

Illinois State Fair Grand Champions Bring Home the Prize—and a Surprise Scholarship

(NAPSA)—Junior livestock growers work tirelessly for months with their animals to vie for a Grand Champion award at the Illinois State Fair. The nine 2016 Grand Champions won that prize awarded on Aug. 16 and a surprise: a \$5,000 scholarship from CME Group.

CME Group, the world's leading futures exchange, awarded the one-time scholarships at the Governor's Auction of Champions in Springfield, Ill. The company provided similar scholarships in 2015 as well.



Grand champion and CME Group scholarship winners pictured here at the Illinois State Fair with Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner.

“Year after year, the junior livestock competitors’ abilities and commitment impress us,” explained CME Group Executive Chairman and President Terry Duffy. “CME wants to do what it can to encourage this dedication—not only so that these students can access the opportunities they deserve, but also to do our part to prepare future generations of farmers and food producers—a critical segment of our state and national economy.”

The scholarships ladder up to a larger agricultural education initiative put forth by CME Group. For the past four years, CME Group has partnered with the National 4-H Council, the country’s largest youth development organization, to bring the popular, award-winning Commodity Carnival experience to state and county fairs each year. This year, the fair game will travel to 150 fairs, and to date has educated nearly 200,000 youth across the country about the economics of agriculture. The interactive game guides fairgoers through the challenges of raising an animal—helping them understand agriculture as a business as well as recognize the risks our nation’s farmers and ranchers face in bringing our food to market. More than 7,500 students in more than 110 countries have downloaded the Risk Ranch app to play the game all year long.

Recipients of the 2016 CME Group scholarships were Serena Schafer, Macoupin County; Jacob Hinshaw, McLean County; Sadie Ropp, Livingston County; Dylan Hummel, Ford County; Kashen Ellerbrock, Henry County; Lane Rinderer, Madison County; Averey Rash, Henry County; Adam Miller, Livingston County; and Lucas Wisnefski, Stark County.