The generosity of this scholarship, Renk family, and the Renk Agribusiness Institute makes me feel so supported and inspired to succeed while encouraging the people around me.



Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I chose the University of Wisconsin - Madison because the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences had such a strong background in agricultural research. I was drawn to the culture of innovation, and was very excited to be part of a larger school to have the opportunity to pursue a wide variety of interests and find what was right for me. I've also loved the community that I've found here through classes, clubs, and social activities. Madison offers a great balance of academics and extracurriculars so I can get the best, well rounded education.

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

I am going into my senior year at Madison majoring in Agricultural Business Management with certificates in Sustainability and Entrepreneurship. Although I do not come from a farming background, I grew up in an area outside of Minneapolis, MN where I was surrounded by large agribusiness firms like General Mills, CHS, Cargill, and Land O' Lakes which sparked my interest in the agricultural production sector. I also love learning about new and innovative ways to farm and produce US goods more sustainably to protect the longevity of our planet without sacrificing profits in the present day. I have recently been pursuing an interest in the operations sector, with a focus on the trade of agricultural products internationally. I hope to one day use the things that I have learned, professionally and academically, to start my own business.

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

I am proud of obtaining an internship with Cargill in operations management. The reason being that I feel that this acceptance represents the culmination of a lot of hard work in the three years of college I have under my belt. I came into college undecided, before finding my footing in CALS with a degree I was passionate about. I've learned so much from my peers, as well as my professors through research projects supervised by UW faculty. I've loved connecting with people and learning about the diverse perspectives in this field. It has felt like an uphill battle at times, but this achievement made me feel like all of the hard work and dedication I have put toward my major paid off. It makes me proud to see how far I've come.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

In terms of my future career, I have discovered an interest in the food supply chain and operations sector, possibly with a focus in research and development for agricultural products. I have taken classes related to supply chain management, and I am currently working at the Center for Dairy Research as a Cheesemaking Assistant, which has helped me understand my interest in researching new innovations in agriculture. I think it would be a great experience to work for a food supply company (such as Cargill) to see the processes that I am learning about in action. I hope to one day find and understand inefficiencies in the food supply chain and find new ways to correct these issues, either continued research through a Masters degree or creating my own business that can work to correct these issues in the real world.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Kelly Herness

Level:

Sophomore

Major:

Agricultural and
Applied Economics
BS, Life Sciences
Communication BS

Hometown:

Whitehall, WI



I am beyond grateful to receive the \$2,000 Renk Scholarship to help fund my education at UW-Madison. It would not be possible for me to study at UW-Madison without the generous donors who make scholarships like this possible. I hope that my education will put me in a position to give back to my rural Wisconsin community and the farmers and agriculturalists who have helped me become who I am today. This scholarship allows me to obtain a high quality education without putting additional financial strain on my farming family and enables me to focus on applying for internships that will help my future career, rather than being stressed over funding my education. Thank you again, Renk Family, for this wonderful opportunity and for helping me study agricultural economics at UW!

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I grew up surrounded by cornfields, dairy cattle, and John Deere tractors, where I quickly learned to love everything about agriculture and Wisconsin. I chose to attend UW-Madison so I would be able to remain close to my roots and family and gain a high quality education at the same time. Although I love my rural community, I also wanted the opportunity to experience city life and expose myself to different perspectives, lived experiences, and people, all of which UW-Madison offered. The countless opportunities for scholarships through the university, like this one, was the final push for me to attend UW-Madison.

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

Currently, I am an Agricultural and Applied Economics Major, double majoring in Life Science Communication, and looking at getting a certificate in Public Policy. Agricultural and Applied Economics interests me because it allows me to understand how things work in the agriculture industry and at home on my family farm. I grew up hearing about milk prices and commodity markets but I never understood the why and how behind them until I began taking Agricultural and Applied Economics courses. Life Science Communications interests me because communication is important in every career, especially in agriculture. I hope that studying communication that is rooted in the life sciences will make me a well-equipped future employee and agricultural advocate. My interest in Public Policy stems from my interest in agriculture from a governmental perspective, which I developed when on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection Agriculture (DATCP) Youth Council in 2021-2022.

