

# NEWS RELEASE



Media Contact:  
Mike King, Ohio Pork Council  
[mking@ohiopork.org](mailto:mking@ohiopork.org)

## **“Breaking Boundaries” Pig Show - The Center Ring Experience**

*Unique show-pig experience offered to youth with disabilities.*

**COLUMBUS** – For the second year, the Ohio Pork Council (OPC) presented the “Breaking Boundaries” Pig Show at the Ohio State Fair, giving participants between the ages of 9 and 22 with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities the opportunity to shine inside the show arena.

With help from youth who participate OPC’s OH-PIGS swine exhibition program, each Breaking Boundaries participant was paired with their own onsite mentor. This provided quick lessons on how to care for, handle, and show a pig in front of a live audience of supporters and the event’s guest judge, Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Brian Baldrige.

“When youth with disabilities are included with our mentors, they all learn about each other’s differences, enabling them to bond over something unique that they all enjoy,” said Kelly Morgan, OH-PIGS coordinator. “Acceptance becomes a part of their lives through this event that they can take with them moving forward.”

Mentors and their families from the OH-PIGS program also provided the event’s show pigs in addition to their personal knowledge and expertise that they shared during their time with the youth participants.

“It’s an honor for the Ohio Pork Council to bring this event to the Ohio State Fair again after last year’s inaugural success,” said Cheryl Day, executive vice president of OPC. “This event helps to showcase the priority that our state’s pig-farming community puts on giving back to others. Without it, most of the participants would likely not get this type of unique opportunity with pigs and mentors that helps them build their people and animal relationship skills in a safe and supportive environment.”

***Link to Photos:***

***About The Ohio Pork Council***

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The Ohio Pork Council was established in 1968, beginning with nearly 800 pig farmers dedicated to the task of promoting their own product. Currently, OPC has approximately 2,500 members. Their mission is to serve and benefit all Ohio pork producers. To learn more about the Ohio Pork Council, visit [www.OhioPork.org](http://www.OhioPork.org) or call 614- 882-5887.

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