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For Immediate Release

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Colorado FFA Foundation Launches Capital Campaign

The Colorado FFA Foundation has launched a capital campaign to endow its Local Teacher Success (LTS) teacher mentoring program. The program started three years ago, utilizes former teachers' expertise to provide mentoring support to teachers of agricultural education in their first three of teaching in Colorado. "The LTS program is one of the highest priorities of the Colorado FFA Foundation Board of Directors, said Board Chair Jenna H. Keller. Keller continued to say, "We really value our ag teachers and FFA Advisors. We are at an all-time high with Ag Teachers and agriculture programs in all regions of our state, helping them is crucial to sustaining the great momentum we have in agricultural education."

The Local Teacher Success campaign was launched by a challenge grant from the Noel Barrett Shuler Foundation. Dr. Noel Barrett Shuler believed that "the youth of this country are its future and, to the extent that they dedicate themselves to excellence, will determine how this wonderful country of ours will continue to grow and prosper spiritually, as well as materially." Following his studies at Colorado State University, Dr. Shuler pursued some of his main interests in life largely related to veterinary medicine, agriculture, animal science and husbandry. He was able to devote many years of time and effort to his beloved Rito Oso Ranch carrying out the skills he had learned. "This Campaign and the mission of the FFA Foundation's LTS program is such a great fit for us. We are honored to help with this very worthy cause," said Cathy Schott, Advisor to the Shuler Foundation. **The Shuler Foundation gift is the single largest gift from one entity the Colorado FFA Foundation has received to date.**

"It all begins with the teacher," stated Emily Rudder Baylie, one of the LTS Specialists. "We know how crucial mentoring our beginning teachers has become," said Baylie. John Stahley, LTS Specialist, added, "I am beyond excited that the FFA Foundation is working on this endowment, we have great teachers out there, they have so much going on, adding a layer of help has proven to be very effective."

Pacific Western Bank has made an initial gift of \$50,000 to help launch the Campaign. CEO Matt Wagner said, "we are honored to help the FFA Foundation get their Campaign off the ground. We are so impressed with FFA's leadership skills and know how important the FFA Advisors are in developing the next generation of citizen and work-place leaders. Hats off to the Shuler Foundation for matching our gift."

Gifts and multi-year pledges will be accepted to fulfill the Campaign. The Colorado FFA Foundation will also be adding a new membership type to its popular Blue Jacket Society, where individuals will be able to nominate an agriculture educator from any state as a "Legendary Owl." Questions and interest in supporting the Campaign should be directed to Executive Director Don Thorn at dthorn@coloradoffafoundation.org.