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“There's a love for the country  
And a pride in the brand  
In America's heartland living close to the land  
In America's heartland close to the land.”

*-Close To The Land (America's Heartland)* by Michael Martin Murphey

These lines from the song “Close To The Land” perfectly describe what drives me. My love for the land, agriculture, and America’s heartland inspire me to want to improve agriculture and invest in the rural communities that are the backbone of America. Growing up on a cattle ranch has given me firsthand experience with life and death and also given me an appreciation for the food on my plate. Raising kids in rural America is the best way to instill values and raise the next generation.

Agriculture helps to feed, clothe, and fuel our nation and the world as a whole. American farmers and ranchers are under pressure to produce healthy, nutritious food while farmland is being developed, weather works against them, public misinformation spreads, and new rules and regulations are enacted. Through social media and news sources, I have seen how the public can be misinformed about the food on their plates and how it is raised. I have worked alongside my grandparents, parents, and other family members on our ranch. I have witnessed the hard work of fellow American agriculturists. I want to take my firsthand knowledge of production agriculture and help to connect those working in the ag industry and raising food with businesses and the public.

Since I was little I have wanted to pursue many different careers including postal worker, baker, and teacher. As I became older I began to explore other career options such as civil engineering, law, and accounting. Since my junior year I have wanted to major in agricultural economics because it allows me to combine my love of math with my passion for the agricultural industry. Studying economics through my agricultural business and American government classes has sparked my interest. I see the importance of economics in human decision making and the gigantic challenge of feeding, clothing, and fueling a growing population.

My future career objectives include graduating with a Bachelors in Agricultural Economics from the University of Idaho, then continuing my education at the University of Idaho to complete a concurrent Masters of Applied Economics and Juris Doctor. I will seek a job as a lawyer working in agribusiness. If I decide to not attend law school after graduation, I do want to attend graduate school to complete my masters and become either an agricultural lobbyist or economist. I want to make a difference in the agriculture industry by helping agribusinesses and producers with their legal affairs and in understanding proposed legislation and laws. Throughout my time in high school, college, graduate, and law school, I plan on completing as many internships as possible to strengthen my education and give myself real world experience that improves my employability.