



## **AFR Blood Drive at Oklahoma FFA State Convention Saved Lives**

Enough blood was donated by Oklahoma FFA members and supporters during their state convention May 2-3, to save 201 lives. The blood drive was a joint effort between the AFR Women's Cooperative and the Oklahoma Blood Institute.

"This is a great partnership between AFR, FFA and OBI," Crystie Shebester, AFR Women's Cooperative State Council chair, said. "We had 67 donors, and I think that is fantastic. The FFA students are outstanding with a strong sense of community. It does not surprise me they embraced this idea and showed up in good numbers."

Shebester said the council decided earlier this year to launch a year-long initiative to promote blood drives throughout Oklahoma in partnership with the Oklahoma Blood Institute (OBI). As the nation's 9th largest non-profit blood center, Oklahoma Blood Institute relies solely on 1,200 volunteer blood donors a day to meet the needs of patients at more than 160 hospitals and medical facilities statewide.

"FFA has always been proud of our participation in community service. Learning to be community servants is a gift that will last a lifetime and will continue to impact the future of Oklahoma," Jack Staats, state program administrator and FFA advisor, said.

The process of donating blood and saving a life is relatively simple and can even be fun as one FFA student noted.

"Yeah, it's been fun because you get to think that you could probably save a life and give it to someone who needs it more than you do," Aaron Nitka, Waurika FFA, said.

Earlier this spring, the AFR Women's Cooperative and the OBI conducted a successful blood drive at the Oklahoma Youth Expo in Oklahoma City. More than 30 people donated enough blood to save 90 lives during that event. Many being FFA members and supporters from across the state.

Serving rural communities is a cornerstone of AFR.

"From our very beginning, more than 100 years ago, we have focused on serving rural Oklahoma communities," Terry Detrick, AFR president, said. "Improving the lives of rural Oklahomans has always been our priority."

To learn more about the AFR Women's Cooperative "Wanted" Blood Drives or to get involved visit [www.iafr.com/womens-cooperative](http://www.iafr.com/womens-cooperative).