

Sarah Kramer – 2022

Kramer was born in Santa Ana, California to Jon and Julie Kramer, and has one brother, Benjamin. She grew up in San Clemente, California and graduated from San Clemente High School.

Growing up as the granddaughter of a produce broker, Kramer saw firsthand the work it takes to get fresh produce from the farm to the grocery store. When it came time to go to college, Kramer, a self-described Orange County beach bum, did not know exactly what she wanted to do in life. She came to Cal Poly in 2001 with plans to return home and work for the family business.

As happens with so many Cal Poly students, she fell in love with San Luis Obispo County. After getting her bachelor's degree in agribusiness with a concentration in Marketing in 2005, she began to look for ways to stay in the area.

She applied for a position at Farm Credit West a year later, and Farm Credit soon realized they had found someone special. As she moved up the ranks over the next seven years to become Vice President Loan Officer, Kramer says she wanted to get more involved in the community.

Kramer joined the San Luis Obispo County chapter of California Women for Agriculture in 2009, becoming vice president and then president a few years later.

She joined SLO County Cattlemen's Association in 2011, where she served in multiple leadership roles including second vice president in 2015 and 2016, president in 2017 and 2018, newsletter chair since 2014, and bylaws chair since 2018.

After joining SLO County Farm Bureau in 2012, she became a board member in 2016, treasurer from 2019 to 2020, and has served as second vice president since 2021.

At the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance, Kramer was elected to the board from 2017 to 2020, including service as Treasurer from 2018-2020 and a Wine Festival Volunteer from 2013-2019.

She has been a Paso Robles Pioneer Day Committee board member since 2016, a San Luis Obispo County Ag Education Committee board member since 2014 and treasurer since 2016, a California Mid-State Fair Heritage Foundation member, a Paso Robles High School Agriculture Department Advisory Committee member since 2016, and she is the Ag Finance Representative on the SLO County Agricultural Liaison Advisory Board after serving as an alternate since 2016.

In 2013, she became vice president and commercial relationship manager at Umpqua Bank, and serves today as senior vice president and commercial relationship manager at Bank of the Sierra.

Her extensive network in the local agriculture community and financial experience continues to make her one of the most sought-after volunteers and board members in SLO County. She says she loves being involved because of the people she gets to work with.

“The majority of the people in my life today came from me being involved in community organizations,” she explains. “I’ve come to realize that people who are involved are the most fun!”

Kramer says she takes pride in giving agriculture a voice through her work with Cattlewomen’s and Farm Bureau. “People – especially government decisionmakers – need to see and hear from people whose livelihood depends on agriculture,” she says. “We need to educate the community as a whole; the general public has no idea where their food comes from or how it is produced, many of them think their food comes from the grocery store.”

Kramer is passionate about teaching kids about the importance of farmers and ranchers. She says her most enriching volunteer role has been with the annual Great AGventure, an agriculture education field trip for fourth graders organized by the SLO County Ag Education Committee.

For young people wondering how they can work in agriculture, she offers this advice: “Get involved! Remember, if a beach girl from the OC can do it, you can too! Never stop learning! Learn from those who done it before you. We might have more technology these days, but the basics of agriculture haven’t changed much. But, the best reason to get involved is the people. The agricultural community is just that, a community!”