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

The achievement that I am most proud of happened during my time spent in FFA. In June of 2019, I became the Wisconsin 1st place winner in the FFA Creed Speaking Contest. Because of this success, I had the honor of representing the State of Wisconsin in the Creed Speaking Contest at the National FFA Convention. I was so proud to represent the state that I loved while also using my unique agricultural experiences to formulate answers to questions on the spot. This experience and how it boosted my confidence encouraged me to pursue three more speaking contests throughout high school, two of which I competed at the state level for. These opportunities improved my public speaking skills and furthered my interest in studying communications.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

Although I do not know what particular job I hope to have, I do know that I want to make a difference in the agriculture industry. In particular, I am interested in working with agriculture from a governmental perspective. I hope to combine my farm grown work ethic, valuable education at UW-Madison, and my personal agricultural experiences to continue moving Wisconsin agriculture in a positive forward direction. I also hope that by working with agriculture, I can give back to my rural farming community that helped shape who I am and instilled the love and appreciation of agriculture within me.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Kylie Konyn

Level:

Junior

Major:

Dairy Science BS,
Business
Management
Certificate, Science
Communication
Certificate

Hometown:

Exondido, CA



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



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 did you choose 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 with certificates in Agricultural Business Management and Life Science Communications. 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.

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 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.

Renk Scholarship

Megan Moede

Level:

Senior

Major:

Agricultural and
Applied Economics
BS, Life Sciences
Communication BS

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 did you choose 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 program, 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 double major in Agricultural and Applied Economics 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.

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. 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?

This upcoming summer, I have secured a competitive commodity trading internship with an agricultural trading company. In this role, I will be responsible for buying, moving, processing, and/or selling agricultural commodities, specifically edible oils. Working alongside some of the best traders in the industry and building relationships with internal and external stakeholders will enable me to show initiative, add value, and learn the process of trading first-hand. With my understanding of economics, communications, customer service, and business decision-making rationale, I am confident that I will thrive in this fast-paced and dynamic working environment. Commodities are essential for everyday life and integral to the global economy. Trading provides the opportunity to minimize price volatility and risk for agricultural producers, and I am excited to play an incumbent role in such a highly influential field.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Molly Olstad

Level:

Junior

Major:

Life Sciences
Communication BS,
Business
Management
Certificate, Digital
Studies Certificate,
Entrepreneurship
Certificate

Hometown:

Stoughton, WI



It is my absolute honor to accept the Renk Scholarship. This scholarship means so much to me as it will financially support me in my education. Again, thank you CALS for the continuous support.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I have dreamt about attending UW-Madison since I was in third grade. I grew up attending badger football, basketball, and hockey games with my family. UW-Madison has top-notch academics which I have the ability to thrive in. I worked hard to get to Madison, and I will keep my successes going to set me up for the future. On Wisconsin.

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

I've always had a passion for agriculture and communications. I grew up showing dairy cattle and haven't stopped since. I've always been interested in a major that allows for endless opportunities. This is what sparked my interest to major in Life Sciences Communications as it is so broad. With that, I have Certificates in Agriculture Business Management, Entrepreneurship and Digital Studies.

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

My biggest accomplishment was winning Supreme Champion of the Junior and Open shows at World Dairy Expo with my heifer Milksource Thunder-ET. I will never forget walking across the colored shavings in front of a huge crowd at the best show in the world. Nothing will ever explain the amount of joy in my smile when it was first announced. I'm extremely grateful to have been exposed to the show industry and will continue to work hard in developing, training and preparing my heifers.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

In my future, I would like to work in marketing to promote agriculture to continue to grow and prosper. I love working with people and think that agriculture marketing would fit me best, given the endless opportunities. I recently accepted an internship with Curious Plot, an agriculture and food marketing agency in Minneapolis, MN.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Natalie Sander

Level:

Junior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS

Hometown:

Mazonmanie, WI



I am very grateful to the Renk Agribusiness Institute and the Renk family for awarding me the Renk Scholarship for the upcoming school year. The tuition assistance means a lot to me and my family, though, being awarded this scholarship holds more meaning than simple tuition assistance. I am proud to have been chosen to represent the Renk institute and I am very grateful for the institute's desire to invest in my future. I hope to someday give back to others in the same way those who saw promise in my future gave to me.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

Attending the University of Wisconsin "Madison has always been regarded as a high achievement by people in my family and community. I set my sights on attending this school and worked very hard throughout high school to ensure that I would. I entered college undecided on my major but knew Madison's diverse number of degrees and great advising and assistance would point me in the right direction. The culture offered by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is by far one of the most welcoming and easy to learn in environments. The small class sizes and willingness of both other students and instructors has helped me dig deeper into my studies and enjoy learning here at UW-Madison.

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

I began college undecided on a major, but knew I wanted something broadly applicable to many things yet practical and to-the-point. Business seemed like the right answer, but I did not like the more theoretical approach to studies that degrees in the business school offered. On the recommendation of an advisor, I looked into Agricultural Business Management and haven't looked back. I feel this degree will set me up for success no matter what career path I choose to go down due to its practicality and ability to be applied to a variety of different careers.

