

## **Southern Iowa Fair – Ribbon Auction**

### **New for 2026 :**

#### **Before Fair Week:**

- We will be proactively reaching out to businesses & individuals to invite them to attend the SIF Ribbon Auction. While we've historically had great attendance from bidders our goal would be to garner as much support as possible for all of our youth. We'd love to see our youth & their families inviting local businesses to attend as well!

#### **The Program:**

- The 2026 auction program will include additional information about our youth. Many businesses might not be familiar with the general location of our 4H clubs so we plan to include the school they attend as well. We believe this helps further identify youth that businesses will want to support.
- In the program this year we plan to showcase the businesses that have historically supported the SIF Ribbon Auction. This will be an incredible opportunity for us to highlight the families & businesses that have been supporting the SIF Ribbon Auction for many years! We also hope this serves as a reminder to those in attendance that 'where we spend our dollars matters'!

#### **The Auction:**

- This year our goal is to ensure that our youth know who's bidding for their ribbon. For the first time we'll be using bidding numbers & asking that bidders proudly raise their bidding number so our youth can see who's bidding. We will be encouraging bidders & families to sit on the south side of the pavilion so our youth can easily see those in attendance. While it might seem like a small deal, we think it's incredibly important that our youth understand that those bidding are real people using their hard-earned money to support them.
- This year we'll be introducing the opportunity for pre-bidding. More details will be shared during fair week but this option would allow bidders that are unable to attend the Ribbon Auction to enter a bid prior to the start of the auction. While it doesn't guarantee they'll "win" that particular ribbon it does allow them to bid without being in attendance. It's possible we could coordinate remote bidding but arrangements would need to be made in advance of the auction. We believe this option could be great for family members that are located out of town or out of state.
- We'll also be sharing throughout the auction that those in attendance can 'add money' to anyone's ribbon that they'd like. This will allow family, friends, or businesses to support our youth even when they aren't able to purchase the ribbon. Simply stop at the Southern Iowa Fair Office (east of the pavilion) to drop off the payment anytime during the auction or at the conclusion of the auction.

#### **What Happens After The Auction:**

- Immediately following the auction we'll have a team of adults assembled to walk our youth through writing thank you's. Our ask would be that parents, 4H clubs, & FFA chapters

support our efforts to see EACH young person that participates in the SIF Ribbon Auction writing thank you's. We know that families have great intentions of getting this done but we also recognize that life is busy. We feel this is a great opportunity to get the "work" done immediately after exiting the pavilion. We will have thank you cards, envelopes, & stamps ready for each youth. They'll have the ability to complete their thank you cards on their own OR with the help of an adult. While writing a thank you to the business or individual that bought their ribbon is our main goal, we also want to encourage youth to write additional thank you's as well (For example: free meal sponsors, the free bedding, to the SIF Board, etc.) Parents are welcome to help their children as well!

- Any youth that doesn't participate in the ribbon auction is also welcome to come write thank you's at this same time!

**Why This Matters:**

- Everything about life & society wants life to be easy for our youth. These kids work for MONTHS to have minutes in the show ring. Many times with results that fall short of their goals. We HAVE to build strong, resilient leaders that won't crumble when things get hard. This SIF Ribbon Auction is an incredible opportunity for our community to show how much we value their hard work!

\*\*\*If you have questions please reach out to Brett Morris - 641-295-1817.