



# Challenge Me: Using Livestock to Connect SAE for All!

*K. A. Bellah, S. Edwards, M. Shultz, J. Sink, & S. G. Cofield*



## MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

### Hutson School of Agriculture

#### Results to Date

- Two of the eighth grade students completed their assessment to move into high school; requested enrollment in agricultural education classes!
- The Challenge Me 4-H program for Trigg County was reestablished and several of those students are now members.
- Undergraduate students have shown an increased interest in working with students with disabilities.
- In separate research component describing their self-efficacy working with students with exceptional needs and Supervised Agricultural Experiences, results an increase in efficacy after this experience.



#### Introduction

The Challenge Me Swine Showing Program was developed and implemented at Murray State University to partner preservice agricultural education teachers with intermediate and middle school students with moderate to severe disabilities from Trigg County Schools. The goal of this program was to use the university's show pig operation and undergraduate agricultural education students to teach the exceptional learners how to bathe, groom, and show market swine animals in preparation for a livestock show, while helping the preservice teachers learn compassion, patience, empathy, and teaching strategies for reaching exceptional learners in a project-based environment.

#### How It Works

Week 1: Six undergraduate preservice agricultural education teachers greeted six middle school students with moderate to severe learning disabilities at the exposition center icebreaker activities, using pig whips and beach balls to move hogs properly around cones, chairs, and people; introduction to live market weight hogs and use of whips to move them around a holding pen. Pig naming, too!

Week 2: Beach Ball review, bathing, large pen show practice, brush handling & number clip acclimation.

Week 3: SHOW DAY! Show ring assembly by preservice students and swine unit student workers with panels, shavings, holding pens, ferns, and pen markers. Middle school students arrived with school administrators, parents, and university faculty from the colleges of agriculture and education to watch from the bleachers. Show official judged two classes – one for intermediate grades and one for middle grades. Trophies & framed show pictures with pigs and buddies issued.



#### Costs

Bus Transportation:	\$500
Participant Lunches:	\$150
Trophies:	\$100
Whips, Brushes, Clips:	\$200
Participant Show T-shirts:	\$200
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1150</b>

#### Future Plans

Program repetition with intent of transitioning the preservice teachers to roles working directly with the Challenge Me 4-H Club in that county.

