

Sophia Grace Kasella

Preferred First Name

Sophia

High School

Kansas Connection Academy

Chapter Name

Ashland FFA Chapter

Chapter Number

KS0254

Semesters of Agricultural Education Completed

10

Years in FFA

5

In what level of education are you currently enrolled?

College/University

What college or university are you currently attending?

Kansas State University

Current College Major

Agriculture Education

Career Objective

Agriculture Teacher/ FFA Advisor

FFA and Agriculture Education Experience

Supervised Agriculture Experience Program and Scope

My SAE is an entrepreneurship project where I create and host the "2 with the 2" podcast, advocating for agriculture through real industry stories. I've published 10 episodes, interviewing FFA officers, farmers, ranchers, and ag professionals, averaging 2,000–3,000 views. I manage all aspects, planning, interviewing, editing, and promotion, while building communication, leadership, and networking skills. I was a finalist for the Ag Communications Proficiency Award.

FFA Leadership Experience: (Office/Committee Assignment, Organization/Group, Year Held) - List up to 5

Reporter, Southwest District FFA, 1 year (2024-2025)

Treasurer, Ashland FFA Chapter, 2 years (2022-2024)

FFA Activities: (Chapter, District or National Events; CDEs; LDEs; Leadership Programs; and other FFA sponsored activities) - List up to 10

Floriculture CDE - 5 years

Dairy Judging CDE - 2 years

Prepared Public Speaking LDE - 2 years

Employability Skills LDE-2 year

District Officer Conference—1 year

National Convention—1 year

Veterinary Science CDE—1 year

Agriscience Fair—1 year

Other Leadership and Service Activities: (Community, School, 4-H, Church, Sports, Clubs, etc.) - List up to 10

Sigma Alpha- Member (1 year)

Dairy Science Club—Member (1 year)

Little American Royal-Member (1 year)

Scholars Bowl-Member (3 years) Captain (1 year)

Forensics- Member (3 years)

Public Library Ag Class—Coordinator/Volunteer (1 year)

Food Pantry- Volunteer (2 years)

Miss Kansas Teen/Miss Kansas Teen Volunteer (2 Years)

Essay Questions

What is your biggest accomplishment up until now? How has it shaped you and your leadership style?

My greatest accomplishment is not a title I have held or an award I have received, but learning how to use my voice to positively impact others. Growing up, I was often the quietest kid in the room. I felt unheard and like I did not belong. That all began to change in the summer of 2023. I stepped outside of my comfort zone by participating in FFA, advocating for agriculture on pageant stages, hosting an agricultural podcast, and holding classes at my local library to educate children about the industry I am passionate about. I continued to be involved, and through these experiences, I found my voice and gained confidence in who I was and what I stood for. I wanted my voice to become a tool to make others feel seen. I often wondered if I was successful. That changed in my senior year when a girl from my district told me that I included those who often felt overlooked by simply talking to them. I cheered them on and invited them to sit with me. It was in that moment I realized I became who I wished would've been there for me when I was younger. I know what it felt like to be the quiet one.

I intentionally seek those who feel like I once did, and I create a space for them. I lead with empathy, focusing on ensuring that every voice is heard and valued. Being a leader means connecting with others, including them, and serving them to the best of our abilities. The beginning of my college journey reminded me how important it is to stay true to these values. When I began comparing myself to others, I lost sight of what truly fulfilled me. Looking back on my high school experience, I realized that my passion came from improving others' lives.

This had changed my outlook on everything. It continues to drive me not only socially but also academically as an agriculture education student at K-State. My greatest accomplishment was not simply finding my voice, but learning how to use it to lift others up. I may have had the quietest voice, but now I use it to amplify other voices and create a place for everyone. Being a leader is not about who is most recognized but about working to help others improve. FFA is for everyone, and everyone has a place and a voice here.

If elected, how would you positively influence the Kansas FFA Association?

Impacting others is not defined by one big action but by consistent and intentional choices made over time. Within Kansas FFA, we have a large range of chapters, rural, urban, large, and small; each has its own unique experiences and perspectives. My dream is to create meaningful connections across districts, promote collaboration through workshops and events, and share all members' stories.

Additionally, I hope to shift focus from winning to growing. While success is important, true impact comes from one's heart and growth. By promoting leadership at all levels and encouraging involvement beyond contests, like in SAE (supervised agricultural experiences), service, and advocacy, we can help members find their passion. FFA is about building the leaders of tomorrow, and I want every member to recognize their value within it.

Every voice deserves to be heard. I hope to inspire others by using my voice to advocate for both our members and the industry we share.

Promoting agricultural literacy to those outside of agriculture is essential, and as our organization grows, it is important to be open and honest about our personal growth, challenges, and experiences within it.

As the agricultural industry continues to evolve, it is more critical than ever to showcase why it matters. By sharing our stories and experiences, we can inspire members to become involved. You never know where your journey might lead. I didn't originally see myself in agriculture, and now I cannot imagine my life without it.

When I think about the leaders who have inspired me the most, I think of past state officers like Elizabeth Huck (2016–2017) and Zoë Rhodes (2024–2025). They lead by serving others and truly caring about them. I was nervous to talk to them at first, but their kindness and warm smiles made it easy. In moments of doubt, I have always known I can count on them for encouragement and support. I owe a lot to those who inspire me.

Because of their example, I strive to create that same environment for others. As a leader, I will be intentional about being present, starting conversations, and making myself approachable. Whether it is a first-year member attending their first event or someone questioning where they belong, I want them to feel the same sense of support and confidence that was given to me.

I hope to have a lasting impact on the organization, its members, and the world through my choices. Maybe one day my actions will inspire others, just as others have inspired me