

# FC and Coon Rapids- Bayard FFA Honor a Special Memory with the Blue Jacket Program

FC is always enthusiastic about supporting the FFA program. This year, however, there was an added feeling of satisfaction in supporting the Coon Rapids-Bayard FFA Chapter through the Blue Jacket Program. It turns out that the chapter had lost a very special member, and through their donation of \$500 and an official blue corduroy jacket, FC was able to help honor that member's very special memory.



*Justin Russell Dickman*

FC supports the FFA program for a number of reasons. "As a company looking for the best talent, we recognize that FFA programs foster in students the core values we look for in employees," said Holly Daniel, with FC. "FFA as an organization plays a vital role in shaping

our future leaders of agriculture. And by giving back to the program, we reinforce our commitment to the students and local communities in our trade territory. This is another chance to invest in the future of farming, and that's a great feeling."

For the past two years, FC and Syngenta Crop Protection have teamed up to raise \$5,000 to support future leaders in agriculture through the FFA Blue Jacket Program. In addition, FC chooses one school's FFA program to receive \$500 of the total donation and an official FFA blue corduroy jacket.

Coon Rapids-Bayard was chosen to receive the honors for this year. In the end, it turned out to be an honor for FC to be able to be part of what was a very special donation.

"We lost a very special member of our chapter – Justin Russell Dickman – to a brain aneurism. Justin had true, blue FFA pride. I've never forgotten his enthusiasm and we all sincerely miss him. Dallas Williams will wear this jacket and represent our chapter. He exemplifies all that Justin wanted to be," says FFA Advisor, Jim Heithoff.

"Justin was one of those kids who taught everyone how to live a better life. He was Autistic; and was in the special education program at CR-B. He was always excited about school and always had a positive attitude. He made friends everywhere he went and was always excited about life and his involvement in the FFA. I learned from him so many times that if life serves you lemons, you need to make lemonade," said Heithoff.

There's one story that really speaks to what kind of kid Justin was, Heithoff continues. "Justin attended the National FFA Leadership Convention his sophomore year and we traveled to Louisville Kentucky with several other FFA chapters from Western Iowa. He befriended everyone on the bus and everyone accepted him as a new friend. While at the National Con-



*Jim Heithoff and Dallas Williams*

vention, one of the Ag Businesses or colleges was handing out sunglasses; and Justin wore his on the bus. When he walked on, one of the members or perhaps an FFA Advisor, told him he looked like one of the Blues Brothers. Someone else called him the 'Soul Man.' The next year Justin decided to enter the radio broadcasting contest in FFA. He signed on as Justin "the Soul Man" Dickman for KFFA radio. He earned a gold rating and was the happiest student I had ever seen. He beamed with pride. At the banquet the next year, we presented him with an FFA Jacket which he wore with pride."

This official blue jacket will be worn by the CR-B freshman creed speaker, Dallas Williams, son of Rex and Michelle Williams in memory of Justin Russell Dickman, son of Kendall and Lisa Dickman. It is the hope of the CR-B FFA Chapter that this will begin a tradition in Justin's name that will continue each year.

**FC is proud to have had a small part in honoring the memory of CR-B FFA member, Justin Dickman.**

**Congratulations to Coon Rapids Bayard FFA!**



*FC's Heidi McGuire (FC-Farnhamville) and Dallas Williams*