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

Something I am very proud of achieving in my college career thus far is my contribution to the Hooper Riding Club through the Union. This year was my first year holding an executive position for the club and I put many hours into lifting the club up through membership participation and fundraising. I was awarded an award for outstanding leadership at the end of this school year, and I have been elected as Hooper Riding Club president for next year. I am incredibly proud of the work I have done for the club to inspire members to be more active. I also feel honored to be an important part of the Wisconsin Union and to be able to continue inspiring positive change amongst members and students with my role as president.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

Currently, I am planning on going into the field of construction management or bidding and estimating for construction projects. I hope my background in business given to me through my major will help propel me into making smart business choices in this career path. I was drawn to this career because of its very realistic and practical approach to work and the emphasis on planning and organizing. I also think the leadership qualities I have grown throughout college will help make me a great candidate for this career path. It is hard to completely know where my career will take me after college, but I am confident in the skill set I have acquired through my time at UW-Madison both in and out of the classroom will help me excel in whatever I choose to do.



College of
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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

**Olivia
McDonald**

Level:
Senior

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

Hometown:
Janesville, WI



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the donors of the Renk Scholarship. This scholarship gives me the opportunity to continue focusing in on my studies, while being more involved in clubs and organizations on campus. This scholarship means more room for me to truly make a difference, not only on the UW-Madison Campus, but also for the greater agricultural community in which I come from, and hope to go back to after I graduate. I cannot thank the donors of the Renk Scholarship enough for their help in removing some of the financial hardship of college for me and my family, and allowing me to continue to work toward my degree here at UW-Madison. Thank you!

Why did you choose 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 part of.

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 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 of my family's farming operation.

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 the 2022-2023 school 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 has given me the opportunity to share my love for AWA with the community, advocate for this organization, and highlight all the

professional and social development we are taking part in. All of which are skills I hope to implement in my future career.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

My career goals are to use communications, marketing, and public relations 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 regarding agriculture. My goal is to take the communication tools and experiences I have gained through my college educate and be a facilitator of meaningful conversation and hopefully policy reform for farmers who are struggling to use their voice. 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.

Renk Scholarship

Samuel Elko

Level:

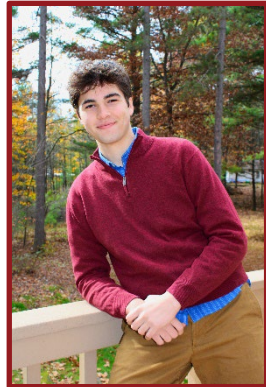
Junior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS

Hometown:

Milwaukee, WI



I am incredibly grateful to have received the 2022 Renk Scholarship. This scholarship means a great deal to me and will allow me to continue my studies with less of a financial burden. Receiving this scholarship has also encouraged me to keep immersing myself in agriculture business here at UW.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

I chose to attend UW-Madison because I love the atmosphere of the city and campus. The programs here are excellent and the student culture is rich and fun. Several relatives of mine have attended UW so I have a strong family connection with the school. Having grown up in Milwaukee, I also have a great appreciation for being able to stay in Wisconsin and still get all

the new experiences that come from being away in college.

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

I am currently pursuing a degree in Agricultural Business Management in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. I landed on this major after wanting to combine my interests in business and sciences. Agriculture is a huge part of Wisconsin and UW has some of the leading agriculture programs and studies in the world, making it an excellent place to study ag business. I am a lifelong French speaker and am interested in pursuing a French certificate in addition to my ABM degree.

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

I am most proud of myself for graduating from my high school with an IB diploma. Completing the International Baccalaureate program was the hardest thing I've done academically leading up to college. The whole experience has greatly benefited me by preparing me for rigorous school that pushes me to learn like here at UW.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

I hope to eventually complete my degree here at UW and find employment with a company in the Midwest. I am deeply interested in commodities and commodity trading and hope to find work involved in agricultural commodities trading here in Wisconsin and the rest of the Midwest. Although I will be looking to handle agricultural business, I am open to working in other areas of business and commodities.



