

# Hermiston graduates earn agriculture entrepreneur awards

HERMISTON HERALD

The inaugural winners of the John F. Walchli Ag Entrepreneurs Award are Emilio Leal and Emma Flanagan.

According to a news release, the John Walchli Annual Ag Entrepreneurs Award is designed to help people living in west Umatilla County to achieve their goal in the agricultural world. It is based on initiative and drive to succeed rather than grades. The winners can use their award where it is needed, rather than for

tuition only.

From the release: Leal was born and raised in Hermiston and recently graduated from Hermiston High School. He grew up on a ranch, so he was introduced to cows and grass at a very young age.

While in high school, he began buying his own cows and was allowed to graze them with the herd.



Leal

He is currently attending WWCC in the CRV 19 version, majoring in ag business. Leal will decide whether to be a cowman or continue his education at Eastern Oregon University or Oregon State University after he receives his associate's degree. He plans to locate in an area where he can build his herd while working on a ranch or farm.

Flanagan was born and raised in Hermiston. She began welding as a freshman in Hermiston High School, and was mentoring students during her junior year. She credits Kelly Robison for inspiring her to become the best welder she could be. She has been employed as a welder since reaching legal work age.



Flanagan

at Columbia Basin College, located in Pasco, Washington. She is enrolled in a two-year program designed for welding certification. She plans to start her own mobile welding business after graduation. She hopes to return to Eastern Oregon, but is willing to move wherever the demand for good welders is strongest.



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## BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER

### UEC Business Resource Center Pairs with Hermiston Chamber for Membership Visits

The Umatilla Electric Cooperative Business Resource Center and the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce have paired together to visit local businesses. Emily Cecil of the UEC BRC joined Kim Nevil, Director of the Chamber to visit members of the Chamber.

The UEC Business Resource Center offers a variety of services to businesses in the area including:

#### Free and confidential business counseling

We offer free and confidential one-on-one advising appointments for all UEC members! At these appointments, we offer advice on starting a new business, expanding an existing business, marketing for an existing business, and so much more.

#### Money for your business

The Umatilla Electric Cooperative Revolving Loan Fund is a flexible loan that has a fixed interest rate of 3.25%. If you would like to schedule a one-on-one meeting with our Executive Advisor, email uecrf@gmail.com or give us a call at 541-289-3000.

#### Advertising

Every Thursday on the UEC BRC Facebook page (@uecbrc), we post a Small Business Highlight, where we promote a business in the UEC service area. If you would like your business to be the next SBH, please fill out the Small Business Highlight request form.

Please email Kim or call the Chamber office to schedule a meeting with Emily and Kim to drop by your office! For more information about the UEC Business Resource Center, contact Emily at UECBRC@gmail.com

### New Office Hours

Our office hours have changed to allow our staff flexibility to meet with our members in their place of business.

Monday 9:00am - 3:00pm  
Tuesday 9:30am - 3:00pm  
Wednesday 9:00am - 3:00pm  
Thursday 9:00am - 3:00pm  
Friday 9:00am - 3:00pm

We can also be reached at 541-567-6151

kimberly@hermistonchamber.com  
kelly@hermistonchamber.com  
kellye@hermistonchamber.com

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If you would like to advertise on this Hermiston Chamber page Please contact: Jeanne Jewett at [jjewett@hermistonherald.com](mailto:jjewett@hermistonherald.com) or 541-564-4531

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