

A different rodeo rider to share her story with FFA

By **MATTHEW WEAVER**
Capital Press

FFA students at this year's Spokane Ag Expo and Pacific Northwest Farm Forum will hear from an inspiring keynote speaker who will tell them about her journey back from a devastating truck accident to become a competitive rodeo rider and state FFA president.

Her name is Amberley Snyder. She is a barrel racer, breakaway roper and motivational speaker from Utah.

In 2010 she was involved in an accident while on her way to the Denver Stock Show and Rodeo. Driving from her home in Utah through Sinclair, Wyo., she looked down at a map. A few seconds later, she looked up and realized her truck had drifted and was heading toward a metal beam.

In an effort to get back to her lane, Snyder overcorrected. Her truck slid off the road and rolled, ejecting her. She slammed into a fence post that broke her back. She immediately lost all feeling in her legs.

Snyder's doctor told her she would never regain use of her legs, according to Snyder's website.

"The top priority for Amberley was not even to walk, but to ride her horses again," her website states.

Eighteen months later, she was riding again.

Snyder figured out how to barrel race using a seatbelt and straps to hold her in place. She competes in both barrel racing and breakaway roping.

She says her favorite part of barrel racing is the combination of competition, speed and horses.

"How can you not love it?" she said in an email to the Capital Press.

She doesn't find it hard to talk about the accident.

"I feel that I have a pur-

pose to serve," she said. She hopes to tell FFA members "that they can overcome the obstacles in their lives."

Snyder was Utah FFA's state president in 2009-2010.

"I am a speaker because of FFA," she said.

Pacific Northwest Farm Forum board member Mike Poulson recommended Snyder for the event.

"I thought she was a very good inspirational speaker for those kids," he said. "She's a young person who's gone through some tremendous adversity and still has a positive attitude."

Snyder graduated with a bachelor's degree in agriculture education in 2015. She is pursuing a master's degree in counseling and competes on the Utah State University rodeo team.



Courtesy photo

Amberley Snyder will tell her inspirational story to Washington FFA students at the Spokane Ag Expo at 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, in the convention center's lower level ballroom.



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