For Immediate Release
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association

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Industry Leaders Host Interactive Panel Discussion at USPOULTRY Foundation’s College Student Career Program

TUCKER, Ga. – March 5, 2019 – College students from more than 55 different universities nationwide visited Atlanta recently as part of the USPOULTRY Foundation’s College Student Career Program, held in conjunction with the 2019 International Production & Processing Expo (IPPE). Nearly 700 students and 138 human resource managers and recruiters from 28 companies participated in the program. The College Student Career Program is the most efficient and effective way for the poultry industry to find managers of the future and has been a vital part of many companies’ hiring process for nearly 50 years. It is one of the largest career events of its kind for students seeking professions in the industry.

In a change of pace from its usual lecture offering, the 2019 College Student Career Program provided an opportunity for students to discuss the industry with a panel comprised of speakers with various levels of industry experience. The panel featured Jarod Morrison, chief financial officer for Farbest Foods, Bernie Adcock, chief integrated supply chain officer for Tyson Foods, and DeShawn Blanding, a student at North Carolina A&T State University and former national FFA officer.

As students brought career and industry questions before the panel, transparency and communication became a repeated theme of the discussion. “The perception of our industry is being stretched right now. We need to be proactive in telling our story, doing it well and being the leaders to take our story forward – presenting our story and not being ashamed of who we are and what we do and the way in which we do it,” responded Adcock to questions regarding current challenges in the industry.

Blanding continued the discussion, commenting, “We have to be able to tell our story and be involved with the community - not just trying to defend what has already been said. By being proactive instead of reactive, we will be better able to tell the stories of agriculture to the public.”

“Everyone needs to do their part,” added Morrison. “It is critical for the consumer to understand what we do and how we do it.”

Between program interviews and events, students also had the opportunity to visit the exhibit floor, which featured the largest collection of industry exhibitors and technology in IPPE history.

Barbara Jenkins, executive director of the USPOULTRY Foundation, commented on the vital role students play in the future of the industry. “All eyes are on these students. We look to them to be the innovators, leaders and trailblazers of our future,” said Jenkins.
The International Student Program also brought in 21 students from 11 universities in Latin America for a specialized program that enabled the students to discuss job opportunities with companies that have Latin American operations.

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The USPOULTRY Foundation’s mission is to support the recruitment and training of the brightest students, seek and fund scientific research, foster student scientists and promote careers in the poultry and egg industry.

**Photo Captions:**

From left: Panel discussion with DeShawn Blanding, Jarod Morrison and Bernie Adcock during the USPOULTRY Foundation College Student Career Program at the 2019 IPPE.
Student asking questions of (from left) DeShawn Blanding, Jarod Morrison and Bernie Adcock during the USPOULTRY Foundation College Student Career Program at the 2019 IPPE.