

NASCOE SCOOP



President's Message

Thanksgiving has always been my favorite holiday. Growing up, my extended family would gather to enjoy all the Upper Midwest delicacies that came with the season. The day was filled with food, laughter, the occasional sibling squabble, and plenty of games—like the year I first mastered the Rubik's Cube or when we played Boggle, a game we never owned at home.

When my great-uncle passed away while I was in sixth grade, our traditions could easily have faded. Instead, my grandmother kept our family together around her table, and she was an incredible cook. Later in life, I learned to make her crockpot stuffing (or dressing—depending on what you call it), a dish that remains a staple on my family's Thanksgiving table today.

As I reflect on the many things I am thankful for, I encourage each of you to pause for a moment and think about what this year has meant to you as well.

What I'm Most Thankful For This Year

- My family—both immediate and extended. A special shoutout to my wonderful husband, my grandson Oliver, and the time I am blessed to have with my grandparents, Grandma and Grandpa Wood.
- My teams. NASCOE leadership, my local work team, and my district team—all of whom support and inspire me daily.
- My job and the producers we serve. The challenges of recent years—and the shutdown through October and into November—have reminded me why our mission matters. I am grateful for the opportunity to support farmers and ranchers and to help ensure that FSA remains relevant and essential in our communities.
- My friends. Both the "besties" here at home and the many friends I've made across the nation who enrich my life in countless ways.
- Each and every NASCOE member. Your continued support and commitment to all FSA employees is truly appreciated.
- Returning to work—and stability ahead. I'm grateful that with full-year appropriations in place, another shutdown will not impact us at FSA or USDA come January 30.
 - While improvements are still needed, we will continue advocating for appropriate funding levels and the staffing our offices require.

Of course, there are many more blessings I could list. But I want to leave room for you to read about the exciting opportunities in our Awards and Scholarships programs. As you do, please take a moment to thank your coworkers—both near and far—who give so much to their Communities, to FSA and Agriculture, and to NASCOE. And be sure to nominate them for our Distinguished Service Awards.

Wishing you and your loved ones a warm and happy Thanksgiving!

On the Horizon

- President and VP trip to DC
- Potential in person visit with Administrator
- EC Meetings 1st Tuesday of the month
- Membership Promotion for 2026
- Membership Growth
- Reorganization Plan Impacts for FSA
- Work to reschedule the canceled Quarterly Call with DAFO & Administrator
- Programs and Negotiations Submissions deadline
- PAC Promotion kickoff

Get to Know NASCOE

NASCOE Awards & Scholarship Chair: Heidi Clinkingbeard

Location: Kansas

FSA County Location(s): Montgomery/Chautauqua County

Family: I've been married to my wonderful husband, Codey, for 13 years. We have a beautiful daughter, Piper (who's celebrating her first birthday this month!), and three dogs — two Pomeranians and a German Shorthaired Pointer who keep us on our toes.

What has been the most rewarding part of being involved with NASCOE?

The most rewarding part of being involved with NASCOE has been the personal and professional growth it's helped me achieve. NASCOE truly pushes you out of your comfort zone — whether that's through developing leadership skills, taking on new challenges, or finding your voice in front of a crowd.

I used to absolutely hate public speaking, but through my involvement with KASCOE and NASCOE, I worked my way into roles that required more and more speaking engagements. It forced me to step up, and along the way I discovered that I can do hard things. Eventually, it wasn't just something I had to do — it became something I wanted to do.

The professional development I've gained through NASCOE is something you can't learn from a textbook. It's hands-on, real-world experience that shapes you into a stronger leader and communicator. And of course, one of the best parts is the people — the network of friends and mentors who become like family.

I'll never forget how special it felt to take my daughter to her first Area Rally and NASCOE Convention so she could meet our NASCOE family. I'll always be grateful to my PT, Karen Holloway, for nominating me to be a KASCOE director all those years ago — it truly changed the course of my career and my life.

In all things give thanks... and save room for dessert!



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More About Awards & Scholarships

NASCOE Awards & Scholarships - Now Open for 2025-2026!

The NASCOE Awards & Scholarships portal is now live, with a submission deadline of January 15, 2026 at 11:59 PM ET. These programs recognize outstanding service and provide valuable educational support for NASCOE members and their families.

Scholarships

NASCOE offers a variety of scholarship categories for members, their children, grandchildren, spouses, and associate members. Awards range from \$125 to \$2,500 and cover traditional, vocational, part-time, and continuing education tracks. A detailed breakdown of categories and amounts is available on the NASCOE website.

Distinguished Service Awards (DSA)

Help recognize the dedication of a coworker through the DSA program, honoring service to NASCOE, FSA-Agriculture, and the community. Any NASCOE member in good standing may nominate a fellow member. Retired members from the current year are also eligible.

Sick Leave Awards

These awards honor NASCOE members with significant unused sick leave, starting at 1,000 hours. Certificates and medallions are awarded, with a submission deadline of July 1, 2026.

Tools & Resources

The committee offers helpful tools on the NASCOE website, including a scholarship eligibility flowchart, monthly timeline, fact sheets, award ordering portal, and guides for setting up state-level scholarship funds.

Visit nascoe.org for full details and resources.