College of
Agricultural & Life Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Renk Scholarship

Zachary Smith

Level:

Junior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS,
Development
Economics
Certificate,
Economic Analytics
Certificate

Hometown:

Brookfield, WI



Being granted the Renk Scholarship is a great honor and privilege. This scholarship will go a long way in allowing me to pursue my academic interests at UW-Madison. As an agricultural business student this award also means a lot to me in terms of my field of study. I am greatly appreciative of being considered and chosen for this award.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

To be honest, I originally came to Madison for engineering, not CALS. Through some thinking and decision-making I decided that I would rather pursue a business degree. After not being accepted into the

business school, my advisor recommended ag business so I transferred to CALS. It has now been two years since the change and I have stuck with my major and really found my place in both agriculture and within CALS.

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

Originally I knew nothing about agriculture and only a bit about business. Through speaking with professors, advisors, and alumni I have found that commodity trading is what interests me the most. I had an internship doing trading last year and have another one with Cargill this coming summer. Trading brings together the physical and personal nature of agriculture, the international studies of macroeconomics, and the analytical side of finance. All of these are reasons I am pursuing a career in commodity trading.

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

Recently I along with some of my peers competed at the NACTA 2023 Ag business competition. This was my first competition in the agricultural world so to me it meant a lot to try and do well to prove myself. Our team won second place and I placed 5th overall individually. These awards were a testament to the hardwork both myself and my team put in, thus I am quite proud of the results. I look forward to competing again the next year and hopefully win more awards.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

I plan on pursuing a career in commodity trading. I already had an internship last year doing risk management with futures, this experience made me more excited to pursue the career. I also competed in the CME university trading competition which taught me more about what it takes to trade. I have a great internship with Cargill this coming summer doing commodity trading. I hope this internship will lead to a job after school and from there I aspire to move up in the hierarchy of traders.



College of
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Renk Scholarship

Zirui Zhou

Level:

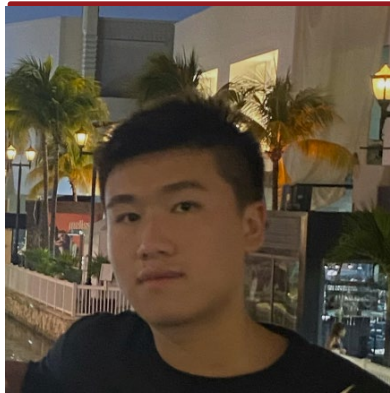
Senior

Major:

Agricultural
Business
Management BS,
Sports
Communication
Certificate

Hometown:

Xiamen Fujian,
China



I am delighted and immensely grateful to have been chosen for the Renk Scholarship. This is not only the first scholarship I have been awarded during my time in college, but it is also an incredible honor. It is immensely fulfilling to have my academic achievements and future career aspirations acknowledged in such a significant way. This recognition will always hold a special place in my heart, and I will strive to continue improving myself so that I can secure more scholarships in the future.

Why did you choose to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison?

Without a doubt, I can confidently state that the offer from UW-Madison is the most outstanding opportunity I have ever received. The school boasts exceptional infrastructure, as well as a world-class faculty and student body. A close friend of mine who attended UW-Madison shared with me their experience, emphasizing the stunning beauty of the campus and the welcoming nature of the community. When I received the offer to join Badger nation, I knew instantly that I could not pass up this chance to be a part of such an exceptional institution.

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

My interests are incredibly diverse and range across various fields. I am particularly drawn to management, farming, and sports media, as they have always been an integral part of my life. During the period of 2017 to 2019, I had the privilege of interning with my father, who runs a green construction company. The experience proved to be invaluable as I acquired crucial management skills. Despite this, I recognize the need for more formal education in business management. Apart from my interests in management, I am an avid reptile lover, and turtles are my favorite. Additionally, sports, especially soccer and fishing, hold a special place in my heart and have played an essential role in shaping my character.

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

Completing a government special fund audit project with my colleagues at a CPA firm in 2021 is one of my proudest accomplishments in life. Being fully involved in the whole project and taking over the government project for the first time provided me with a range of new experiences that I had not encountered since childhood. The month-long work allowed me to gain insights and knowledge that have been incredibly beneficial to me. I am thrilled with what we accomplished and grateful for the confidence it instilled in me. I believe this experience will prove to be instrumental in shaping my future endeavors.

What are your future career plans or aspirations?

While I am still uncertain about my future, I will be participating in an event planning and execution internship in China this summer for an organization that specializes in soccer tournaments. Following my graduation, I intend to embark on a career in the media industry. In addition, I have a strong desire to establish a reptile farm and wild turtle rescue. Although these two career paths appear vastly different, I believe that I can draw on the knowledge and skills I have gained at this university to pursue a fulfilling career. By leveraging my experience in event planning and execution, media, and my passion for animals, I hope to carve out a unique career path that combines my varied interests and experiences.



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