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**Ten Graduate from Ohio AgriBusiness Association's LAUNCH Program
Program Prepares Future Agribusiness Leaders**

COLUMBUS, Ohio (March 4, 2024) – Ten Ohio agribusiness leaders were recognized as the latest graduates of Ohio AgriBusiness Association's LAUNCH program.

Hosted by the Ohio AgriBusiness Association, in partnership with Shift-ology Communication, the LAUNCH program is geared to help Ohio agribusinesses **Elevate People, Elevate Ideas and Elevate the Industry**. Participants were identified by their companies as emerging agribusiness leaders: individuals with a desire to meet higher level goals than the scope of their current positions, who seek to rise within their companies.

The ten OABA member graduates who successfully completed the 2024 LAUNCH program include:

- Justin Eibling, United Equity, Inc.
- Justin Gibson, Deerfield Ag Services, Inc.
- Chase Horn, Carrollton Farmers Exchange
- Noah Kreuz, Gerald Grain Center Inc.
- Lauren Prettyman, Ohio AgriBusiness Association
- Carley Roberts, Stratovation Group
- Kaitlyn Saul, StoneX Financial Inc.
- Trisha Seckel, Global Impact STEM Academy
- Luke Wallbrown, Deerfield Ag Services, Inc.
- Isabelle Wellman, Consolidated Grain & Barge Co.

"The LAUNCH program is instrumental in cultivating the growth of today's agricultural leaders by providing them with essential skills and confidence to progress in their careers," said Janice Welsheimer, OABA's interim CEO. "It also helps them in recognizing and seizing opportunities that can elevate their professional aspirations. This year's graduating class exemplifies the bright and promising future of our industry."

LAUNCH is a transitional training – empowering employees to meet higher level goals, going beyond the scope of their current position. Agribusinesses continually compete with all industries to recruit and retain the best talent, but there is also a need to invest in those who are already passionate about agriculture.

Program topics and skills practiced included: personal insight, next-level leadership skills and decision making including strategic planning, critical thinking, change management, goal setting and organizational skills; communication and presentation skills; global issues in agriculture; sales and marketing principles; Ohio/regional trends in agribusiness; state and local government; and a personalized capstone project.

Other staples of the LAUNCH experience are networking opportunities, webinars and the capstone project – a key component of LAUNCH where the participant selects a strategic project to implement at his or her place of business.

More than 20 different speakers provided their insight through multiple interactive sessions including Ann Gallagher of Gallagher Consulting Group, Heather Vidourek of Farm Credit Mid-America, Lisa Woodke of Start of the West, Matt Lis of Crestcom International, Gary Weidenborner of Co Bank, Darryl Grayson of DLMG Training Associates, Chris Williams of Rosen’s Inc., and Amy Zimmerman-Dunham of Vital Fitness. Participants also toured local fertilizer company and OABA member, Morral Companies, LLC.

For additional information on OABA or the LAUNCH Program, contact Janice Welsheimer at 614-326-7520 or jwelsheimer@oaba.net.

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About OABA

The Ohio AgriBusiness Association is the leading advocate for Ohio agribusiness by creating a sustainable business climate through collaborative policy leadership, continuous education and effective communication. OABA is a membership-based state trade association which includes the manufacturers and wholesale/retail suppliers of plant nutrient and protection materials, the grain warehousing and marketing industry, the feed and seed industry, as well as companies providing equipment, financing, insurance, consulting, and other products and services for the agribusiness industry. OABA is also the administrator of the Ohio Certified Crop Adviser Program, 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program and Ohio Agricultural Council. For more information, visit oaba.net.

PHOTO CUTLINE: Graduates of Ohio AgriBusiness Association’s 2024 LAUNCH leadership program include (L to R) – *Back row*: Chase Horn, Carrollton Farmers Exchange; Justin Eibling, United Equity, Inc.; Noah Kreuz, Gerald Grain Center Inc.; Luke Wallbrown, Deerfield Ag Services, Inc. *Front row*: Carley Roberts, Stratovation Group; Lauren Prettyman, Ohio AgriBusiness Association; Kaitlyn Saul, StoneX Financial Inc.; Trisha Seckel, Global Impact STEM Academy; Justin Gibson, Deerfield Ag Services, Inc.; Isabelle Wellman, Consolidated Grain & Barge Co.